

## PEANUTS.

Many boys who can readily distinguish a hickory nut-tree from a walnut-tree, and a beech from a chestnut-tree, would mistake a field of growing peanuts for a field of clover. During the American Civil War big boys in blue often ran with eagerness into clover fields in search of peanuts, and could not be convinced of their mistake until they had pulled up a considerable number of the roots and had been roundly laughed at by their more knowing comrades.

The peanut, sometimes called ground pea or ground nut, is known in the Southern States as the pindar and gouber; and the French call it "pistache de terre." It is generally believed to be a native of Africa, where it is the principal food of some of the Congo tribes; but four or five species of the nut are found growing wild in Brazil.

Its cultivation has been successfully introduced into Spain. In this country it is raised principally in the States of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, and has been more recently cultivated in California.

The culture of the peanut is not difficult. Land suited to the raising of corn or melons is generally selected, and care is taken that there be nothing in the ground that would stain the shells.

Planting time begins when the danger to plants from frost has passed. The ground is ploughed five or six inches deep, and then harrowed. The nuts are taken from the pod without breaking their skins, are planted two or three together in rows about three feet apart and twenty inches from hill to hill, and are covered with two inches of earth.

When in a short time the vine is eight or ten inches long and begins to blossom, it is covered with an inch of soil, care being taken to leave the tip end uncovered. The vines blossom profusely with small yellow flowers, and as the flower fades away a sharp-pointed stem grows out from its base, turns downward and buries itself in the ground; on the end of the stem a thick-shelled pod forms, and enlarges rapidly. All the care that is necessary after the stem returns to the ground is to keep the land free from weeds.

In October, when the nuts are ripe, the farmer loosens the earth and pulls up the vines, to which the nuts adhere, and turns them over to dry. He performs this work only in pleasant weather, and when the ground is dry. After the vines have lain in the sun for a day, which is generally a sufficient time for drying them, the grower stacks them around a stake about five feet high.

The vines remain in stack from three to five weeks, after which the nuts are picked off, placed in sacks and shipped to market. A vine under favorable conditions often bears more than a hundred nuts, and the yield per acre averages forty bushels.

Most of the Virginia and North Carolina crop, which is about two-thirds of the whole crop of the country, is marketed in Norfolk and Petersburg, Virginia; the rest, with the whole crop of Tennessee, is carried to St. Louis or Cincinnati. In each of these cities are factories where the nuts as they are delivered by the farmer are bought. The nuts as they appear at this stage, with earth and their stems still clinging to them, are hardly to be recognized as the bright nut we afterwards see on the corner stand.

To polish them, and to remove the earth and stems, the nuts are scoured in large iron cylinders, from which they pass through blast fans, in which a strong current of air separates the fully developed nuts having sound kernels from those imperfectly filled, and from empty pods. The sound nuts fall through the fan upon picking tables, where those which are discolored are taken out, and the bright ones are passed on into sacks which will each hold about one hundred pounds of nuts. Each sack is marked with the brand which indicates the grade of its contents.

The dark and the partially filled nuts are shelled, and the kernels are used by confectioners in making peanut candy. The work of picking over and separating the nuts is performed by little girls, about twenty of whom are employed at every table.

Three varieties of peanuts are grown in this country, the white, the red, and the Spanish. The white, which is the most important variety, has a nut with two ker-

nels with pink skins; its vine spreads along the ground, in this respect unlike that of the red variety which grows more upright and in a bunch.

The pod of the red nut holds three and sometimes four kernels, and has a deep red skin.

The Spanish is a much smaller nut, with a lighter skin and milder flavor than either of the others possess. The entire crop is shelled, and used especially in that rich confection known as nougat.

The history of the competition between the home product and the imported peanut is interesting and gives one some idea of the importance of the peanut trade. In 1872, and for several years previous, there were annually imported into New York a half million bushels of peanuts, the greater part of which came from Africa and the rest from Spain.

The American farmers gradually awakened to a perception of the profits to be made by raising the nuts. Melon patches were turned into peanut fields, and in 1878 the seed of the Spanish nut was planted in Virginia. The product was found to equal that of the foreign nut, and as it cost two or three cents a pound less to market the crop, it was not long before the imported nut was driven from the market. At present Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee count "gouber-raising" as one of their chief industries.

In 1880 the consumption of peanuts in the United States was less than two million bushels. In 1887 the amount had increased to four and a third million bushels, all of which was eaten in the United States and Canada.



HARVESTING PEANUTS.

The demand for peanuts has trebled in the past few years, and the crop has never been sufficient to supply the demand.

The price of peanuts varies according to the supply. The average price last year was five cents a pound. America's average crop, which is estimated at three million bushels, thus represents a value of three million three hundred thousand dollars at wholesale price.

The peanut is a more useful product than people in general think it to be. We all know how eagerly it is sought after in the roasted state to help boys enjoy a baseball match or a circus; but its use in the roasted form by no means measures the extent of its value, or the variety of the uses to which it is put.

The nuts contain from forty-two to fifty percent of a nearly colorless, bland, fixed oil, which resembles olive oil and is used for similar purposes. This oil is principally employed in the manufacture of the finer grades of soap.

In 1883 Virginia began to manufacture peanut flour, which makes a peculiarly palatable biscuit, and North Carolina has long made pastry of pounded peanuts. It is also eaten for dessert, and it is roasted as a substitute for coffee.

The peanut is very nutritive. The negroes use it in very many places in making porridge custard, and prepare from it a beverage. The vine forms a fodder as good as clover hay, and hogs fatten on what they find on the fields after the crop has been gathered.—George B. Spear, in *Youth's Companion*.

## BE LIKE THE BIRD.

Be like the bird, that, halting in her flight,  
Awhile on boughs too slight,  
Feels them give away beneath her and yet sings,  
Knowing that she hath wings.

—VICTOR HUGO.

## THE WAKING SOUL.

(Concluded.)

"Ah, little Lawrence, the world has failed so too. It has let its beloved ones go by; and then, when it was too late, it has called after them in pleading to return. They never come back, but the world keeps repeating their names forever. That is its punishment and their fame."

"What does it need me for?" asked Larry.

"It needs you to paint for it the pictures you see amid the clouds and on the earth."

"Can't they see 'em?" queried the boy.

"No, not as you can. Their sight is not clear enough. God wants them to know of it and so he sends them you to make it plain to them. It is as though you went to a foreign country where the people's speech was strange to you. You could not know their meaning unless some one who understood their language and yours translated it for you. He would be the only one who could make their meaning clear to you. He would be an interpreter."

"How am I to get that thing you spoke about that'd take me up to Heaven, so's I could bring down the beautiful things I see?" inquired Larry. "Where is it?"

"Inspiration?" asked the voice. "That is everywhere—all about you. Within and without you. You have only to pray to be given sight clear enough to see it and power to use it. But now I must leave you. I have given you my mes-

sage. Give the world yours. Good-by, Lawrence—good-by;" and the voice had ceased.

Larry stretched out his hands and cried: "Come back, oh, come back!" but the echo of his own words was all he heard in response. He lay quite motionless and still for some time after that, thinking about all the voice had said to him, and when finally he pushed his hat back from before his eyes, he saw the starlit sky smiling down upon him benignantly. And then, from behind a dark cloud he saw the radiant moon appear, and it seemed to him like the most beautiful woman's face he could imagine, peering out from the shadow of her own dusky hair to welcome the night.

He got upon his feet as well as he could, for he was very stiff with lying so long, and stumbled on toward some dark nook or cranny where he could huddle unseen until the morning; his head full of plans for the morrow, and his heart beating high with courage and hope. He would dream no more, but labor. He would work at the first thing that came to hand, and then, perhaps, that wonderful thing that the voice had called inspiration would come to him, and he would be able to mount to Heaven on it and bring down to earth some of the glorious things he saw. He thought inspiration must be some sort of a magical ladder that was invisible to all but those given special sight to see and power to use it. If he ever caught a glimpse of it

he intended to take hold at once and climb straight up to the blessed regions above; and dreaming of all he would see there he fell asleep.

In the morning he was awake bright and early, and, stretching himself with a long-drawn yawn; set out to find some way of procuring for himself a breakfast. First at one shop door and then at another he stopped, popping in his shaggy head and asking the man inside to "Give me a job, Mister?" and being in reply promptly invited to "Clear out!"

But it took more than this to discourage Larry, heartened as he was by the remembrance of his visions of the day before, and on and on he went, until, at last, in answer to his question—and just as he was about to withdraw his head from the door of the express office, into which he had popped it a moment before—he was bidden to say what it was he could do. Almost too surprised in the change in greeting to be able to reply, he stumbled back into the place and stood a moment in rather stupid silence before his questioner.

"Well, ain't yer got no tongue in yer head, young feller? Seemed ter have a minute ago. Ef yer can't speak yer no better'n this yer ain't the boy fer us."

But by this time Larry had recovered himself sufficiently to blurt out:

"I kin lift an' haul an' run errands an' do all sorts of work about the place. Won't ye try me, Mister? Lemme carry out dat box ter show ye how strong I am."

And suiting the action to the words, he shouldered a heavy packing-case and was out upon the sidewalk and depositing it upon a waggon, already piled with trunks and luggage, before the man had time to reply. When he returned to the door-step he was greeted with the grateful intelligence that he might stay a bit and see how he got along as an errand boy if he liked; and, of course, liking, he started in at once upon his new office.

That was the beginning. It gave him occupation and food. He had no time for dreaming now, but often when he had a brief moment to himself would take out of his pocket the piece of a chalk with which he marked the trunks he carried and sketch with it upon some rough box-id or other the picture of a face or form he saw in his fancy, so that, after a time he was known among the men as "the artist feller," and grew to have quite a little reputation among them.

How the rest came about even Larry himself found it hard to tell. But by and by he was drawing with pencil and pen and selling his sketches for what he could get, buying now a brush and then some paints with the scanty proceeds, and working upon his bits of canvas with all the ardor of a Raphael himself.

A man sat before an easel in a crowded studio one day giving the last touch to a painting that stood before him. It pictured the figure of a lad, ragged and forlorn, lying asleep beneath some sheltering trees. At first that seemed all to be seen upon the canvas; but if one looked closer one was able to discover another figure amid the vaporous, soft glooms of the place. It grew ever more distinct until one had no difficulty in distinguishing the form of a maiden, fair and frail as a dream. She was bending over the slumbering body of the boy, as if to arouse him to life by the whispered words she was breathing against his cheek.

The artist scrawled his signature in the corner of his completed work and set the canvas in its frame, and then stood before it, scrutinizing it closely.

"The Waking Soul." I wonder if that is a good name for it?" murmured he to himself. And then, after a moment, he said to the pictured lad:

"Well, Larry, little fellow, the dream has come true; and here we are, you and I—you, Larry, and I, Lawrence—with the 'wish grown strong to an endeavor, and the endeavor to an achievement.' Are you glad, boy?"—Julie M. Lippman, in *N. Y. Independent*.

## ONLY ONE.

God has given men two eyes; if he lose one he hath another. But man hath only one soul; if he lose that the loss can never be made up again.—Chrysostom.