

wings, would allow the ship to descend gently to the ground, and as special cars are to be made for crossing the ocean, the ship would float on the water, should anything happen while making the voyage.

When everything is in readiness for a trip the machine will be lifted into the air at the height desired by the aerial engineer by a vertical propeller. The height it is proposed the ship shall attain is about one hundred and fifty feet above the ground, and when that point is reached a propeller in front of the machine will be started. The gas used to supply the machine is to be furnished from a cylinder by a gas engine through a hose, and when the vessel has been directed on its course it is expected that it will whirl through the air at the rate of fully two hundred miles per hour, according to the computations made of the resistance of the air. It will be steered by an electrical appliance, whereby a compass course will be laid and the ship automatically guided through the air.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

REV. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 25, 1897.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

OCTOBER 3, 1897.

God save the Queen. Canadian Hymnal, 340.

THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE.

The year 1897 will ever be an epoch in the history of England. During this year representative persons from every part of the British Empire met in London, the great metropolitan city, to take part in the Jubilee services of her most gracious Majesty's reign. The Jubilee itself will have a lasting influence, and will not only encourage all loyal subjects of the Queen, to be proud of their position, but will also tend to give other nations a better idea of the status of the empire, among the various nationalities of the world.

THE GREATNESS OF THE EMPIRE.

Foreigners are often surprised that the little island called England, should be at the head of such a powerful nation. Various reasons for this greatness have been assigned, but doubtless the Queen herself gave the true reason when she informed the African prince that the Holy Bible was the true secret of England's greatness.

A STRONG PERSONALITY.

Altogether, aside from her position as Queen, Victoria has been illustrious as a wife, a mother, and now as a widow. She has nobly filled all those positions. No woman could more reverence her husband, who was justly called "Albert the Good," than Queen Victoria did, and though years have rolled away since death removed him from her side, she still holds his memory dear. Her children revere her. When they travel abroad, or are called to go from home, as soon as they possibly can they return to the royal household, and greet their beloved mother.

PIERS FROM HER YOUTH.

Before she had attained to maturity, it was known to her that she would soon

sit upon the throne of England. She did not assume any lofty airs, or manifest proud notions in anticipation. She seemed to tremble at the thought of the responsibility which would soon rest upon her, and when the fact was made known to her that she was monarch of England, she requested the archbishop to kneel with her and pray, that she might have grace and wisdom to conduct the affairs of the nation, so that they might secure the divine approval.

OUR DUTY.

We should be grateful to God that we have such a noble woman at the head of our nation. Compare her with any monarch who has reigned during the same period, and where is there one with whom she can be compared? She has outlived all those who were monarchs when she began to reign. Her long life has been a noble example of righteous living and pure morality. The breath of scandal has never had occasion to tarnish her name. Her noble life should prove a blessing to her people.

IMITATE HER EXAMPLE.

Her position from the commencement of her reign gave her ample opportunities to gratify herself with all the pleasures of life, but she has never been known to do so. Even when young, she was not known to be fond of gaiety. Young people in our day are in great danger of being carried away with those things which are frivolous. The tendency needs to be guarded against. The indulgence of pleasure is ruinous to morals, as well as injurious to health, and endangers reputation. Acknowledge God in all your ways.

THE LIFE OF A CLAM.

The clam's body is completely enshrouded in the mantle, except for two openings, through one of which the food can be pushed out. The other is for the siphon, or what is commonly known as the "neck" of the clam. In some respects the clam may be better off than we are, for he has a little brain in his foot and also a gland for secreting strong fibres. With this he spins a byssus, by which he can attach himself to whatever he likes. He does not even have to search for his food, but waits for it to come to him. He makes a burrow in the mud or sand, attaching himself to the bottom by the byssus. Then he thrusts his siphon up through the mud and water until it reaches the surface. The siphon is made up of two tubes, the water flowing in through one and out through the other.

When the inflowing current, laden with minute plants and animals, reaches the gill chamber, some of these are sifted out and retained for food, while the water and waste matter flow out through the other tube.

The clam's eggs are carried by the mother on her gills. When there are fish in the water with them, the mother clams discharge the eggs, which soon hatch, but if there are no fish they carry the eggs until they decay. The reason of this strange behaviour is this. When the eggs are set free in the water they soon hatch, and the little ones swim about until they find some fish to which they attach themselves. They live for a time on the mucus of the fish, and then drop off, sink to the bottom and form burrows for themselves. This curious, parasitic life is no doubt a reversion to the habit of some ancient ancestors.—Popular Science Monthly.

APPEARANCE OF THE MUSK-OX.

The musk-ox lives in the land of perpetual cold, and its appearance is so odd and striking that when once seen, it is seldom forgotten. You see an oblong mass of tremendously long brown hair, four and a half feet high by six and a half long, supported upon wide hoofs and very short, thick legs, almost hidden by the body hair. There is also a blunt and hairy muzzle, a pair of eyes, a pair of broad, flattened horns, that part like a woman's hair and drop far downward before they curve upward—and that is all. The mass of hair is so thick that, as the robe lies on the floor, it is about as easy to walk over as a feather bed. Over the loins you will find, if you look closely, a broad "saddle-mark" of dirty-white hair, shorter than the rest of the coat.

Next to the body is a matted mass of very fine and soft hair, like clean wool, so dense that to snow and fog it is quite impenetrable. Over this lies a thick coat of very long, straight hair, often twelve inches in length, and sometimes twenty, like the grass rain-coat of a Japanese soldier. Sometimes it actually touches the snow as the animal walks.

An Indignant Scholar.

BY EMILY H. MILLER.

Such a horrid jogafray lesson!
Cities, and mountains, and lakes,
And the longest, crookedest rivers,
Just wriggling about like snakes.
I tell you I wish Columbus
Hadn't heard the earth was a ball,
And started to find new countries
That folks didn't need at all.

Now, wouldn't it be too lovely
If all that you had to find out,
Was just about Spain and England,
And a few other lands thereabout?
And the rest of the maps were printed
With pink and yellow to sav,
"All this is an unknown region,
Where bogies and fairies stay!"

But what is the use of wishing,
Since Columbus sailed over here,
And men keep hunting and 'sporing,
And finding more things every year?
Now, show me the Yampah River,
And tell me, where does it flow?
And how do you bound Montana,
And Utah, and Mexico?

THE TWO PAINTERS.

There is an old story, but a good one, of two painters who were employed to fresco the walls of a cathedral, and both stood on a rough scaffolding constructed for the purpose some forty feet from the floor.

One of them was so intent upon his work that he became wholly absorbed, and in admiration stepped back from the picture, gazing at it with intense delight. Forgetting where he was, he moved still farther back, surveying the work of his brush, until he had neared the edge of the plank upon which he stood.

At the critical moment his companion turned suddenly, and, almost frozen with horror, beheld his imminent peril. Another instant, and the artist would be precipitated upon the pavement beneath. If he spoke to him, it was certain death; if he held his peace, death was equally sure. Suddenly he regained his presence of mind, and, seizing a wet brush, he flung it against the wall, splattering the beautiful picture with unsightly blotches of colouring.

The painter flew forward and turned upon his friend with fierce upbraids; but, startled at his ghastly face, he listened to his recital of danger, looking shudderingly over the dread space below, and, with tears of gratitude, blessed the hand that saved his life.

THIN PLACES.

"There! my darning is done for this week—every hole is mended."

"And the thin places?"

"Thin places! Why, Auntie, I never look for thin places. There are always holes enough to keep me busy."

"When I was a little girl," said Auntie, "I had a dear old grandmother who taught me to mend and darn, and with the teaching she slipped in many a lesson about higher things. 'Look out for thin places,' she used to say 'it'll save thee a deal of time and trouble. A few runs back and forth with the needle will save a half-hour's darning next week. There are a few thin places in thy character,' she said one day, 'that thee'd better attend to—little failings that will soon break into sins.' I did not quite understand her, so, sweetening her talk with a bit of the chocolate she carried for the buns, she said, 'I see thy mother pick up thy hat and coat, putting away thy rubbers again and again. I hear thee sometimes speak pretty sharply when some one interrupts thee at thy story reading. I heard thee offer to dust the parlour several days ago, but thee forgot it, and to-day thy mother put down her sewing to do it.'"

"I felt so ashamed that I never forgot about the thin places after that, though I'm afraid I did not always attend to them at once."

"Why, Aunt Mary! If you hadn't said Grandma, I'd think you meant me! There are my rubbers under the stove, and I promised mamma to dust the sitting-room this very day! But I don't quite understand what holes she meant."

"If you can't find your things, and you are in a hurry, what might happen, Grace?"

Grace coloured, and her eyes fell. "I did get real mad about my grammar. I was sure I had put it on my desk!"

"And you found it on the divan! Then, if you promise and do not perform, does it not lower your notion of truthfulness, and so give Satan more power over you?"

"Why, auntie, I went right up and tidied my room."

"I don't understand, Grace."

"I thought you knew," said the girl in a shame-faced whisper. "I told mother I had tidied my room (for I promised I would) when I had forgotten it and was ashamed to own up. Oh! I see how thin places become holes, and I mean to look out."

"With God's help," said auntie softly, and Grace, giving her a hug, ran to put away her rubbers and dust the sitting-room.

"How about your thin places?"

THE LUCKY HORSESHOE.

The horseshoe superstition which obtained a foothold in a number of countries, had several different origins, among them being the facts that its shape is an emblem of good luck; it is worn by the horse, which is considered a fortunate animal, and it is made of iron. Iron is popularly believed to be endowed with protecting qualities beyond those of any other metal. The opal, which is a beautiful stone, is considered unlucky, while the flint stone, which is made up of about the same matter as the opal, is considered lucky; and in many stables a piece of flint, with a natural hole through it, is hung over the door to prevent the entrance of witches, who would otherwise ride the horses all night and leave them exhausted next morning. Even now, the most rabid enemy of superstition will, half-laughingly, pick up an old horseshoe and carry it home with him.

The Romans drove nails into the walls of their cottages as an antidote for the plague. The Arabs believe that the evil god which sends the simoon upon them can be appeased by the shout, "Iron, iron," and when overtaken by that storm, that is the cry they raise. The Scandinavian constantly carries in the bottom of his boat an open knife, or nail driven in a reed, to ward off the water-spirits. Many nations have long held that iron is a potent breaker of the spell of witchcraft, and so the finding of old iron is lucky; and as old iron is mostly found in the shape of horseshoes, and as the horseshoe is the lucky crescent shape, the horseshoe has become to be considered a lucky emblem.

In the mythology of England, horses were looked upon as luck-bringers, and in Yorkshire it is still thought that a disease may be cured by burying a horse alive, while in some rural districts it is a common practice to place horses' hoofs under the bed of invalids to cure diseases. Near the close of the last century, the belief in the power of horseshoes reached its height, and in the west end of London a horseshoe was nailed over the door of almost every house. Fifty years later there were but half as many, and the present day sees only a scant few, as education overrides superstition.

Over the door of one of the principal churches of Suffolk a prominent horseshoe was worked into the architecture, probably with the idea of keeping the witches out. At that time, fifty years ago, many churches had horseshoes nailed over the doors. The Irish peasants modify the custom, and nail horseshoes on the thresholds, planting cloves of wild garlic over the door. There is a prevailing custom of affixing a horseshoe to the foremast of ships, and many of the most famous battleships have carried this emblem.

The horseshoe has often been the means of saving life. English lore tells how Queen Margaret watched the battle of Blore Heath, in 1459, and when she saw the battle would be lost, made her escape on horseback, having the blacksmith reverse the shoes of her horse, so that it would appear that she was galloping the other way.

When Stanley started across the continent of Africa, he had seventy-three books in three packs, weighing one hundred and eighty pounds. After he had gone three hundred miles, he was obliged to throw away some of his books through the fatigue of those carrying his baggage. As he continued on his journey, in like manner his library grew less and less, until he had but one book left. You can imagine its name—the Bible. It is said that he read that book through three times during the journey. The Bible is the only book that has stood the test of all centuries and earth's greatest minds. It alone contains that which will meet the deepest yearnings of our immortal souls. It is the book that we should read daily, and "hide in our hearts," as did the Psalmist, and it will help to keep us from sin.