

and practice, put into speech by an Indian old enough to remember witnessing in his childhood horrible cannibal feasts, cruel tortures inflicted on their own subjects by savage chiefs, and domestic life in its most degraded state, reminds us that 'with God all things are possible.' At half-past six, just as the cannery had opened for work, our steamer slowly moved away from the pier. The little group of Indian men and women on the wharf joined the Endeavorers on the 'Queen' in singing, 'Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.'

Tears rolled down some dusky, smiling faces and filled the eyes of the one white face, Mr. Duncan's, as the strains of 'God be with you till we meet again' became fainter as the boat steamed away. Soon all that could be distinguished of the happy New Metlakahla was the great white church, the beacon-light of these earnest Christian people.

### My Squirrel 'Muffle.'

(For 'Our Dumb Animals,' by Mrs. S. J. Brigham, East Orange, New Jersey.)

'Muffle' resides in Chipmunk Town,

We own a lot together,  
His home is there the whole year round,  
Mine through the summer weather.

His house is high, the tower climbs  
A hundred feet or more,  
Mine is a little one which stands  
Quite near to his back door.

It took the Lord a hundred years  
To build his house, they say,  
Mine is a cottage built by men  
In three months and a day.

We are such comrades! he and I,  
We spend much time together  
Talking about the woodland folk  
Who dress in fur and feather.

And of the long cold winter days  
When snow lies deep above him,  
When he and I are far apart,  
And no one near to love him,

He condescends to share with me  
Nuts of all sorts and sizes,  
Stuffing his furry cheeks until  
His face he quite disguises.

When 'Muffle' wants his share and mine  
I gladly give him all,  
And while his pockets swell with nuts,  
My own grow very small.

Dear 'Muff!' He hides them all away  
Upon his storehouse shelf,  
While I am learning how to love  
My neighbor as myself.

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Drinking is, after all, only a pronounced symptom of a large vice,—self-indulgence; and self-indulgence is always fatal, in the long run, to all the habits and activities which men very properly honor.—R. F. Horton, D.D.

### Ant-Hills.

(The Strand Magazine.)

A striking peculiarity of the white ant is that it is not an ant at all, but a termite. Any ordinary person observing it and its habits would call the insect an ant; but the learned men of science who settle these things tell us that it belongs to the order of Europtera, and is allied to the dragon-fly; whereas the ants are all Hymenoptera. Indeed, the very latest classification puts the termites in a class by themselves, somewhere between the dragon-fly and the cockroach. But the travellers who first encountered the termite in its different kinds were not scientifically exact in their nomenclature, and took the way of the ordinary person, calling the new insect a white ant.

The termites are remarkable chiefly for two things—some sorts for one and some for the other. One is the building of most extraordinary nests, formed of particles of earth cemented together, and pierced by many tunnels, chambers, passages, and corridors, and the other is the destruction (internally) of anything wooden they can get hold of.

Mr. W. Saville-Kent, the distinguished naturalist, made a tour in Australia a year or two ago, taking photographs of many remarkable things, some of which were reproduced in his valuable work, 'The Naturalist in Australia.'

The termites of Australia have not yet been thoroughly examined, but the European species (*Termes lucifugus*) has; and in a nest of the latter there are found together eleven different types—which will give some measure of the complicated state of termite society. The eleven types are: (1) the youngest larvae, there being no discernible distinctions between them at this stage; (2) the semi-matured larvae of the soldiers; (3) adult soldiers; (4) semi-matured larvae of workers; (5) adult workers; (6) nymphs (with imperfect wings) of the first order, developing into kings and queens; (7) king; (8) queen; (9) nymphs of the second order developing into supplementary males and females; (10) adult supplementary males; (11) adult supplementary females. There is no reason to suppose that termite society in Australia is any less highly organized—in fact, it may be found to be more highly organized still.

The white ant is one of the most destructive insects in Australia. It is not a mound-builder, but it lives in subterranean passages, and in the borings it makes in wood. Nothing is safe from this pest. Furniture, rafters, floor-boarding, door-posts—it eats into all. A house left unguarded for a month or two may come to terrible grief. The whole of the wood-work, while outwardly apparently sound, will become a mere shell, with walls no thicker than paper, so that one puts his foot through the flooring as he would through a stretched newspaper, and the legs of seemingly solid chairs and tables crush to dust and splinters between the finger and thumb.

The soldier termites are distinguishable by their darker color, and by their larger heads, which are almost black. These termites, it may be observed, as well as other species, secrete a sort of acid, which will eat away

even glass and lead. There are many instances of the metal capsules of bottles being pierced, in order that the insects might get at and eat the corks. And in these cases the surface of the glass was plainly corroded along the line where the termites had laid their covered passages towards the corks. Lead sheeting of considerable thickness has also been perforated by white ants eager to get at wood behind it.

The food of the mound-building sorts seems to be chiefly dried grass. They are mound-builders and haymakers. They collect great hoards of grass blades finely cut up, and store them in the myriad food chambers that intersect their hillocks. And the various species erect mounds of varying shapes and sizes, particular shapes being produced by particular species. These mounds are all of a roughly pyramidal shape, sometimes with the apex prolonged into a pinnacle. The hills grow gradually, of course, and when completed, range from 6ft. to 12ft. in height as a rule, though some reach 14ft. or 15ft. And it may be taken as a general rule that the habitation, or 'termitarium,' as it is correct to call it, extends as far downward under the surface of the ground as upward in the air. Thus we may get some notion of the immensity of the architecture of these industrious insects, in comparison with their insignificant size. The color of the mounds is commonly a rust-red, much akin to the line of the soil below. Mr. Saville-Kent made several unsuccessful attempts, by excavation, to discover and examine the queen in her royal chamber, in the midst of certain of the mounds. But the skill and diligence of the worker-termites rendered his efforts unsuccessful. So rapidly did they wall up all approaches to the chamber at the first alarm, that it became, apparently, a mere lump of clay, indistinguishable from the many others around it. In many cases it was possible to trace clay-covered galleries for several hundred feet along the surface of the ground from the bases of the hillocks. It is supposed that the termites make innumerable holes in the walls of these galleries in the night, issue forth, gather their harvest of grass, and, bringing it in, repair all the breaches before daylight.

We come now to the mounds of what Mr. Saville-Kent calls the 'Kimberley type,' since he came across them in the Kimberley district of Western Australia. The tallest nest of this sort which Mr. Saville-Kent measured was 14ft. high. It had reached its fullest development, and it was becoming a little worn at the top by weather. The shapes of these termitaries vary a great deal, and some present odd and grotesque forms.

With the aid of a pickaxe and a cross-cut saw, a mound was divided exactly in half, and the thousands of inner chambers and passages were exposed. From the centre upward and out to the sides the chambers were almost wholly filled with the stored food, in the shape of finely chopped grass. In the centre, however, and a little below, was a collection of smaller cells, apparently the nurseries, devoted to the rearing of the young ants. These cells, however, were found to be unoccupied when laid bare, the young having doubtless been carried away at the first sign of disturbance. Here again nothing could be discovered of the queen ant.