

before a boy's pocket solved the problem how to make the thing contained seven times greater than the container. The only thing that saved Adam and Eve from interrogational insanity was the paucity of language. If little Cain had possessed the verbal abundance of the language in which men are to-day talked to death, his father's bald head would have gone down in shining flight to the ends of the earth to escape him, leaving Eve to look after the stock, save the crop, and raise her boy as best she could. Which would have been, 6,000 years ago, as to-day, just like a man.

Because, it was no off hand, absent-minded work answering questions about things in those spacious old days when there was crowds of room, and everything grew by the acre. When a placid, but exceedingly unanimous looking animal went rolling by, producing the general effect of an eclipse, and Cain would shout, "Oh, lookee, lookee pa! what's that?" the patient Adam, trying to saw enough kitchen wood to last over Sunday, with a piece of flint, would have to pause and gather up words enough to say:

"That, my son? That is only a mastodon giganteus; he has a bad look, but a Christian temper."

And then, presently:

"Oh, pop! pop! What's that over you?"

"Oh, bother," Adam would reply; "it's only a paleotherium, mammalia pachydermata."

"Oh, yes; theliocomeafterus. Oh! lookee, lookee at this 'un!"

"Where, Cainny? Oh, that in the mud? That's only an acephalia lamelli branchiata. It won't bite you, but you musn't eat it. It's poison as politics."

"Whee! See there! see, see, see! What's him?"

"Oh, that? Looks like a plesiosaurus; keep out of his way; he has a jaw like your mother."

"Oh yes; a plesiosserus. And what's that fellow, poppy?"

"That's a silurus malapterus. Don't you go near him, for he has the disposition of a Georgia mule."

"Oh, yes; a slapterus. And what's this little one?"

"Oh, it's nothing but an aristolochoiid. Where did you get it? There now, quit throwing stones at that acanthopterygian; do you want to be kicked? And keep away from the nothodenatrichomanoides. My stars, Eve! where *did* he get that anonaceo-hydrocharideo-nymphaeid? Do you never look after him at all? Here, you Cain, get right away down from there, and chase that megalosaurius out of the melon patch, or I'll set the monopleuro branchian on you."

Just think of it, Christian man with a family to support, with last year's stock on your shelves, and a draft as long as a clothes-line to pay to-morrow! Think of it, woman with all a woman's love and constancy, and a woman's sympathetic nature, with three meals a day 365 times a year to think of, and the flies to chase out of the sitting-room; think, if your cherub boy was the only boy in the wide wide world, and all his questions which now radiate in a thousand directions among other boys, who tell him lies and help him to cut his eye-teeth, were focused upon! Adam had only one consolation that has been denied his more remote descendants. His boy never belonged to a base ball club, and never teased his father from the first of November till the last of March for a pair of skates.

Well, you have no time to pity Adam. You have your own boy to look after. Or, your neighbour has a boy, whom you can look after much more closely than his mother does, and much more to your own satisfaction than to the boy's comfort. Your boy is, as Adam's boy was, an animal that asks questions. If there were any truth in the old theory of the transmigration of souls, when a boy died he would pass into an interrogation point. And he'd stay there. He'd never get out of it; for he never gets through asking questions. The older he grows the more he asks, and the more perplexing his questions are, and the more unreasonable he is about wanting them answered to suit himself. Why, the oldest boy I ever knew—he was fifty-seven years old, and I went to school to him—could and did ask the longest, hardest, crookedest questions, that no fellow, who used to trade of all his books for a pair of skates and a knife with a corkscrew in it, could answer. And when his questions were not answered to suit him, it was his custom—a custom more honoured in the breeches, we used to think, than in the observance—to take up a long, slender, but exceedingly tenacious rod, which lay ever near the big dictionary, and smite with it the boy whose naturally derived Adamite ignorance was made manifest. Ah me, if the boy could only do as he is done by, and ferule the man or woman who fails to reply to his inquiries, as he is himself corrected for similar shortcomings, what a valley of tears, what a literally howling wilderness he could and would make of this world.

Your boy, asking to-day pretty much the same questions, with heaven knows how many additional ones, that Adam's boy did, is told every time he asks one that you don't know anything about, just as Adam told Cain fifty times a day, that he will know all