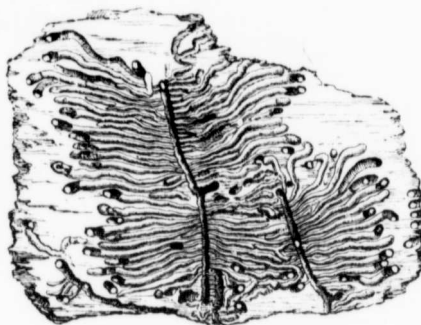


I pick up flint ventriculites in my garden amongst other stones lying on the surface of the ground, and this fact, taken in connection with the existence of our rounded pebbles, shows that in early days the sea must have rolled over this part of Middlesex, although now it is the highest ground all round London.

Another proof of this fact was afforded by our finding a fossil crab, which was discovered about ten feet below the surface by some men who were digging a well.

ASH-BARK BEETLE (*Scolytus*).

A piece of bark has fallen off an old gate-post and has revealed some markings on the wood beneath. These I find are the work of a small beetle which burrows under the bark of the ash-tree and there lays her eggs. When the grubs come out each one lives and works in its own little tunnel, eating



SCOLYTUS BORINGS.

the wood as it goes along until it is full grown and changes into a pupa and eventually into a perfect beetle, when it gnaws its way out leaving a small round hole at the end of the tunnel.

An allied species does grievous damage to elm timber; whole forests are sometimes destroyed by this apparently insignificant insect.

The beetle bores into the tree-stem, makes a central gallery, and from it she bores small side galleries with wonderful regularity side by side, and at the end of each of these alleys she lays an egg; and when the larvæ are hatched they gnaw the wood in a straight line, always enlarging the gallery as they themselves grow bigger, so that the result upon the wood is a curiously symmetrical pattern.

Other beetles make curved galleries of intricate design, of which I have several specimens resembling delicate wood carvings.

IN THE TWILIGHT SIDE BY SIDE.

(SECOND SERIES.)

By RUTH LAMB.

PART I. BESSETTING SINS.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. xvi. 32).



W parted only a month ago, my dear girls, after having gone the round of the year together, and we carried with us pleasant memories of our many meetings. But we lingered a little over our farewell words, through which ran a note of sadness, since we did not then look forward to meeting again in the same way.

You know how sorry I was to say good-bye to you all, and, judging from your letters, I know that many of you shared in the regret I felt. Then there came to me a welcome message from our dear editor, your true friend and mine, who was the first to suggest our sitting together, "In the Twilight Side by Side." "Will you not go on with the Twilight Talks next year?" he asked. "The dear girls would be indeed sad if they were discontinued."

How can I express the pleasure these words gave me? It was the greater, because I knew how impossible it had been for us to touch

upon all the subjects we wished to talk about, and many dear girls had written to ask for advice after our last year's round had been completed.

Do you not feel with me that it will be even more delightful to resume our talks, than it was to begin them in the first instance?

We meet as old friends, and yet, I trust, with many additions to our number. Those who enjoyed our talks last year, will bring others to share in them all through the current one. Our timid members will have gained confidence by experience, and will not hesitate to speak of their trials, their efforts, their discouragements or successes; for they will be sure of sympathy.

We shall all be more anxious to help each other, for, if our gatherings have really been the means of sowing good seed in young hearts, a grand harvest will be the result. Each of us will feel, that whatever our portion and position in this life, there is not one but has something to spare which will benefit her neighbour, if it be passed on at the right moment.

A pressure from a kind hand may give strength, a loving look may be more eloquent than speech, and tell of tenderest sympathy. A whispered word in season may prevent a rash act, or a hasty expression which, if uttered, would have separated "very friends." Only, my dear ones, you, who give of these things which, in a sense, cost nothing, but which are not to be bought with money, must have in your hearts love both to God and your neighbour.

The recipient of any token of sympathy must be able to realise that it comes straight from the heart of a faithful friend. The word in season must be uttered in a soft voice, and reach only the one ear, so that it may inflict no wound in passing, and leave no sting behind it.

Now, dear girls, let me tell you that the subject of our talk this evening has been suggested by one of yourselves. I do not know her name, her dwelling, or anything about her position in life, and I never expect to be better informed on these subjects. But, in a very sweet and touching letter, she has given me a glimpse of her inner self.

She tells me how she has looked forward to and enjoyed our Twilight Talks, and I am sure too, that, like myself, she has found them profitable, but she wants them to be still more so. She has been struggling daily, but thus far in vain, to conquer a hasty temper which leads her to say sharp words.

Doubtless, they wound others, but none more than herself—afterwards. She grieves over her failures, and longs to conquer this besetting sin, and to be an example of kindness, patience, and forbearance to the younger members of her family who are, I fear, partly to blame. Knowing the weak place in their sister's armour, they aim sharp arrows at it, in the shape of provoking words.

If any of you who are with me this evening are in the habit of using such weapons, I beg of you to pause and think of the harm you do, and lay them aside once and for all.

It is a precious privilege of God's children to help each other on the heavenward way, and this is what my dear girl correspondent asks of us to-night. Our talk is to be on the subject of "getting angry about little things," hence the text I have already quoted. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

I am sure many of us could truthfully conclude a letter in the words which so went to my heart, as I read them at the close of the one alluded to. "From one who tries, but fails to be kind, pitiful and courteous."

Perhaps we could not all write those first words truthfully. There are many who are conscious of a fault, yet make no effort to overcome it. Something is gained when we can honestly say: "I try."

Then comes the question, "If you are indeed fighting against a foe whose strength you acknowledge, how have you prepared yourself for the contest?"

The soldier does not go into battle unarmed, or his life would be thrown away. He would neither win honour for himself nor be of service to his country. Much training and discipline are needed. He must learn patience, submission, obedience, watchfulness and he must trust his leader implicitly. His ear must be intent to catch the word of command, and, when his captain leads, he must follow without