

philosopher has truly said: "Cowards die a hundred times, the valiant die but once."

This habit of embittering the present, and filling the future with the grim spectres of melancholy and despair, is as sinful as it is unfortunate. It implies a want of trust in Him who always tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and will with every temptation provide also a way of escape.

Let those of us who are addicted to this habit, see to it that we do not sadden our lives, and rob them of half their sweetness by home-made troubles.

HOME-MADE GAMES.

Boys do not like fun ready-made; they like to manufacture it.

I visited a family who were supplied with boards and nails, saw and hatchet. It was astonishing to see how little it took to make them contented—and not only they, but the playmates who invariably flocked there. Some mothers would prefer less attractions. They would assume the risk of their children being injured morally, by playing elsewhere, rather than have the noise, and "things at loose ends."

In the yard where these boys lived, there was a large tree. From one of the limbs they suspended a ball (an old croquet-ball) by a small rope. They made a platform about two yards square, and with black paint marked spots to place the pins. The ten wooden pins were about a foot in length. A space was left (a foot) on each side of the platform. Four dots on the back, three in front of them (in front of the spaces), then two, then one.

The ball must be hung just low enough to hit the pins. Stand as far back from the platform as the rope will allow, then drop the ball and knock down the pins. Each one can try three times. The boys made a black-board, crossed and re-crossed it with white paint, and nailed it to the tree "to keep tally." I noticed a block of wood, with a piece of sheep-skin (fleece on) nailed on, hanging near the black-board to erase chalk marks. The idea was not original, perhaps, but as it was the only home-made game of the kind I had ever seen, I thought it might be new to many of your readers.

Besides the "ten-pin" game, these boys had two swings, one above the other. I call them swings, although there was very old-fashioned swinging done by the boys. The ropes were large, with an iron rod fastened securely across the bottom. They made a large bag, filled it with straw, and kept it under the swing, "in case they did what they did not intend to."

At first I held my breath in suspense when I saw them perform their various antics, but I soon began to enjoy it, as they invariably came "right side up."

There was a nice tent in the yard. It was *the* place for the family to gather after-noon. The tent did not cost thirty dollars (more or less), perhaps not three; and yet it was commodious and tasteful.

The boys bought (boys should be allowed a little "pin money," not *too much*) some coarse cotton, cut and made it, and put it up—a surprise to their parents. How those boys managed to sew the seams, I don't know. *I do* know they did not rip.

They could take the tent down, and put it up again with ease at a minute's notice—a feat they exhibited with pride. An old lounge and rocking-chair furnished the tent. Those were for father and mother, and friends. The ground suited the boys best.

They considered their tent a success, indeed, when "Uncle John" came from Florida to visit them. For they often found him sitting in the tent—the *act* telling his appreciation.

There was a croquet-set in the garden; *that* was not home-made. Every family should own one, however.

I wondered then and now why every family did not have more games upon their own premises. Some parents do not encourage them; I fear *that* solves the mystery.

It was not "all play" with those boys, neither did the parents mean it should be "all work."

They had their regular work out of school. They brought in wood, worked in the garden, watered and fed the horse and cow, and fed and watered the hens, too. They owned the hens; they bought grain for them, and had all they could make (one way to get "pin-money") from eggs. They worked as they played—with a will. Healthier, happier boys, I never saw.

How they seemed to enjoy my visit. *They* did not know the reason, but *I* did. The reason was this: they tried to make me happy. In fact, they always had in mind with everybody—at least, it seemed so to me.—*Select-ed.*

PARLOR GARDENING.

A hanging-basket or stand of plants has come to be an important matter of parlor furnishing. It is cheering to see how within the past few years the love of these simple natural decorations has increased, and to witness how they transform an otherwise sombre and formal apartment into a pleasant, home-like place.

In October preparations for parlor gardening should be completed. Plants will suffer after the weather becomes wintry by transportation in the open air; and it is better, also, that they should become accustomed to the air of the room which is to be their home while more fresh air can be