

The Sailor Fish.

In the warm waters of the Indian Ocean a strange mariner is found that has given rise to many curious tales among the natives on the coast thereabout. They tell of a wonderful sail often seen in the calm seasons preceding the terrible hurricanes that course over those waters. Not a breath then disturbs the water, the sea rises and falls like a vast sheet of glass; suddenly the sail appears, glistening with rich purple and golden hues, and seemingly driven along by a mighty wind. On it comes, quivering and sparkling, as if bedecked with gems, but only to disappear as if by magic.

Many travellers had heard with unbelief this strange tale; but one day the phantom craft actually appeared to the crew of an Indian steamer, and as it passed by under the stern of the vessel the queer sail was seen to belong to a gigantic sword-fish, now known as the sailor fish. The sail was really an enormously developed dorsal fin that was over ten feet high, and was richly colored with blue and iridescent tints; and as the fish swam along on or near the surface of the water, this great fin naturally waved to and fro, so that from a distance it could easily be mistaken for a curious sail.

Some of these fishes attain a length of over twenty feet, and have large crescent shaped tails and long, sword like snouts, capable of doing great damage.

In the Mediterranean Sea a sword-fish is found that also has a high fin, but it does not equal the great sword-fish of the Indian Ocean.—St. Nicholas.

A Child's Definition of Backsliding.

A definition of a backslider, given by a little girl, is told in The Home Magazine. A minister's little girl and her playmate were talking:

"Do you know what a backslider is?" the former questioned.

"Yes, it's a person that used to be a Christian and isn't," said the playmate promptly.

"But what do you suppose makes them call them backsliders?"

"Oh, you see, when people are good they go to church and sit up in front. When they get a little tired of being good they slide back a seat, and keep on sliding till they get clear back to the door. After a while they slide clear out and never come to church at all."

The Unenlightened Goat.—"Oh, my dear daughter" (to a little girl of six), "you should not be frightened and run from the goat. Don't you know you are a Christian scientist?" "But, mamma" (excitedly), "the billy goat don't know it."—Ex.

Going to Grandmother.

By Charlotte Jobling.

Grandmother loved me, mother,
When I was ever so small;
How I wish she had lived to see me
Growing up strong and tall.
For, now I am going to die, mother,
It seems such a pity, you see,
That I shall not know grandmother,
And grandmother can't know me.

When I am awake at night, mother,
And lying here calm and still,
I wonder if grandmother knows, mother,
Her pet is so very ill.
Does she wonder, as I do often,
How long the time will be,
And if I shall know grandmother,
And if grandmother will know me.

I think she'll be very glad, mother,
To see the Baby again,
And to hear all that I can tell her
Has happened to us since then.
But I think, withall she'll be sorry—
As sorry as you will be—
To know I have left you, mother,
Though grandmother does love me.

I will tell her of Lily and Rosie,
Our little twin baby girls;
And Reginald's beautiful eyes, mother,
And Geraldine's golden curls.
How Willie will go for a soldier,
And Jack will a sailor be—
But how if I don't know grandmother,
And grandmother can't know me?

That grandfather lives with us now,
I'm sure she'll be glad to hear;
And how we all love him fondly,
Because he's so kind and dear.
And the beautiful long-tailed pony—
But, no! not that; for, you see,
'Twas a fall from grandfather's pony—
The fall that is killing me!

There's heaps and heaps I can tell her
When that happy home I reach;
And I'll take her a fond, fond kiss, mother,
With a loving message from each
And God, who knows all our thoughts,
mother,
Will help me, I know, for He
Will know how I love grandmother,
And how grandmother loves me.

No Ugliness in Nature.

No natural object can be ugly, repulsive, uninteresting, or unentertaining, if we see it as it is, and have knowledge of its place and purpose. It may lack what artists call the elements of grace; its colors may be dingy; but then how soon we tire of too pronounced brilliancy. The ugliest weed, on the other hand, is not always ugly. Think of the brilliant beetle or gay butterfly that may rest upon it. A turtle rooting in the mud of a ditch, itself the color of the soiled water that surrounds it, is so beautifully adapted to its home and habits that we forget the lack of pleasing color and are impressed with the more suggestive beauty of adaptation. We must centre a thought upon the object before us—a serious, prolonged, truth-desiring thought—and then, and then only will the symmetry of nature's handiwork become apparent. Such a recognition on our part repays us as fully as floods of color delight the unthinking eye.—Lippincott's.

The Right Brain Stimulant.

The Medical Journal refuses to accept the superstition that alcohol is any help to a tired brain. On the contrary, it says:

"The best possible thing a man can do when he feels too weak to carry anything through is to go to bed and sleep as long as he can. This is the only recuperation of brain force; because during sleep the brain is in a state of rest, in a condition to receive and appropriate particles of nutriment from the blood, which take the place of those which have been consumed by previous labor, since the very act of thinking burns up solid particles, as every turn of the wheel or screw of the steamer is the result of consumption by fire of the fuel in the furnace. The supply of consumed brain substance can only be had from the nutritive particles in the blood, which were obtained from the food eaten previously; and the brain is so constituted that it can best receive and appropriate to itself those nutritive particles during the state of rest, of quiet, and stillness of sleep. Mere stimulants supply nothing in themselves; they goad the brain, force it to a greater consumption of its substance. until it is so exhausted that there is not power enough left to receive a supply."

I stood a while ago and looked at a drinking fountain. A marble angel, beautifully sculptured, stood pointing to heaven. Then came polished granite inscribed with gilt letters and massive slabs of stone. But I noticed that the water came through a small brass pipe, and the people drank from an iron cup attached to an iron chain. And the marble angel pointing heavenward would have done nobody any good but for the brass pipe and iron cup.

Think if the pipe had said, "If they do not make me of gold, I will not be long to the thing." Or if the cup had said, "I must be of silver, or I shall be ashamed to be there at all."

No, I thought I heard the music of the three—common water, common pipe, common cup. "Well," Jey sang, "they can't do without us, and we must do our part along with the marble angel and the polished granite."—Mark Guy Pearce.

A girl never marries her ideal. One reason is that she seldom finds him, and when she does she doesn't like him. Another reason is, the material man is so dreadfully unlike the one of her imagination.

"Happy is the bride the sun shines on," is the saying in this country, but a Breton bride rather likes to have a wet wedding; it is to signify that all her tears are now shed, and that she will, therefore, have a happy married life.

Lord Overtown claims that Glasgow is in the forefront of great cities in the number of earnest Christian workers.