

Mercury is the wind who blows away the clouds and then dies down into a gentle little breeze. Goethe's ballad, *The Erlking*, which may be read in Scott's translation, tells how the wind steals away the soul of the child. The fact of the stolen things following the piper, instead of being driven before him, may be compared with the common idea of little children that the trees make the wind.

The whole of Browning's poem is not given in the reader. The conclusion runs thus:—

"Alas, alas, for Hamelin!
There came into many a burgher's pate
A text which says that heaven's gate
Opens to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in!
The mayor sent east, west, north and south,
To offer the piper, by word of mouth,
Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavour,
And piper and dancers were gone forever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
'And so long after what happened here
On the twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six.'
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it the Pied Piper's street—
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern,
To shock with mirth a street so solemn;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away.
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people who ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterranean prison,
Into which they were trepanned
Long ago, in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why, they don't understand."

So, Willy, let you and me be wipers
Of scores out with all men, especially pipers;

And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,

If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise!
The poem calls for very spirited reading. The children will notice the funny rhymes, and the fitting of sound to sense, especially in the passages beginning

"And the muttering grew to a grumbling."
and,

"There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling."

The latter passage should be memorized. The prose story may be read to the children, and they should tell what the poet has added in his version. Good subjects for writing upon are "What the Piper looked like," "What the Rat Heard," "The Lame Boy's Vision," "The Plague of Hamelin."

Words and phrases needing explanation:

Guilder.—A Dutch coin, worth twenty *stivers*, or about thirty-eight cents.

Kith and Kin.—Intimate acquaintance and relationship. *Kith*, an obsolete word meaning acquaintance, is now used only in this expression.

Admire.—"And nobody could enough *admire* The tall man and his quaint attire."

Here *admire* means to wonder at.

Train-oil.—Oil from the blubber of whales.

Drysaltery.—A storehouse for dried and salted meats, etc.

Nuncheon.—Luncheon.

Julius Caesar.—The reference is to a story that the famous Roman general, having to swim across a river, held the manuscript of his history of the Gallic Wars (called the *Commentaries*) above his head with one hand to keep it dry.

Cham.—Pronounced *Kam*. The ruler of Tartary, or land of the Tartars, a group of tribes in the north and northeast of Asia.

Nizam.—The ruler of Hyderabad, a state in India.

Caliph.—The ruler of Bagdad, the seat of the Mohammedan empire, in south-western Asia.

A new school building is to be erected on Hester street, in New York, which will be the biggest in the world. It will occupy a ground space of 75 by 200 feet, and be six storeys above ground, besides a basement and sub-cellar. A hall seating 1,600 will be located in the basement, and altogether the building will accommodate 4,500 pupils. There will be 124 separate class-rooms, and on the top floor will be a gymnasium, kitchen, work-shop, baths, etc. This will be the first school building in New York to have elevators.

In the stock market the "bulls" are those that have something to sell and are anxious for prices to go up; the "bears" are those that want to buy or for some other reason want to see quotations go down.