

THE TOAD ADMITS REPAST.

Few of our readers, most probably, have ever observed the toad at his repast. It is performed with electric rapidity, and with more than telegraphic precision. The tongue is doubled back upon itself, and is tipped with a glutinous secretion. The moment the beetle comes within range, the tongue is shot forth with unerring aim, and, quick as lightning, the captive is withdrawn. They are invaluable in a garden. Mr. Jesse, in his gleanings, complains of gardeners destroying them, of savagely cutting them in two with their spades.—We hope not. Horticulturists of such "gross ignorance" ought themselves to be extirpated. The beauty and vigor of our flower-borders we have long ascribed, in a measure, to a select family of toads, which we tenderly protect, and some of which have now reached a patriarchal age. Mr. Jesse mentions that Mr. Knight, the eminent nurseryman, keeps a large number of toads in his stoves, for the purpose of destroying the woodlice that infests his plants, and that they do not seem at all affected by the heat, even when it reaches 130 degrees. We are surprised at this statement, which does not agree with our observation. We have observed that the toad in very hot weather seeks shelter under foliage, or buries himself amongst the soft mould. In the evening he emerges from his concealment, and no doubt then employs his protusile tongue.

Mr. Buckland mentions a curious use of toads. They are employed as insect-traps. A brigade of marauding toads are conducted the into garden in the evening. They make a famous supper, but in the morning their entomological employer, by a gentle squeeze, compels them to disgorge their evening meal, and in this way many curious and rare specimens of rare and minute nocturnal insects have been obtained. "There is just now," says Mr. Buckland, "a plague of ants in many of the London houses, which defy extermination. I strongly recommend those who are troubled with these plagues to try whether a toad or two won't help them." Most certainly. They clean upon frames of these insects, and why should they not perform the same friendly office in the drawing-rooms of London citizens?—Nothing but ignorant prejudices can prevent the adopting of the excellent suggestion. And yet the prejudice exists, and they are a loathed species. Toads, time immemorial, have been persecuted by school-boys, and you cannot wonder

through a village on a summer day without seeing defunct and flattened specimens of these unoffending creatures. Innocent of literature, it would be tracing the cruelty of the urehins to too high a source to ascribe into the "ugly and venomous" toad of Shakspeare, or the yet more odious imagery of Milton. And yet from the erroneous natural history of the two great national poets, the idea may have originated, and thus handed down from one race of school-boys to another.

While toads are not truly venomous, and lack the specific apparatus for producing venom which really venomous reptiles are endowed with, there is an irritant secretion in the glands of their skin which is more or less injurious. When a dog seizes a toad, this glandular fluid is squirted out, and his tongue and lips are burned, as with a strong acid.

The metamorphosis which frogs and toads undergo is complete and remarkable. In their tadpole condition the respiration is performed by gills, and is aquatic. In their adult state their gills are converted into true lungs, and can breathe atmospheric air alone. The spawn of frogs and toads is very distinguishable. The spawn of the former is found distributed through the whole mass of jelly, while that of the latter is seen arranged in long strings, and generally in double rows.—"Curiosities of Natural History," in *Blackwood*.

A man's force in the world, other things being equal, is just in the ratio of the force and strength of his heart. A full-hearted man is always a powerful man; if he be erroneous, then he is powerful for error; if the thing is in his heart he is sure to make it notorious, even though it may be a downright falsehood. Let a man be ever so ignorant, still if his heart be full of love to the cause, he becomes a powerful man for that object, because he has a heart-power, heart-force. A man may be deficient in many of the advantages of education, in many of those niceties which are so much looked upon in society; but once give him a strong heart that beats hard, and there is no mistake about his power. Let him have a heart that is right full up to the brim with an object, and that man will do the thing, or else he will die gloriously defeated, and will glory in his defeat. Heart is power.—*Spurgeon*.

This is certain, that a man that studi-
ously keeps his own wounds green,
which otherwise would heal and do well,

HOW SHALL WE MAKE GOOD READERS.

This is an important question, and should engage the fixed thought of all workers upon minds. A good reader commands the undivided attention of all listeners. But how rare is such a treat? To what shall we attribute the cause of so few good readers? We answer, that it is for the want of proper discipline of the voice, "that most wonderful of all instruments."

As teachers, we hasten over the elementary basis, so essential to make good readers, to repeat words, words, as though that was the key to attain what we so much desire. Pupils need to be drilled for weeks upon the elements, so that the organs of speech will perform involuntarily almost, the slightest elemental sound in articulation. If beginners begin regularly in the elements, articulation would be nearly faultless. A faulty articulation cannot be overcome, except by a daily discipline in the utterance of the elemental sounds. Vocal gymnastics, as a regular exercise, will not only secure a good articulation, but help to develop the physical structure, so important to the well-being of the child. The teacher should start with the monotone, or "re-lying in a horizontal line." When that is thoroughly mastered, then the shades of the voice will naturally follow, and all errors are quickly detected. Then *accent, emphasis, modulation, and pitch* of voice, with their various examples illustrative of each, will succeed each other legitimately. Difficult consonant combinations, and sentences of like character, should be repeated with every exercise, for this is not the production of an hour, a day, or a month; but the work of successive months and years, and will ultimately produce glorious results. The teacher should give interest to every exercise. He should be able to re-create into life each day, what most teachers consider a *dry, dull* and monotonous task. So it will be when the teacher fails to thrill the learner with the importance of the subject, and evidence the same, all over his own being. From his heart to the heart of his pupils the telegraph must be established, and among the unseen wires, such communications must pass as will make teacher and scholar a unit.—Then progress will be attained, and good readers an inevitable result.—*New York Teacher*.

It is true greatness to have in one the frailty of a man, and the security of a God.