

For Friday Afternoons.**The Puzzle Column.**(Selected from the *Woman's Home Companion*).**Studies in Botany.**

Here are some elementary questions which will interest the botanical class of students, who, if they feel so disposed, might contribute a few similar queries of their own:

- Which is the most comfortable tree in winter?
- What tree prefers the ocean?
- Which is the most melancholy tree?
- Which tree is useful to the mason?
- Which tree would you term the dandified tree?
- Which trees go in couples?
- Which tree is a person?
- Which is the most active vine?
- Which is the most venomous flower?
- Which vegetable is dangerous to a boat?
- What tree is always in debt?
- What plants are used on railroads?
- What is a good protection against thieves?
- Which plants follow cats?
- Which is the homeliest tree?
- Which is the shoemaker's tree?
- Which plant is always angry?

A Quaint Old Rebus.

I'm a strange contradiction: I'm new and I'm old,
I'm sometimes in tatters and sometimes in gold;
Though I never could read, yet lettered I'm found,
Though blind, I enlighten, though free, I am bound;
I'm English, I'm German, I'm French, and I'm Dutch,
Some love me too dearly, some slight me too much;
I often die young, though sometimes live ages,
And no queen is attended by so many pages.

Industrious William.

A traveller trying to reform a lazy fellow with an aversion to labour, recounts his discomfiture as follows:

"I asked Bill if he wanted to work, and he asked, 'Why should I work?' 'To earn money,' I replied. 'What's the use of earning money?' he said. 'To save it up,' I replied. 'But what do I want to save money for?' he asked. 'So that when you grow old you can rest,' says I. 'But I am growing old as fast as I wish now,' says he, 'and what's the use of working to rest when I can begin to rest right now?' I failed to convince him, but I got him to contract to just try for thirty days at sixteen shillings a day, but stipulated that he would forfeit twenty shillings for every day he idled. At the end of the month neither owed the other anything, which convinced Bill of the folly of labour."

And right here comes a very pretty problem such as those who solve puzzles love to tackle:

Can you tell just how many days Bill worked?

(Answers next or the following month).

Bright Birds.

(Three little girls wearing colours, blue, red, yellow.
A boy personates the crow).

I am a bluebird; on branches bare
I love to swing like a blossom fair,
And sing to people tired of snow
The prettiest songs of spring I know.

I am a robin "To wurtle, tu whit!"
Do I mind the cold weather? no, not a bit;
Gayly I'll carol and loudly shout
Till I coax the leaves and blossoms out.

My colour is like the buttercups;
I love to dance where the wild bee sups,
I know I've not much of a voice to sing,
But I carry a sunbeam on either wing.

I'm a jolly old crow, I'd have you know,
I've sung ever since I was born;
And as for farming, I can beat
The smartest at hoeing corn;
You don't think much of my music?
That's as much as some people know.
What sound is there in this noisy world
So sweet as the song of a crow?

Caw, caw, caw.

—Annie Chase, in *American Primary Teacher*.

Song of the Grass Blades.

Peeping, peeping, here and there,
In lawns and meadows everywhere,
Coming up to find the spring,
And hear the robin redbreast sing.
Creeping under children's feet,
Glancing at the violets sweet;
Growing into tiny bowers,
For the dainty meadow flowers.
We are small, but think a minute
Of a world with no grass in it.

—Selected.

Foreign Lands.

Up into the cherry tree
Who should climb but little me?
I held the trunk with both my hands
And looked abroad on foreign lands.

I saw the next door garden lie,
Adorned with flowers before my eye,
And many pleasant places more
That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass
And be the sky's blue looking-glass;
The dusty roads go up and down
With people tramping into town.

—Robert Louis Stevenson.