



OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Edited by Cousin Maud.

I WAS calling upon two old ladies, sisters, one day not long ago, who live together in a cozy little home. Before I finished my call, as usual, the conversation turned upon the weather. They found the winter "so tedious" they told me and longed for the warm days again.

"Winter will soon be over," I cheerfully remarked. "next week will bring the first spring month."

"Spring," echoed one in dismay, "why March is the most disagreeable month of the year."

"How I dread March," said the other, "the cold raw winds, ugh, I can almost feel them now! How they penetrate every corner!" and she drew her fleecy wraps more closely together and looked miserable in anticipation.

I said a few kind words in favor of this poor abused month; spoke of it as a time of promise; hinted at it being only the short darkness before the dawn of the fairest season of the year, and rose to take my leave.

That evening as I sat beside my own bright grate fire I fell to musing.

I was thinking of the good time folks wasted in grumbling about the weather; thinking of a saying I had often heard from a dear old friend: "That if people had the making of it we should have queer weather."

Years ago she had cured me of this bad habit of grumbling. I had said to her one very disagreeable, rainy day, "What a dreadful day!" and her quiet remark "I am thankful for any, my child," taught a lesson not yet forgotten.

As I sat thus, thinking and watching the bright coals that evening, the Brownies, or somebody as mysterious, brought me this little fancy, and I will tell it to you, my dear children:

Mother Year stood in the midst of her ten children. Two others, her eldest sons, January and February, she had sent to earth in the fall, and now it was about time for noisy, boisterous March to go.

He had packed his thirty-one days and strapped them across his sturdy shoulders and looked eager for his journey. His mother was speaking to him these parting words, "You have the hardest mission of all, my son, the great piles of snow still lay thick upon earth, these have all to be melted away, and it will take days and days of wind and rain to do this, and soften and cleanse the frost-bound soil underneath. You will often feel discouraged, for when you have everything in good order and your days grow bright and mild as April, that little rogue Jack Frost will come along and freeze up tight again the brooklets you have set so merrily running, or a great snow storm will rage and partly undo your hard work."

"The earth folk will not be glad to see you, even if you start off with some of your warmest days, you will hear on one side 'March has come in like a lamb but he will go out like a lion,' or 'it is lovely weather but we'll pay for this.'"

"The people will grumble, my son, but the trees and the little flower roots will welcome you, for they know more than most men that without your snowing and blowing the warm sun of April might shine in rain."

"But, mother," protested March, with a troubled look, "why could I not accomplish all this work with sunny days, and warm winds and soft rains?"

"My boy," said Mother Year, "these things

are ordered aright. Were you to go to the earth in the way you say the flowers and fruit blossoms would be tempted out before their time, Jack Frost would pounce upon them and think of the result.

"Go my son, brave March, so long as you do your duty, the opinion of the world matters little."

COUSIN MAUD.

Children's Games of Fifty Years Ago.

By Mrs. Wheeler.

LADY QUEEN ANNE.

WE will imagine five little girls engaged in this play, and their names may be Fanny, Lucy, Mary, Ellen and Jane. A ball or pin-cushion or something of the kind having been procured, Fanny leaves the room or hides her face in a corner that she may not see what is going on, while her companions range themselves in a row; each concealing both hands under her frock or apron. The ball has been given to Ellen, but all the others must likewise keep their hands, under cover, as if they had it. When all is ready, Fanny is desired to come forward, and advancing in front of the row, she addresses anyone she pleases, for instance, Lucy, in the following words:—

"Lady Queen Anne she sits in the sun
As fair as a lily, as brown as a bun,
She sends you three letters, and prays you'll read one."

LUCY. "I cannot read one
Unless I read all."

FANNY. "Then, pray, Miss Lucy
Deliver the ball."

Lucy, not being the one who has the ball, displays her empty hands; and Fanny finding that she has guessed wrong retires, and comes back again as soon as she is called. She then addresses Mary in the same words, "Lady Queen Anne, etc.," but she is still mistaken, as Mary has not the ball.

Next time Fanny accosts Ellen, and finds she is now right; Ellen producing the ball from under her apron.

Ellen now goes out, and Fanny takes her place in the row. Sometimes the real holder of the ball happens to be the first person addressed.

BUFF SAYS BUFF TO ALL HIS MEN.

This game, like many others, is merely a way of collecting forfeits. The company are seated in a circle; one holds a little stick in her hand, and says:—

Buff says buff to all his men,
And I say buff to you again;
Buff neither laughs nor smiles,
But carries his face
With a very good grace,
And passes his stick to the very next place."

As she concludes she holds the stick to the one next her, who takes it and repeats the same, and so on in succession. Those who laugh or smile while saying it must pay a forfeit.

THE BELLS OF LONDON.

This should be played in a field or in some place where there is no danger of being hurt by falling.

The two tallest of the company join their hands and raise them high above their heads, while the others, each folding the skirt of the one before her, walk under in procession. The two that are holding up their hands sing the following rhymes:—

Oranges and lemons,
Say the bells of St. Clement's;
Brickdust and tiles,
Say the bells of St. Giles;
You owe me five farthings
Say the bells of St. Martin's;

When will you pay me?
Say the bells of Old Bailey;
When I grow rich,
Say the bells of Shoreditch;
When will that be?
Say the bells of Stepney;
I do not know,
Says the great bell of Bow."

At the last line they suddenly lower their arms, and endeavor to catch one of those that are passing under. Having each previously fixed on a name, for instance, one Nutmeg, the other Cinnamon, they ask their captive, which she chooses, Nutmeg or Cinnamon. Accordingly she answers, she is put behind one or the other. When all have been caught and placed behind, those at each end join hands, so as to encircle the two in the middle; and they must wind round them till they get closer and closer. The rhyme, "Oranges and lemons, etc.," is then repeated; and at the words, "Great bell of Bow," those in the centre must give a sudden push, and extricate themselves by throwing down all the rest.

THE PRUSSIAN EXERCISE.

All the children kneel down in a row, except one who personates the captain, and who ought to be a smart girl, and well acquainted with the play, which is more diverting when all the others are ignorant of it, except the one at the head of the line. If the corporal, as this one is called, does not know the play, the captain must take her aside and inform her of the manner of concluding it.

When all are ready, the captain stands in front of the line, and gives the word of command, telling them always to do something that has a diverting or ludicrous effect when done by the whole company at the same moment.

For instance: the captain gives the word to cough, and they must all cough as loudly as possible. They may be ordered to pull their own hair; to pull their own noses; to slap their own cheeks; to clap their hands together; to laugh; or do any ridiculous thing.

All, however, must be done at once, and by the whole line, the corporal setting the example. Finally the captain orders them to "present." Each then projects forward one arm, holding it out straight before her. The next command is to "fire." Upon which the corporal gives her next neighbor a sudden push, which causes her to fall against the next, and in this manner the whole line is thrown down side-ways, one tumbling on another. This is rather a boisterous play, but it can be made very laughable, and there need be no fear of the children getting hurt if they play on the grass, or in a hay-field, or if they take the precaution of laying cushions, pillows, or something soft at the end of the line, to receive the one who falls last; she being in the most danger.

THE LAWYER.

This must be played by an odd number, as seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, that there may be one to personate the lawyer after all the others have arranged themselves in pairs.

The company must be seated in two rows, facing each other, each girl taking for a partner the one opposite. She who performs the lawyer walks slowly between the lines, addressing a question to whichever she pleases. This question must not be answered by the one to whom it is addressed, but the reply must be made by her partner. If she inadvertently answers for herself, she must pay a forfeit; so also must her partner, if she forgets or neglects to answer for her companion.

