

WHAT THE BURDOCK WAS GOOD FOR.

"Good for nothing the farmer said,
As he made a sweep at the burdock's head ;
But then, he thought, it was best no doubt,
To come some day and root it out.
So he lowered his scythe, and went his way,
To see his corn, to gather his hay ;
And the weed grew safe and strong and tall,
Close by the side of the garden wall.

"Good for a home," cried the little toad,
As he hopped up out of the dusty road ;
He had just been having a dreadful fright—
The boy who gave it was yet in sight.
Here it was cool and dark and green,
The safest kind of a leafy screen ;
The toad was happy : "For," said he,
"The burdock was plainly meant for me."

"Good for a prop," the spider thought,
And to and fro with care he wrought,
Till he fastened it well to the evergreen,
And spun his cables fine between.
'Twas a beautiful bridge—a triumph of skill ;
The flies came round, as idlers will ;
The spider lurked in his corner dim,
The more that came, the better for him.

"Good for play," said a child perplexed
To know what frolic was coming next ;
So she gathered the burrs that all despised,
And her city playmate was quite surprised
To see what a beautiful basket or chair
Could be made, with a little time and care,
They ranged their treasures about with pride,
And played all day by the burdock's side.

Nothing is lost in this world of ours ;
Honey comes from the idle flowers ;
The weed which we pass in utter scorn,
May save a life by another morn.
Wonders await us at every turn,
We must be silent, and gladly learn,
No room for recklessness or abuse
Since even a burdock has its use.

—St. Nicholas.

MRS. HOMESPUN, who has a terrible time every morning to get her young brood out of their beds, says she cannot understand why children are called the rising generation.

CAPTAIN RICHARD BROWN.

BY JULIA COLMAN.

"What's the use of studying about these things?" is an exclamation we often hear when boys and girls are invited to attend a temperance school. "Everybody knows alcohol is bad, and we are pledged against it, never did touch it anyhow, and that's enough—no use spending any more time over it."

"Well, perhaps not ; some people are so wise in their own conceit that they never would learn anything even at a temperance school. But I would like to tell you a case that came under my own eyes, and we could all see similar cases if we only opened our eyes wide enough.

About thirty years ago there was a temperance school started in a little town in the north-east part of England. They called it a Band of Hope, but that is only one kind of a temperance school. If the nature and effects of intoxicants are taught, and they were in this case. Of course they had anniversaries and parades and dialogues and addresses, but with all the rest they had regular drill in just the same facts that we learn now in the "Catechism on alcohol," and they learned that alcohol was a poison, that it was good for neither heat nor cold nor hard work—that it was always bad when

taken internally, and how and why ; and they found it a most interesting study.

Among the boys in this school was one Richard Brown. He was just a common kind of a boy without much other schooling, but the thinking he did in the temperance school waked him up and set him to studying all he could by himself. When he was about fourteen he went out on a ship, like most of the other boys in that little seaport town, and he took his books with him and improved all his spare moments. The first trip was not a long one, but they had some cold rough weather, and at one time a severe storm, when they had to break the icicles off the ropes when they tacked the ship. The sailors grumbled and wanted extra grog, as sailors often do nowadays ; when they had cold, wet weather, and hard work they thought it would help them. Richard knew better ; he had learned at the temperance school. He knew why he was better off without it, and he would not touch it. There were two other boys on board, and they would have drunk as they saw the sailors do, but Richard had told them some of the things he had learned about the drink, and neither of them touched it. The result was that very soon these three boys were the only sober heads on board, and they had to manage the ship. But for them it would have gone to the bottom—no help for it—and every soul would have been lost, for the others were all too drunk to save themselves. Fortunately the storm soon began to abate, but the awful lesson they learned during those few hours, when every man from the captain down was too drunk to do anything about managing the ship, was one that Richard remembered. He often told sailors of it afterwards, and turned them from the notion that the drink helped them about hard work. He took pains also after that to ask sailors who had been shipwrecked all about what happened, and in most cases he found that there had been serious indulgence in drink, either by officers, or men, or all hands. In cases where they had all been so drunk as to go to the bottom without leaving anybody to tell the tale, he could of course find out nothing, but he had reason to believe there were many such cases. So you see what a difference that temperance school made in the very existence of Richard Brown and all his shipmates on board that little storm-beaten vessel.

Besides that, it was the making of him as a man. This school having awakened his intelligence, he rose rapidly from one position to another, until when I met him in New York, where he stopped on his way home from China, he was master of the bark *Kedron*, with a fine temperance crew, who were never tired of praising him and honouring temperance principles. He was every inch a model captain, carrying bridal presents home to a lady every way worthy of him. He was religious, happy, prosperous. The temperance school of Richard's boyhood had done more than anything else to secure this for him, and without it there is little probability that he would ever have become Captain Brown.—*Youth's Temperance Banner*.

WHO IS TO DIE?

A STORY OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

BY DAVID KER.

"Stand by to lower the boat!" shouted the Captain, and then he muttered gloomily to himself, "It's our only chance now."

It was, indeed. For three days the French brig *St. Pierre*, homeward bound from the Isle de Bourbon, had fought against as fierce a gale as ever swept around the stormy Cape of Good Hope. Captain and crew had done all that men could do to save the ship, but in vain. Their only chance now was in taking to the one boat that the storm had left them.

As Captain Picard turned round from giving his orders he found himself suddenly face to face with a pale, delicate-looking lady in deep mourning, who had just come up the after-hatchway with a little boy in her arms.

Poor Madame Lachaux ! she might well look worn and sad. Her husband had gone home an invalid ; her only daughter had died a few weeks before ; and now, just as there seemed a chance of her seeing home and friends once more, Death in his worst form was hovering over herself.

Captain Picard broke to her as gently as possible the fatal news that the ship was sinking, and that their only hope was to take to the sea in a small boat. At this announcement the poor mother's sickly face grew paler still, and she pressed her child convulsively in her arms.