

## The Rockwood Review.

theskies. Our exertions had caused us to doff pinafores and jackets, and these we had piled in a heap near the scene of our labors. The grass was so plentiful that a small windrow of it extended in the direction of our duds. While we were hurrahing for Protestant ascendancy, the insidious flame had seized the windrow, and run as if on powder to our clothes. Imagine our horror when we saw these involved in common ruin! And imagine, if you can, our sheepish looks when we arrived at the farmhouse, and sans pinafores and jackets, sought quiet entrance to its hospitable kitchen. Nemesis emerged from behind the kitchen mangle, and a long cane, held by ruthless hand, fairly curled about us, as we received condign punishment for our misdeeds. After that it was never difficult to "Remember, remember, the Fifth of November."

From some plain or other, peat was brought to Swallowbeck in carts, and helped to keep up summer fires in the kitchen, when coals were not required. Its fragrant smoke is a pleasant recollection. But the fuel for the large oven, in which the supply of bread was baked, was of different character. The fences of thorn required annual pruning, flashing with a bile-hook, and then cuttings were bound up into bundles termed kids, and these being stretched near the house and there left to dry, were thrust with liberal hands into the mouth of the oven, and produced heat sufficient for baking purposes. Even now, one can recall the red and brilliant fires thus shining in upon a youthful memory.

Church-going was really enjoyed by our youthful company—and that is saying much for its attractions. It wasn't the service droned out by parson and clerk, although even that had its soothing effects, upon visitors and juvenile nerves, but

the walk of nearly two miles from Swallowbeck to Bracebridge, with flowing hedge-rows, a halt or two, a flowing river, with fish beneath a wide brick bridge, and the little adventures by the wayside, which boys, somehow or other, find whenever they walk abroad, and all which combined made the trip so pleasant then, and so pleasant to think of now. Palm Sunday was specially notable, for upon it we gathered great bunches of willow catkins, and proudly carried them to Bracebridge church, under the sure and certain conviction that they were the veritable "palms" cast before the Saviour upon his entrance to Jerusalem.

There were other days in the year when we felt that life was truly worth living. In one local newspaper—one of the oldest in England—were duly announced in the hunting season, the fixtures for the Burton Hunt during the coming week. We scanned these carefully, and when we discovered, as we sometimes did, that on the following Saturday the hounds would "throw off," somewhere within measurable distance of Swallowbeck, we were ineffably happy. Upon that morning we were out of bed by daylight, swallowing breakfast at the earliest practicable moment, and out of doors two or three hours before it was possible for the pack and its red-coated whippers in to arrive. But they invariably came, and it was the moment of moments when, even yet distant, was descried the spots of scarlet upon the highroad, and the other spots of brown, and black and white, with waving tails aloft, which assured us that the hounds were really there. With bated breath we saw them pass—with sycophantic leer at the near whipper in, we excitedly followed—and with determined trot we kept steadily on until the woods were reached