

The Wind.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you.
But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I.
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

—Christina Rossetti.

THE QUESTION BOX.

S. J. B. asks to have the following questions answered:

1. Is an intransitive verb inflected for Voice?
2. Give the mood of the verbs in the following sentence, with reasons: "If I (a) had been in his place I (b) would have paid the money."
3. Is it necessary to make two clauses of the following sentence in analyzing it: "He was across the street, but in the shade."
4. What is the difference between He is gone, and He has gone?

1. The passive voice in English is not formed by inflections; and strictly speaking, intransitive verbs have no passive voice.

2. (a). Subjunctive. A supposition contrary to fact.

(b). Subjunctive. Consequent clause after a supposition.

3. No, not necessary. We should consider it optional.

4. Both verbs are in the present perfect tense. But in saying, "He is gone" we think rather of his present condition; in "He has gone" of the act of going.

A correspondent asks for some facts about Agnes Maude Machar,* who is known also by her pseudonym "Fidelis." A brief sketch of this writer's life and work, with some extracts from her poems, will be found in the REVIEW for February, 1908. The collected edition of her poems is called "Lays of the True North and other Canadian Poems" and was published in Toronto in 1899, and 1902, and reviewed in the "Canadian Magazine" for December, 1899. It is hard to say which are her best or best known poems. "Canada to the Laureate" appeared in "Good Words" and called forth a cordial letter from Tennyson.

Some questions on Nova Scotia Literature texts will be furnished next month in response to a request from a subscriber.

*Pronounced Macker, with the stress on the first syllable.

EXCUSES.

"Roger, do you think that a good excuse for not doing something you ought to do, is as satisfactory as to have done the thing itself?" Mr. Brook asked his younger son, who had a fertile genius for "explanations."

"Why," said Roger, "one seems about the same as the other."

"Well," replied his father, "it will be a great step forward when you find out that they are totally *different* things! A good excuse for not having prepared your lesson at school may save you from punishment, but no excuse will put an atom of knowledge into your head. You may have an excellent excuse for having poor health, but no *good* health will be given in exchange for it."

"I never thought of it that way before," said Roger, looking thoughtful.

"Usually," continued his father, "excuses are only excuses. What we really *want* to do, we find a way to do. When you had your heart set on building a wireless station, you were particularly busy at school, and you were doing errands in the afternoon to earn money, so you had no time to spare. But you got up very cheerfully at sunrise for weeks to get the time you wanted." "It wasn't hard to do," said the boy.

"No, for you really *wanted* to do it," his father replied. Every one can instantly produce a perfectly good reason for not doing what he isn't keen to do."

"It's a very convenient faculty," said Roger, with a chuckle.

"It's not to be laughed about," answered his father. "It's one of the most dangerous capacities of human nature. If, whenever we left undone something that we ought to have done, we had to face squarely the fact of our own failure, there would not be half the evil there is in the world. But we blind our eyes to our own culpability; we even justify ourselves. We trifle with our moral sense, until our moral sense grows dull and blind, and we grow poorer and weaker—and we don't know it."

"I make no more excuses," said Roger, soberly.

"They are weak things to make to any one," replied his father, "but they are especially dangerous when we make them to ourselves."

—Youth's Companion.