

EXERCISE.

How important to man is bodily exercise! Not only does it keep all our physical organs in vigor and health, but it conduces also the cheerfulness of mind, enabling us to think and reason with greater soundness and facility than is possible during long periods of idleness and sluggish repose. Walking, equestrianism, manual labour and gymnastic games are all desirable for converting debility into strength, and supplanting the sickly palor of disease by the ruddy glow of salubrious pleasure. Walking is always available, and in a walk in cheerful frame of mind, with the eyes open for beauty and the air attuned to natural melody, is no despicable exercise. But as President Hall remarked: "It is rare to find an American, man or woman, who enjoys taking a walk. Our excessive heat in summer and excessive cold in winter gives us a ready excuse for neglecting this exercise. But if we would know what the true enjoyment of life is, we must learn to walk. We have no lark to tempt us, by the exquisite music of his morning hymn, to walk before sunrise, nor nightingale to lure us out in evening rambles; the sweet scented violet, the early primrose and the fragrant thorn are absent from our hedgerows and our lanes. Yet I am slow to believe that our friends of the Old World have any greater attractions out of doors than we."

If men ask for the songs of birds, we have the song sparrow, the American robin, the cat-bird, the brown thrush, and the mocking bird, to fill the morning air with music; the oriole, the vireo, the purple-finch and the bobolink sing all day, and after sunset the ring of the Wilson's thrush, and the long-drawn plaintive sweetness of the wood thrush, mingling with the cheerful song of the beeswing-finch, leave nothing to be desired. If you ask for beauty in the flowers, our woods and our meadows and prairies pour out an unmeasured abundance; if you ask for fragrance, May gives the spicy breath of the arathusa cicea. June festoons the trees with the odorous flower of the wild grape; July fills the air with the perfume of the azalea; August brings the sweet eletra, and the modestly concealed clusters of the apios makes the woods redolent of the memory of the flowering grape. But what can compare with the Ameri-

can forest in October? When every tree is dressed in such glories that it would repay one for an hour's walk to see a single tree; or if a tree declines to put out this holiday array, some wild vine running up its trunk, and, laying hold of its branches, honors its modesty by clothing it in more than regal purple. But a difficulty occurs, which is thus noticed by the gentleman we have mentioned above: "Believe me, the only drawback to the enjoyment of the long walks in America is the difficulty of finding a companion who is willing to walk far enough to reap the full benefit of the recreation." The exhilaration and happiness produced by exercise and a contemplation of the beauties of nature elevate the soul and invigorate the body. Gloom is changed into gaiety, and morbid melancholy is supplanted by merriment. Nay, even the semi-convulsive paroxysms of laughter chase away hypochondriacal ennui, and dispose sufferers from that too common complaint, the "blues," to view men, and matters, and things, *en couleur de rose*.

KITE FLYING.

If ever you go to China, and wait for the ninth day of the ninth moon—which any Chinaman will indicate to you—you will be surprised to see floating in air, above every hill and mountain, and above a good many plains, thousands of little white specks which dance about, and flutter, and rise and fall, like snow-flakes that will not or cannot drop to the earth. These are kites, which hundreds of thousands of Chinamen are flying on that day, in honour of some old custom which is, no doubt, highly respectable.

The ninth day of our ninth moon is not, that I know of, more famous for kite-flying than any other day in the year. But I dare say, if this country was examined, that on that day as well as others, white specks could be detected in the neighbourhood of many a school and many a quiet home, and that a closer inspection would prove that the white specks are kites.

A common kite is, as you know, made of two cross laths, or slender sticks, a bow, and paper. The way to make one is as follows: The straight stick, which is the backbone of the kite, is the first thing to be looked to. It should be straight, without knots or splits, light,

and strong. It should have three notches in it—one about an inch or two from the top, another about a third of the whole length from the top, and a third about the same distance from the bottom, and two holes, one about one-fifth of its length from the top, the other about one-fifth from the bottom. The second piece is a short cross piece about half the length of the backbone, or a trifle more; it should be tightly fastened to the backbone at the middle notch. Then the bender—which is a flexible lath, or half a strong hoop, must be fastened to these—the two ends of the bender being tied to the ends of the cross-piece, while the centre of the bender is made fast to the upper notch of the backbone. The frame of the kite is thus complete. Over the whole, now, a large sheet of paper, or several sheets fastened together, must be pasted. To make all secure, a string must be run from the ends of the cross-piece to the holes in the backbone, and also to the notch where the bender crosses it; this done, a second string must be run through the two holes of the backbone, and knotted; to this, at the point where the kite balances, the string, by which you fly it, must be tied. The next thing to be done is to fasten the wings, which are bundles of paper tightly folded, and not too large, to the ends of the cross-piece; then you tie on the tail. The tail is made of little rolls of paper about four to six inches wide, and tied at intervals of a couple to four inches: it should be six or eight times as long as the backbone of the kite. Now, your kite is complete; and you have only to choose a windy day, jerk it into air, and run off with the string, to see it rise. After it has risen a certain distance, you may stand quite still, keeping the string tightly drawn; it will rise till it seems a mere speck, and, in cloudy days, you may lose sight of it altogether.

Other kites are sold in the toy shops, which are more elaborate, and more convenient to carry. They are made of canvas or linen, and fitted upon cross-sticks, so contrived that they can be folded up and packed in a very small compass. These kites are very ingenious, and less liable to be torn than the common ones.

You know, of course, that it was by means of a kite that Franklin discovered that the lightning we see in stormy weather, and the electricity we make by rubbing sealing-wax or glass against certain