

SEA GULLS.

The sea gull is usually "whole-footed," that is, more or less web-toed; although many of them are no swimmers, being far outdone in that graceful accomplishment by the awkward, waddling duck. Its buoyant body eminently fits it for flying, in which gay and fascinating employment it spends most of its days, apparently never wearied on its long and strong wings. It is thickly dressed with oily feathers, which effectually protect it from the assaults of the beating rain, the dash of the breaking wave, or the penetrating moisture of the sea-fog. It is also fitted out with a sharp-pointed bill, slightly crooked or hooked at the end, with which it captures its prey. See this one, for example, as he shoots down like a dart upon the water, where his keen eye has descried a little fish. There! he rises again, with the wriggling captive in his bill. Now, you think, he must retire to some near rock or bending bush on which to eat it. But no; without any assistance from foot or folded wing, this capable bill has no trouble in instantly disposing of the little wriggler; and the work of plunder goes right on again.

At times you will see them in idle groups, alighted on some projecting sand-point, as though refreshing themselves from weariness of wing; but the true explanation is, that they are waiting or watching for signals that the rapacious blue-fish, or the bonito, are driving another school of helpless youngsters of other tribes to the surface, in the seizure of which they will lend a hand. For they are apparently always hungry, with no set hours for dining. These domestic gulls are said not to be divers; but they are, notwithstanding, frequently seen, in striking for a fish, to disappear entirely for a moment or two beneath the surface. They are no waders, like the snipe or the sand-piper.

In color, some varieties are pied, or parti-colored, while others are gray or brown. Reeds, or rushes, or the long grasses, afford them shelter for their nests; while others of them seem quite satisfied with the open sand, where they unconcernedly drop their eggs, leaving them, as the ostrich has been said to do, "in the earth, and warming them in the dust, forgetful that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them." Take care! don't tread on that little congress of unfledged young ones on the beach before you. They look so much like the sand itself that you must look sharp to see them. But you may handle them with impunity, as they make no outcry, and their good easy mothers are probably far away,

or, if near by, they will not fly into your eyes with unappeasable fury, like the fierce eagle or the falcon.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

TWO BOYS' VERBS.

BY A. L. NOBLE.

Tom Fuller and Ed. Horton were making a snow image. They had worked all one cold day at their Sphinx, as they had called it, for no particular reason. Toward night they were giving it

before he exclaimed: "I am going to have a good education first, then I will have money, for brains and money give a man power and position. Father says that every time he points out Judge Wells, who was a poor cartman's son. Bolton, the banker, he too started out with only will and pluck. Why can't we do what other poorer boys have done?"

"Sure as you live now, Ed, we can do that same," roared Tom, slapping the Sphinx's broad cheek with his shovel; but just then the supper-bell rang, and the gha-

Sphinx once rose and melted.

Where were the boys? They had gone after their verbs. I will "have" had been Ed Horton's, and he had gained by his talents, money. Wealth and knowledge easily gained him political power, and men began to call him greatly successful. Tom's verb had all along been I will "be" whatever is just, worthy, upright, and pure; true to myself, helpful to other men. Moderate wealth and also a certain power of character had come to Tom. He had because he was.

One cold November evening, Tom, who was a physician with a large practice, was coming home from a call when he passed crowds of noisy men rejoicing over a great political victory, for it was election night. He heard Horton's name everywhere, and he knew his old schoolmate had gained a long-coveted office. Coming suddenly to a brilliantly-lighted liquor-saloon, he found the entrance blocked by a swearing, shutting, half-crazy crew already drunken. Glancing in he saw Horton dispensing unlimited whiskey to these his political adherents.

"Poor Ed! poor Ed!" sighed Tom. "He took a wrong start someway, and now he does not seem to care what he is so he gets what he wants. He is cheating himself. He is a shrewd politician, but he is getting to be a fraud as a man. I wish he could begin life over; but it is too late."—*Youth's Temperance Banner.*

ABOUT THE BANYAN TREE.

The Banyan or Banyan tree is of enormous size. Each tree forms a small grove; for each branch sends out small tender fibres which are actually roots, and when these reach the ground they root themselves, and in time become thick trunks. As this process is continually going on it is easy to see that one tree becomes in a short time a series of trunks which form delightful alleys with cool retreats most desirable in hot climates. The Hindoos think much of this tree—they look upon its sheltering branches as emblematic of the outstretched arms of God affording them safety and contentment. The Brahmins pass much of their time beneath the pleasant shade and meditate upon their religion. And where there is no temple, the Banyan tree is made to take its place, and worship is conducted under its leafy ceiling.—*Little Folks.*

IT IS THE performance of every duty, and the exercise of every function in the fullest manner, that constitutes a happy, valuable life.



THE SEA-GULL.

the last touches and chatting about matters in general.

"Nobody would say we lacked perseverance if he knew how much snow we had managed to-day," said Ed.

"No, indeed," returned Tom. "Professor Wilson said yesterday that neither of us lacked will nor energy."

"What of it?" asked Ed.

"Oh! he meant, of course, that it only depended on us to decide what we would be hereafter," returned Tom hacking away on the Sphinx's nose with comical gravity.

Ed dumped a new load of snow

ly white monster was declared to be a beauty, then left for the night. As the boys turned away, Ed Horton said, laughing: "If the Sphinx would only open her cold lips and tell us our fortunes. I would just like to see twenty years from to-day, for instance."

Two bright, winning fellows they were, and no man or woman could have told which was more likely to be the better man. They were equal in scholarship, and if Ed was ambitious Tom was earnest.

Twenty years went by; parents and teachers were dead; a great factory stood where the