

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

"Summer is Here."

BY ROBERT M'INTYRE.

When the mower cuts the clover, and the swallow skims the corn, And you hear the herd boy calling 'cross the meadows in the morn, And the dawa is rich with robins, piping in the poplar trees, And across the bending buckwheat gad the yellow-buskined bees, And the quail calls up his covey by the music of his name, In the platted old fence corner, with its Indian pinks aflame— Then summer-time is here!

When bobolink falls from tree-top, tripped and tangled in his song, And the catbird buttonholes you, for a dialogue, right or wrong, And the speckled hawk loafs lonely on the dappled, distant sky, And the affable white sheep graze about you as you lie, Looking down cool terminal colonnades where bits of blue are seen, Through the sinuous antique arras of the breeze-blown muscadine— Then summer-time is here!

Far and faint you hear the tinkle of the bland bells of the kine, And your heart spills out its bitterness as bacchanals spill wine, Soft peace comes down, balm breasted, on the weary heart and brain, And your soul bursts off her gyves, and, full-statured, hears again Through lapped leafage the light footsteps of the Master pausing near, Rise and gird thee for his coming—hear him calling plaintive, clear: Summer-time is here!

1837-1897.—THEN AND NOW.

What! You want grandfather to tell you the story of his life? Well! that's a large order. But still, I'll tell you something of the old and new things I've seen.

Now sit round and listen; and you, young quicksilver Bert, sit in the centre, and see if you can keep your restless energies quiet for a few minutes while I show you these pictures, and tell you the story. Are you all comfortable? No? Well, let Dolly come closer. Mag, cease chattering. There, now, you are a nice party.

Well, when I was a youngster, some thirty years ago, I well remember the good Princess Victoria being hailed Queen of England. The old king had died in the night, and his ministers hastened to Kensington, where the princess was sleeping, and aroused the household. They said they must see her Majesty the Queen. "But," said the ladies of the household, "the princess is fast asleep." "Ah! but," replied these gentlemen, "the Queen's business is important, and we must see her Majesty." So the princess was awakened, and hastily putting on a dressing gown, she came to the room where these gentlemen were awaiting her. They said they were sorry to disturb her Majesty's sleep, but events had happened which rendered it important that they should at once see the Queen of England. And so they delicately made known to her that the king was dead and she was Queen.

For sixty years has she reigned; a model Queen, a noble woman. And possibly, she, with others of us old folks, will be looking back over those years, and comparing what then was and what now is. Look at that old wooden battle-

ship in our picture. That was the sort, when I was a mite in my dear old mother's arms, which swept the seas of our foes, and made England mistress of the seas. Good old wooden walls! But now what a difference. Wooden ships have given way to steel, and sails to steam. Our fighting ships now have walls of steel twelve or eighteen inches thick, and are armed with monster guns which cost the country about £20 at each firing, and which will send the destructive bullet to hit and damage at a distance of five or six miles, while for closer quarters, from the fighting tops on the masts, a storm of bullets are poured out as the gunners grind the handle. Terribly destructive are these modern ships of war. We are glad they are seldom called upon to show their teeth. May their strength and might long maintain our peace.

Travelling was slow when I was a boy,

all so satisfied with the coach. Nothing could be faster or more comfortable. What a mad-brained fellow Stephenson was to think of doing better than the coach and horses. What disasters, the knowing ones said, would take place when the first railway was made. Boilers would burst, cattle would stray on the lines and upset the train, and as for the idea of travelling at twenty miles an hour, it was wicked. People must expect to get killed if they rushed along at such a breakneck pace. But now you youngsters coolly step into the modern trains with the palace cars, so different to the stifling boxes of early times, and are whisked along at sixty or more miles an hour, making a journey in a day which we old boys would not have dreamt of doing in less than ten days.

I wonder whether the horse will one day be thought worthy a cage in our Zoo as a specimen of one of the animals

spark. What a feeble light our spluttering, guttering, tallow candles gave. Every few moments they needed snuffing, and sometimes in snuffing them, out would go the light, because our snuffers had snapped off too much of the wick. And then we would have to go click, clicking again for another spark. At last, Sir Humphrey Davy said we should have our streets and houses lighted with gas. Nonsense! how could it be? How could he get the gas to our houses? No, he was a dreamer, surely. But yet, we have got the gas in our houses, so bright with its incandescent mantle, that surely Sir Humphrey Davy would open his eyes in astonishment at its brilliancy. And better than that, electricity is here with its powerful light, and electricity by which we may send messages, in a few moments of time, to any part of the world; and by which we may speak to one another, although hundreds of miles apart. What an alteration, too, in farm work. The sickle and scythe are old-fashioned implements of harvest. Now the farmer employs a machine, which cuts the corn at one side, and throws it out at the other as a neat, tied-up bundle. And the old flail, shovel, and sieve are laid on one side, for machinery now beats out the corn, winnows it, and stacks the straw. All this is the result of intelligence. The harvest is quickly gathered, little is now spoiled, and so there is more and cheaper food for the people. But we old folks sometimes long for the swish of the scythe, and the song of the harvest home. Ah, me! for the old days. But yet it is good to see the free schools and the free libraries, where all may acquire knowledge. What poky little rooms the old dames taught us in, and what a little they taught. What nervous old souls they were. How they cleared the rooms of all needles, and even the fender and fire-irons, when a storm came, and we all huddled together, shivering with fright, terrorized at each crash of thunder. Wonder of wonders was the penny post, when Sir Rowland Hill enabled us to send a letter to any part of the country for a penny. But you youngsters can beat that, for there is your halfpenny post. It was said the penny post would never do, for everybody would be wanting to write. Yes, it's true, these fine schools and the intelligent teachers are putting knowledge in every one's way.

And is it not good to learn that pain is lessened nowadays. With chloroform and ether our surgeons put us to sleep while they cut away or examine our diseases, and our dentists with their gas make us unconscious that we are having ever so many of those aching teeth removed. We have police to protect, firemen to save; while out at sea the sailor in peril sends up his rockets, assured that some brave lifeboatmen will bring their unsinkable lifeboats to his rescue. And there are papers and books by the hundreds for us to read, and children's books are cheaper, ever so much larger, and twenty times more interesting than when Victoria became Queen. Surely it is good to live to see it. We are all happier and more comfortable for all this intelligence. Let us use our intelligence to make others happier.—Our Boys and Girls.

The latest device of a Paris paper for attracting attention is the engagement of two eminent physicians to attend gratuitously upon its yearly subscribers. The glass and porcelain trade of Vienna is interested in a new substitute for glass, which has all the brilliancy without the brittleness in fact is flexible. It is made of Collodion wool



THE QUEEN'S LONG REIGN.—1837-1897.—THEN AND NOW.

go where you would. Lands across the sea were only reached by sailing vessels. And if winds were contrary, it was slow indeed. But steam has altered all that, and we don't wait for favourable winds. The powerful engines thrust the steamer against wind and tide, and rapid travelling is now the order of the day. But more than that. Steam has brought within our reach the fruits and foods of other lands. These are so quickly carried that scarcely anything the world produces can now be considered perishable. Ice is not now sought for, but made; and in these steamships are ice chambers in which these fruits and foods are kept sweet and good. So that even the very poor may now enjoy what in my boyhood's days were considered by the rich as luxuries.

Ah! what a to-do there was when George Stephenson set about changing our ways of land travelling. We were

which used to inhabit England. People used to ride him a good deal. Now the cycle takes his place. To-day we make him drag our carriages. By-and-bye, I suppose, he won't be wanted at all, for we shall all travel by motor car. And then poor old puss will have to find some other food than cat's meat.

How easily we get our light now. We take our box of matches, strike one, and immediately there is light. You would scarcely believe it, but there was not a match in England when I was a boy. When we wanted a light, we took a piece of flint and a steel, and got a spark like Bert does when he strikes his heel-up on the kerb. But we took care to have some very dry tinder close by, into which our spark should drop, and then, having caught our spark, we would blow and puff, and puff and blow, till we got a flame. Ah! often I've stood shivering with cold, click, click, clicking for the