



Marbles.

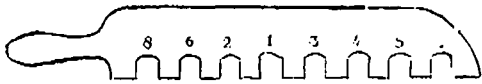
"Just one game, Uncle. It won't take long to tell how to play one game."

These were the words that were spoken by my nephew, just as I had taken a book and settled myself for an hour of reading. I knew it was of no use for me to say no, for this little fellow was so persistent there was no getting rid of him until he had gained his point; but I tried.

"You know more games of marbles than I ever did, without my telling you any more," I said.

"I don't know about that. Even if I do, those you tell me about are always better."

This settled it; so I put away my book and went out into the woodshed, and got a piece of pine board and cut it out like the illustration:



THE MARBLE BOARD.

"What are you going to do with that?" he asked. "Did you ever see a marble board? Well, I am going to make you a marble board, and show you how to play that game."

"O, that will be splendid. Did you have one?"

"Yes, I had one made just like this."

"Why don't you have the figures run right along in order?"

"Because that would make the large numbers all come together. You see now the large ones are on the ends of the board, and the chances are in favor of rolling the marble outside of the board entirely if they try to get big numbers, while if they try to keep safely within range of the board the chances are that they will get the smaller number if they get any. They will risk getting a small number rather than risk rolling by the end of the board."

"Yes, but how do you play?"

"The owner of the board—"

"That's me!"

"Yes; you measure off ten or twelve feet, just as the players agree, and hold the board. Of course any number of boys can play. You agree to give the player who is so lucky as to put a marble through one of the holes as many marbles as the figure above the hole calls for. Thus, if he goes through eight you give him eight marbles and the one he rolls; if he rolls through one, one marble and the one he rolls, and the same for any hole, always returning the one he rolls with as many as the hole calls for. Every marble that hits the board or goes by the end belong to you."

"But won't I get out of marbles quick? Every one will roll through."

"I think you will find that in the end you will have the most marbles. The roller has more chances of missing than he does of hitting. You see there are nine pieces of wood to make the eight holes, besides the chances of rolling by either end. This makes eleven chances in your favor to eight in favor of the rollers. This should be so, too, for at each roll he only risks one marble, while you risk at most eight, or at least one."

"That is splendid! I think we will all like that. I'm going right off to play now. I'm ever so much obliged."

And the boy went off happy, while I went back to my book with the consciousness that I had lost half of my reading hour, but with a feeling that it had been much better for me than if I had been selfish and refused the request of the boy.

A pleasant drink for invalids: Pick off and wash some grapes, place them on the fire with very little water. Boil till soft, strain without squeezing; boil the juice two or three minutes, then add half as much sugar as you have juice, and boil for five minutes. Then seal it in bottles.

Hiram Homespun's Ideas About Raisin' Children.

A GOOD many folks have somehow gotten the notion that the youngsters of this here age is just about as bad as they was before the Flood. I am only a plain farmer fellow, but I have observed a few things, and I don't agree with those people. The boys of to-day ain't no wuss than they ought to be considerin' the trainin' some of 'em gets. I was only t'other day tellin' naybor Skinner that he was makin' a big mistake with his boys. Skinner's a good farmer—none better. He farms scientific. But he don't know the science of bringin' up a youngster. Children thrive best in the light, sandy loam of kind words, where it is allus warm and cheery like. After a while, when they gets middlin' strong, they ought to be transplanted to the heavier clay of common sense and self-reliance. This will give 'em a will of their own—strength of purpose, you know. I like to see a boy with a will of his own. Some parents is allus a feelin' bad when they see younguns acting stubborn like. Then they go to work to break that stubbornness with a barrel hoop or hickory switch. They thrash and pound until they beat out everything that's good, and there's nothing left but a lot of worthless

chaff that you can blow anywheres. It's fearful foolish, that. If the parents had only got the child's will under control instead of knockin' all the spirit outen 'em, their boys would have been some use to the kentry. The boys who makes successful men is, those who have got lots of push and go-ahead, which is nothin' more nor a good strong will that has to be trained to go straight. Another mistake—and naybor Skinner's makin' it—is to want all your boys to learn a profession. You might just as well try to make a wagon-pole outen a toothpick, or a barn door outen a shingle. They would be dead failures. If you have had to work hard, the boys can work hard. Some of the boys won't make good farmers, and them's the ones to make storekeepers, book agents, or lawyers of. But whatever you do don't choose their profession. Turn a sheep out in the bush and it'll find the best grass and purest water. Give your boys a chance, and when they go into the thick woods of life they'll in nine cases outen ten come out to the clearin' right side up.

THE GIRL FOR THE FIRESIDE.—The girl best fitted to make the fireside happy is she whose mind is well stored with practical and useful knowledge, is accomplished without affectation, retiring and modest without prudery, frank, free, and gay without frivolity, and thinks her husband the greatest man the world ever saw or is ever likely to see.

