

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

Has the boy in a village any advantages over the city boy? It has been said often in serious literature and fiction that he has advantages, but Professor Hobbes finds there are many features of village life that adversely affect the boy's moral development. Idleness, vicious entertainments, bad companions and lack of moral stimulation, the professor says, abound in the village.

Environment, of course, has much to do with the formation of character, but hereditary inclinations have much also. These may be good or bad, in city or country. In a village or on a farm a boy's opportunities of moral development through healthy contact with nature are greater than in the city, but if he is viciously inclined and neglected he will find it easy to do wrong anywhere. Good tendencies can be encouraged and evil tendencies repressed by wise, conscientious parents anywhere.

The city boy has much more in his favor now than he had twenty years ago, for our cities are being made more desirable places of living. Parks and playgrounds are doing much to give the boy a chance to play under wholesome surroundings, and city life is broader than country life. There are compensations for both the city boy and the country boy, and what either becomes is dependent, in a very large measure, on what his home life is. Society is responsible for much, but parents are responsible for more in the shaping of the boy.

A new grain known as black winter emmer has been evolved after years of study by Prof. Buffum, who conducts an experiment farm in Wyoming. It bids fair to solve the forage problem, not to speak of the general food problem of the world. The grain is somewhat larger than wheat, and is a cross of wheat and several other less known grains. It will grow in much drier soil than wheat and four times as much can be grown to the acre. It weighs more to the bushel than wheat, and while hardly so fine as that grain for food purposes, may assist materially in solving the general food problem, owing to its excellence and cheapness as fodder for the animals whose flesh figures on the dinner tables of men.

Emmer itself is not a novelty. It has been raised for many centuries, and has been given much attention by farmers in Russia. It is believed that emmer, or spelt, was the corn of Pliny, which he said was used by the Latins 360 years before they knew how to make bread. It is one of the primitive forms of wheat, but resembles barley in character, as it is bearded, and the grain is tightly held in the calyx.

## PHONE TALKS MADE CLEARER

Danish Bank Manager Has Transmitter Warmed.

A simple way of making telephone conversations more audible has been invented by Herr Peterson, a bank manager of Nykøbing, Denmark. On the principle that sound is more readily transmitted through rarefied air, he has constructed an apparatus to warm the transmitter, whereby the air in it becomes thinner and the sound is intensified. Prof. Hannover of the Danish Government telephone testing station, who has made extensive experiments with Peterson's apparatus, says in his report that the increase of sound obtained is remarkable. Telephone conversations between Copenhagen and Nykøbing, a distance of some 75 miles, could be clearly followed some distance away from the instrument. The inventor has applied for patents in different countries.

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## THE SIGNALMAN

Brooding is not good for a railway signalman; he can put in far too many hours at it without interruption. For nearly ten hours John Harbrough had been shut up in the little signal-box at the south end of the long wooden bridge over the Erevale river and valley, and the actual work he had been called upon to do in the time could have been performed easily in twenty minutes.

The long intervals of idleness, during which he was forbidden by the regulations either to leave his box or allow anybody to enter it, other than the guard or fireman of an occasional train held up for a few minutes in the siding in order that another might pass over the bridge before it, he had spent going over and over the last scene with his sweetheart, and asking himself, what there would be in life worth living for if Esther got tired of waiting and actually gave him up.

Esther May was the daughter of the stationmaster at Erevale Junction, his immediate paymaster and chief, and John and she had discovered that they were in love with each other before he had been three months in his position as signalman at the Erevale Bridge South Box. That was when John was only twenty-two, and felt that he was going to advance rapidly, because he had already been placed in charge of a signal-box. Esther's father had shared his belief, and looked with an indulgent eye on the courtship; he himself had been in charge of a signal-box at Harbrough's age, and had been speedily promoted to a young man who could not get on, and, in consequence, poor Esther had turned upon her lover, and told him, with angry tears, that if he cared for her at all, he would not stick all his life at the South Box.

It was unfair of Esther. The young signalman had told himself a thousand times during the long lonely days that he had done all a man could do. He had performed his simple duties perfectly. Not once in the five years had he made a mistake. With a woman's impatience of impersonal rules, Esther had often been cross because he would not let her enter the signal-box, or leave it himself for a stroll with her, when it could harm nobody and nobody would know.

But, in spite of all temptation, her lover had held firm. At seven o'clock the telegraph-bell tinkled, as he had been waiting for it to do for the last ten minutes, and the customary directions ticked out on the needle. A goods train was leaving the junction, and was to be turned into the siding to enable the passenger train which followed it to pass, and cross the bridge before it.

Like an automaton, Harbrough signalled back that the line was clear, pulled down the lever which opened the points for the siding, and strolled to the window of his box to lean out and watch for the goods train's approach.

He was conscious of no interest in it. He was asking himself still what there would be in his life worth living for if Esther carried out her threat and refused to "keep company" with him any longer.

But it was his custom to make the most of the passing of the trains, and the break that they made in the dead monotony of the day, and when the engine came puffing round the curve he counted the raggons in his usual mechanical way. There were three fewer than on the previous day.

Sometimes the driver or guard would wave a hand to him as he stood at the window, but to-night neither noticed him, and the train ran further than usual into the long siding. Harbrough was glad of it. He felt too miserable to chat to anybody to-night, and he turned away from watching the line. The telegraph-needle was clicking impatiently. The passenger train was waiting at the junction for his signal to come on, and he sent back the signal that the line was clear.

As he did so, his heart leaped suddenly. Esther's voice was calling him, and calling him by a name he had scarcely hoped to hear from her lips again.

"Jack dear—Jackie dear!" He was no longer an automaton as he strode to the door and looked out. Esther was at the bottom of



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the steps that led up to his box, looking up at him with a radiant, mischievous smile.

"Don't be frightened, Jack. I am not coming up," she said breathlessly, "and I can hide behind here if a train passes. I had to come and tell you, although father is waiting for his supper, and I ran all the way here. What do you think, dear? It has come at last! You are promoted to the Wendlesham box, where father used to be, with a rise of ten shillings a week straight off. The letter was sent to dad, and I felt I must run and tell you."

She was waving an official-looking document in her hand as she hurried her news out breathlessly, and for several reasons—the smallest of which was that he wanted to see the wonderful announcement with his own eyes—Jack ran down the stairs. It was then he was kissing her, and reminding her that a rise of ten shillings a week, and the prospects offered by employment at a busy junction like Wendlesham justified their immediate marriage, and satisfied to the full the conditions under which her father would give his consent, that Esther began to cry.

"I don't know how you can want to marry me at all when I have been so horrid," she sobbed. And Jack had to assure her again and again that she had been the best and most patient of sweethearts, until the sound of the train approaching from the junction reminded him that he was on duty, and that a signalman must not be seen making love in business hours.

Esther remembered it, too, and tore herself away hastily. Jack stood at the top of the stairs watching her swiftly-running figure until it disappeared. At the same moment the train came in view round the curve, and he turned to enter his cabin.

The telegraph was tinkling and ticking desperately, but he paid no attention to it; for, as he entered his glance had fallen on a down-pressed lever, and his blood froze with horror.

The depressed lever meant that the points to the siding were still open, and that the passenger train, which generally gathered a speed of more than fifty miles an hour coming down the incline from Erevale Junction, instead of crossing the Erevale bridge, would dash into the siding and the waiting train there.

As a matter of strict rule, he should have altered the points before he signalled the line clear, but the two operations were in his ordinary routine so nearly simultaneous that the rule could be ignored. Only to-night the two operations had not been simultaneous. In the moment between signalling the line clear and raising the lever, his sweetheart had called him, and the lever had been forgotten.

He rushed for the lever. Even now he might be in time, but, with his hand on it, he hesitated. The train was thundering by. He could not be sure whether the engine had reached the points or not, and he sprang to the window, and turned sick to realize that, if he had acted, the inevitable accident would have been prevented. Even now there was a moment before the engine would reach the points, but the moment found him paralyzed and the next it was lost. With a dangerous jar, the engine caught the points.

Many men as distracted as he would have moved the points even when it was too late; but, in spite of his distraction, John Harbrough had nerve and judgment enough to resist the temptation, knowing that to divert the train in the middle would cause a worse accident than the collision.

Instead, he flung himself forward at the open window, shouting to the guard. It was too late for the driver to hear his warning, but the

guard at the back understood, evidently, for he could hear the sudden grinding of the brakes, and then the crash, as the engine dashed into the standing goods train, and leaped upwards as if to climb over the guard's van at the rear. Then came a moment of terrible dead silence, and Harbrough fainted. The telegraph was still clicking furiously.

When he recovered consciousness, he was lying on the floor of his cabin, with a folded coat under his head. Somebody was kneeling beside him, holding a pocket-flash to his lips. There were other men in the room.

He lay quite still. He did not want to come back to consciousness to be asked questions for which he had no answer. He would much sooner have died. But a burning anxiety in his mind forced him to speak.

"How many are killed?" he asked, his voice emotionless.

"None actually, thank goodness," said the man bending over him. "The driver stuck to his post, and is badly hurt, poor fellow; the fireman was thrown right into the coal-tender, and seems practically hurt. The front carriage was telescoped, but, fortunately, it contained only one passenger, and he is not so badly injured as you would expect. Luckily for him, the guard of the goods train was out of his van. Drink a drop more of this."

Harbrough would have liked to refuse it, but the spirit trickled down his throat against his will. He did not want ever to get up again. Beside the man who was giving him brandy, and whom he recognized now as a local doctor. One was at the telegraph; the other—a short, dark, thick-set man—seemed to be dictating in sharp, masterful, staccato tones.

He turned abruptly to where Harbrough lay, and at the sight of him the signalman felt very much relieved. "You are all right," he said, "and I imagine he's been working overtime on very little food."

"All the more credit to him," said Oscar Willett, in his sharp voice, "for keeping his mind clear in an emergency." And he held out his hand to Harbrough. "Thanks for my life!" he said. "Don't move. I know how a strain like this takes it out of a man, and the uncertainty as to what the collision would be like. We've got out of it pretty cheaply. I believe, as it happens, and, in any case, it is better than for us all to find ourselves in the river. A man who can decide on the instant which is the better of two calamities is a man with a head on his shoulders."

Among John Harbrough's many admirable qualities was that of remaining silent about things he did not understand, and it was not until he had been driven home in the doctor's motor-car, been given a sleeping-draught and slept nearly until the noon of the next day in consequence, that a London newspaper enabled him to understand that he was the hero of the hour. From the newspaper it appeared that the Erevale river, swollen by floods, had unexpectedly carried away part of the railway bridge which spanned it; that the news had been carried to the northern side railway-box just in time to enable the signalman there to wire an urgent message to his confrere across the river to stop the approaching train.

Failing to get any response, he had gone on mechanically repeating his message, and the needle in Harbrough's box was busily ticking out: "Stop train. Bridge carried away," when Mr. Willett, who had been a passenger, hurried in to cross-examine the signalman, and found him unconscious. It had been easy for the traffic manager to form his own deductions, and it was his account of the affair that appeared in the Press, and made Harbrough a hero—a man who, by his quick judgment and action, had saved a hundred and twenty-three passengers from almost certain death at the expense of a smaller catastrophe, happily unattended by any loss of life.

For a young man as modest and straightforward as Jack Harbrough, it was a trying ordeal to be the recipient of praise that he had not deserved; and he improved the good opinion Mr. Willett had formed of him by the resolute manner in which he refused to be fêted, interviewed, or photographed for the Press.

But no man can be asked to incriminate himself, much less to incriminate his officer, and only Mrs. Harbrough knows, out of all the world, that her husband owes his rapid promotion in the railway service to the one and only occasion when his love made him forget his duty.—London Answers.

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In order to appreciate fully the charm and beauty of Luke's introductory narrative covering the childhood period of the life of Jesus, one must read at a sitting the first and second chapters of the Gospel. Our four lessons for January are devoted to these two chapters. This makes possible their

## THE SECRET OF LONG LIFE.

Do not sap the springs of life by neglect of the human mechanism, by allowing the accumulation of poisons in the system. An imitation of Nature's method of restoring waste of tissue and impoverishment of the blood and nervous strength is to take an alternative glyceric extract (without alcohol) of Golden Seal and Oregon grape root, Bloodroot, Sene and Mandrake root with Cherrybark. Over 40 years ago Dr. Pierce gave to the public this remedy, which he called Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. He found it would help the blood in taking up the proper elements from food, help the liver into activity, thereby throwing out the poisons from the blood and vitalizing the whole system as well as allaying and soothing a cough.

No one ever takes cold unless constipated, or exhausted, and having what we call mal-nutrition, which is attended with impoverished blood and exhaustion of nerve force. The "Discovery" is an all-round tonic which restores tone to the blood, nerves and heart by imitating Nature's methods of restoring waste of tissue, and feeding the nerves, heart and lungs on rich red blood.

"I suffered from pain under my right shoulder blade also a very severe cough," writes Mrs. W. Doss, of New Brookland, S. C., to Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y. "I had four different doctors and none did me any good. Some said I had consumption, others said I would have to have an operation. I was bedridden, unable to sit up for six months—and was nothing but a live skeleton. You advised me to take Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. When I had taken one bottle of the Discovery I could sit up for an hour at a time, and when I had taken three bottles I could do my cooking and tend to the children. I took four more bottles in all and was then in good health. My weight is now 107 pounds."

Mrs. Doss.

## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDY

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, JANUARY 7.

Lesson I.—The birth of John the Baptist foretold, Luke 1. 5-23. Golden Text, Heb. 11. 6.

Verse 5. Herod, king of Judaea.—The first of six Herods mentioned in the New Testament and founder of an Idumean family which furnished a number of kings and other rulers for Palestine and adjacent countries. He is known also as Herod the Great and reigned from B. C. 27 to 4.

Zacharias.—A common Jewish name, meaning literally "remembered by Jehovah." Since the time of David the Jewish priests had been divided into twenty-four groups or "courses," each of which in rotation was responsible for the temple services for one week. Each group would thus officiate twice a year, at an interval of six months. The course of Abijah was the eighth, and is said to have officiated in April and October.

Daughters of Aaron.—Lineal descendants of Aaron, the brother of Moses, and founder of the priesthood in Israel.

6. Righteous before God.—Good, pious Hebrews, scrupulous in their observance of the Mosaic law.

9. The custom of the priest's office was to decide by lot the several functions which each of the group of officiating priests was to perform. Some would officiate in the court of the temple at the altar of burnt offering. Zacharias's lot was to enter into the temple and burn incense.

10. The whole multitude of the people.—The worshippers in the temple courts.

The hour of incense.—Either morning or evening, since incense was offered twice daily on the golden altar within the temple proper, and immediately in front of the veil of the Holy of Holies.

11. An angel of the Lord.—Literally, a messenger. Angels were thought of as superhuman beings, intermediate between God and man. Belief in them was common except among the Sadducees, who were skeptics on many points of faith in orthodox Judaism.

13. John.—Meaning literally "the favor of Jehovah." Fuller notes on John the Baptist will be given in Text Studies for February and March.

15. Greatness in the sight of the Lord is by the angel associated with abstinence from wine and strong drink. The positive element contributing to the child's greatness is indicated in the next sentence, he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit. The negative element without the positive would have been incomplete.

17. Go before his face.—The face of Jehovah, signifying his presence. It was to be John's function to announce the nearness of Jehovah to his people and the approaching manifestation of his presence in the birth of the promised Messiah.

The spirit and power of Elijah were those of a sturdy and fearless prophet of righteousness. For the Old Testament prophecy alluded to, compare Mal. 4. 5, 6.

19. I am Gabriel.—Two angels only are mentioned by name in the Bible. These are Gabriel, referred to in Dan. 8. 16, 9. 21; and Michael, mentioned in Dan. 12. 1, 2; Jude 9; Rev. 12. 7.

20. Silent and not able to speak.—A sign, and at the same time a rebuke and punishment for unbelief.

21. Marvelled while he tarried.—Or, at his tarrying. Priests were expected to perform their duties with promptness and precision and then retire from the sanctuary.

22. Had seen a vision.—Had been vouchsafed some unusual revelation in the temple.

23. When the days of his ministry were fulfilled.—At the end of his week of service in the temple.

repeated reading, both separately and in conjunction with Matthew's narrative covering the same period (Matt. 1 and 2). Each Gospel mentions a different series of events according to the peculiar interest and purpose of its author.

CHANGES IN FLOWERS.

Many of Our Most Beautiful Ones are Modern Productions. It is a truly astonishing thing to reflect that Shakerar, for instance, a love of flowers, would have been able to name scarcely a single bloom in a twentieth century garden, says the Strand. He would hardly have been able to distinguish the queen of flowers itself, so greatly has the rose changed in the last three centuries.

As for the begonias, the chrysanthemums, the dahlias, the geraniums, the fuchsias and carnations, these were unknown even to our great-grandfathers. Many of our most beautiful flowers are purely modern productions.

Three centuries ago there were what were then thought of as garo-ni flower gardens in England. The roses were herbaria, places where rosemary, mint, rue, thyme and sage grew, and perhaps a few primitive blooms, such as violets and primroses, were suffered to exist, much as poppies and cornflowers do to-day.

Many well known plants have been developed from specimens discovered in various parts of the world, and there is no doubt that a number of charming novelties are still lurking undiscovered in remote spots. The chances of valuable finds are, however, becoming unfortunately less every year. A small army of collectors is always at work in every corner of the world searching for new treasures to enrich our floral store.

From South America came many years ago, the recently fashionable fuchsia; from the hills of northern India and Tibet have been brought many useful varieties; from China we have had among other things many new primulas. Japan has yielded wonderful irises. Africa many pretty plants, usually of most brilliant and gorgeous coloring; while numerous charming members of the narcissus family have been discovered in the Pyrenees.

But this cannot continue indefinitely, and even in the realm of orchids, for which perhaps the most systematic search of all is being made, there is not much left to be explored. For our future novelties we shall have to rely then chiefly on the skill of our hybridists, who are constantly engaged in mating different species of the same family of plants, and our cross fertilizers, who are doing similar work with different varieties of the same species. The flowers of to-day are the result of cross breeding, stimulating by electricity, drugs and hot water baths.

## CHINESE WOMEN SOLVED IT.

A woman missionary in China was taking tea with a mandarin's eight wives. The Chinese ladies examined her clothing, her hair, her teeth and nails, but her feet especially amazed them.

"Why," cried one, "you can can walk and run as well as a man."

"Yes, to be sure," cried the missionary. "Can you ride a horse and swim, too?"

"Yes," "Then you must be as strong as a man."

"I am." "And you wouldn't let a man beat you—not even if he was your husband—would you?"

"Indeed I wouldn't," the missionary said. "The mandarin's eight wives looked at one another, nodding their heads. Then the eldest said softly:—

"Now I understand why the foreign devil never has more than one wife. He is afraid!"—Tientsin, (China) News.

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W. P. Peters, R. D. Allan Stroud.

Brantford, Jan. 2.—man was elected he the Hydro-electric ty of 360 over Jones bylaw to raise \$85,000 ment of the John H. tal was carried by nity, having received port in all the Barin.

Bedlin, Jan. 2.—The test yesterday result Mayor, William H. W. D. Euler, first der second, and third deputy, Fred E men: E. W. Clement, Carl Krantz, David Pinner, C. H. Mills, N. B. Wetweiler, Jose George Pucher, C. B. (nichtel), J. R. Schill ley, John S. Schwartz.

Bylaw to raise \$100 sions to the waterwor carried by 576 majori raise \$10,735 for deviat street storm drain was majority.

Belleville, Jan. 2.—elections yesterday d much of a stir, notwit there was a mayoralty Varmilyas was elected by a majority of four Ald. Thomas, the vote former and 745 for the second ward, the which there was a con men, R. B. gle, F. Slat while were elected. In S. T. Harris was elected trustee by a majority c Greenleaf. In Blecker was elected school over W. H. Wrightmye.

Sault Ste. Ma Sault Ste. Marie, Jan. ed contest for the may day Mayor Munro defeat on by a majority of 18 allors elected are: Georg Main, J. A. McPhail, E. Crawford, and P. School trustees: O. A. L.