

THE EASE OF HABIT.

On a visit to the mills where the banknote paper is made for the use of the government, one is struck with astonishment with the skill and swiftness with which the sheets are counted. A recent visitor thus describes the operation:

"I saw one girl whose motions resembled those of a machine in their accuracy and lightning-like rapidity. My eye could not follow the monotonous, flashing movement of her fingers; yet so delicate and unerring was her touch, that every imperfect sheet was instantly detected and dropped." The narrator says that he discovered in this girl an old school-mate, "whose fingers two years ago were as clumsy as my own."

The government employ women in the Treasury Department in separating the charred fragments and cinders of bank-notes accidentally destroyed by fire, so that their denominations and numbers may be discovered. A visitor watched one of these experts float a mass apparently of black soot on the water, and divide it with fine, light touch, until it took shape and meaning to her keen glance.

"My eyes," she said, in answer to his expression of amazement, "are no sharper than your own. The skill lies only in habit."

School-boys in their groping efforts to plan and forecast their future, are apt to compare themselves, untrained and crude as they are, with men long skilled in their trade and profession, and to grow hopeless with the contrast.

The student of book-keeping despairs as he watches the accountant, reckon a line of figures with at swift, upward glance, and the tyro with the pen loses courage as he sees the old editor dash off a column of forcible argument in vivid English, the words coming unsummoned when needed. How can they compete with such ability as this? They forget that these men began with steps as hesitating and unable as their own. They make no allowance for the staunch, unfailing ally, ease of habit, which comes to every patient worker.

THE FIRST SIGHT OF THE BLIND.

An old negro woman in Pennsylvania who was born blind, late in life received her sight by the removal of the cataract. When the bandage was first removed, the patient started violently, and cried out with fear, and for a moment was quite nervous, from the effects of the shock. For the first time in her life she looked upon the earth.

The first thing she noticed was a flock of sparrows. In relating her experience to a reporter she said that she thought they were teacups; although strange to say, a few moments afterwards she readily distinguished a watch which was shown her. It is supposed that this recognition was owing to the fact that she heard its ticking. The blaze from the lamp excited the most lively surprise in her mind. She had no idea what it was, and when it was brought near her wanted to pick it up. When night approached upon the day when she first used her eyes, she was in a fright,

fearing she was losing the sight which she had so wonderfully found after a lifetime of darkness.

TEA AND ITS MANUFACTURE.

The tea plant is an evergreen shrub, with very hard, glossy, and delicately-serrated leaves of a rich dark-green colour, resembling the foliage of the laurustinus. In winter and spring it produces a profusion of single white flowers, something like dog-roses. Large quantities of the young plants are annually propagated from seeds gathered in the autumn. In the spring they are sown, and the seedlings when a year old are planted out in rows three or four feet apart. The height of a plant at the age of twelve months is from three to six feet. In order not to check the growth it is not interfered with for two or three years, when it becomes well established; and then in gathering great care is necessary in selecting the lardiest plants, which are least likely to suffer from the loss of their leaves. There are generally two gatherings in the year: the first in spring, when the buds and young leaves are plucked, forming the higher class of tea; and again in the autumn, forming the second quality. The leaves are placed in baskets as they are gathered, and are frequently turned over by the hand so as to prevent the lower leaves from fermenting, which spoils the whole plucking. The process of manufacture is different according to the various kinds of tea to be produced. If Pekoe tea is being prepared, the leaves are placed in sieves, and finally over charcoal fires, and packed whilst warm to prevent the aroma escaping. The manufacture of ordinary green tea is somewhat different; the leaf is gathered separately, and the leaves as soon as gathered are placed in a deep iron pan heated by fire, and then rolled and tossed until perfectly soft. They are removed from the pan and given over to rollers, who roll them under their hands on a table covered with a mat. In the manufacture of black tea much more time is occupied. In the manufacture of green tea speed is necessary to preserve the colour of the leaf; while for black the opposite course is required. After the leaf has been weighed it is tossed about, and then put on shelves to desiccate; this continues for some time, and as soon as the leaf begins to turn up at the sides is rolled by hand, a process which it twice undergoes: it is then placed in the pans for 'firing,' which is performed in a similar manner to that described in the manufacture of green tea; the difference being that the pans employed for the black tea are shallow, and placed over the stove at an angle, while for green tea the pans are deep, and placed horizontally over the stove. After the leaves have been roasted they undergo rolling again, and are put aside to dry, and are again roasted, the heat of the stove being lowered; the leaves are then lightly strewed over sieves which are exposed to the action of a charcoal fire, which is the last process except the sorting, which is done by means of sieves of different sizes. As the tea is sorted it is packed in the boxes so well known to European commerce and awaits its final destination in the hands of the consumer.

HARRY'S DRIVING.

When Harry was in the country, his great delight was to see the big dog "Nep" harnessed to a small waggon, and carrying things to the neighbors. One day, he asked if he might drive Nep. Mrs. Gray was sending some milk and other things to the country store.

"I'm afraid you will not make Nep mind," said she. But Harry promised to be careful. So he took the reins, and he and the dog started. Now, which do you think is the most forgetful, a boy, or a dog? When they were in the path through the woods, a saucy Bob-White called out to them. Nep did not pay much attention. He knew all about "Bob-White." But Harry said "Whoa, Nep!" The dog stood still; and "Bob-White!" sounded clearly again.

"Oh, I must see that fellow! You stand still, here, Nep!" said Harry speaking very sternly to the dog. And Nep did as he was told, until he caught sight of two, long ears in the grass, a little way ahead. Ah! a rabbit! thought Nep; and he forgot all about the wagon behind him, and started to get poor Bunny! Then what a rattling and breaking time there was! Harry heard it, and screamed "Whoa." Mrs. Gray heard it, for she had followed a little way, to see if all went right. The hired man heard it; and ran out to see what was the matter. Why, the matter was, that Harry had forgotten his promise to be careful! And can any one expect a dog to be more careful than a boy? Yes; very often, they are so. But this dog saw a rabbit; and I think we can excuse him. Harry was the one who did wrong.—*Shepherd's Arms.*

BERTHA'S TABLE AT THE FAIR.

"Children have very fancy names now-a-days—think of that little Smith girl being Gladys Smith!"

"Ridiculous!"

"And instead of Kate and Susan and Mary, we have Laura and Flora and Estelle, and all sorts of fine titles."

"What difference does it make?"

"Just this, that I won't have Gladys Smith at my table."

"Girls! girls!" called Mrs. Vane, from another room.

"What is it mother?"

"Don't let prejudice govern you."

"But, mother, everybody will laugh at that little red-headed Gladys. Her father is a butcher, too!"

"No matter; we all have to eat meat. What would we do without butchers?"

"I don't know," sulked Bertha; "but I don't want to have Charlie making all sorts of fun of us, and he will get up rymes on Gladys. If she were plain Kitty Smith he wouldn't think of it."

"It is the decorative age," laughed Mrs. Vane.

"I won't, I won't, I won't have her at my table," repeated Bertha, in a whisper to her friend, Edith Edwards.

But Bertha was not to have her own way. The tables were all arranged.

Three little girls to each of those where fancy articles were sold, and four for the flowers.

Bertha had been appointed to the

flowers, but the older girls had decided to sell those as they better knew their value.

The fair day came. Many kind hands and hearts had been at work, but Bertha's table looked bare.

She saw in a minute that it did not compare with the others.

Fairs have their shady side like everything else.

Bertha was full of envy and disappointment.

She could not even help shedding a few tears, and the worst of it was Edith did not sympathize with her.

Why not?

Because Edith knew that Bertha had made a mistake in refusing to have Gladys Smith with them. She happened to know more about Gladys than Bertha did, and she told her so. "Shall I speak to Gladys?"

"I don't care what you do," was Bertha's cross answer. "Fairs are all horrid."

A whispered consultation between Edith and Gladys resulted in this. Gladys having a taste for sketching in water colors had made a perfect pile of cunning little bits of pictures with ribbons to hang them by, and when Edith told them how bare their table was, the generous child came and hung them all over the empty spaces. Yes, and she added lots of little fern baskets and twisted chairs made of roots, and many ingenious toys which only she could make.

Bertha was never more ashamed of herself in her life, though she couldn't tell Gladys of her folly. She made Charlie promise to be as polite as she determined to be, and that ended the nonsense about names.

"Fairs are quite nice when you can make so much money for Daisy Wards, aren't they?" said Bertha to Edith.

"Yes, and when you can come across any one so kind and obliging as Gladys Smith!"

FLO'S DISOBEDIENCE.

Flo lived in the country. The warm days of Summer were gone; so that mamma told her little girl not to swing in the hammock any more, but to run about. The day before Flo's birthday, mamma was busy making nice things for the little party. Flo went out to play. "Oh, dolly! how nice it would be to have a swing!" she said. The sunshine seemed so bright; and she thought mamma did not know how very warm it was. She was in the hammock, in another minute, swinging, with dolly in her arms. The wind blew about her tossing her curls; but she did not notice, because she was thinking of her party. In the middle of that night, Flo had the croup; and papa went for the doctor; and mamma lost all her rest, while she held the disobedient little girl in her arms, and put on the hot cloths, as the doctor said.

"How did my darling take cold?" mamma said kissing the hot face.

"I'm not a darling, I'm a bad little girl!" whispered Flo. "I sat in the hammock, ever so long!" She could not speak much. But she saw how sorry mamma was. All that long bright birthday, Flo had to stay in bed; and there was not any party, after all!