

* The Inglenook *

Hungry Ants Build a Bridge.

Something new and interesting about ants was learned by a Mount Airy florist and told to a "Philadelphia Record" reporter. For a week or so he had been bothered by ants that got into boxes of seeds, which rested on a shelf. To get rid of the ants he put into execution an old plan, which was to place a meaty bone close by, which the ants soon covered, every one deserting the boxes of seeds. As soon as the bone would become thickly inhabited by the little creepers the florist tossed it into a tub of water. The ants having been washed off, the bone was put in use as a trap again.

Then the florist bethought himself that he would save trouble by placing the bone in the centre of a sheet of fly paper, believing that the ants would never get to the bone, but would get caught on the sticky fly paper while trying to reach the food. But the florist was surprised to find that the ants, upon discovering the nature of the paper trap formed a working force and built a path on the paper clear to the bone. The material for the walk was sand, secured from a little pile near by. For hours the ants worked, and when the path was completed they made their way over its dry surface in couples, as in a march, to the bone.

The Tower of Babel.

A French scholar, M. de Mely, has published a hitherto unknown Greek manuscript which gives some curious details about the Babylonian temple now represented by the ruins called Birs Nimroud, and identified by some with the Tower of Babel. This venerable building, which was restored by Nebuchadnezzar the Great in the sixth century B.C., forty-two generations, according to him, after its first erection, was not only standing, we learn from the newly-found document, but was used as a place of worship, as late as the fourth century B.C. As seen and measured by Harpocration the temple rested on an enormous substructure of seventy-five feet in height. In the centre rose a square tower consisting of six stories one above the other. Each story was twenty-eight feet high, and at the top there was a small shrine rising fifteen feet more. It was ascended by an outside staircase with 365 steps, 300 of which are said to have been of silver and the remainder of gold. The number of steps evidently answered to the days of the solar year and the seven stages or stories to the days of the week. These statements of a Greek observer of the fourth century B.C., confirm the suppositions of the French Assyriologist, M. Oppert, based on modern research.

"Do You Suppose."

"Do you suppose," said Johnny, as his little cousin laid away her largest, rosiest apple for a sick girl, "that God cares for such little things as we do? He is too busy taking care of the big folks to notice us much."

Winnie shook her head and pointed to mamma, who had just lifted baby up from his crib. "Do you think," she said, "that mamma is so busy with the big folks that she forgets the little ones? She thinks of baby first, 'cause he's the littles. Surely God knows how to love as well as mother."

Stevenson's Picture of a Double Life.

FROM "GOD'S GENTLEMEN," BY THE REV. R. E. WELSH, M. A.

One of the strangest things about Robert Louis Stevenson's "Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," is the dispute among critics concerning its purpose. By common admission it displays all Stevenson's faculty for the creation of bizarre, fantastic, and even grotesque characters and uncanny scenes. Brave men, reading it late at night alone, have flung it away when they reached the critical point in the tragedy, unable to bear solitude any longer. . . . Is it only a morbid nightmare, the result, as we are told, of an injudicious supper, or is it a flaming moral vision of the refined essayist turned prophet?

In telling the enthralling story, the master romancer holds back the clue to the mystery till the end, and employs all the best literary arts to give vividness to the two main figures.

We are shown the eminent physician of high repute in his hospitable home in Cavendish square, and again, the dwarfish, gruesome, misshapen creature Hyde, as he skulks along the back street and steals into the dark house which stands back to back with Dr. Jekyll's. There appears to be a shady mystery connecting the distinguished doctor with the ugly Hyde, whose evil, uncanny face and mis-begotten figure with clothes too large for it, cause in everyone who sees him a nameless repugnance. At times Dr. Jekyll shuts himself up in his laboratory behind his house, where he conducts mystic experiments in chemistry. Then Hyde perpetrates some diabolical deed and disappears. Jekyll is found in a state of sick melancholy, but returns to his social duties, feverishly eager to devote himself to humane and pious charities, and for a season is benignant and happy. But after a time he is once more in his cabinet within his laboratory. Restless steps, a voice unlike his own, cryings as of a lost soul, are heard. Notes of pitiful appeal are dropped to servants sending them for drugs, which each time prove too weak for his needs.

At last his friend Utterson and the awe-stricken servants break in the cabinet door, and find, amid the pungent smell of noxious drugs, the convulsed, the dwarfish figure of Mr. Hyde, just dead. The two men are one and the same! With a draught of some transcendental liquid, the one could transform himself into the other. All is confessed and explained in a statement which Dr. Jekyll leaves behind him, and in which many a man may see his own inward strife displayed. The story is but the stage on which Stevenson exhibits his vision of truth.

It is the drama of a double life. We are not harmonious units. We are different persons at different times and in different moods. There are several of us within, as the demonized maniac confessed when he exclaimed in his agony: "My name? O miserable me! I am not one, but many! My name is legion!" After a giddy, reckless spirit has possessed us, a mad mind capturing us and laughing at old vows and cold moralities we come to ourselves and stand appalled. We remember the other self, but we are not it; we stand away, indeed, shrinking from the Hyde character into which we have slipped.

The first experiments in the life of the Hyde nature are often highly exhilarating, and for a time it seems as if this duplicity of life could be practiced without unhappy results. Dr. Jekyll tells how at first he feared to try the experiment of his secret discovery. But an unholy curiosity drew him on. He took the strange liquid, and at once "I felt younger, lighter in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images, running like a mill-race in my fancy."

He found, to his delight, that it was easy for him to pass from one character to the other. He had to take but one draught from the sparkling cup in order to escape from the restraints of his dull professional character.

Yet, when he had returned to his saner self, especially after having indulged his worse nature to excess, Dr. Jekyll loathed the part that he had been playing as Mr. Hyde. He would swear to heaven that never again would he have anything to do with that hateful creature. But he did not go and destroy the implements of his evil courses.

For some months his resolve held firm; his life was restrained and severe, and the compensations of a benignant conscience were his. But the force of his revulsion began to slacken. Old visions and cravings for freedom cast their spell over him. The heart was not fixed. He had not shared his evil secret with his friend Utterson. This was his ruinous mistake, his inexpressible misfortune at this point—that he had not taken his intimate into partnership with him in his struggle, and therefore had not the support of a strong personality beside him. The way back was open—and nobody the wiser. "My devil had been long caged; he came out roaring."

We find that, whilst first it required an act of deliberate and clear-headed choice before we could pass into the lower self, by and by we slip unconsciously into the worse character. We come to make the transition without our choice, or even against our desires.

On one occasion he had been out upon a night adventure, had returned late, and awoke with strange sensations. "It was in vain I looked about me; in vain I saw the tall proportions of my room in the square; in vain that I recognized the pattern of the bed curtains; something still kept insisting that I was not where I was, that I had not wakened where I seemed to be, but in the little room in Soho where I was accustomed to sleep in the body of Mr. Hyde. In one of my wakeful moments my eye fell upon my hand. Now the hand of Henry Jekyll was professional in shape and size; it was large, firm, white and comely. But the hand that I now saw, clearly enough, in the yellow light of a mid London morning, lying half shut on the bed clothes, was lean, corded, knuckly, of a dusky pallor, and thickly shaded with a swart growth of hair. It was the hand of Edward Hyde." He had gone to sleep Dr. Jekyll; he had awaked Mr. Hyde.

One's power to play a clandestine part, when practiced for a time, at length becomes self-acting. When restraints are removed, when the watchman is asleep or off his guard the ruling passion takes possession. The worse character becomes the natural one, and nature asserts itself when free to act spontaneously.

It is also remarkable that the forces required for the purpose of transition have to be increased as the time goes on. On the laboratory table was found a book of notes; and opposite certain dates, perhaps six times in all, occurred the single word "double," and one "total failure."