

in which he labored, and was constantly getting specimens of geology and zoology for his friends at home. It was about this time that the slave trade was started, and he fought against it fiercely, liberating any slaves which he could, and writing home accounts of its horrors.

His letters of the last few years being all destroyed by the treacherous Boers, nobody knew whether he was alive or not, so Henry Stanley searched for him and found him in 1871, nearly starved for want of food and water. He was supplied with these and went back to work. Not long, however, was the struggle to continue, for he was found dead kneeling beside his bed in a rude hut on April 30th, 1873. His remains were carried back over land and sea by his faithful followers and were laid in Westminster Abbey, with the honor that England accords only to her great sons. MYRTLE LINDSAY.

(Age 14.)

Lochwinnoch, Renfrew Co., Ont.

Dear Puck and Beavers.—As I have just been reading your charming letters I thought I would ask Puck a few questions, if it is no harm, so here they are: May we write on more than one page, or on as many as we like? And may I write again or may I join your garden competition? Will you please excuse this awful writing Puck, and will Annie Condy, age 14, please write to me? MARGARETTA WILLIAMS.

Larchwood P. O.

You may write on as many pages as you like, but only on one side of the paper. Certainly you may write again, and you may also enter our Garden Competition. I have entered your name.

Dear Puck and Beavers.—I would like to join your club. My uncle takes "The Farmer's Advocate" and I always get the reading of it. I want to tell you about a worm I saw, and would like if you could tell me its name. It was light-green in color about three inches long and about half an inch thick, light-yellow and dark strips on its sides cornerwise. It had a large neck and head. Seven yellow and black feet on each side, nearly half an inch apart. I found this worm on the lilacs so I broke off the branch, and when it was laid in the sun, the worm would go down under the leaves.

I have read a few books. Some of them are "The English Orphans," "Children on the Plains," "Gleaned from Life's Pathway," "Sheer Off," "Ellen Hart," "Snow Storms," "Richard Bruce," "Allen White," and some others.

My letter is pretty long, isn't it? But you'll just have to excuse me this time, for I'd rather tell my news than write it. Bye Bye.

Elphin, Ont. C. M. CAMPBELL.

(Age 13.)

The "worm" you found was probably the caterpillar or larva of one of the moths. If you find one again put it in a box pierced with small holes, put in a supply of leaves for food, and watch what will happen as the days go on.

Dear Puck.—I am very pleased with the last prize you sent me, and I wish to thank you for it with all my heart. It is a book which I wanted the most of all, and it shan't be put in a box only to be brought out on state occasions, as a great many prizes are. I have read and reread my bird books which you sent me, and you may be pretty sure that this one will share the same fate, especially in summer, as the birds and flowers claim most of my attention then. I often wondered why, in the summer, you did not have bird competitions as well as flower. Have the Beavers found out about the birds through the birds themselves, and not through books? There are so many things we could find out if we only would, but not only the birds and flowers. A few years ago I remember I came upon a mother snake enjoying the warmth of the sun with her little ones. When she heard my steps in the grass the mother called to her little ones, opened her mouth, in popped the little ones, and she glided away into the bushes. For a time I did not know what to think about it. To me it

seemed a strange thing to have a mother deliberately swallow her young, but I learned later that had I concealed myself till the mother snake thought the danger was passed, I would probably have seen the little snakes jump out of their mother's mouth as if nothing had happened. A short time ago I read an account of a gentleman who was in doubt as to whether the mother snake did swallow her young, so he killed a mother snake and found she had about two or three hundred living little snakes inside of her. He said that the mother snake had a special bag or pouch to keep her young in. He also found a snake's nest, and published a full description of it. From what I remember the eggs are very unlike those of the birds, the shells being very soft. They are laid in circles so that the mother can wind herself in around them, and one nest contains from two to four hundred eggs. The nest is about one or two inches below the ground, and is covered by the soil which helps to keep the eggs warm. I do not know the size of the snake's eggs, but I think they are white in color.

Did any of you Beavers ever see the frog change his suit? Watch him, and you will probably see him take off his old suit and swallow it. He will do it soon now, about May or June.

I. WINFRED COLWELL.

Brookville Stn., St. John Co., N. B.

Dear Puck and Beavers.—I have been reading the Beavers' letters in "The Farmer's Advocate," and I was tempted to write to your circle and see if I can join. I saw about "Hunting and Trapping," so I thought I would write. Hunting and trapping should not be done unless the animals are doing harm. Some boys think it good sport to kill squirrels and groundhogs, just for the fun of being smarter than some other boys. Last winter a mink was taking away our chickens. We set two traps side by side in the hole. When it came back it caught one hind leg in one trap, and one front leg in the other trap. Papa killed it and sold its hide, but it did not bring enough for the lost chickens, which amounted to eighteen in all. As this is my first letter I will close.

Troy, Ont.

FLOYD JOHNSON.

R M D No 1.

(Age 11, Sr. IV.)

Peter Rabbit's Lesson.

Peter rabbit
Had a habit
Of visiting the house;
And every night
When the moon was bright,
He crept along like a mouse.

But one night
He got a fright,
And you'd think he'd seen a bear;
For he started running
And he looked quite cunning,
As he hopped and jumped in the air.

But he soon got calm,
And he sat like a lamb,
At the foot of a great big stone,
As he thought about what he had seen;
And he began to feel kind of mean,
But he was glad he was all alone.

He soon turned around
And he sniffed like a hound,
As he quietly hopped to the box,
He smelt all around
In the air and the ground,
And crept up as sly as a fox.

He peeked in the door
And there, on the floor
Lay an apple so big and so red
That Peter Rabbit
Wanted to grab it,
As it sat there, as big as his head.

At last he went in,
But he knew it a sin,
And gingerly took a bite;
Bang—went the door,
While there on the floor,
Peter stared with all his might.

How nice he was caught!
For an apple he'd been bought.
But he thought of his mate,
As he blinked at his fate.
It was growing late,
But he still had to wait.

In the morning he ventured a peek at the door

And what he saw there, made him feel sore,

For the lock was not true, and the door did just close

And out with a bound, young Peter goes.

It is needless to say, that Peter Rabbit, After this gave up the house-haunting habit.

HOMER FITZGERALD.

(Age 14.)

Thorndale, Ont. R R No 3.

Dear Puck and Beavers.—Here is another new Beaver to trouble Puck in his very busy occupation. I have been a very interested reader for a long time, and think, like many others, that Puck had a good head on him to give this circle a name like it has.

I certainly am going to try the "Garden Competition."

There are some very funny riddles sent by the Beavers, like the one Gladys Elsley sent. I agree with Vera Schweitzer that it was a watermelon.

I live on a farm of about four hundred acres, about two hundred under cultivation. We have a large sugar bush on it, and in the spring we make syrup and sugar. We sold all the syrup we could spare, and could have sold more.

Although I am a girl I am very fond of horses. Willie King gave me a new idea about teaching colts to lead. We have seven horses, three that can work and a pair of matched colts rising two years old, and a pair of foals, which my brother and I take great pain in training.

I have a sister who is very fond of drawing and painting, and she has made some very beautiful pictures. I am pleased to know that Dalphine Allen is a drawer, and I hope she will continue practicing and some day win great fame.

Well, I guess Puck will be getting tired enough so I will close, hoping to see my letter in print and wishing Puck and the Beavers every success in their future work. BESSIE CURRIE.

Lammermoor, Ont.

(Age 14.)

Dear Puck.—I thought that I would write a story on a leaf of tea.

The first I can remember I was a little leaf under the ground, by and by I slowly began to grow, and soon I was above the ground. Then I began to unfold my leaf. My, what a beautiful world I saw before me. Over me was growing a beautiful tree, and I thought what a chance it had compared with me to see the world. I little thought that I would have all the chance I wanted before I was done with my travels. I grew and grew till I was quite a height, then with my brothers I was picked and dried. Then we were sent away to be put up in packages. When we got there we were culled over, and then put up in lead packages and labelled Salada tea. Then we were shipped to a little country store. There we sat on the counter. All the other packages were sold but the one I was in. Then one day a little girl came in and bought the package. I was at the top of the package, and when the little girl's mother opened it she took several of my brothers and myself out and put us in a teapot, then she poured hot water on us and allowed us to steep for five minutes, then she poured us in cups. I happened to be poured in a little boy's cup. The little boy was not feeling very well, and did not drink all of his tea. And I was left in the bottom of his cup. Then the little girl threw me outside. There I lay on the frozen ground for a while. But by and by it began to snow, and soon I was all covered over with a nice warm blanket. Then after a few months the snow began to melt. The grass grew green and the birds began to sing. And I again thought what a beautiful world, but did not add that I would like to see more of it, for I have seen plenty. I am now lying half hidden in the beautiful long grass, and am well content with my lot.

Wheeler, Ont.

LYLA HURST.

(Class 4th, Age 14.)

Browsings Among the Books.

FROM ESSAY ON "GAMES."

(By A. C. Benson.)

Then, too, I am afraid that I must confess to a lamentably feeble pleasure in mere country sights and sounds. I love to watch the curious and beautiful things that go on in every hedge-row and every field; it is a ceaseless delight to see the tender, uncrumpling leaves of the copse in spring, and no less a pleasure to see the woodland streaked and stained with the flaming glories of autumn. It is a joy in high midsummer to see the clear, dwindled stream, run under the thick hazels, among the rich water-plants; it is no less a joy to see the same stream running full and turbid in winter, when the banks are bare, and the trees are leafless, and the pasture is wrinkled with frost. Half the joy, for instance, of shooting, in which I frankly confess I take a childish delight, is the quiet tramping over the clean-cut stubble, the distant view of field and wood, the long, quiet wait at the covert-end, where the spindle-wood hands out her quaint, rosy berries, and the rabbits come scampering up the copse. The delights of the country-side grow upon me every month, and every year. I love to stroll the lanes in spring, with white clouds floating in the blue above, and to see the glade carpeted with steel-blue hyacinths. I love to walk on country roads, or by woodland paths, on a rain-drenched day of summer, when the sky is full of heavy, inky clouds, and the earth smells fresh and sweet; I love to go briskly homeward on a winter evening, when the sunset smoulders low in the West, when the pheasants leap trumpeting to their roosts, and the lights begin to peep in cottage windows.

Such joys as these are within the reach of everyone; and to call the country dull because one has not the opportunity of hitting and pursuing a little white ball round and round among the same fields, with elaborately contrived obstacles to test the skill and the temper, seems to me to be grotesque, if it were not also so distressing.

I cannot help feeling that games are things that are appropriate to the restless days of boyhood, when one will take infinite trouble and toil over anything of the nature of a make-believe, so long as it is understood not to be work; but as one gets older and perhaps wiser, a simpler and quieter range of interests ought to take their place.

FROM "HABITS."

(By A. C. Benson.)

How rare it is to meet a man who in the course of an argument will say, "Well, I had never thought of that before; it must be taken into account, and it modifies my view." Such an attitude is looked upon by active-minded and energetic men as having something weak and even sentimental about it. How common it is to hear people say that a man ought to have the courage of his opinions; how rare it is to find a man who will say that one ought to have the courage to change one's opinions.

FROM "RELIGION."

(By A. C. Benson.)

We look back upon our life, and feel that it has all followed a plan and a design, and that the worst evils we have had to bear have been our faithless terrors about what should be; and then we feel the strength that ebbed from us drawing back to sustain us; we recognize that our present sufferings have never been unbearable; that there has always been some residue of hope; we read of how brave men have borne intolerable calamities, and have smiled in the midst of them, at the reflection that they have never been so hard as was anticipated; and then we are happy if we can determine that, whatever comes, we will try to do our best, in our small sphere, to live as truly and purely as we can, to practice courage and sincerity, to help our fellow-sufferers along, to guard innocence, to guide faltering feet, to encourage all the sweet and wholesome joys of life, to be loving, tender-hearted, generous, to lift up our hearts; not to be downcast and resentful because we do not understand everything at once, but humbly and gratefully to read the scroll as it is unrolled.

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