



VOL. XIX.—No. 931.]

OCTOBER 30, 1897.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

### PERFECT FREEDOM.

HE is not free who serves himself—  
His lower self that clips his wing,  
And numbs him that he cannot sing  
Of praise or joy.

But he who bows his will to God's,  
And opes his heart to other's woe,  
And lives for Christ his life below,  
He, he is free!

This is true freedom—not *my* way  
But His who ever chooseth best,  
Whose yoke means liberty and rest  
To heart and soul.

REGINALD  
CALLENDER.



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BEREAVEMENT.

## SISTERS THREE.

By Mrs. HENRY MANSERGH, Author of "A Rose-coloured Thread," etc.



## CHAPTER V.

ON Saturday afternoon Mrs. Freer drove up to the door in an old-fashioned carriage. She was a thin, little woman, not at all like her big son, whom she evidently adored as the most wonderful specimen of his sex, and she was full of gratitude for the kindness which had been shown to him. Rex's letter had evidently been of a descriptive nature, for his mother recognised each of the three girls, addressed them by name, and referred to their special interests.

"How do you do, Miss Hilary?" I hope my son's illness has not interfered with the arrangements for your journey. How do you do, Miss Lettice? How do you do, Norah? Rex has told me of your wonderful playing. I hope you will let me hear something before I go."

Norah was never loath to play, and on this occasion she was anxious to make a good impression, so that Mrs. Freer might gain her father's consent to the proposed music lessons. At the earliest opportunity, therefore, she produced her violin, played her favourite selections, and had the satisfaction of seeing that Mrs. Freer was unmistakably impressed.

The little head in the large black bonnet approached Mr. Bertrand's in confidential fashion. Norah watched the smile of pleasure on her father's face, followed by the usual pucker of the brows with which he was wont to receive a difficult question. Mrs. Freer was evidently approaching the subject of the professor from Lancaster, and presently, oh, joy! the frown passed away, he was leaning forward, clasping his hands round his knees, and listening with an air of pleased attention.

"Mr. Freer is quite willing to allow Edna to take lessons, even if they should be rather expensive, for the poor child frets at being separated from her friends, and she is not strong enough to remain at school. She could not come here to have her lesson, I am afraid, for she is only allowed to go out when the weather is mild and sunny; but if you would allow Norah to come to us for the day once a fortnight—(fortnightly lessons would be quite enough, don't you think so?)—it would be a pleasure to have her. She would have to stay for the night, of course; it is too far to come and go in one day. Edna would be charmed! It would really be a charity to the poor child!"

"You are very good. It sounds feasible. If you will be kind enough to make inquiries, I shall be most happy to fall in with your arrangements. And now let me give you some tea."

Half-an-hour later the carriage was brought round again, for the nights grew dark so soon that it was necessary to make an early start on the ten-mile drive. Rex hobbled down the hall on his sticks, escorted by the entire Bertrand family, for the week of his visit had seemed to place him on the standing of an old and familiar friend, and the Mouse shed tears when he kissed her in the porch, while Lettice looked the picture of woe. Norah was the most cheerful of all, for Rex whispered in her ear, "I'll keep them up to the mark about the lessons. We will have some good times together when you come over, and—I say! I impressed upon your father that you were awfully clever; you'll have to do as much for me, and convince mine that I am too stupid to do any good at college!"

"Oh, I will!" said Norah emphatically. "I will! Good-bye. I'm most fearfully obliged!" She stood on the path waving her hand and nodding farewells so long as the carriage remained in sight. It seemed as if her wish were to be fulfilled indeed, and the thought of the new friends and the fortnightly visits to Brantmere filled her with delighted expectation.

For the next few days Hilary was as busy as a bee preparing for her visit to London. She gathered together all her nicest things, and, not content with her own, cast a covetous eye on the possessions of her sisters. Half-a-dozen times in the course of the morning the door of the room in which the two youngest sisters sat would burst open, and Hilary's sleek little head appear round the corner to make some new request.

"Lettice! you might lend me your new muff!"

"Oh, Hilary! I only got it at Christmas, and I need it myself in this cold weather."

"Don't be so selfish. I'll leave you my old one. It doesn't matter what sort of a muff you wear here, and you know quite well mine is too shabby for London. It's only for a fortnight."

"Oh, well, I suppose you must have it. It's very hard though, for I do like nice things, even if I am in the country."

"Oh, thanks awfully. I'll take mine to your room." Then the door would bang and Hilary's footsteps be heard flying up the staircase, but in less than ten minutes she would be down again with another request. "You don't mind, I suppose, if I take your silver brushes?"

"My silver brushes! I should think I do mind, indeed. What next!"

"But you never use them. You might just as well lend them to me as leave them lying in their case upstairs."

"I am keeping them until I go away visiting. If I don't even use them myself, it's not likely I am going to lend them to anyone else."

"Lettice, how mean! What harm could I do to the brushes in a fortnight?

You know what a grand house Miss Carr's is, and it would be horrid for me to go with a common wooden brush. I do think you might lend them to me!"

"Oh, very well; you can have them if you like, but you are not afraid of asking, I must say. Is there anything else?"

"Not from you; at least I don't think so just now. But, Norah, I want your bangle—the gold one, you know! Lend it to me, like a dear, won't you?"

"If you lose it, will you buy me a new one?"

"I won't lose it. I'll only wear it in the evening, and I'll be most awfully careful."

"You have a bangle of your own. Why can't you be content with that?"

"I want two, one for each arm; they look so nice with short sleeves. Thank you, awfully. I'll put it in my jewel-box."

"I haven't said I would lend it to you yet."

But Hilary ran away laughing, and gathered brushes and bangles together in triumph.

It was on the evening preceding the journey to London that Mr. Bertrand came upon his second daughter standing alone in the long upstairs corridor, which ran the whole length of the house, pressing her forehead against the panes of the windows. Lettice had been unusually quiet during the last few days, and her father was glad to have the opportunity of a quiet talk.

"All alone, dear?" he asked, putting his arm round her waist and drawing her towards him. "I was thinking about you only a few minutes ago. I said on New Year's Day, you remember, that I wanted to give each of you three girls some special little present. Well, Hilary is having this trip with me, and Norah seems in a fair way of getting her wish in the matter of lessons; but what about you? I'll take you with me next time I go away, but in the meantime, is there any little thing you fancy that I could bring back from London town?"

"No, thank you, father. I don't want anything."

"Quite sure? Or—or—anything I can do for you here before I go?"

"No, thank you, father. Nothing at all."

The tone was dull and listless, and Mr. Bertrand looked down at the fair face nestled against his shoulder with anxious eyes.

"What is it, dear? What is the matter, my pretty one?"

He was almost startled by the transformation which passed over the girl's face as he spoke the last few words. The colour rushed into the cheeks, the lips trembled, and the beautiful eyes gazed meltingly into his. Lettice put up her arm and flung it impetuously round his neck.

"Do you love me, father? Do you love me?"

"Love you! My precious child! I love every one of you—dearly—dearly! But you"—Mr. Bertrand's voice broke off with an uncontrollable little tremble—"you know there are special reasons why you are dear to me, Lettice. When I look at you I seem to see your mother again as I met her first. Why do you ask such a question? You surely know that I love you, without being told?"

"But I like being told," said Lettice plaintively. "I like people to say nice things, and to be loving and demonstrative. Hilary laughs at me if I am affectionate, and the boys tease. Sometimes I feel so lonely!"

Mr. Bertrand drew his breath in a short, stabbing sigh. He was realising more keenly every day how difficult it was to bring up young girls without a mother's tender care. Hilary, with the strain of hardness and self-seeking which would ruin her disposition unless it were checked in time; beautiful Lettice, longing for love and admiration, and so fatally susceptible to a few flattering words; Norah, with her exceptional talents, and daring, fearless spirit—how was he to manage them all during the most critical years of their lives? "I must speak to Helen Carr. Helen Carr will help me," he said to himself, and sighed with relief at the thought of sharing his burden with the kind-hearted friend of his youth.

It was nearly six o'clock when the travellers drove up to the door of the white house in Kensington, and Miss Carr came into the hall to meet them, looking far less altered by the lapse of three years than her young visitor, who had developed from a delicate girl of fourteen, into a self-possessed young lady of seventeen.

"And this is Hilary. Tut, tut! What do you mean by growing up in this ridiculous manner, child?" Miss Carr pecked the girl's cheek with a formal kiss, and turned to hold out both hands to Mr. Bertrand. "Austin! how good to see you again. This is a pleasure—a real pleasure." There was no doubting the sincerity of the tone, which was one of most affectionate welcome, and the plain old face beneath the white cap was beaming with smiles. Miss Carr had been Austin Bertrand's devoted friend from his youth onwards, one of the earliest believers in his literary powers, and the most gratified by the fame which he had gained. Hilary was left out in the cold for the next ten minutes, while the old lady fussed round her father, inquiring anxiously if he were cold, if he were tired, and pressing all manner of refreshments upon him. Even over dinner itself she received scanty attention. She had put on a pretty blue dress, with a drapery of lace over the shoulders, arranged her hair in a style copied from the latest fashion book, and snapped the gold bangles on her arms, with a result which seemed highly satis-

factory upstairs, but not quite so much so when she entered the drawing-room, for Miss Carr put up her eye-glasses, stared at her fixedly for several moments, and then delivered herself of an expressive grunt. "Deary me! seventeen, are we? Don't be in too great a hurry to grow up, my dear. The time will come when you will be only too thankful to be young!"

At this rate Hilary began to feel that it was not uninterrupted bliss to be in London, and this suspicion was deepened when at nine o'clock her hostess looked at her stolidly, and remarked—

"You are tired, my dear. Go to bed, and have a good night's rest."

Hilary bridled, and held her little head at the angle of injured dignity which her sisters knew so well. Nine o'clock indeed! As if she were a baby!

"Oh, thank you, Miss Carr, but I am not tired. It was such an easy journey. I am not sleepy at all."

"My dear, all young girls ought to get to bed and have their beauty sleep before twelve o'clock. Don't mind me. Your father will manage to entertain me. He and I have always plenty to say to each other."

After such plain speaking as this, it was impossible to object any further. Hilary rose with a flush on her cheeks, kissed her father, and held out a stiff little hand towards Miss Carr. The old lady looked at her, and her face softened. She was beginning to repent, in the characteristic manner to which Norah had referred. Hilary felt herself pulled forward, kissed lovingly on the lips, and heard a kindly tone take the place of the crisp, mocking accents. "Good-night, dearie, good night! We must have some good times while you are here. Sleep well, and to-morrow we will talk things over, and make our plans."

The door shut behind the girl, and the two occupants of the room looked at one another in silence. Miss Carr's expression was self-conscious and apologetic; Mr. Bertrand's twitching with humorous enjoyment.

"Too bad, Helen, too bad! I can't have my poor little lass snubbed like that!"

"My dear Austin, it will do her all the good in the world. What a little Miss Consequence! What have you been about to let the child think so much of herself?"

"Put a woman's responsibilities on her shoulders, I'm afraid, before she was ready to bear it. My dear Helen, that's the very thing about which I am anxious to consult you. These girls of mine are getting on my nerves. I don't know what to do with them. Hilary has the audacity to be seventeen, and for the last eighteen months she has practically done all the housekeeping. Miss Briggs looks after the Mouse—Geraldine, you know; gives lessons to Lettice and Norah, but beyond that she does little else. She is a good, reliable soul and a

great comfort in many ways, but I fear the girls are getting beyond her. We had a conference on New Year's Day, and I find that they are tired of present arrangements, and pining for a change. I promised to think things over, and see what could be done, and I want your advice. Hilary is a conscientious, hard-working little soul. She has been thrust into a responsible position too soon, and it is not her fault if she is a trifle overbearing, poor child. At the same time it will be a terrible misfortune if she grows up hard and unsympathetic. Norah is a vivacious young person, and they tell me she is developing a genius for music. She is afire to go abroad and study, but I think I have settled her for the time being with the promise of the best lessons that the neighbourhood can produce. Lettice—"

"Yes—Lettice?"

"She is a beautiful girl, Helen. You remember what Elma was at her age. Lettice is going to be quite as lovely; but I am more anxious about her than any of the others. She is demonstrative herself, and loves demonstration and flattery and appreciation. It's natural, of course—quite natural—but I don't want her to grow up into a woman who lives only for admiration, and whose head can be turned by the first flattering tongue that comes along. What would be the best thing for a girl with exceptional beauty, and such a disposition as this?"

Miss Carr gave one of her comical grunts. "Small-pox, I should say!" she replied brusquely; then softened into a laugh at the sight of her friend's horrified face. "I see you are like most parents, Austin, all your geese are swans! Norah is a genius, Lettice a beauty, and Hilary a model housewife. You seem to be in a nest of troubles, poor man; but I can't undertake to advise you until I know more of the situation. We will have a pleasant time while you are here—take Miss Consequence about, and let her see a little life; and then, as you're an old friend, I'll sacrifice myself on your behalf, and as soon as the weather is anything like warm, pay you a visit, and see how things are for myself."

"My dear Helen, this is really noble of you. I know your dread of the 'North Country,' and I assure you I appreciate your self-sacrifice. There is no one else in the world who can help me so much as you."

"Well, well, I have an idea; but I won't say anything about it until I know the girls better. Would you be willing to—"

"Yes, what?"

"Nothing at all. What a silly old woman I am to be sure, when I had just said that I wouldn't speak of it. It's something for the good of your girls, Austin, but that's all you will hear about it until I come to Cloudsdale, and see them for myself."

(To be continued.)



## RAMBLES WITH NATURE STUDENTS.

By MRS. ELIZA BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Wild Nature Won by Kindness," etc.

## PART I.

It is quite possible to take a walk in the country, through the most beautiful scenery, in lovely weather, with everything to conduce to our enjoyment and invigoration of spirit, and yet to return feeling bored and weary and half inclined to say how dull the country is! That is one side of the picture.

On the other hand I have known young people come back from a ramble in a quiet and rather unpromising country lane, their faces beaming with pleasure, and their hands filled with an odd collection of specimens. Leaves, mosses, stones, anything in fact which had taken their fancy as curious or interesting. Then eager questions are poured forth with bewildering rapidity, and it is easy to see that keen enjoyment has been derived from even this commonplace little stroll. May I point out that the difference between these two results simply arose from acquiring or not acquiring the habit of seeing intelligently what lies around us. If we pass everything by with our mental eyes shut, our physical eyes observe nothing.

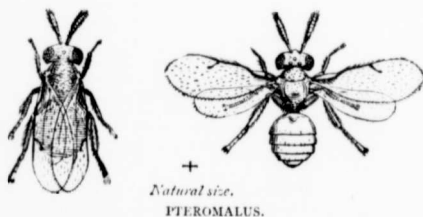
I am going to take for granted that a large number of our GIRL'S OWN PAPER readers belong to the former class, that they are intelligent observers and yet are in need of a guide to help them to understand the thousand and one things that they may see in a country walk.

The curious objects in hedges, trees and fields all have a purpose and a meaning, but very often these need interpretation for those who never have had the opportunity of acquiring facts in natural history.

The practice of putting down the results of each day's ramble, making notes of things seen or obtained, the first appearances of birds and insects, the flowering of trees and plants, will result in the course of a few months in a record possessing a certain value. We can thus compare one year with another and note the differences in each, and the effect of temperature in hastening or retarding the appearance of flowers and insects and the arrival of migratory birds.

The remarks I shall endeavour to make upon all these and other points will be the result of my own actual observations made from day to day and noted down at once, so that any readers who may like to follow this plan can do so with ease if they happen to live in the country or have access to it from time to time.

The first appearances of birds, insects and



flowers may vary somewhat as to date, according to the mildness or severity of the winter, so that I cannot promise that every object that I write about will be found upon the same day in the following year, but probably within a short period earlier or later each object will be discovered.

It need not be thought that one must be far

away from cities in order to learn about nature. I live only twelve miles from Charing Cross, and yet I find abundant subjects for study in my own place and the adjacent common. I think it is especially interesting to try and find treasures in most unlikely localities.

Having on one occasion to wait a whole hour on a pouring wet day at Bedford railway station, I determined to see if I could collect anything to while away the time. Things looked very unpromising outside the station; new houses in the act of being built, heaps of sand and mortar and plenty of mud everywhere seemed hopeless enough; but a bare patch of common, across which ran a newly-gravelled road, caught my eye; there might be possibilities in the gravel, so I made my way to the new road and before long I had the pleasure of finding there several rare fossils, pieces of chalcid and jasper, a shell impression and sundry other treasures; so in spite of rain and wind, my waiting hour passed, not only without weariness, but in positive enjoyment.

I believe I have heard of as many as fifty species of wild flowers being found in a single field, and a well-known scientist discovered an equal number of wild plants in a piece of waste ground in the outskirts of a large town.

It is a little discouraging to begin our natural history diary in November, just when all animal and plant life seem going to sleep for the winter, but as our magazine commences its annual round in this month it has been deemed advisable to begin now. Perhaps we shall find to our surprise that there is hardly a day in the blankest season of the year which will not afford us some sources of interest and much that will lead to pleasant thought and study. The limits of space will not admit of a daily ramble, and bad weather sometimes hinders outdoor study, so for a little variety I have sometimes discoursed upon objects taken from my own museum.

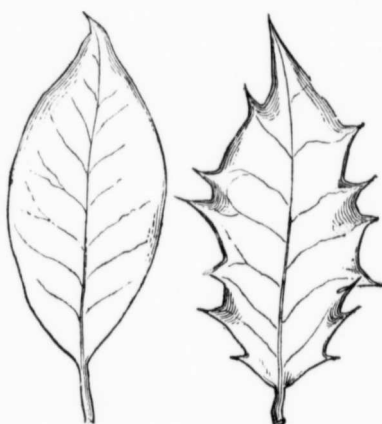
## PTEROMALUS.

Although the weather is very cold I see a quantity of little hardy flies upon the window-pane. Apparently they are unaffected by a temperature which paralyses almost all other insects in the depth of winter.

This special little fly, *Pteromalus*, has a very curious life history, for it lays its eggs in living caterpillars, chrysalides, or hibernating blue-bottle flies. The eggs hatch into very minute grubs which feed upon but do not kill the unfortunate insect until they are full grown, then they emerge from the creature they have preyed upon, turn into tiny chrysalides and in due time appear as perfect flies. They are so excessively small that they can creep through a mere crevice at the back of a picture-frame and make their way under the glass. Thus I have frequently found thirty or forty of them

spread over the inner surface of some valuable print and there was no getting at them but by removing the picture and re-framing it.

These flies perform a very useful office in reducing the number of caterpillars and other noxious insects which would otherwise abound in our gardens.



## THE HOLLY.

The hollies are reflecting the bright morning sunshine which glistens on their polished leaves.

These are, as far as I know, the only trees which have sharply-spiked leaves on the lower branches only, to defend the foliage from the attacks of browsing cattle. Higher up out of reach, the leaves are perfectly smooth and unarmed, resembling those of the camellia. It is difficult to believe such differing leaves can belong to the same tree.

Southerly's well-known lines refer to this peculiarity in the holly leaves.

"O reader! hast thou ever stood to see  
The Holly Tree?  
The eye that contemplates it well perceives  
Its glossy leaves  
Ordered by an Intelligence so wise  
As might confound the Atheist's sophistries.

Below a circling fence, its leaves are seen  
Wrinkled and keen;  
No grazing cattle through their prickly round

Can reach to wound;  
But, as they grow where nothing is to fear,  
Smooth and unarmed the pointed leaves appear.

I love to view these things with curious eye

And moralise;  
And in this wisdom of the Holly Tree

Can emblems see,  
Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,  
One which may profit in the after-time.

Thus, though abroad perchance I might appear

Harsh and austere; [intrude  
To those who on my leisure would  
Reserved and rude;

Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be,  
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree."

## OWLS.

We are constantly hearing the brown owl's hoot, both in the daytime and in the dusk, and occasionally I see it and the White Barn owl flitting across the lawn in the twilight.



These birds are of essential value in ridding the land of mice; they are like winged cats always on the watch for their prey, and very successful they are in catching, not only mice but young rats, sparrows and beetles.



OWL PELLET.

Owls like to roost on certain trees which afford them a thick covert during the day, and beneath those trees I often find large grey pellets consisting of the fur and bones of rats and mice which it is the habit of the owls, as they cannot digest them, to reject each morning after their nightly feast.

When owls are kept as pets, their raw meat diet should include a mixture of small feathers, or fur of some kind, else the birds will not continue in a healthy state.

The frequent occurrence in their pellets of the wing cases of the dark blue dung-beetle shows that this is a favourite article of diet with the owls.

In order to ascertain the number of mice and other rodents destroyed by these useful birds, seven hundred and six pellets of the Barn owl were carefully examined, and in them were found the remains of sixteen bats, three rats, two hundred and ninety-three voles or field mice, one thousand five hundred and ninety shrews and twenty-two small birds.

We thus see that without their aid the farmer would find it very difficult to save his crops from devastation, and that these useful birds should be protected and encouraged by every means in our power.

A few years ago, when the crops in southern Scotland were threatened with complete destruction by field-rats or voles, great flocks of owls appeared on the scene, and corrected a plague which human science had proved quite unable to deal with.

LEAF-SCARS.

Now that the trees are leafless, we can readily observe the marks upon the branches

called leaf-scars, which show where leaves have been.

Some trees, such as the sycamore, the wayfaring tree and others have opposite leaves; others produce them alternately or at varying distances and in a variety of ways; the study of leaf position is known in botany as Phyllotaxis, and it is to the individual differences in bud-growth that we owe much of the beauty of our woods.

Each tree has branches varying in form, in lightness and density, and hence arises the exquisite play of light and shade which we cannot fail to admire when trees are grouped together.

One curious fact about the horse-chestnut may easily be noted at this season. Amongst the smaller branching twigs some may be found which are almost exact counterparts of a horse's foot and leg. As shown in the illustration, there are the hoof and six or eight nail marks of the shoe, the fetlock joint and part of the leg.

According to the angle at which the twig is growing will depend its resembling a fore or hind leg. There appear to be three suggested derivations of the name of this tree. The word "horse" is a common prefix denoting anything large or coarse, such as horse-mushroom, horse-radish, horse-parsley, and so it may have been applied to this tree which grows vigorously and has large leaves. One writer, however, explains the name as being a corruption of the word "harsh," as the horse-chestnut fruit is harsh and austere compared with the sweet chestnut with its eatable nuts. There remains the third derivation arising from the curious mimicry we find in the twigs and branches, which seem to be quite a likely reason for bestowing a name alluding to the fact.

A little ingenuity in neatly cutting and



HORSE-CHESTNUT TWIG.

trimming the mimic horse's leg will result in a woodland curio which will surprise those who have never happened to notice the shapes which horse-chestnut twigs assume.



WITCHES' BROOMS ON HORNBEAM.

HORNBEAM.

Some Hornbeam trees are attacked by a kind of parasitic fungus (*Evosacus Carpini*), which so seriously interferes with the flow of the sap that a multitude of small interlacing shoots are the result. These give to the tree in winter the effect of being laden with birds' nests.

Each year these tufts increase in size until the branches become weighed down with their unnatural burden. These "witches' brooms," as they are popularly called, occur also upon the birch and several species of pines, larches and spruce firs.

It is still, I believe, a moot question whether these unusual growths may not be the work of a gall fly instead of a fungus, and here is a field for the ingenuity of a young observer to exercise itself upon.

VENTRICULITES.

Those who have access to a chalk-pit may like to know that the long slender flints so often to be found there are singularly resonant.

If two flints are attached by a piece of string and struck against each other whilst held suspended in the air, they emit a sweet ringing sound almost like that of a bell.

Certain fossil sponges called ventriculites may also be found amongst chalk *débris*; they are usually met with in two pieces, having snapped asunder at the narrowest part; but by putting the upper and lower halves together we may easily imagine how they looked when growing on some sea-shore countless ages ago.



VENTRICULITE IN FLINT.



VENTRICULITE IN CHALK.



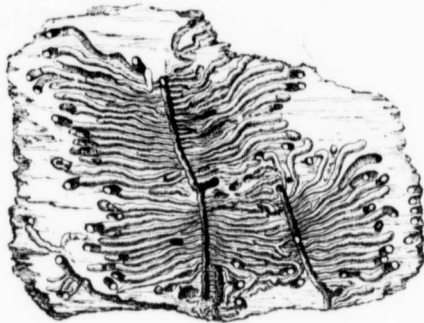
RESONANT FLINT.

I pick up flint ventriculites in my garden amongst other stones lying on the surface of the ground, and this fact, taken in connection with the existence of our rounded pebbles, shows that in early days the sea must have rolled over this part of Middlesex, although now it is the highest ground all round London.

Another proof of this fact was afforded by our finding a fossil crab, which was discovered about ten feet below the surface by some men who were digging a well.

#### ASH-BARK BEETLE (*Scolytus*).

A piece of bark has fallen off an old gate-post and has revealed some markings on the wood beneath. These I find are the work of a small beetle which burrows under the bark of the ash-tree and there lays her eggs. When the grubs come out each one lives and works in its own little tunnel, eating



SCOLYTUS BORINGS.

the wood as it goes along until it is full grown and changes into a pupa and eventually into a perfect beetle, when it gnaws its way out leaving a small round hole at the end of the tunnel.

An allied species does grievous damage to elm timber; whole forests are sometimes destroyed by this apparently insignificant insect.

The beetle bores into the tree-stem, makes a central gallery, and from it she bores small side galleries with wonderful regularity side by side, and at the end of each of these alleys she lays an egg; and when the larvæ are hatched they gnaw the wood in a straight line, always enlarging the gallery as they themselves grow bigger, so that the result upon the wood is a curiously symmetrical pattern.

Other beetles make curved galleries of intricate design, of which I have several specimens resembling delicate wood carvings.

## IN THE TWILIGHT SIDE BY SIDE.

(SECOND SERIES.)

By RUTH LAMB.

### PART I. BESSETTING SINS.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. xvi. 32).



**W** parted only a month ago, my dear girls, after having gone the round of the year together, and we carried with us pleasant memories of our many meetings. But we lingered a little over our farewell words, through which ran a note of sadness, since we did not then look forward to meeting again in the same way.

You know how sorry I was to say good-bye to you all, and, judging from your letters, I know that many of you shared in the regret I felt. Then there came to me a welcome message from our dear editor, your true friend and mine, who was the first to suggest our sitting together, "In the Twilight Side by Side." "Will you not go on with the Twilight Talks next year?" he asked. "The dear girls would be indeed sad if they were discontinued."

How can I express the pleasure these words gave me? It was the greater, because I knew how impossible it had been for us to touch

upon all the subjects we wished to talk about, and many dear girls had written to ask for advice after our last year's round had been completed.

Do you not feel with me that it will be even more delightful to resume our talks, than it was to begin them in the first instance?

We meet as old friends, and yet, I trust, with many additions to our number. Those who enjoyed our talks last year, will bring others to share in them all through the current one. Our timid members will have gained confidence by experience, and will not hesitate to speak of their trials, their efforts, their discouragements or successes; for they will be sure of sympathy.

We shall all be more anxious to help each other, for, if our gatherings have really been the means of sowing good seed in young hearts, a grand harvest will be the result. Each of us will feel, that whatever our portion and position in this life, there is not one but has something to spare which will benefit her neighbour, if it be passed on at the right moment.

A pressure from a kind hand may give strength, a loving look may be more eloquent than speech, and tell of tender sympathy. A whispered word in season may prevent a rash act, or a hasty expression which, if uttered, would have separated "very friends." Only, my dear ones, you, who give of these things which, in a sense, cost nothing, but which are not to be bought with money, must have in your hearts love both to God and your neighbour.

The recipient of any token of sympathy must be able to realise that it comes straight from the heart of a faithful friend. The word in season must be uttered in a soft voice, and reach only the one ear, so that it may inflict no wound in passing, and leave no sting behind it.

Now, dear girls, let me tell you that the subject of our talk this evening has been suggested by one of yourselves. I do not know her name, her dwelling, or anything about her position in life, and I never expect to be better informed on these subjects. But, in a very sweet and touching letter, she has given me a glimpse of her inner self.

She tells me how she has looked forward to and enjoyed our Twilight Talks, and I am sure too, that, like myself, she has found them profitable, but she wants them to be still more so. She has been struggling daily, but thus far in vain, to conquer a hasty temper which leads her to say sharp words.

Doubtless, they wound others, but none more than herself—afterwards. She grieves over her failures, and longs to conquer this besetting sin, and to be an example of kindness, patience, and forbearance to the younger members of her family who are, I fear, partly to blame. Knowing the weak place in their sister's armour, they aim sharp arrows at it, in the shape of provoking words.

If any of you who are with me this evening are in the habit of using such weapons, I beg of you to pause and think of the harm you do, and lay them aside once and for all.

It is a precious privilege of God's children to help each other on the heavenward way, and this is what my dear girl correspondent asks of us to-night. Our talk is to be on the subject of "getting angry about little things," hence the text I have already quoted. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

I am sure many of us could truthfully conclude a letter in the words which so went to my heart, as I read them at the close of the one alluded to. "From one who tries, but fails to be kind, pitiful and courteous."

Perhaps we could not all write those first words truthfully. There are many who are conscious of a fault, yet make no effort to overcome it. Something is gained when we can honestly say: "I try."

Then comes the question, "If you are indeed fighting against a foe whose strength you acknowledge, how have you prepared yourself for the contest?"

The soldier does not go into battle unarmed, or his life would be thrown away. He would neither win honour for himself nor be of service to his country. Much training and discipline are needed. He must learn patience, submission, obedience, watchfulness and he must trust his leader implicitly. His ear must be intent to catch the word of command, and, when his captain leads, he must follow without

question or hesitation. He must know how to use his weapons, and, between himself and his comrades, there must be unity of purpose and effort if victory is to be won.

You and I, dear girls, are surely of one mind in this. We wish to be truly God's children, and if so, we must be soldiers of Christ and possess all the qualities I have named, to equip us for the fight which must go on whilst we live on earth. We have to war against ourselves, first of all, and to conquer by God's help, the sin which most easily besets us.

This is not the kind of battle for an army, but for each soldier individually, yet all can help the one.

You and I can do this, and now, for the one amongst us who tries, but owns with sorrow that hitherto she has failed to attain what she desires. Let me ask each of you to pray that she may have strength from above to enable her to continue the struggle, patience to persevere until she comes off even more than conqueror, and that as the soldier looks to his captain, follows his lead and obeys his commands, so she may follow the Great Captain of our salvation until she is able to exclaim, "Thanks be to God who hath given me the victory over my besetting sin."

I want you also to pray unitedly that our second year's twilight gatherings may be fruitful of good to each and all of us, that the Holy Spirit may guide us in choosing subjects to speak about, and that after every meeting we may have a sense of greater nearness to God, and be in more loving touch with our neighbour.

I suppose we all know what temptation assails us most powerfully and is the hardest to resist. If we could compare notes, I have no doubt that many would own that the tendency to get angry about little things holds the first place.

Many people think that a hasty temper is not such a bad thing after all. They will say, "Give me a quick-tempered, sharp-spoken person to deal with; such a one is not often deceitful. He says straight out what he has to say. No beating about the bush." Or, "She is fiery enough. Up in a moment if a word is said that makes her angry; but there is no malice about hasty-people. The temper is over directly, and then—"

What then? Can the hard words be recalled? Does the effect of them pass away with the sound of the voice which uttered them? Have they inflicted no wound which will be long in healing, or may never heal? At best a scar is left as a reminder of past suffering, and the most forgiving natures

cannot always forget, however much they may wish to do so.

It too often happens that those we really love best, the members of our own families, are the ones who suffer most from our hasty tempers, and their outcome, sharp and bitter words. We are less under restraint beneath our own roof-tree than when amongst strangers. Common civility, to say nothing of social refinement, constrains us to exercise decent self-control over temper and tongue, or we should be shunned by our acquaintances and friendship would be impossible.

The fact that we do control our tempers in society shows that the power rests with ourselves to a great extent, and besides and above all, a better safeguard is to be had for the asking. Only we must want it. We must be convinced of our own weakness, and, like my dear girl correspondent who grieves over her failures at home, we must seek help where we may be sure of finding it.

Let us together take the measure of the enemy we have to fight against and the harm that it can effect as shown in God's word.

Can we find in the Bible a picture of a braver man than David was, so far as personal courage was concerned? He feared neither the paw of the lion nor of the bear; but mere lad though he was, he faced them and slew them in defence of his father's flock from which they had stolen a lamb. With only a sling and stones for armour, David, the ruddy youth, met and slew the giant Philistine.

Many a long year after, when he was King over Israel, and the father of grown-up children, we find him crying to God for help against enemies of another kind.

He, who had feared neither savage beast nor heathen giant, prayed that his life might be preserved, and that God would hide him from those whose tongues were sharpened like a sword and their bitter words like arrows.

Patient Job, amidst his many sore trials, appealed to his friends not to aggravate them by their reproaches. "How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?" he cried. "Grievous words stir up anger," said the Wise King. They are the outcome of a hasty temper, and are infectious, for they make others angry too. "An angry man stirreth up strife."

The Old Testament abounds with warning passages which show how strong a foe we have to battle with in the hasty temper which vents itself in sharp words. Turn from it to the New Testament. There the tongue is compared to a fire, an unruly evil, which needs to be kept by bit and bridle.

I could go on quoting passages of this kind,

but it will be far better for each of you, dear girl friends, to look them out for yourselves. We know enough to be sure that, in our own unaided strength, we cannot conquer a hasty spirit or keep our tongues from evil, and our lips that they speak no guile. David realised this when he cried, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips."

Like David we must pray for God's help first of all. I often think that he must have tried and failed, and felt his utter weakness when fighting against this besetting sin of speaking hasty words, and so he asks for a sentry to be set and a restraining hand to act as a lock to his lips. We must ask in a like spirit of self-distrust.

We have sometimes seen a mother place her hand over her child's mouth to prevent some foolish utterance. David asked for such a remedy, an invisible restraining power, and we cannot doubt that his petition would be granted.

So with all the armour we need to insure success, God can give it, and in His word we read, "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraided not, and it shall be given him."

Such words must take away all our doubts and fears. Besides, are we not further encouraged by the words of our great Captain—Christ? "Learn of Me for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

We must look upward in confidence, resolved to follow our Glorious Leader, and in His name let us ask for patience, perseverance, watchfulness and more of Christian love. It is those who possess a large measure of this last named, but chief amongst Christian graces, who are "not easily provoked."

Strive on, work on, fight on against the hasty spirit which vents itself in anger and sharp words. Think how glorious the victory will be when won—glorious and precious in God's sight.

Many a general, both in ancient and modern days, has come home after gaining a victory by siege or battle. His countrymen have bidden him welcome and honours have been heaped upon him on all sides. But something far better awaits you, dear ones, who try and try again; until, despite many failures, you realise that you have won a bloodless victory over a besetting sin. For the still small voice of a quiet conscience will say to you, "Well done!" and God Himself has declared, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

(To be continued.)

## VARIETIES.

### THE ACTIVE CHRISTIAN.

"I earnestly wish," says Count Tolstoi, "that every Christian of our time would devote herself with heart and soul to two kinds of activity—the abstaining from all unchristian deeds, and the bold confession of the whole truth.

"The Christian would then feel not only that her life was full, but how short it is for the fulfilment of all that is in store for her and is required of her by the Lord."

### MUSHROOMS.

Annie: "It's always in damp places where mushrooms grow, papa?"

Papa: "Yes, little one."

Annie: "Is that why they look like umbrellas, papa?"

### UNDOING DEEDS.

"Great deeds cannot die;  
They with the sun and moon renew their light,  
For ever blessing those that look on them."  
*Tennyson.*

BRIDAL SUPERSTITIONS.—According to an old superstition no bride must go to the altar without "something old and something new, something borrowed, and something blue." Neither must she, after her toilet is complete, look at herself in the mirror. She must see that no bridal guest wears a costume entirely black, as that would bring her sorrow. On changing her gown, she must throw away every pin used in the bridal attire.

GOLD DIGGING.—In the rugged hills of toil and hardship life's finest gold is found.

### HIGH AND HIGHER.

"The peak is high, and flushed  
At his highest with sunrise fire,  
The peak is high and the stars are high,  
But the thought of man is higher."

THE BEST WEAPON OF ALL.—"Woman's best weapon is her tongue," says an old philosopher. This is a mistake. She has a far better one, and the wisest woman is she who has learned to use it. That weapon is a sweet temper.

A GOOD HABIT.—"Get the habit—a glorious one—of referring all to Christ. How did He feel, think, act? So then must I feel, and think, and act. Should I please myself? For even Christ pleased not Himself."  
*Frederick W. Robertson.*

## FROCKS FOR TO-MORROW.

By "THE LADY DRESSMAKER."

I CANNOT better begin my chronicle of the late autumn season than by a little chat about warm underclothing. Nothing shows better the change in our ideas of comfort and convenience than a perusal of the advertisements in any ladies' newspaper. In one which lies before me at present I find no fewer than four

dealing with knicker-bockers; or, as some firms prefer to call them, divided skirts. The latter a very obvious misnomer, as the original and only divided skirt was really what its name implied; and was long and straight, with the smallest amount of shape possible, and as much of width as could be managed,

in order to ensure its being mistaken for a petticoat undivided, if worn as a dress. The knicker-bocker, on the other hand, has always had the same characteristics, and has always been fastened by a band under the knee, exactly as when it first came into use for mankind about thirty (or perhaps more) years ago.



GREY CLOTH GOWN AND BOLERO JACKET.

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JACKETS FOR THE WINTER SEASON.

So far as I can see, all those that are advertised are knicker-bockers only; and I fancy the divided skirt proper would be a very ugly garment for a cyclist. The materials are generally of serge, Italian cloth, fine tweed, alpaca, silk and satin. The first is the best for ordinary wear, and the last two for comfort. The slip, or detachable lining should always be purchased with them in any material of which they are made. It can be procured of calico or fine cambric, and two sets are needed for comfort and cleanliness. One of the advertisements is rather amusing and grandiose when it alludes to "the crude and cumbersome petticoat," "from which the knicker-bocker is an unspeakable relief," but it is very true, nevertheless. In case of warmth being required, the calico lining can be replaced by one of fine flannel, or what is called cotton-flannelette, or swan's down. Chamois leather is used for the cycling "knickers," and is as much of a necessity as it is for riding-trousers, and should be always worn.

The ordinary underdress of so many women at present consists of a woven combination and a pair of knicker-bockers only, that I have consequently given more space than I otherwise should to my notice of them, and I now must say a word on the subject of woven combinations. These may be of silk, wool, merino, cotton, and several mixtures of silk and wool, etc., and this year they can be obtained at wonderfully low prices. I consider that an immense saving is effected when

they can be washed carefully at home by some one who really knows how to treat them; and another saving is certainly effected when they are continually looked after, well-larned, and thickened in all thin places. There have been some excellent cotton combinations in many shops lately, and these wear very well, and are found to be warm enough by many people. I have said nothing about making knicker-bockers at home; and I hope no one will think me extravagant if I say that I prefer to purchase them; and certainly I advise my readers to get one pair from some good maker, sending the correct measure required, and getting the slip lining too; goods can then be copied, and the result will be far more satisfactory than if the task were undertaken without a guide as to the many small particulars required in the making.

Woven slip-bodice is another very good thing for winter. They are to be found in most of the good shops made of cotton as well as of wool and merino. I prefer the cotton; and they are not really expensive, for with care they wear a long time, and the fit leaves nothing to be desired.

It really seems as though one section of, or even the entire community could not rejoice over any special blessing, without finding out that it had inflicted hardship and suffering upon somebody. We have all felt as if the lovely weather of the past summer were a real blessing; but, alas! it has been anything but that to a large and important class amongst us; and in their opinion, says the

*Drapery World*, the summer of 1897 lived far too long. In both the wholesale and retail drapery trade the effect of our Jubilee summer was not satisfactory; and in many instances the retailer might as well have shut up his shop, and disported himself at the seaside up to the end of August, for all the summer goods were disposed of in the earlier part of the season. We are assured, however, that at present there is a remarkably improved taste in dress prevailing amongst us; which is evinced by a general desire for variety in colour and more artistic design.

To begin with, I must devote a few lines to the newest fashions in furs. The coats which I have seen are short; and nearly all the fitted ones have waistbands, generally of the fancy tinselled and jewelled order; which seems, to most sensible women, quite impossible for daily wear. Velvet sleeves to match the colour of the fur are popular; and these have cuffs, and usually a muff of the same fur. These little fur coats follow, to a great extent, the prevailing fashions in dress bodices. They are pouched in front, fastened down on one side, and have small basques, which fit rather tightly. People who possess much-worn sealskin jackets, or indeed any other fur, will find this rather a good season for using them; so little fur seems needed to manufacture a pretty jacket. The new fur capes, trimmed with frills of fur and frills of lace, do not much attract me, and I think they will make most people look like mountains; nor can I admire the flounces of fur. Surely it is too unwieldy

a material to be used thus! Cloth jackets trimmed with fur follow much the same rules. There are the high storm collars of last year, and a rather narrower roll of fur to decorate the front. There are cuffs and bands of fur, and in many cases braiding is used with excellent effect. Large cape collars, with ends cut in narrow points to the waist, are seen, but I fancy that the feather ruff will be much worn by those who do not feel the

English weather cold enough for fur; and there are many to whom the small fur collar-ette is quite the extreme of fur wearing to them. These useful little things are fully as much in evidence as ever, and will be just as popular, to all appearance. I have seen but few dresses as yet trimmed with fur, but no doubt many will be produced later on in the winter season.

Skirts are being cut rather narrower for the

winter season, and there seems to be a tendency to get rid of superfluous fulness, which is most reasonable when it comes to wearing gowns of heavier material. The front breadths are narrower, and many dressmakers find that they can fit their customers far better with the narrow front. Braid is very popular, many of the new skirts being braided, apparently after they were made up, for the braiding covers the seams. All kinds of this trimming are used, from fine silk to a very wide black silk one, which is edged on each side with a very fine looped one. Trimmings are carried all round the skirts in some cases, but considering the efforts made to introduce trimmed skirts, one is rather surprised to find their use so much restricted. The materials are beautiful, especially those with a black ground and a design in colour on them; while the new patterned velvets are exceedingly pretty, and will certainly be much used for bodices, blouses, and mantles.

Plaids seem to be everywhere, in all the Continental shops, and will, undoubtedly, be most popular amongst ourselves for fronts, blouses, and trimmings of all kinds. Gowns of Indian-red trimmed with black seem to have a renewed popularity; and golden brown petunia and a new shade of green appear to be the most fashionable colours. Black is certainly the most favoured trimming for every colour. Bands of black satin ribbon, an inch wide on the skirt, form a very pretty decoration; five or six rows of which are sometimes seen, and there is nearly always a black vest or a black *moiré* waistband to every cloth gown of a brighter hue.

The gown of grey cloth with a short bolero jacket which we illustrate is trimmed with white braid and picot embroidery, the sleeves being of grey poplin to match in colour, and the waistband and sash of the same. The popularity of this short bolero has continued through the summer, and is still very great. It is becoming and youthful-looking to so many figures.

The gown of woollen and silk material has a pouched bodice with a band of white leather and braid bands. It is a very simple afternoon dress for a girl, and is inexpensive and pretty. The pouched bodice needs careful cutting, especially if one be selected which drops over all round the waist; only very slight people can wear this style of thing.

The jackets for the winter season are fair examples of what I have already written about them. They are all short, generally with basques, storm collars, and some with fur bands. A variety of hats are shown, amongst which the Tyrolese hat with its erect cock's feathers is quite conspicuous. Small toques of fur, and hats of felt, with one side turned up and trimmed with velvet, and ostrich feathers are next in favour to the Tyrolese. Velvet trimmings are more liked than any others, and the cock's feather and the ostrich plume carry all before them; and we feel thankful that the bird of paradise and the heron's feathers are less in favour than they were.

I quite forget whether I said, in any of my recent articles, anything about the revival of the liking for ear-rings. The jubilee year has probably done this for us, for Her Majesty has always liked and worn them, and the Duchess of York follows her lead, and is not in the least degree troubled if they be out of or in the fashion. It seems strange that earrings should have gone out of fashion, and when we think of their ancient popularity, we are astonished. The Roman ladies wore them of great weight and value. Poppaea's earrings were worth £150,000, and the wife of Julius Caesar had a pair worth twice that sum. These weights often tore through the lobes of the ears, and there was a class of women in Rome who employed themselves in healing the torn ears of these victims of fashion.



GOWN OF SILK AND WOOL MATERIAL.

## "A GIRL OF GRIT."

## CHAPTER IV.



IT WAS eight o'clock in the evening when Helen climbed the little stair which led to her brother's room. She was footsore and weary, and exhausted for want of food. She had walked every step of the road back to the station with her valuable tin box and a large bunch of

flowers in her arms, and the excitement of the day with the tender associations it recalled had brought on a

mental fatigue which was foreign to her healthy nature.

When she got to the back of the door she heard voices—it was the doctor, who was paying Harold one of his weekly visits. But this did not deter her from rushing into the room, for she felt that she must use her last ounce of strength for the supreme moment, for a feeling of faintness was coming over her. So, with a cry of joy, she flung herself on her brother's bed and held the tin box at arm's length above her.

"Harold, Harold, I've found it, safe and whole! You can go into the country for three or four weeks; and we can pay for the tonics, I know we can, for it's worth a lot of money. Harold, do you hear me?"

The doctor took the box out of her hands and laid it on the table, and lifted her off the bed and put her in the arm-chair. Her arms dropped loosely to her sides, and her head fell back, then a quivering sigh ran through her—she had fainted.

"Look, doctor, she has fainted! Oh, Helen, what is the matter? Doctor, is she very ill?"

"Keep in your bed, young man. You're not strong enough to help; but ring the bell."

In a minute Mrs. Larkin answered the furious peal which Harold had given the old-fashioned bell-rope.

"Here, Mrs. Larkin," exclaimed the doctor, "unfasten her dress; and have you any eau de cologne?"

When Helen's head had been bathed, and the doctor had held it well forward until it almost touched his knees, she began to recover consciousness, and she held out her hand as if groping for something.

"The tin box," she whispered. "Don't let it fall or you will break all our fortune."

The doctor smiled.

"It's quite safe, my dear child, and when you are better we will open it and see what treasure it contains."

"Harold must open it, please; and I'm nearly all right now, indeed I am."

Mrs. Larkin washed her face in cold water, and the colour returned to her pale cheeks,

"I must sit on the bed and watch him open it, doctor, and I'll not faint again, I promise you."

The doctor pretended to be cross, but at once helped her to the bed, where she sat down with a beautiful smile of satisfaction on her face. Harold's thin white hands opening the box were in striking contrast to the strong rough hands of the joiner who had opened it a few hours previously.

When the lid was open, Helen lifted off the paper and watched Harold's eyes. Her heart was beating with excitement. A terrible look of disappointment and fear came into her brother's face when he saw the treasure displayed, and almost in a whisper he said—

"Chum, dear, there's only a queer-looking egg in the box; what do you mean?" Hurlingly he put his hand again in the box. "No, wait a minute," he said, "there is something else in it. Yes, here's a little agate cross; the one you used to wear as a child, Chum." And he handed it to her.

Helen took the little cross. She had forgotten she had hidden it with the egg. It was a little keepsake which a soldier friend, for whom as a child she had had a hero worship, had given to her many years ago. These were her two treasures, and she had hidden them away together from the weasel eye of her cousin. The soldier was a mere boy when he had said good-bye on the eve of his first departure from England; but in the story of Helen's after-life the little agate cross played a very important part.

The doctor took the egg from Harold and examined it.

"I have never seen one like it before," he said; "but for all that, what is the joke you are playing on us, Miss Helen?"

Helen held out her hand for the tin box, and Harold gave it to her; lying at the bottom of it, folded flat and very discoloured with age, was a letter. Helen took it out and handed it to the doctor. With some difficulty he read it through, and suddenly exclaimed—

"Dear me! dear me! The girl's not daft after all; it's the egg of the great auk, found by your uncle, Captain Churchill, in the year 1842 off the Faroe Islands. He leaves it, with his collection of birds' eggs and some other smaller legacies, to his niece Helen, only daughter of his favourite sister of the same name. He goes on to say that some day, when you are in need of it, you can inquire at the Natural History Museum what the value of the egg is, and turn it to account; but you are in no wise to part with it during your father's lifetime."

Harold pinched Helen's fingers. "Good old uncle, he knew it would go the same way as everything else. Can't you imagine father 'putting' the great auk's egg on 'Zingari,' or some other horse he believed in at the moment."

"Hush, Harold, don't." Helen was on the verge of tears. The doctor put the letter back in the box, and also the wonderful egg, and congratulated the youthful pair, who were already building wild castles in the air.

"How did you come to get the letter and the egg, my dear; didn't anyone know the value of it?"

Helen told the long story in a few words. "When uncle's legacy came, father was away, and mother, who was always an invalid, was easily coaxed into letting me have my own way; so when all the things which seemed to her of value were taken away from me (I was twelve at the time), I insisted on having the collection of birds' eggs, which she had not the slightest idea were of much importance,

and I only coveted them to add to my own poor little collection; so I was given the box of eggs, and one day when I was tidying it, as you know children love to tidy, at the bottom of the box, which was beautifully made, and which, of course, my cousin now possesses, I found this letter, telling me about the great auk's egg. As a child I thought it was the egg of a solan goose, and imagined it very valuable if worth a few shillings; but I determined that as it was left to me by my dead uncle, I would never part with it. Then my cousin came, who robbed me of everything, and one by one the eggs my uncle had left me changed hands. In a year's time he possessed every one except this. One night I hid it with the little agate cross, where I thought he would never find it."

"It was very successfully hidden, my dear child; and now let me advise you to put it away safely, and have some supper."

"Oh, I must show it to Mr. Larkin first; it was he who put me in mind that I had once had one, and where I had hidden it."

Mrs. Larkin had been standing open-mouthed in utter amazement at all that had happened. "I'll go and call Larkin, miss, he'll be that proud to see it, for he'll feel as if he'd had a hand in bringing you good fortune."

She called downstairs for her spouse, who was, as usual, sitting in the most comfortable seat in the kitchen smoking.

"I was just coming up, missis, for there's a letter for missie," and Mr. Larkin came leisurely upstairs.

"Here, Mr. Larkin," said Helen, "you mustn't touch, but you may look. This is an egg just like the one the gentleman paid two hundred and fifty pounds for at Christie's sale."

Mr. Larkin threw up his hands and used an expression more graphic than polite. Helen took the letter from him and opened it.

"It looks dreadfully like the chemist's bill," she said to herself, "but never mind, we can afford to go on tick now."

When she had opened it, she sat down suddenly, and put her hand before her eyes. "Am I blind, Harold, or is it true? Read it. . . . The editor of the *Motor* has accepted all your sketches I sent him except one, and he will give you plenty of work to do whenever you are well enough. Things never come singly, not even good fortune!" and with a cry of delight she threw herself into her brother's arms. "Oh, Harold, dear, our dawn has broken. I knew it couldn't always be night!"

The doctor and Mrs. Larkin felt that their presence was no longer required, so they slipped out and left the brother and sister locked in each other's arms.

Do you care to peep, dear reader, at the happy couple I passed the other day on the sands of Deal? The girl's face is familiar to me, but the look of anxiety has gone from it, and when I look again more closely at the young artist who is sketching by her side, I recognise him also, but the summer sun has tanned his fair skin, and his whole mind is given to the sketch he is making of various types of holiday-makers. He is scarcely robust yet in appearance, but his face is full of healthy interest in his work. It is only a parting glimpse of them, for we must say farewell at the beginning of the girl's life as a woman. My story dealt with the trials and crosses she endured before the dawn broke and the shadows flew away.

[THE END.]

## OUR PUZZLE POEM: PRIZE WINNERS AND REPORT.

## SOLUTION.

"ON THE GENTLE ARTS OF MAKING AND TAKING TEA."

How easeful to the jaded mind is tea,  
If careful blended and well made it be!  
Use teapot made of earthenware and cheap,  
And watch the water, from the kettle leap  
By spout or lid; then make the tea-pot hot.  
Put in the tea, not recklessly a lot,  
One teaspoon each, nor churlishly refuse  
Another for the pot; so will your muse  
With Dr. Johnson's praise this wondrous cup,  
Though, unlike him, do not immoderate sup,  
Lest theine and tannin and essential oil  
Combined unfit you for continued toil.

## PRIZE WINNERS.

Seven Shillings Each.

Edith Berry, Carlton Curlew, Leicester.  
Isabel Borrow, 219, Evering Road, Upper Clapton, N.E.  
M. S. Bourne, 14, The Broadway, Bromley, Kent.  
Rev. J. Chambers, Woodhead, Manchester.  
T. O. Cooksey, 60, High St., Bridgnorth, Salop.  
Mrs. A. D. Harris, Redcote, Llanishen, nr. Cardiff.  
H. E. Klein, 46, Clifton Crescent, Asylum Road, S.E.  
Eliza Learmonth, 3, Ravensbourne Terrace, South Shields.  
E. M. Le Mottée, 15, Linden Park, Tunbridge Wells.  
T. H. Mann, 15, Glebe Road, Bedford.  
May Merrill, Ulverley, Olton, nr. Birmingham.  
Florence E. Russell, 3, Rosendale Road, West Dulwich, S.E.  
Ellen Rothery Smith, 11A, Union Court, Old Broad St., E.C.  
Gertrude Smith, 10, Ferron Road, Clapton, N.E.  
Emily M. Tattam, 23, Springdale Road, Green Lanes, Stoke Newington, N.

Special Mention (equal with prize winners).

Agnes McConnell, Emily L. Reid, Ada Rickards.

## Very Highly Commended.

Edith Ashworth, Edith Barnes, Rev. S. Bell, Joanna M. Bell, Eliza Blunt, Sarah L. Bromwich, B. Bryson, Lucy Chakona, Mary I. Chislett, Margaret W. Cornack, M. A. C. Crabb, R. D. Davis, E. H. Duncan, Winifred E. Eady, Edith E. Grundy, M. Hodgkinson, G. D. Honeyburne, J. Hunt, Rachel V. R. James, Mildred M. C. Little, F. M. Morgan, F. A. Prideaux, Lucy Richardson, W. M. Roberts, Fanny Shepard, Harriet C. Smyth, Isabel Snell, E. Swebstone, Mary J. Taylor, Caroline E. Thurgar, Ellen Thurtell, Evelyn Townend, Edith White, Frances Whitlock, Florence Whitlock, Edith Gladys Wynne, Elizabeth Yarwood.

## Highly Commended.

Lydia Belling, M. Bolingbroke, Mrs. J. Brand, Alice W. Browne, Walter W. Bryant, Louie Bull, A. C. Carter, Agnes B. Chettle, Lillian Clews, Edith Collins, Helen M. Coulthard, Dr. R. Swan Coulthard, Mrs. G. Cumming, E. Danell, Amy Dawson, Lizzie Dawson, Annie E. Dineen, Rose Ferrington, Herbert V. French, Florence M. Graves, Julia A. Hennen, Rosa S. Home, "Iscult," Alice E. Johnson, Violet Lendrum, E. Lord, Annie G. Luck, Francie Massey, F. Miller, Mrs. Nicholls, Annie Page, P. H. Pevland (?), F. A. Powell, Ellen M. Price, Davida Reid,

Henzell G. Robson, John Rodway, Janet Scott, Amy I. Seaward, A. C. Sharp, Ethel J. Shepard, Ellen C. Tarrant, Daisy Tyler, Alice M. West, W. L. Wishart.

## Honourable Mention.

Eliza Acworth, Dora N. Bertie, Amy Briand, E. Burrell, N. Campbell, Mrs. E. Cunnington, Annie Kate Edwards, E. W. Floyd, A. and F. Fooks, D. L. Griffin, V. M. Griffin, Mrs. Grubbe, Mary Hinkson, Rose A. Hooppell, Edith L. Howse, Mrs. Kemp, Ellen H. Kemp, Leonard F. Kemp, P. R. Kemp, Arthur Madin, Mrs. C. A. Martin, Mrs. Amy Moraine, Phyllis Pearson, St. Clair Conway Poole, Janet M. Pugh, V. C. S. Sams, Mary Sanders, Alice M. Seaman, M. Sinnatt, Elizabeth A. Skinner, Florence White, M. Wilkins, T. Francis Williams, Alice Woodhead, Emily Wright.

## EXAMINERS' REPORT.

Difficult enough to frighten many yet easy enough to be solved by many, must be the conflicting verdict on the August puzzle. Perhaps the summer heat had something to do with the fright, and it is possible that freedom from the more fascinating duties of school life had something to do with the solving. "Howsoever these things be," let us accept the facts and forbear to waste valuable time in wondering, an occupation which is, by common consent, exclusively reserved for the other sex.

A glance at the solution will cause many solvers to regret that they did not observe that the letters *Gent* were *on The*. Others will lament their ignorance in mistaking the beautiful jay for a common crow or, even less excusably, for a "bird." But the puzzles are meant to teach the differences between many things that are not at all alike, in spite of appearances, and such faults may be readily forgiven—for the first time.

The correct name for a mixture of teas is "blend," and the adoption of it was necessary for the accurate rendering of line 2. As to the grammar of the same line, to which several solvers kindly call attention, we must point out that there is a difference between a grammatical exercise and a poem. "If carefully blended and well made it be," would have been excellent grammar but indifferent poetry, and if one of the two must be indifferent, poets always sacrifice the grammar.

The sixth line was responsible for a very interesting duplicate reading—"Put in the tea, not recklessly, allot," etc.

Inasmuch as inaccurate spelling is frequently introduced into these puzzles we have not a word to say against such an admirable reading and we have adjudged it to be equal with the author's. A few competitors who adopted this version spelt allot with only one l, a blending of the two readings which could not be allowed. Others again preserved the w in the wreck, making "wrecklessly," quite a new and inadmissible word.

Now what shall we say as to the teaspoon? Perhaps it might have been smaller with advantage, though scores of competitors had no difficulty in identifying the species. However, our own doubt as to the size leads us to accept "large spoon," and also though less willingly "spoonful." As a matter of fact the usual indications of a full spoon are wanting, but on the other hand it is difficult to assert its emptiness with any degree of confidence. Never before has a teaspoon given us so much anxious thought.

Poor old Dr. Johnson was sometimes mistaken for William Cowper, but, apart from the question of likeness, what evidence is there

that the latter ever drank too much tea? "Theine" was evidently a new word to many solvers, and was accordingly rejected with that confidence which ignorance sometimes inspires. As we always like to be instructive, we may explain that theine is an alkaloid obtained from tea leaves which, in any quantity, is injurious to life. Wherefore, tea drinkers beware!

No solution of the last line which failed to note the combination of the U and N could be accounted good.

The extension of the r was generally expressed by "continued" or the equally good word "extended." "Prolonged," "protracted" and "long lengthened," in the same connection are all inferior by reason of their clumsiness, but none of these readings could be reckoned as more than a small fraction of a mistake. And this brings us to the end of our report. The prize list being so long we had to leave out previous winners regardless of their entitlement to a second prize.

It may be interesting to competitors to know that these reports are meant to be read. If "Kathleen" had read the one on "Poison d'avril" she would not have troubled us with an elaborate inquiry as to the reason of her failure. And we must ask A. E. J. and many others to note that one good, honest mistake often disqualifies for mention of any kind. As to the indentation of lines of poetry we may say in answer to E. E. G. and "Ubique" that the solution of "Poison d'avril" was wrongly printed; lines 6 and 12 ought not to have been indented. On the general question a note has already appeared in the Answers to Correspondents. We did not receive a perfect solution of "Suppositions" from E. S. A. G. B. shall have credit for all her solutions, however wrongly her name may have been printed.

One regular solver, whose opinion is entitled to every consideration, complains of our adjudication on the puzzle "Still Life." He maintains that his was a perfect solution "although it differed in two words from the copy." The copy received by us differed in three, and after examining it again and yet again we are quite satisfied as to the justness of our decision. But following a criticism in detail our competitor writes—"The only difficulty to be found in these puzzles is assigning the best word to a picture that may represent several ideas. In fact a kind of missing word competition." We have little fault to find with the first of these remarks, but we do protest most strongly against the second. There is no warrant whatever for such a conclusion. It is clearly impossible, if there is to be any "puzzle" at all, to avoid the use of pictures which may represent more than one idea. But taking the whole series of the puzzles, it has rarely happened that more than one of the possible interpretations of a picture has fitted in with the purpose and rhythm of the verse. But even such a possibility cannot be wholly avoided, and now and then we do find a duplicate reading equal in every respect with the author's. In these cases we do not favour one reading more than the other. Once (and once only) the difficulty of adjudication was so great that we had to resort to an arbitrary ruling. We called attention to the fact in our report and expressed our regret. From the beginning of these "Puzzle Poems" we have consciously made every endeavour to keep them above the level of the chance competitions now so popular, otherwise we should not have taken so much notice of our expert correspondent's criticism. Nothing would be easier than to make the puzzles more difficult and nothing would be more unpopular.



## WHY WE COOK, AND THE HYGIENIC VALUE OF COOKERY.

By L. H. YATES.

"A true cook, be it remembered, is an artist."—*Theodore Child.*



**A**n American writer, to whom we owe many bright and wise things, speaking of nutrition in a large sense, has described it as "A stream of materials in motion, in the midst of which we live." "Our apparently solid bodies," she says, "are but processions of materials. While the procession passes a given point we live in it, that is all. Do not imagine that we are permanent objects through which dinners may or may not pass. The dinners are the fixed consideration, we the transient one. It is a matter of indifference to the dinner who eats it, or if it is eaten at all, but a matter of terrible importance to us."

This, at first sight, strikes us as a way of putting what is doubtless a truth that is not altogether flattering to human nature; if we go further into the thought we realise that the standing ground whereon we rear life, or physical maintenance, is indeed "little firmer than the rolling barrel on which the clown stands, it has to be kept going in order to support us at all."

Unless the business of supporting the body be carried on unflinchingly, no other business can be properly attended to.

The road from market to kitchen, kitchen to table, table to stomach, is a continuous one; it grows wider, more attractive, and more interesting as we pursue it, but the road which begins in the phosphates and carbons that the earth holds in reserve, is the same road that loses itself at last in the clear brain and tense muscles of our frame.

The herb and vegetable that grew in the soil ate of the substances of that soil, and developed; the sheep and cattle devoured the green things and roots and throve; man takes the vegetables and adds to them meat—or vegetables twice eaten—and secures his share of nutritive force. Here we have the elements of nutrition.

In addition to the elements man adds a process that is unknown to the animal, viz., the preparation and cooking of food. According as this process becomes more refined and perfect so it becomes more subtle and complicated, so much so that it demands the whole attention of a special functionary, who is every whit as important in society as the carpenter, the potter and the smith.

The necessity that makes cooked food essential to civilised man arises from the fact that his digestive system varies according to the amount of labour exacted from it, and according to the ease or difficulty with which the supply is furnished.

Food ready cooked is half digested, hence a saving of energy, time and force. Raw food takes an elaborate digestive system for its conversion into meat.

Far back in the earlier stages of civilisation it took all man's strength to get his food, a ceaseless effort to catch up with his food-supply, a constant "struggle for existence." As man conquered in the struggle he did not have to run after his food, he could make it grow, he produced it. In this ever-growing process of nutrition, man has so learnt to govern and manage his food-supply, that as long as our means of transportation and

distribution continue we shall live and develop the powers and faculties which our food-supply enables us to cultivate. We still have to "make our living," but our completer organisation has made it unnecessary for every individual to be absorbed in the process of preparing and producing his own food. Society, by setting apart certain members to do certain kinds of work, effects an economy of force, energy and material for the community.

While the primary reason for cooking food is undoubtedly that of saving energy in the consumer, the secondary one is that of the economising of the food-stuffs themselves, by enabling the greatest amount of good to be drawn from them with the least possible amount of waste. Scarcely subservient to these comes another reason, namely this—that as refinement of nature increases taste is developed, and the eye, the palate and the nostrils all require to be thought of. Hence we see how important is the education of that functionary who holds so important a place in our household organisation; no matter how fine the meat may be that the farmer and butcher supply, how rare the fruits and the condiments we receive from the grocer, or how choice the fish may be that the fisherman has toiled to get, the one pair of unskilled hands in our kitchen may ruin the whole procession of materials in a few minutes' time. At no stage in all the long road is there need for more energy or skill.

We are apt to forget that the art of cookery refers not only to the pleasing serving of food and maybe its dainty preparation, but the artist here has to have in mind food principles, and plan so that real nourishment be given at the right stage of life.

The building-up, more especially the keeping-up of a beautiful human frame lies in a great degree in our own hands. Raisers of cattle and breeders of poultry have long grasped this truth and acted accordingly, but while every fact that can be gleaned about methods of feeding stock is carefully tested by trial, the study of human dietaries is pursued only by those who have earned for themselves the title of crank and faddist.

Defective nutrition is at the bottom of half the evil and crime that debases human nature, as it is also the primary cause of deformities and disease. Under-fed or over-fed the result in either case is similar.

We need to realise how certainly the work of the cook and the housewife take hold of the very springs of life. The work done by them, the kind of work and the quality of it, makes or mars even the character and morals of those who come under their care, but especially does it make or mar those bodies which, as temples of the Holy Ghost, should be in line and form, fair, fine, strong and pure. Study, then, the laws of food, and by them build, not for the present generation's comfort alone, but for the well-being of the generation yet to come.

The more complex our modern human life becomes the greater becomes the strain on the human system; the outlay is not always the same; there are times when we are not called upon to great physical or mental exertion, then again there are periods of excessive strain; these varyings have to be met by varying supplies of nutrition. The handful of dates which will satisfy the Arab will not meet the needs of the brainy merchant, neither will the coarse abundance found on the table of the miner or labourer.

Cooking is variously regarded; in itself perhaps a "low" function, comparatively speaking, one of the traits which bespeak us as "of the earth—earthy," it is nevertheless an art, a science, a craft and a profession, or had we not better substitute service for profession, seeing that we entrust it to hands far from professional, leaving it too often to the least capable people to perform?

If ever cooking is to become worthy of the title of profession it must be pursued by those who are specialised for the purpose. It is a folly to say that all women should be cooks; we might as well demand that all men should be architects or doctors.

While cooking that is performed by a trained and intelligent functionary becomes possessed of all the dignity of a profession, it is also a craft because of the skill that must be acquired if it is to be perfectly handled; it is a science too, because it has laws of its own just as the science of medicine has. The work that the physician does is too often that of remedying the work that the cook has done ill. Alas, it is too often sadly true that the cook makes so ill that the physician's remedy is of no avail at all.

Cooking is also an art, in that its highest votaries are "born, not made," and that their work is open to the inspiration of genius. It is a vehicle for the expression of fancy, and of the colour sense.

At the latest exhibition held by the Universal Cookery and Food Association, one of the most interesting exhibits was the model kitchen of sixty years ago, contrasted with a model of a kitchen of the present date. It seemed a case where extremes met. The heavy, clumsy appliances, very few in number, of the early Victorian age, might explain the taste of the times for large, substantial and solid dishes; but surely we have added to our labour tenfold when we surround ourselves with such needless accessories as our modern furnisher would have us think are becoming!

Striking the line between these we shall arrive at something like a real idea of the value of saved labour and of helpful utensils.

While lined copper pans represent the acme of good housewifery in the eyes of the ruler of a large establishment, and in his *chef's* opinion, in the small household where labour is limited, they are a burden to life. Let glazed earthenware, "granite" ware, fire-proof china, and enamelled pans, take the place, and we have cleanliness ensured us, while the quality of our dish will not be changed.

Our Puritan fathers looked upon cooking stoves as an unrighteous lessening of the curse laid upon toil in the garden of Eden; and women's work has been handicapped for generations by something of the same narrow spirit.

We are wisely trying to substitute cooking stoves for the open ranges that have long been a bugbear to the middle-class English housewife. Other nations—the French, Americans, Germans, Austrians—all have long since found out better means and methods.

While there is much to be said in praise of both oil and gas stoves for cooking purposes, more especially for the latter, the excellences of which are so numerous that I could wish every housewife to be the possessor of a gas cooker of some kind, yet, personally I would place the American kitchener, or the French *cuisinière* before them all, for every purpose, indeed, except for the roasting of meat.

The joint that has been suspended in the middle of a gas oven and cooked for just its proper length of time, will be found to be almost identical in flavour to that which was roasted on the jack before an open fire, and very much superior to the so-called roast done in the range oven, which is really baked and not roasted at all.

The newer methods of cooking by electricity are yet too undeveloped and too costly to be of much use to us; but the promises held out to us of what shall be are far beyond our dreams. In the meantime the developments of the modern gas range are more than enough to satisfy every possible requirement, and with careful usage will cost less in fuel than the ordinary range fire.

The improvements in cooking utensils and in methods of work which are made from time to time, are generally originated by those, who, having thought the subject worthy of their study, have become artists and proficients; but, unfortunately, many of their methods and inventions only become adopted in the majority of homes after they have

reached them by passing through the hands of a class who have neither appreciation for, nor the intelligence to comprehend, their right advantages. Happily for us we are rapidly awakening to the knowledge that work in the kitchen is essentially noble, honourable, human work; in a very few years' time we may hope to see it undertaken by the most highly-trained and skilled workers of the community.

In proportion to the value that we put upon this work so will it rank in our labour market. While English people persist in regarding it as "servant's work," and only suited to the hands of the class into whose care it is given at present, so long will cultivated intelligences think it an unworthy sphere for their employment. The States are far ahead of us here, partly because the true servant class is there almost unknown. Household economy and economics in every branch, not only have their special schools and centres of demonstration, but a practical course of their study is part of a regular college curriculum. More than that, in Boston, the meals of school children and

older students have been thought sufficiently important to be put under civic control.

Mrs. Ellen Richards, chemist in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, writes that, the prevalent disregard of the importance of human dietetics is especially noticeable in connection with the life of students. If a student breaks down, the remark is heard on all sides—"What a pity he studied so hard!" and no one asks, "Was he well fed?"

To sum up then, since the repair and building-up of the human frame is one of the chief businesses of life, it follows that whatever economises time in this respect leaves more opportunity for other works. As what is most easily digested affords the most nourishment, proper food, properly cooked and prepared for digestion adds to our strength and length of life, increases our usefulness, and, if we may indeed feel all to be true that is told us on this head, does much to determine our mental and moral character, for what we eat makes us what we are, say some.

(To be continued.)

## "IF LOVING HEARTS WERE NEVER LONELY—;"

OR,

MADGE HARCOURT'S DESOLATION.

CHAPTER V.  
JACK'S DEPARTURE.



It was with anything but a light heart that Jack left for London two weeks later.

In spite of the delightful prospect before him, of a trip on the ocean, in a well-appointed yacht with jovial companions, he could not banish a troubled

feeling from his mind. All the way to London, look where he would, his sister's face, as he had last seen it, rose before him. He was thoroughly anxious about her, for there had been something strange about her expression that he could not fathom. It was not exactly reproach or grief that her eyes expressed, but a dreary hopelessness, that he could not but know should have no place on so young a face, and it puzzled

He felt he ought to have stayed with her longer; that he was acting selfishly in making his visit so short; and however little a man may acknowledge such pricks of conscience, he seldom feels easy under them.

It was with a sense of real relief that he at last stepped from the train in London and found his friend, Guy Fawcett, waiting for him. The latter was in high spirits, and full of their

coming trip, and, in five minutes, Jack had forgotten everything but the pleasures of the moment. For Guy was just such another careless, pleasure-loving man as Jack, and whenever these two were together, there was little room for shadows.

The yachting excursion in prospect rendered them even more lively than usual, and on being joined by a third member of the party, their exuberance of spirit became almost beyond bounds.

They started off at once on a last shopping expedition to the Stores, the principal item to buy being kitchen utensils, and as none of them knew in the least what they wanted, the proceeding proved somewhat ludicrous. Guy wanted three saucepans and Jack only two, while the third man, Dick Herman, was quite certain one would be sufficient. Then again, Jack wanted a gridiron as well as a frying-pan, and Guy would have it that a frying-pan answered the same purpose, therefore it wasn't necessary.

Finally, after having sorely tried the patience of the man who served them, and come to the wise conclusion that they didn't any of them know much about it, they decided to leave the matter in his hands, and told him to furnish them with whatever they would require for a six weeks' trip.

They then took a stroll down Piccadilly, and, after ordering an unconscionable amount of tobacco and cigars, turned into their club for tea. Here they were joined by the other man of the party, and a general stampede followed, during which they discovered that the last mentioned had already furnished the yacht with kitchen-appliances, and therefore they were likely to somewhat represent a strolling caravan laden with pots and pans.

For a few moments they were at a loss

to discover a way out of the difficulty, and then Guy Fawcett, with his usual aptitude, hit on a plan.

"I'll tell you what, you fellows," he exclaimed, "we can easily get out of it by starting a few hours earlier! Let's go by the nine train, and wire to the Stores, that, being obliged to start much earlier than intended, we shall have to countermand the order."

This wicked suggestion met with universal consent, and they made a move at once to go and finish their packing.

Unfortunately, in the general excitement next morning, the telegram was forgotten, with the result that a most unlooked-for display of pots and pans was found to adorn their chambers on their return.

It was not until late in the evening that Jack had time to let his thoughts return to Madge and to his visit home. He and Guy were having a quiet pipe after their dinner, when he suddenly recollected he had bought two books for her and rose to get them.

Guy watched him lazily, with a half-curious air, lounging back the while in an easy chair, with his feet planted on the mantelshelf. He had heard Jack give the order and been surprised at the tenor of it, but had forgotten all about it, until he saw him place the books on the table and open them.

"You're looking mighty serious, old man," he remarked presently. "If it weren't too utterly beyond the bounds of probability, I should be inclined to think you were going to wade through one of those learned books yourself, with a view to laying claim to the possession of an intellectual taste," and he laughed good-humouredly. "As a matter of fact, I don't suppose you'd be able to make head or tail of a single page."

"I don't believe I should," replied

Jack, but his face did not relax its gravity, and, as he turned over the pages, he knit his brows with a perplexed look.

Guy was surprised, and finally dragged himself up out of the depths of his chair. Then he stretched his long arms and legs, ran his fingers through his thick dark hair, shook himself like a huge Newfoundland dog, jerked his refractory tie back to its original position, and finally put his arm across Jack's broad shoulders, leaned over him and read the titles of the books.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" he exclaimed slowly, with emphasis, adding, "*The Story of the Heavens* sounds fairly reasonable, but what on earth does *Sartor Resartus* mean?"

"Upon my word, I don't know," replied Jack shrugging his shoulders. "But that's nothing compared to the idea of a girl of eighteen choosing such books for a present. I asked my sister what books she would like and she deliberately wrote these two. What's more, she only wanted this," holding up the offending *Sartor Resartus* disdainfully, "because her other copy had got spoilt somehow, so I suppose she's known all about it a long time."

"Well, did she really though choose those? What an extraordinary thing that you should have a sister a blue-stocking. Does she dress anyhow and wear blue spectacles?"

"No, she isn't a blue-stocking at all, she's only got queer tastes. She's just

the oddest sister a fellow ever had, and one of the best in spite of it."

"Tell me about her," said Guy seating himself on the edge of the table and swinging one leg. "What a chap you are, I never even knew you'd got a sister."

"Nonsense, you must have heard me speak of Madge."

"Yes, but I didn't know who she was, and even then you only mentioned her once in a blue moon. I didn't know but what she was a maiden aunt. I'd like to hear about your home," he continued. "Have you been having a gay time? You're a lucky chap to have a home, I think, but you say precious little about it."

"I don't often go there, you see; it's so deadly dull, I can't stand it for long; besides, I've got a step-mother who wants spificating."

"Whew—" whistled Guy. "That's it, is it? well, I should bar a step-mother myself. But what about this sister who reads *Sartor Resartus* at eighteen and isn't a blue-stocking. What's she like, a bit eccentric?"

"I suppose she is, in her way," replied Jack slowly, "but she doesn't do it for effect. I can't exactly describe her, except that she has rather odd ideas about some things and is jolly nice-looking. But look here, Guy, I want you to come home with me next year, promise you will if you can, there's a good chap."

"I'd like to immensely, but I hope

your sister won't use words of more than three syllables when she condescends to talk to me, or I shall feel an awful gull. You'll drop her a hint, won't you?"

Jack laughed. "Oh! she won't do that," he said, "you needn't be afraid. I shall be awfully glad to take you because it may cheer her up a bit. She has a wretchedly poor time of it," and his face puckered again. "I felt quite miserable about her until I met you this morning. I feel rather wretched now, to be going off to have such a grand time, while she's moping up there, among those desolate hills."

"I should think she's used to it by now," said Guy, reassuringly. "It isn't likely to be so bad to her as it seems to you, after London."

Jack sighed and turned aside to knock the ashes out of his pipe.

"I don't know," he said slowly, "I've a kind of idea the matter upsets her more in a week than she would me in a month."

"Oh! it's that way is it?" remarked Guy, adding, "Well, it's no use your worrying about it now. Of course it's hard lines on a girl to have a nasty step-mother, but there's many worse things than that," with which somewhat ambiguous remark, he precipitated himself from the table, with a kind of long jump half-way across the room, and prepared to retire for the night, an example Jack was not loth to follow.

(To be continued.)

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

## MEDICAL.

"ONE WHO WANTS TO KNOW."—Earwigs do not derive their name from their traditional habit of creeping into the ear, but from the shape of their unfolded wings, which are said to resemble a human ear. The name is a corruption of "earwing." Earwigs do sometimes, though very rarely, enter the ears of people lying asleep on the ground. As a rule if they do get into the ear they quickly get out again. If they do not decamp, filling the ear with oil or water will make them float out. It is absolutely impossible for them to reach the brain. If any insect gets into the ear, and either comes out of itself or is dislodged, it does no harm.

SWIFT MIGNONETTE.—1. The "scaliness" of your face is doubtless due to scorbout. Sulphur ointment will probably cure it.—2. You cannot check severe perspiration. Wearing kid gloves increases the flow of perspiration in the hands.—3. It is usual when introduced to a person to say "how do you do," or some equivalent phrase. It is always the privilege of the lady to speak first.

"VALERIA ITALICA."—A spider nevus "need not necessarily be small; in fact, some are of large size. If the spot which troubles you corresponds to the description of the spider nevus, that is, a red centre with radiating lines leading from it, the whole disappearing when pressed upon, a spider nevus it is whatever its size. There are other kinds of nevi or "mother's marks," and a large number can be removed by surgical means.

A. J. S.—You might try ichthiol, but we cannot tell you what result to expect. Calomel is considered to be injurious to the teeth, and if taken in enormous doses constantly repeated may do some injury to the teeth. As it is given at the present time its effect on the teeth is nil. It is not only non-injurious but is one of the most valuable drugs we possess.

"A BOOKWORM."—Unless your eyelashes are unhealthy or the lids are not in a good condition you can do nothing to make your eyelashes grow longer. If the lids are sore you may find boracic lotion useful.

A LOVER OF THE "G. O. P."—If you derive benefit from peroxide of hydrogen by all means continue to use it. It is perfectly harmless.

A PLAIN GIRL.—We are afraid that we cannot help you much. Soap does not make the skin dry. Perhaps some simple preparation, such as vaseline, applied in the evening might do some good.

LELA.—The symptoms you mention may be due to organic heart disease, but they may also be due to anæmia or nervous disease of the heart, or to several other causes. We strongly advise you to overcome your prejudices and have your heart examined by a physician. This alone can settle the question, which is one of vital importance to yourself.

J. Y. K.—We are afraid that your fingers will not return again to their previous condition; but still, they may improve. Massage may do them good. If you have massage done by a professional it is exceedingly expensive, but you can do it yourself. All that is necessary is to gently rub the fingers in the direction of the veins, that is, begin at the tip and gently rub upwards. Never reverse the direction.

E. M. W.—No; it is not etiquette to offer a present to a physician who has attended you free of charge because you cannot afford to pay him. If you know him personally it is a different matter. We need scarcely remind you not to forget to thank him.

INQUIRER.—It is absolutely impossible to tell you what is the matter with your spine without any details. "Spinal weakness" may be almost anything. No one could be certain as to what diseases you without careful investigation.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

ROCHDALIAN.—The number containing the article on "Swiss Darning" is that for May 15th, 1886, No. 20, vol. i., pp. 314, 315, by Marie Karger. If you advertise for the number you will, no doubt, obtain it.

JEAN VERTAUB.—We have answered your question before. The phrase "cock and bull story" is a corruption of "concocted and bully story"—the catchpennies sold in the streets being vulgarly called "cocks;" and "bull" is derived from the Danish word *bulle*, which means "exaggerated." What is called an "Irish bull" is a ludicrous blunder, which comes to the same thing.

JANIE.—The English lady-novelist who has published the greatest number of books of that description, so far, is Mrs. Oliphant, over and above six (or more) biographies, and contributions to periodical literature. Her novels are seventy-six in number; Miss Braddon following next with about twenty less. Amongst men-writers of such-like fiction Mr. John Black heads that list with thirty books; and Mr. Besant follows with twenty-seven. But even Mrs. Oliphant's prolific brain has been thrown into the shade by some of our transatlantic cousins; and Lope de Vega, the Spaniard, who flourished between 1602 and 1635, surpassed all our modern novelists in the extraordinary number of his publications, and, probably, all who preceded him in any age of the world.

DOLLY.—Sleeping with the head to the north has been a question attended with much superstition in various and very many parts of the world. In Japan a diagram of the points of the compass is usually pasted on the ceiling of the guest-room that they may avoid making any mistake. In all four quarters of the world the opinion prevails of its sinister effects; but on the contrary, in this country, our views are guided by a consideration of the influence upon us of the electric currents, which are credited to flow from the North Pole, and thus prove conducive to better sleep when the head turns that way.

CONSTANT READER.—Although we have already answered your letter, we have, since then, obtained the first legal opinion on the possibility of changing your Christian name when already registered at your baptism, and find that it could not legally be done. The name registered is unalterable, but you may call yourself by any "fancy name" you please. Should a copy of your baptismal registry be required on matters of business, for marriage, to accompany certificates, or to be inserted in wills, it must correspond exactly with the Christian name registered, or the change of name will invalidate the document.

NESTLES.—We have always placed the tin of condensed milk, when opened, in a basin of cold water, and kept it covered with a wetted cloth. It must be kept cool, and of course the water must not get into the milk. It would keep good for quite a week, if not more.

OUR NEW PUZZLE POEM.

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DEAR D WHO BRAELY ÷ 5 POR  
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PRIZE COMPETITION.

MY ROOM.

THE Editor wants to see each of his readers in the room in which she generally sits. Every girl has something in her room to describe, whether it be a room of grand furniture and ornaments, or a room devoid of everything but the most meagre articles.

The *Queen Newspaper* in noticing one of our recently-printed competition essays, said :-

"She describes her work as long, but pleasant; she is on duty from eight till eight, earns a pound a week, and will not earn any more because she is going to be married. The main features of the room are a gas fire, a typewriter, some fashion plates, an almanac, a thermometer, a text, and a portrait of the Duchess of York. How well one sees that room!"

Now, that illustrates what the Editor wants. Each girl to describe her environment (sitting-room or work-room) in the same or in a similar way. On page 505 of our last volume we printed a paper by Lady Bloomfield on *My Boudoir*, and very interesting reading it was because it described faithfully the "household gods" of an interesting woman. Of course each girl is of equal interest to her Editor, and he wants as vivid a picture of her room as Lady Bloomfield gave in her paper above mentioned. There will be five prizes of one guinea each for the best five papers, and five prizes of half-a-guinea each for the five next best papers. Each essay should be written on one sheet of foolscap (four pages) and both sides of the paper may be written upon. No paper will be returned to the writer whether stamps be sent for the purpose or not.

The last day for receiving the papers will be from Great Britain and Ireland, January 1, 1898; from abroad, March 1, 1898.

\*\* PRIZES to the amount of six guineas (one of which will be reserved for competitors living abroad) are offered for the best solutions of the above Puzzle Poem. The following conditions must be observed :-

1. Solutions to be written on one side of the paper only.
2. Each paper to be headed with the name and address of the competitor.
3. Attention must be paid to spelling, punctuation, and neatness.
4. Send by post to Editor, GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW, London. "Puzzle Poem" to be written on the top left-hand corner of the envelope.
5. The last day for receiving solutions from Great Britain and Ireland will be December 15, 1897; from Abroad, February 17, 1898.

The competition is open to all without any restrictions as to sex or age. No competitor will be awarded more than one First Prize during the year (November 1897 to October 1898), but the winner of a Second Prize may still compete for a first. Not more than one First and one Second Prize will be sent to any one address during the year.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE of one guinea will be awarded to the competitor, not a prize-winner, who shall receive the highest number of marks during the year for Mention. Very Highly Commended to count 10 marks; Highly Commended to count 7 marks; Honourable Mention to count 5 marks.

This will be an encouragement to all who take an interest in the puzzles and who cannot quite find their way into the front rank of solvers.

NOVEMBER, 1897. PRICE THREEPENCE.

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