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TYPICAL CHURCH TOWERS OF ENGLISH COUNTIES.

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PART I.

LONDON AND MIDDLESEX.



OUR girls who are in the habit of visiting different English counties, either for purposes of study or of holiday-making, must have been struck by the various forms of the church towers of those counties; they will have noticed, for instance, that the graceful and elegant Somerset steeples differ completely from the sturdy embattled granite structures of the neighbouring county of Devonshire or the massive, plain square piles of

Wiltshire. If they passed through Northamptonshire, they will have observed the remarkable fact that the majority, even of the village churches, are adorned by tall, graceful stone spires, a feature unknown to Middlesex or Hertfordshire, and so rare in other counties that Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Essex can show only one solitary example apiece. What contrast in architecture can be greater than that which exists between the quaint and humble low towers of the Essex churches and the stately towers of those of the adjoining county of Suffolk?

Now without going so far as to assert that every county in England has but one type of tower, which is peculiarly its own, yet the marked and striking contrast between the steeples of adjoining counties is so singular as to demand careful study, and, if possible, explanation.

Before writing these papers we consulted a very eminent ecclesiastical architect upon the subject, and we give his opinion in his own words. "I consider the very distinct variations, to be noticed between the church towers of different English counties, the most interesting and singular fact in the whole history of mediæval architecture, and any explanation of the causes which have led to such a startling result would be highly valuable."

We must caution our readers against concluding that every tower in each county follows the "local type," but where it does not some reason for the variation can usually be assigned. Perhaps the architect came from some other county,



MIDDLESEX: OLD HADLEY CHURCH.

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possibly he was a foreigner. It might be that the clergy or the patron, who was subscribing liberally to the work, had seen a church some distance off, which, for the sake of association, he desired to see copied. At Lostwithiel, in Cornwall, is a spire so thoroughly unlike anything in this country, and so exactly similar to some German spires, that the nationality of its design cannot be doubted; and other examples of a similar kind may be pointed out.

We must not expect to find the local characteristics so distinctly displayed in city churches as in country ones, because, of course, local influences are always more strongly felt in the country than in the city, neither shall we find them so apparent in monastic, as in parochial churches, and the village or market-town church tower will often display them to a much stronger degree than will that of the cathedral. In fact, as a rule (exceptions there are), the cathedrals do not exhibit much county influence. It would almost appear as if a special distinction was attempted to be gained for the cathedral, by making it as different as possible to the parish churches of the district; thus we find that in a county like Norfolk, peculiar for towers, the cathedral has a tall stone spire, and the noble spire of Salisbury is almost alone in Wiltshire, whereas Lincolnshire, which is remarkable for its beautiful church spires, has only towers to its cathedral.

It is to the parish churches, and more especially the country parish churches, that we must look for the solution of this question. The parish church was, of course, essentially the church of the people, they only shared the monastic or cathedral churches with the clergy of those establishments to which they were attached, so that if we want to know about the people in the Middle Ages, the ecclesiastical edifices which will naturally afford us the most certain instruction are the parish churches. It will be understood that our observations extend only to mediæval churches, because, after the introduction into this country of the Italian or "Revival Classic" style, all local peculiarities vanished.

We now propose to consider each English county separately with a view to discovering what is the special type of each, and how it originated. We must begin with Middlesex, or rather London. Of course, we know that London and Middlesex are different counties, and to speak of London being "in Middlesex" is absolutely a geographical error, yet, for the purposes of this article, we must deal with the

two in one paper. It is difficult to speak of the old church towers of London, because but one solitary example has escaped destruction or modernisation, and that is the small and unimportant one of Allhallows Staining. The church itself was pulled down some years back, but the old Gothic tower was allowed to remain. It had nothing ancient or remarkable about it except a curious traditional observance: the churchwardens used to dine off a boiled leg of pork on the 17th of November in honour of Elizabeth's accession. It is said that the curious custom came about from Elizabeth's remarkable generosity in "tipping" the clerk when she visited the church, which so astonished that worthy man, that he asked a number of friends home with him to dine off a leg of pork which his wife was boiling. The tower is a very ordinary example of the Middlesex type. The tower of St. Sepulchre's Church, Snow Hill, is old, but so much modernised that it is not quite possible to say for certain what its original design was, but probably the ancient outline is preserved; if so it was a tall embattled tower with four very lofty pinnacles at the angles; judging from ancient views of London before the fire, this was a very common type of tower for large parochial churches in the city. St. Michael's, Cornhill, was the most magnificent example. Wren considered it "so noble," that he attempted to copy it when rebuilding the church, but the result can scarcely be pronounced satisfactory.

When we leave London and come to examine the country churches of Middlesex, we find that they possess a very marked character, and that they tell us in a most interesting manner what was the condition of the county at the time they were erected; they generally consist of a rather low but solid square structure embattled at the top round a lead flat, with a turret at one angle rising above the parapet, also embattled; the belfry windows are small, and the whole presents rather the appearance of a castle than of an ecclesiastical structure. In point of construction they are somewhat plain, not to say rude, a fact which at first strikes one as singular, as they are close to the capital city of a great nation. When, however, we come to examine into the former condition of the county, we shall find that it was for the most part covered with wood and forest, with small clearances here and there sparsely inhabited and poorly cultivated. There were few castles to which the people could fly for refuge when the district was invaded by robbers or other vagabonds who infest the

parlous of a vast city, so that they built their church towers as much for purpose of defence as for holding the church bells. The tall turret at the angle was intended to hold a beacon for the purpose of conducting the traveller through the forest or undrained swamp; to those forced to proceed by the crooked paths and primitive roads, the beacon high up upon the distant church tower must indeed have been welcomed "As a cresset true that darts its length of beamy luster from a tower of strength guiding the traveller." Those who, like the writer, have lost themselves in Hadley Wood with the shades of evening closing in around must have wished that the old beacon of Hadley were still lighted up of a night.

Do our girls know Hadley Wood? If they want to gain an idea of Middlesex in olden times, nothing will bring it more vividly before them, but they should put on strong boots and leave their bicycles at home. Close at hand is old Hadley Church, with its weather-worn and ivy-clad tower, the perfection of the Middlesex type of church tower, with its ancient beacon still surmounting its turret, the only one now existing in England.

Another very interesting feature is the slab over the western doorway bearing the date 1494 and two little rebuses, one with a rose carved upon it, and the other with a wing. Some very far-fetched explanations of these have been given, but we believe they stand for "Rose Wing." Who was Rose Wing? We know not: did she build the tower, or restore it, or did she give the beacon? She has long, long gone back to her rest, and let us hope she has received her reward for this and other good deeds.

The similarity of Middlesex towers is quite remarkable, and the exceptions very few. Some of the smaller and poorer churches have miniature wooden towers and squat little spires crowning them, placed astride the nave roof and supported internally upon rude axe-cut beams.

The towers of Harrow and Stanwell Churches are crowned with lofty spires, but as they are absolutely plain and constructed of wood, they were probably intended as landmarks or guides; just as the Israelites of old were led to the Promised Land by a pillar of cloud during the day and one of fire by night, so were the weary wayfarers of later times led through dangerous paths by the church tower in the day and its beacon through the night.

(To be continued.)

SISTERS THREE.

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



CHAPTER III.

HE old grandfather's clock was just striking six o'clock when Raymond and Bob, the two public school-boys, came home from their afternoon excursion. They walked slowly up the drive, supporting between them the figure of a young fellow a few years older than themselves,

who hopped painfully on one foot, and was no sooner seated on the oak bench in the hall, than he quietly rested his head against the rails, and went off into a dead faint. The boys shouted at the pitch of their voices, whereupon Mr. Bertrand rushed out of his sanctum, followed by every other member of his household.

"Good gracious! Who is it? What is the matter? Where did he come from? Has he had an accident?" cried the girls in chorus, while Miss Briggs rushed off for sal volatile and other remedies.

The stranger was a tall, lanky youth,

about eighteen years of age, with curly brown hair and well-cut features, and he made a pathetic figure leaning back in the big oak seat.

"He's the son of old Freer, the Squire of Brantmere," explained Raymond, as he busied himself unloosening the lad's collar and tie. "We have met him several times when we have been walking. Decent fellow—Harrow—reading at home for college, and hates it like poison. We were coming a short cut over the mountains, when he slipped on a bit of ice, and twisted his ankle trying to keep up. We had an awful time getting him back. He meant to stay at

the inn to-night, as his people are away, and it was too dark to go on, but he looks precious bad. Couldn't we put him up here?"

"Yes, yes, of course. Better carry him straight to bed and get off that boot," said Mr. Bertrand cordially. "It will be a painful job, and if we can get it done before he comes round, so much the better. Here, you boys, we'll carry him upstairs between us, and be careful not to trip as you go. Someone bring up hot water, and bandages from the medicine chest. I will doctor him myself. I have had a fair experience of sprained ankles in my day, and don't need anyone to show me what to do."

The procession wended its way up the wide old staircase, and for the greater part of the evening father and brothers were alike invisible. Fomentations and douches were carried on with great gusto by Mr. Bertrand, who was never more happy than when he was playing the part of amateur surgeon; then Miss Briggs had her innings, and carried a tray upstairs laden with all the dainties the house could supply, after partaking of which the invalid was so far recovered that he was glad of his friends' company, and kept them laughing and chatting in his room until it was time to go to bed.

The next morning the ankle was much better, but, at his host's instigation, the young fellow dispatched a note to his mother, telling her not to expect him home for a few days, as Mr. Bertrand wished him to stay until he was better able to bear the long, hilly drive.

The girls discussed the situation as they settled down to finish the much disliked mending in the afternoon. "It's very annoying," Hilary said, "I do hope he won't be long in getting better. We were going to London on Monday week, but if he is still here we shall have to wait; I hate having things postponed."

"I wish he had been a girl," said Norah, who came in for so much teasing from her two brothers during the holidays that she did not welcome the idea of another boy in the house. "We could have had such fun together, and perhaps she might have gone home, and asked us to stay with her. I should love to pay visits. I wonder if father will take us up to London in turns, now that he has begun. I do hope he will, for it would be great fun staying in Kensington. I remember Miss Carr when we were in London; she was a funny old thing, but I liked her awfully. She was often cross, but after she had scolded for about five minutes, she used to repent, and give us apples. She will give you apples, Hilary, if you are very good!"

Hilary screwed up her little nose with an expression of disdain. Apples were not much of a treat to people who had an orchard at home, and she had outgrown the age of childish joy at the gift of such trifles. Before she could speak, however, the door burst open, and Raymond precipitated himself into the room. He was a big, broad fellow of sixteen, for he and Lettice were twins, though widely different in appearance.

Raymond had a flat face, thickly speckled over with freckles, reddish brown hair, and a pair of brown eyes which fairly danced with mischief. It was safe to prophesy that in less than two minutes from the time that he entered the room where his sisters were sitting, they would all three be shrieking aloud in consternation, and the present instance was no exception to the rule. It was very simply managed. He passed one hand over the table where lay all the socks and stockings, which had been paired by Hilary's industrious fingers, and swept them, helter-skelter, on the floor. He nudged Norah's elbow, so that the needle which she was threading went deep into her fingers, and chuckled Lettice under the chin, so that she bit her tongue with a violence which was really painful. This done, he plunged both hands into his pockets and danced a hornpipe on the hearthrug, while the girls abused him at the pitch of their voices.

"Raymond Bertrand, you are the most horrid, ungentlemanly, nasty, rude boy I ever knew!"

"If you were older you'd be ashamed of yourself. It is only because you are a stupid, ignorant little school-boy that you think it funny to be unkind to girls."

"Very well, then! You have given me all my work to do over again, now I won't make toffee this afternoon, as I promised!"

"I don't want your old toffee. I can buy toffee in the village if I want it," retorted Raymond cheerfully. "Besides, I'm going out to toboggan with Bob, and I shan't be home until dark. You girls have to go and amuse Freer. He is up, and wants something to do. I'm not going to stay indoors on a jolly afternoon to talk to the fellow, so you'll have to do it."

"Indeed, we'll do nothing of the kind; we have our work to do, and it is bad enough to have two tiresome boys on our hands without having to look after a third. He is your friend, and if you won't amuse him, he will have to stay by himself."

"All right! Nice, hospitable people you are! Leave him alone to be as dull as he likes—it's no matter to me. I told him that you would look after him, so the responsibility is off my shoulders." Raymond paused, pointed in a meaning manner towards a curtained doorway at the end of the room, tiptoed up to the table, and finished his reply in a tragic whisper. "And I've settled him on the couch in the drawing-room, so you had better not speak so loudly, because he can hear every word you say!"

With this parting shot, Mr. Raymond took his departure, banging the door after him, while his sisters sat paralysed, staring at each other with distended eyes.

"How awful! What must he think? We can't leave him alone after this. Hilary, you are the eldest, go and talk to him."

"I won't—I don't know what to say. Norah, you go! Perhaps he is musical. You can play to him on your violin!"

"Thank you very much. I'll do

nothing of the kind. Lettice, you go; you are not shy. Talk to him prettily, and show him the photographs."

"I daren't; I am horribly shy. I wouldn't go into that room now, after what he has heard, for fifty thousand pounds!"

"Norah, look here, if you will go and sit with him until four o'clock, Lettice and I will finish your work between us, and we will all come and have tea in the drawing-room, and help you out for the rest of the afternoon."

"Yes, Norah, we will; and I'll give you that pink ribbon for your hair. Do, Norah! there's a good girl. You won't mind a bit after the first moment."

"It's all very well," grumbled Norah; but she was plainly softening, and after a moment's hesitation, pushed back her chair and said slowly, "All right, I'll go; but mind you are punctual with tea, for I don't bargain to stay after four o'clock." She brushed the ends of cotton from her dress, walked across to the door, and disappeared through the doorway with a pantomimic gesture of distaste. At the other side she paused and stood facing the invalid in silent embarrassment, for his cheeks were flushed, and he looked so supremely uncomfortable that it was evident he had overheard the loud-toned conversation which had been carried on between the brother and sisters.

Norah looked at him and saw a young fellow who looked much older and more formidable than he had done in his unconsciousness the night before, for his grey eyes had curious, dilating pupils, and a faint mark on the upper lip showed where the moustache of the future was to be. The stranger looked at Norah and saw a tall, slim girl, with masses of dark hair falling down her back, heavily marked eyebrows, and a bright, sharply-cut little face, which was very attractive, if it could not strictly be called pretty.

"How do you do?" said Norah, desperately. "I hope you are quite—I mean, I hope your foot is better. I am glad you are able to get up."

"Thank you very much. It's all right so long as I lie still. It's very good of you to let me stay here. I hope I'm not a great nuisance."

"Oh, not at all. I'm sure you are not. I'm not the eldest, you know, I'm only the third, so I have nothing to do with the house, but there are so many of us that one more doesn't make any difference. My name is Norah."

"And mine is Reginald, but I am always called Rex. Please don't trouble about me if you have anything else to do. If you would give me a book, I'd amuse myself."

"Are you fond of reading?"

"No, I hate it—that is to say, I like it very much, of course, but I have had so much of it for the last two years that I sometimes feel that I hate the sight of a book. But it's different here, for a few hours."

"I think I'll stay and talk to you, if you don't mind," said Norah, seating herself on an oak stool by the fire, and holding out a thin, brown hand to shade her face from the blaze. "I'm very

fond of talking when I get to know people a little bit. Raymond told us that you were reading at home to prepare for college, and that you didn't like it. I suppose that is why you are tired of books. I wish I were in your place, I'd give anything to go to a town, and get on with my studies, but I have to stay at home and learn from a governess. Wouldn't it be nice if we could change places? Then we should both be pleased, and get what we liked."

The young fellow gave a laugh of amusement. "I don't think I should care for the governess," he said, "though she seems awfully kind and jolly, if she is the lady who looked after me last night. I've had enough lessons to last me for the rest of my life, and I want to get to work, but my father is bent on having a clever son, and can't make up his mind to be disappointed."

"And aren't you clever? I don't think you look exactly stupid!" said Norah, so innocently, that Rex burst into a hearty laugh.

"Oh, I hope I'm not so bad as that. I am what is called 'intelligent,' don't you know, but I shall never make a scholar, and it is waste of time and money to send me to college. It is not in me. I am not fond of staying in the house and poring over books and papers. I couldn't be a doctor and spend my life in sick rooms; the law would drive me crazy, and I could as soon jump over a mountain, as write two new sermons a week. I want to go abroad—to India or Ceylon, or one of those places, and get into a berth where I can be all day walking about in the open air, and looking after the natives."

"Oh, I see. You don't like to work yourself, but you feel that it is 'in you' to make other people exert themselves! You would like to have a lot of poor coolies under you, and order them about from morning till night—that's what you mean. I think you must be rather lazy," said Norah, nodding her head in such a meaning fashion that the young fellow flushed in embarrassment.

"Indeed, I'm nothing of the kind. I am very energetic—in my own way. There are all sorts of gifts, and everyone knows which has fallen to his share. It's stupid to pretend that you don't. I know I am not intellectual, but I also know that I have a natural gift of management. At school I had the arrangement of all the games and sports, and the fellows would obey me when no one else could do anything with them. I should like to have a crowd of workmen under me—and I'll tell you this! they would do more work, and do it better, and be more contented over it,

than any other workmen in the district!"

"Gracious!" cried Hilary, "how conceited you are. But I believe you are right. It's something in your eyes—I noticed it as soon as I saw you—a sort of commanding look, and a flash every now and then when you aren't quite pleased. They flashed like anything just now, when I said you were lazy! The poor coolies would be frightened out of their senses. But you needn't go abroad unless you like. You could stay at home and keep a school."

"No, thank you. I know too much about it. I don't want the life worried out of me by a lot of boys. I could manage them quite well though, if I chose."

"You couldn't manage me!" Norah brought her black brows together in defiant fashion, but the challenge was not taken up, for Master Rex simply ejaculated, "Oh, girls! I wasn't talking about girls," and laid his head against the cushions in such an indifferent fashion that Norah felt snubbed; and the next question came in a subdued little voice—"Don't you—er—like girls?"

"Ye—es—pretty well—the ones I know. I like my sister, of course, but we have only seen each other in the holidays for the last six years. She is sixteen now, and has to leave school because her chest is delicate, and she has come home to be coddled. She don't like it a bit—leaving school, I mean—so it seems that none of us are contented. She's clever, in music especially; plays both violin and piano uncommonly well for a girl of her age."

"Oh, does she? That's my gift. I play the violin beautifully," cried Norah modestly, and when Rex laughed aloud she grew angry, and protested in snappish manner. "Well, you said yourself that we could not help knowing our own talents. It's quite true, I do play well. Everyone says so. If you don't believe it, I'll get my violin and let you hear."

"I wish you would, please forgive me for laughing. I didn't mean to be rude, but it sounded so curious that I forgot what I was doing. Do play! I should love to hear you."

Norah walked across the room and lifted the beloved violin from its case. Her cheeks were flushed, and she was tingling with the remembrance of that incredulous laugh; but her anger only made her the more resolved to prove the truth of her words. She stood before Rex in the firelight, her slim figure drawn up to its full height, and the first sweep of the bow brought forth a sound so sweet and full, that he started in amazement. The two sisters in the

adjoining room stopped their work to listen, and whispered to one another that they had never heard Norah play so well; and when at last she dropped her arms, and stood waiting for Rex to give his verdict, he could only gasp in astonishment.

"I say, it's wonderful! You can play, and no mistake! What is the piece? I never heard it before. It's beautiful. I like it awfully."

"Oh, nothing. It isn't a piece. I made it up as I went along. It is too dark to see the music, and I love wandering along just as I like. I'll play you some pieces later on when the lamps are lit."

"I say, you know, you are most awfully clever! If you play like that now, you could do as well as any of those professional fellows if you had a chance. And to be able to compose as well! You are a genius—it isn't talent—it's real, true, genuine genius!"

"Oh, do you think so? Do you really, truly think so?" cried Norah pitifully. "Oh, I wish you would say so to father! He won't let us go away to school, and I do so long and pine to have more lessons. I learnt in London ever since I was a tiny little girl, and from a very good master, but the last three years I have had to struggle on by myself. Father is not musical himself, and so he doesn't notice my playing, but if you would tell him what you think—"

"I'll tell him with pleasure; but if he won't allow you to leave home, I don't see what is to be done—unless—look here! I've got an idea. My sister may want to take lessons, and if there were two pupils it might be worth while getting a man down from Preston or Lancaster. Ella couldn't come here, because she can only go out on fine days, but you could come to us, you know. It would make it so much more difficult if the fellow had to drive six miles over the mountains, and we are nearer a station than you are here. I should think it could be managed easily enough. I'll write to the mater about it if you like."

"Will you, really? How lovely of you. Oh, it would be quite too delightful if it could be managed. I'd bless you for ever. Oh, isn't it a good thing you sprained your ankle?" cried Norah in a glow of enthusiasm, and the burst of laughter which followed startled the occupants of the next room by its ring of good fellowship.

"Really," said Hilary, "the strange boy must be nicer than we thought. Let us hurry up, and go and join them."

(To be continued.)



BE WARNED IN TIME!

OR,

WALKING THE HOSPITAL WITH "THE NEW DOCTOR."

ALL ABOUT THE EAR.



HERE IS A wide-spread belief that nothing is known about the ear, and that it is a waste of time and money to look after the trivial ailments of

an organ which can well take care of itself. If you will take a walk with me to the nearest London hospital, I will show you how thoroughly wrong is this view of the trivial character of ear affections.

As we are walking to the hospital we may learn much, if we look about us, as many affections of the ear can be told by the appearance of those suffering from them.

Commencing our walk in a busy city suburb, before we have gone more than a few steps, we see two city men talking together; one holds in his hand an instrument which looks like a cross between a French horn and an old-fashioned stethoscope. This is an ear-trumpet, no doubt a new and special kind, invented the other day, but which will be considered old-fashioned and useless in a few weeks. He will then exchange it for some later and more improved, though probably not more valuable instrument. We may presume that the bearer of this appliance is deaf, and this is the variety known as nerve deafness. Further, we may be certain that the deafness is incurable, for no one would use an ear-trumpet if he could possibly avoid it and had not given up all hope of cure. This is, however, one of the very few forms of deafness that cannot be cured.

Passing into a by-street we see a nurse with three children. One of them, a little girl, has her mouth open, the bridge of her nose sunken in, and the inner corners of her eyes drawn downwards. Moreover, her nose is thin with small oblique nostrils. She looks a delicate child, and if you were to ask her mother about her, you would hear that she never was strong, that she snores terribly and often wakes up in the night screaming; she will also tell you that her daughter is very deaf. Looking now at the other children we see the same general aspect, though less marked, in both.

You will perhaps wonder why I stopped to look at these children, for you see nothing extraordinary in them, and will say that a large number of children have the same look and snore at night. Precisely so; but do you know what that means? Those children have "adenoids." As I have elsewhere told you what that mysterious condition of "adenoids" is, I will not enter into it here. But there is one thing that I wish you to notice, that is, the girl who shows the typical expression most plainly is also deaf. Her deafness is due to adenoids. This is an example of the second form of deafness, namely, throat deafness.

By this time we have left the main thoroughfares and entered a back street. There we see half-a-dozen children with dirty frocks

and still dirtier faces playing in the gutter. One little fellow looks the picture of health, and, judging by the noise he makes, we conclude he is in the best of spirits. But if you look closer you will see a pellet of dirty wool in his left ear. You know as well as I do this means that he has a discharge from his ear. His mother now comes up to him, and we take the liberty to ask her about her son. She at once replies that he is in perfect health, and when we mention the condition of his ear, she says, "Oh, that's nothing; he has had a discharge from his ear ever since he had scarlet fever; but it does not do any harm, for he seems none the worse for it." Perhaps you have formed the same opinion as the boy's mother, but I see something very different. In the discharge that is described as "nothing," and which, obviously, is not being treated, I see many ways by which that "nothing" may destroy the boy's life. But when we get to the hospital I may be able to show you clearly what I mean by saying that discharge from the ear is a very dangerous condition if left untreated.

We have now entered the hospital and taken our places in the ear department. The first thing that strikes one on entering the room is the enormous number of instruments of all shapes that are laid out on the table. It seems as though Germany had sent to this department every useful and useless surgical instrument that her inventive genius has produced. Nearly all the instruments are German, and the great majority of them are absolutely useless.

The first person that enters the department is an old man from the country. His complaint is that he has been deaf for the last twenty years. The surgeon tells him to sit down and proceeds to examine his ears. But immediately he pulls back the shell of the ear he says "wax," and scribbling something on the patient's case-book, tells him that he has ordered some drops to be put into the ears every night for a week. He is then to come to see him again.

We look at the prescription and see the following: "R sodæ bicarbonatis gr. x.; aquæ ad ℥j. To be mixed with an equal part of hot water and dropped into the ear every night for a week."

The surgeon also tells the man that he will probably get a little deaf during this treatment; but, when he comes next time, his ears will be syringed out and his hearing restored. The man then goes out, not altogether contented, because most patients, especially country people, think they have been slighted unless some mixture is ordered to be taken internally.

Perhaps you are rather disappointed with this case, because, as we do not intend to come here next week, we will not be able to judge the result. But never mind, in the course of the afternoon some patients are sure to come in for the second time with wax in the ears, and we will then see the result of the treatment.

Two or three other patients come and go, with various affections of hearing; but, as they do not interest us as they do the surgeon, we will pass them over.

But now a woman enters, who at once begins to abuse the surgeon because instead of getting better she has got worse. The surgeon quietly tells her to sit down, and says, "I told you that you would get deafer during the week whilst you were using the drops, but to-day I hope to cure you completely."

Here we have what we were waiting for. This woman came last week with wax in the ear, and is going to have her ears syringed out to-day. The surgeon washes out her ears and some pieces of dirty brown substance come away. You will be surprised at the amount of wax that will come out of one ear.

Let us see how the surgeon syringes out the ears. He fills the syringe to the top so that no air is left in the barrel, and directs the nozzle towards the upper wall of the passage and syringes gently and steadily. After he has finished he carefully examines the ear to see that no wax is left behind. He then wipes out the ear with a piece of wool and proceeds to test the woman's hearing. He finds that she can hear his watch ticking at three feet away from her. Looking at her paper he sees that last week she could not hear the same watch at a distance of more than three inches from her ear. The woman declares that she has not heard so well for the last five years, and after profusely thanking the surgeon, leaves the room.

We cannot stop to examine all the cases that come to the ear department in an afternoon, so we will pick out those that more particularly interest us.

Here is a child with exactly the same look as the girl we met in the street. She has adenoids, and has come to this department because she has lately become deaf. Her mother, who accompanies her, is told that her daughter's throat must be seen to and that she must therefore attend the throat department.

Of the large number of patients with discharge from the ear that attend this afternoon, we will pick out three typical examples. The first is a little girl who has had a discharge for three days. She is ordered to wash out her ears four times a day with the following lotion: "R acidi boracis, gr. v., aquæ ad ℥j.

No doubt in two or three days she will be quite well again.

The second is a lad who has been attending for some weeks, and who has had a discharge since he had measles two years ago. He has been using the same lotion that was ordered for the first patient, and he is steadily improving.

The last patient with a discharge from the ears is a servant who has not been getting any better. The surgeon examines her ear and sees a little red mass inside the passage. He tells her that she has an aural polypus which must be removed before she can expect to be cured. Having put some cocaine solution into her ear he proceeds to remove the polypus. As you have never before seen a surgical operation, we had better leave the department. But before we go let us take a look round the hospital.

It is tea-time, and there is no better time to visit a ward than when the inmates are having their tea.

We will go to the children's ward first. This is always my favourite ward in a hospital, for children bear disease wonderfully well and make very much better patients than adults. Doubtless they do not feel the mental suffering that is the most distressing feature in illness; but still, it seems strange that they should not cry more than they do.

As we enter the room we see seven or eight children sitting round the table anxiously watching a nurse handling round the bread and butter. They all seem to be thoroughly enjoying themselves, and as we watch them we can see that they are uncommonly hungry.

There is one little boy, who however is not at the table, but is sitting up in one of the beds, who has already demolished a pile of slices of bread and butter, and is eagerly calling to the nurse for more. You would think that there is nothing much the matter with him; but you are mistaken, for he is in a very precarious condition.

We glance around the ward and a bright face is seen peeping out of every cot. But in an obscure corner there is a bed surrounded with curtains, and on approaching we see a nurse watching a child, who at first glance we take to be asleep. We look again at the child's face and notice that the features are fixed, save that every now and then she opens her mouth and utters a faint, short cry. Her head is drawn backwards till it almost touches her shoulders. What we took to be sleep is the last stage of inflammation of the brain. We take up the notes that are hung upon the cot, and there we read that the patient had had a discharge from her ears for three years, but was not treated until she complained of severe and constant headache, when at last she was brought to the hospital. Alas! too late. The matter from her ears has found his way into her brain and now nothing can save her.

We turn from this dismal scene and enter the women's surgical ward, and there a

middle-aged woman with her head bandaged up arrests our attention. The nurse tells us that she has just been operated upon for disease of the bones of the skull following a prolonged discharge from her ears. More fortunate than the child we have just seen, she has come in time and will probably recover. But if she had not neglected to have had her ears seen to she would never have required the operation.

Having now seen as much as we care to, let us leave the hospital, and while walking home talk over what we have just done. It would be impossible to discuss all our experiences of the past few hours, so let us confine our conversation to two conditions which have been forcibly brought before our notice, namely, wax in the ear and discharge from the ear.

We saw that wax in the ear was cured without much difficulty. The fluid that I have described above was dropped into the ears every night for a week, and the ears were then syringed out and the cure completed. To be successful you must pay attention to the following points: always direct the nozzle of the syringe to the upper wall of the passage. This is a most important detail to remember. If you forget this point, you will do no good by syringing. Be careful to let the water flow gently and evenly. If you inject the

water forcibly or in jerks it will produce giddiness or fainting. Lastly, always syringe until no more wax comes away and the water returns quite clear. If you leave any wax behind it will act as a nucleus round which more will be deposited and so the trouble will recur. For wax in the ear the best fluid to use is warm water.

The other affection that we will discuss is discharge from the ear. We have already seen this condition in some of its most common varieties and with its worst complications. I may have frightened you by showing the fearful severity of some of the results of this affection. It was to impress upon you the extreme importance of having discharge from the ears immediately seen to that I showed you the two unfortunate victims of neglect in this respect.

Remember that if you ever have a discharge from your ear, gently syringe out your ear with a weak antiseptic fluid, such as we saw used in the ear department, and do not put in any wool, as this keeps back the discharge, which may burrow into the skull or brain.

You see there is very little trouble or expense in this treatment, and if it is carried out carefully you will be saved from the severe affections that not uncommonly arise from neglecting this so-called trifling ailment.



CHAPTER II.

HE pile of clothes ready for ironing was placed at the end of the kitchen table, and Helen without any word took the hot iron from the fire and started upon Victoria Maud's pinafores. They were easily ironed as they were made of stout, plain linen,

and Mrs. Larkin had damped them when she had folded them down, so Helen had the satisfaction of seeing the large pile quickly disappear before Mrs. Larkin came in to help. But it was hot work, and she was beginning to look flushed and tired, so Mrs. Larkin told her to sit down and rest while she folded down another bundle from the line in the back-yard. As Helen was sitting there she thought—What would poor Harold say if he knew I am laundress to-day and model to-morrow? And I have to go on deceiving him, as he would worry himself to death, but I'm so glad I've got the rent safe and sound in my pocket, and by doing this I am wiping off some of my obligation to Mrs. Larkin. At that moment Mrs. Larkin reappeared behind a huge bundle of clothes. Helen jumped up from her chair and helped her to put them on the table.

When they were both busily engaged in ironing, Mrs. Larkin's husband came in and settled himself in a comfortable arm-chair by the fire. He was very respectful to the pretty young laundress and thanked her for helping his wife. He had an evening paper in his hand, and he regaled the two women with snatches of news. Mr. Larkin's

"A GIRL OF GRIT."

idea of news was principally taken from the column dealing with the police courts, and he also had a partiality for facts which came under the heading of News in a Nutshell.

"Now, missis, would you believe this," he said, "that there are some folks who have no more to do with their money than to give £3000 for a pictur', and here's one man as I should think wants putting in a lunatic asylum, has paid £250 for an egg?"

"Well, Mr. Larkin, there's something wrong with your specks to-night, for you won't get me to believe that. Give me the paper, and I'll believe it when I see it myself."

Mrs. Larkin took the paper out of her husband's hands in a rough but not ill-natured way, and found the paragraph. It gave the prices paid for a few articles belonging to some private collection which had been sold at Christie's sale rooms, and the prices Mr. Larkin quoted were quite correct—a fine Turner, £3000. And one of the other items quoted was "A Great Auk's Egg, £250."

Mrs. Larkin handed Helen the paper. "May I keep it and show it to my brother, Mrs. Larkin?"

Helen's face had suddenly flushed and then turned deathly pale.

"I will give it back to you in the morning."

Mr. Larkin responded readily; "Certainly, missie, how's your brother to-night?"

"He's getting on nicely, thank you, Mr. Larkin. But it's getting late and I must go up to him again."

She slipped her hand into her pocket and drew out her past two weeks' rent and laid it on the ironing table.

"There, Mrs. Larkin, that's yours, and thank you so much for waiting. I will be able to pay you the rest early in the week, and I would like my brother to be moved into the front room to-morrow. The doctor says he would get better much quicker if his room looked south, and," she added with a reassuring smile, "I won't keep you waiting for the rent again."

Mrs. Larkin took the money, and gazed at the girl in open amazement. "Sakes alive! Has the sky fallen? This afternoon you couldn't pay for the back-rooms and now you're wanting the front one, but there, it ain't no business of mine, and if you can afford it I'll be real glad to shift your brother, for there's a bit more life in that room. And I'll tell you what it is, miss, I'll charge you the same rent as you pay for the back one, until I get an offer of a let for the front, and then you see, miss, I must think of the children and accept it."

Helen thanked her but sternly refused the offer. "You've been very good to us already, Mrs. Larkin, I really couldn't accept it, besides," she continued with the same confident little smile, "I have just heard this afternoon of a good opening—I think I can make some money."

"Well, and you deserve it, miss," broke in Mr. Larkin, "for you're made of the right stuff. Oh, I knows all about you, you ain't accustomed to this way of living, for it's mighty strange how small the world is when you come to look at it." Mr. Larkin spoke as if he had taken a birdseye view of the globe. "My mate at Brookfields was stable-boy to your pa, and he says he never served a truer gent. Bill says as how your pa spent money like a duke."

"If he hadn't, there might have been more left for me, Mr. Larkin; but I must go to my brother now, so good-night."

When Helen got out of the hot kitchen, she flew up to her tiny bedroom and threw herself down on the bed. But in a moment she was up again and in a state of nervous excitement; she paced up and down her room like a caged lion.

"Oh dear, oh dear, if I had only someone to help me. I don't know where to begin; what shall I do? In the first place, I must get someone to look after Harold, and keep him from worrying, and then I must go and pay my dear cousin another visit."

She smoothed her hair and bathed her

flushed face in cold water. "It's time I went to Harold now," she said; "but how am I to tell him. I daresn't raise his hopes on so small a ground. I must let him imagine that I want to go into the country for a day. Dr. Harvey meant more than he said when he advised a change of air. If he only knew how hopeless it all is. I could have screamed when he said, 'Your brother hasn't any chance of getting better in this dark room'—just as if I didn't know it, and just as if even I, who am not artistic, didn't find myself crying sometimes for a breath of country air, for the sight of rain on a turnip field, for the blue haze over the dear woods.

* * * *

In Harold's room Helen tried to talk naturally and brightly; she told him that she had made all arrangements with Mrs. Larkin for his removal the next day to the front room.

"And, dear boy, I want a breath of fresh air. I wonder if you would think me very selfish if I went into the country for a long day, the day after to-morrow. I would gather you some real country flowers, and bring back a whiff of the country in my clothes; could you spare me, dear?"

"Why, Helen, how rich you have suddenly become! How can you manage it? Spare you?—of course I could; I'd be a selfish brute if I couldn't, after all you've done for me. Now sing something, dear, for I'm too tired to talk."

Helen did not admit that she felt too excited and overstrung to sing, but instead she drew her chair near her brother's bed and sang softly some quaint nigger ditties, with a droning, sleepy refrain, and in less time than she had expected Harold was fast asleep.

The next morning Helen saw her brother safely moved into the front room. It made her heart ache, and filled her with a horrible sense of loneliness when she saw how weak he really was. Mr. Larkin had to carry him in his arms like a child from the one room to another. It was then Helen realised how little she had on earth to cling to, and how urgent was the necessity of getting her brother into a more bracing atmosphere. When he was comfortably settled, and had fallen into a quiet sleep, Helen dressed herself hurriedly and started off to the studio to keep her appointment as model. She took a number of her brother's sketches with her, to show the artist for whom she was sitting if a suitable opportunity occurred. "He will give me a candid opinion, I feel sure, for he is delightfully outspoken," she said to herself with a smile. The walk to the studio had brought a brilliant colour to Helen's cheeks, with the result that when her double knock was answered with a short "Come in," she entered in her usually buoyant fashion, looking like a veritable young Hebe. The artist gazed at her in only half-concealed wonder. Her elastic step, and her smiling radiant face, was such a direct contradiction to her penitence position. She was just the sort of girl who looked as if she wore old clothes from pleasure, not from necessity.

"I hope I'm in good time, sir. I've been so busy all the morning, and the time has flown." Helen made a point of addressing him as "sir," as she desired no footing of intimacy between them.

"You are in good time, Miss Churchill, and you look as if your work had been pleasant. What a comfort it is to meet a happy fellow-worker, and not a grumbler; but let us get to work."

At the end of twenty minutes' standing, Helen had an interval of rest. She was glad of it, as her arms were beginning to ache horribly, for the position necessitated her

holding them out. She sat down in a comfortable easy chair, and was soon lost in thought. The artist watched her keenly, and was astonished at her power of concentration. When she was standing, her whole attention had been given to her work as his model, and now that she was at rest, she appeared scarcely conscious of where she was. Her mind was so deeply engrossed in her own concerns. He tried to draw her into conversation about herself, but it was useless. What she meant to tell him, she would tell him of her own accord, and rather abruptly, it must be admitted, she unfolded her brother's sketches on her knee, and asked his opinion on their marketable value.

"Who has done these—not you?"

"No, my brother; but why not I? Do you think I couldn't sketch?"

"I'm sure you couldn't; you're too practical. You lack the nervous temperament of the artist who has done this." He tapped the sketch he held in his hand with his palate knife.

"What does your brother work for?"

"Nothing," was the faltering answer; "that is why I showed them to you. Do you think he could get work?"

"That depends on what sort of a man he is. He can certainly do good work, but that is no criterion that he will get it; that's where the artistic temperament comes in. You must get it for him."

"How do you mean, sir?"

"Well, I'll tell you. I'll give you a letter of introduction to a man who is starting a new weekly illustrated paper. He wants work like this; you must take some of your brother's work and show it to him. He's a very exacting man, and he likes having a say in the matter. He fancies he knows a bit about art; but he is a good chap and has asked me to recommend him some fresh work. Don't lose any time about going, for these sort of things get filled up directly."

"I'm sorry, I can't go for a day or two, sir! I have some very important business to do; but I'll go directly I can."

"What a busy person you seem to be!" he said, smiling. "You quite put me to shame! But pray don't thank me so much; I'm really doing nothing but granting the request the editor made to me. I'll send him these sketches if I may as specimens of work which I think will just suit, and I'll let you know the result as soon as I can."

With more thanks and charming smiles unconsciously born from happiness at the bright prospect, Helen said good-bye, and this time the artist did not forget to pay her. So, with a light heart and a fuller purse, she hurried home.

"Seven-and-six for a morning's work isn't bad," she said to herself; "but what trying work it is! My arms felt as if they would break."

When she got home it was time for their frugal mid-day meal, so she busied herself in laying the table, and this prevented Harold questioning her as to where she had been.

Directly after lunch she made herself as neat as her poor wardrobe would admit, and started off to see her cousin. When she was shown into his private office, he looked up from the pile of letters that lay in front of him and smiled condescendingly.

"My dear Helen, you here again? What a ray of sunshine you are in a dismal office! Please sit down!"

Helen writhed inwardly at every word of his flowery speech and remained standing.

"I shall only interrupt you for one moment," she said in her coldest voice. "I have once more come to ask a favour."

"Which, my dear cousin, I hope is in my power to grant."

"I should not ask it otherwise, sir. May I go home, to your home, I mean" (there was a quick little catch in her voice almost like a sob of pain when she corrected herself), "and get something I left there—something that as a child I hid there, and now I want it."

"Perhaps you forget that when I took over the house I took over all that was left in it. What you left there as a child now belongs to me."

This was said half in chaff, half in earnest, and Helen answered in the same spirit.

"No, it does not. Forgive me for contradicting you, but what I left there was given to me by my godfather; it could not be sold without my permission."

"Then why did you not take it with you?"

"Because I forgot it was there."

"Then it cannot be of much value."

"Then I may go and get it?"

"I am glad the request was one I could grant so easily, pretty coz. Yes, you may go and get it; but, pray, where is this treasure? I have never seen it."

"It is between the floor of the lumber-room that was my play-room and the ceiling of the pink bed-room. Do you remember our old hole in the floor?"

Her cousin roared with laughter.

"I should think I do, don't I just! On a wet day you would go and put your hands in as far as ever you could reach and pull out all sorts of treasures, and when they came out I made you shut your eyes and offered you a penny or twopenny for whatever you had found. It was a regular treasure-trove. I remember the day I hid Harold's best pocket-knife in the hole, and the next day when he went to see what had been swept into the treasure-trove he pulled out his knife wrapped up in paper. I bid twopenny-halfpenny for whatever he had in his hand, and I'll never forget the rage he was in when he found it was his knife."

Helen's eyes were flashing.

"You remember it all," she said, "how you bought everything we possessed—we had never seen money until you came. I sold you all I had for eightpence-halfpenny to pay for the rabbit with the red eyes."

"Not quite everything, dear coz, if you are going there to-morrow to get something. Stop, I've half a mind to come too and see what it is."

"You will be sadly disgusted. It is not beautiful."

He groaned.

"I suppose not, or I should have had it long ago. You were always a trifle mercenary, Helen."

Helen winced.

"You never bought it from me, because I hid it from you. I determined never to part with it, because my godfather left it to me, so I laid it in a box and put it in the hole in the floor. I lay face downwards and pushed the box as far back as I could with father's walking-stick, beyond the reach of your arms or the nursery poker. But I am keeping you; I will not interrupt you further. Good-bye."

She held out her hand and smiled.

"Thank you for granting my request. I am really grateful!"

When she was safely out of the office her heart began to beat naturally again, and she hummed a little tune under her breath.

"It's always darkest before the dawn," she said, "and I believe our dawn is breaking. If Harold could get a change of air he'd be able to work, and if the box is still there the clouds will indeed have broken!"



MRS. HARCOURT.

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LE ROI EST MORT.

By L. G. MOBERLY.

ONE day I crowned you King in my heart,
 You seemed so true and so strong,
 That from other men I set you apart,
 For "my King could do no wrong."
 But now you are standing a King uncrowned,
 You do not care if you fling
 Your crown aside, and to-day I have found
 That the King has slain the King.

My faith was so strong in humanity,
 Because I believed in you;
 But now you have fallen, it seems to me,
 That the human race falls too.
 I wish you had broken my heart that day!
 The pain would have hurt me less
 Than to see you walk on a lower way—
 It is deepest bitterness.

Ah! King, my King, will you rise once more
 To your kingly place of old?
 For surely the crown that I thought you wore,
 Was not *all* of tarnished gold?
 Give me back my faith in the pure and true,
 Be again as straight and strong
 As I thought you once—let me say of you,
 That "My King can do no wrong."

"IF LOVING HEARTS WERE NEVER LONELY—";

OR,

MADGE HARCOURT'S DESOLATION.

CHAPTER III.

THE LONG LONG THOUGHTS OF YOUTH.

WHEN Jack at last settled himself to his fishing, Madge lay back against a bank, with her hands behind her head, and remained silently gazing into the blue sky.

She was trying to think what it was she wanted and why she was different from other girls.

They were sad, longing thoughts, and an intensely wistful expression rested on her young face, as she lay still, listening to the drowsy hum of the bees, and to the song of a skylark just above her.

Half unconsciously she repeated to herself the verse in Shelley's beautiful poem, to that sweetest of songsters, which runs:—

"We look before and after,
 And pine for what is not;
 Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught,
 Our sweetest songs are those
 Which tell of saddest thought."

Oh, how happy, how madly happy, this little creature seemed; was it possible God loved it more than He did her? After all, it would not be so very strange, for this little bird never grieved its Creator as she did. Madge's idea of God was not a very clear one, but at least she felt that her habits and thoughts were not of a kind likely to be pleasing to Him. To her He was chiefly the great Creator, and she did not, in her heart of hearts, think her personal interests were of much consequence to Him. She had read so much, and her literature had been of such a strangely varied and mixed description, and mostly of such a speculative nature, that it was small wonder her mind was in a state of chaos. She had dabbled, more or less, in various "ologies," to say nothing of metaphysics and philosophy, and having

never known the luxury of a companion with whom to talk things over, she had deduced her own views without any helpful influence whatever.

Jack was quite right when he said she thought too much. He was right too when he said she was "odd." She had already thought more in her eighteen years than many girls think in a lifetime; and she had succeeded in weaving into her mind a collection of fantastical, tangled ideas, which certainly did not tend to secure her peace of mind. As she lay there, on the green sward, with peace breathing all around her, she could not, even for that brief space, let her mind partake of the general restfulness.

Her thoughts soon soared beyond the gay songster, and, as she lay, gazing upwards into space, strange deep questionings stole into her soul.

That feeling, which Carlyle has described as "a murmur of eternity and immensity, of death and life," crept over her, and the words themselves passed through her mind.

"Eternity and immensity!" Oh, what did it all mean? What was man, in the midst of the vast universe? What was she lying there? Surely a mere atom, of no value perhaps; just one of millions of similar phenomena, as was even the very world she was on. How strange to think that above her and around were myriads of other worlds, whirling for ever and ever in their appointed courses.

How strange to think that beside her were myriads of little living creatures, each with an individual existence. The thought of it all—the thought of everything that ever was, seemed to crush her with its awful magnitude.

The sense of her own insignificance and littleness oppressed her. Up there, above her, in that smiling blue vault, of a distance so appalling that man could

not even express it, were there not other worlds, other suns, other wonders utterly beyond man's comprehension? And then the duration of it all!

The distance to which "time past" stretched! The eons that might lie before!

In remote ages gone by, had not the earth existed and sped in the same unwearying course; and in remote ages to come, would it not still speed on? And what then of the little creatures called human beings, who strutted and fretted for a paltry three-score years and ten on its surface?

They came and they went—did any man know more? Was there any more to know? Was it possible that the Creator of so stupendous a marvel as the universe could have time or inclination to think for a moment of anything so utterly minute as herself? Why should she presume to be any better than the countless myriads of tiny, life-holding phenomena, that abounded on every side?

They came and they went—did she do any more? The thought of all the mystery and complexity of everything seemed to make her mind gasp, though she was but going over old ground. She felt sometimes as if she could not bear the strain of her own thoughts, and yet she could not rest; not even now, with Jack and the sunshine and no one to bother her.

"What of this wondrous story, of the only Son of the Creator coming to be a man to die on this little planet," she mused. "Why should He come to this particular globe; were there no other creatures elsewhere? Why should God place human beings on one planet more than another, when there were possibly countless myriads of precisely the same nature. And, if others were inhabited, did this Son of God die for them too?"

It seemed to her so presumptuous, considering the vastness of creation, to attach so much importance to the existences of the little creatures who "came and went" on this one little insignificant planet.

But then again, the question arises, what of man's mind? What of this strange inexplicable power he possesses to dive into the heart of things and find out so much? What of this undeniably inrooted expectation of a larger and fuller life to come? After all, could man possibly be so insignificant, since he possessed such wonderful powers and capabilities? Did not this strange mysterious soul of his, actually and indeed, place him first, amidst all this majesty and grandeur? Was she, in spite of her seeming littleness, in reality one of the most wonderful of God's creations? If so, why was she also so weak and helpless and seemingly useless?

She drew her hand wearily across her eyes. She would feign have given it up, but the wondering and the questioning still plied her, and her mind rambled on.

This will of hers; was it part of her soul or a separate wonder? If a part, why did not the two work more in unison? Why was her soul always, always longing and yearning for something which she could not express? Why, when she gazed away over the hills, and upward into space, did that great craving possess her, which made the earth and everyday life seem so common-place and unsatisfying? Why could not she force her soul to rest, by the might of her will, for with all her heart she longed to do so; longed to still her fevered imaginings and questionings and live through the day in peace.

But she could not.

Day after day in her solitary rambles, the girl's heart swelled with the passion "to know," and day after day the monotony and seeming littleness of her life grew ever more oppressive.

Even in the night she could not rest, and many were the hours she spent at her window, gazing earnestly up at those silent worlds, wondering about it all. Wondering sometimes what was her particular mission in life, for, since everything in creation appeared to have a definite work of some kind, surely she too must have been created for some special purpose.

And yet, as far as she could see, she was absolutely useless. And the thought hurt her grievously, for away among those lonely Cumberland hills, this solitary girl was panting to be doing. Anything so that it made her life a reality, and took from it the aimlessness and torpor that were so galling to her fearless, energetic spirit. She had read books in search of knowledge and enlightenment, and what had she gained? How had they helped her? Alas! had they not rather harmed her, for in her bitterness she had chosen books congenial to her feelings and fed on literature that only heightened her cynicism and plunged her deeper into scepticism.

But amidst all this chaos of mind, there was one feature in the girl's heart

that never changed, and which maybe saved her from growing up a misanthropic atheist. It was the deep, passionate love which burned in her strong young heart for those dear to her.

True that wealth of love was lavished almost solely upon three, but her loyalty and love for those three was very truth itself. One she had already lost, the beautiful young mother, whom she remembered so tenderly and longed for without ceasing.

The others were Jack and little Helen Liston, the schoolmistress's invalid child.

These three stood alone in her heart, the rest of the world she regarded chiefly as a large collection of human beings and "nothing more."

Meanwhile the time passed, and at length Madge discovered she was getting hopelessly bewildered and that her head ached. Finally she came to the wise conclusion that she had thought quite enough for one day, and so she raised herself on her elbow and turned to Jack.

How bright and happy he looked, seated there, leaning back lazily against a tree; it seemed to Madge quite refreshing to see him, and for a little time she watched him in silence.

Suddenly he turned to her, and their eyes met.

"So you've come back, have you?" he asked laughingly. "It was awfully mean not to offer to take a fellow with you."

"I wasn't aware that I'd been away; you must be dreaming."

"I dreaming indeed; well, I like that! It's you that's been dreaming, you've been to the Land of Nod, and to *dolce far niente* to see Alice in Wonderland."

Madge laughed. "I'm sure I haven't been to sleep," she replied. "You settled yourself as if you didn't mean to be disturbed for about a month, and so I had a long think to pass the time."

"Well, don't tell me what you thought about and I'll say no more. My brain-power isn't at its best just now, and I daren't risk any extra strain. Food is more in my line than anything at present; let's have lunch."

"What? have lunch before you've caught a single fish?"

"A single fish indeed! what do you call that?" and he tossed a good-sized minnow to her feet.

Madge laughed merrily. "I'll call it a small whale if you like," she said. "It would be a pity to call it a minnow, as it took nearly two hours to catch."

Jack laughed too and threw down his rod.

"We'll leave them in peace for a while," he said. "It's too bad to catch them quickly, they haven't time to say good-bye to each other. What is there for lunch. I'm ravenously hungry."

"Then you'd better eat your fish first," remarked his sister slyly, "for there's only sandwiches."

"Thanks! but I thought perhaps you'd like to take it home to the mater."

"I would, only she might want me to take it to someone in her district," and so saying, Madge tossed the little thing

back into the water and proceeded to unpack their luncheon. When they had finished Jack settled himself for a chat, lying with his head in Madge's lap. He had decided that that particular spot was not good for fishing and that further efforts would only be waste of time.

For fully two hours they stayed thus, enjoying thoroughly the June sunshine and perfect idleness and a long talk without fear of interruption.

Jack was the chief spokesman this time, Madge merely asking questions. She loved to hear of all that he had been doing and with such an interested listener he could not choose but speak.

Both were sorry when at last they had to start homeward, Madge especially, for she grudged anyone a word with Jack during his short visit.

"Well, if I enjoy the rest of my stay as much as I have done to-day," he said, as they drew near the manor, "I shall not want to go away again."

"Well, don't go, Jack," and Madge looked pleadingly into his face. "I'm sure your friends won't mind much if you give up the yachting."

"Yes, but they would. I've promised such a long time to make up the party. I'm going to superintend the cooking, don't you pity them? Fawcett's too good a fellow to disappoint, and it's all his arranging. I'm going shooting in Scotland with him when we get back."

"Why is he such a good fellow?" asked Madge, for she was inclined to be jealous, Jack had spoken of this friend so often.

"Because he is, I suppose," replied Jack, smiling at her clouded face. "I hope to bring him here next year and then you'll see for yourself. I wanted him to come now, but he couldn't."

"And I sincerely hope he won't be able to next year either," was the unexpected reply.

"Why on earth not?" asked Jack in surprise. "We'll have no end of fun together."

"You two will, I've no doubt," she replied bitterly, "but two's company, three's none, and I don't want him. It's too bad of you, Jack," she continued hotly, "you only come home once a year, and now you talk of bringing a friend. I shall see scarcely anything of you if you do. Besides, you can see him nearly every day in London, surely that's enough without taking him about with you."

"My dear girl, you are talking nonsense. As if I should be likely to bring him if he'd be in the way. He'll be just like one of ourselves, and you'll like him immensely. I thought it would be a pleasure to you; he's no end of a joke and a real good fellow all round."

"I shall hate the very sight of him," replied Madge obstinately. "I don't care if he's the nicest man in the world; I don't want him here and I hope you won't bring him."

Then, seeing a vexed expression on Jack's face, she quickly changed the subject, and in a few minutes they reached home.

(To be continued.)

OUR BEAUTIFUL FURS, AND WHERE THEY COME FROM.

PART I.

FROM many a chat I have had with girls concerning the beautiful furs they were wearing, and from the errors generally exhibited in such matters, I thought of writing these little articles, and I trust they may be of some help.

Many of the young people I have conversed with never appear to have given a thought to the enormous amount of slaughter annually required, and the consequent great privation to the sable hunters, to procure them those handsome and warm coverings our girls enjoy so much.

Now a sable skin is of no value except caught in winter, which means long and exhausting tracks, through many inches of snow and deep snow-drifts. The fur when caught in early spring is valueless; although the animal may still be retaining his winter coat, the skin thus procured, when dressed, would shed all its hair. An ordinary skin is considered to be worth from £1 to £6; but if it should be of the best quality it will fetch from £12 to £15. It takes two skins to make a lady's fashionable tie, and you can have a one skin tie which is very pretty; perhaps a hint or two will be useful in the selection of a sable fur if you buy one. Firstly, see that the skin exhibits a watering appearance, and above all look for whitish hairs sparsely scattered all over the fur; they are not very observable, so you require to examine the fur well, because this is an important matter, as a dyed fur of any other animal could not display these sparse hairs. So if a fur be ever so like in colour, if it does not possess this peculiarity it is not sable.

We have to thank our sable hunters also for our nice water-colour and oil brushes.

Now it takes twelve sables to make one of those beautiful Victoria fur boas with four tails, and a cape three or four times the quantity, and will cost at a furrier's from £25 to £50 15s.; you can get a good boa for £7 7s.; three skins will go to one muff, placing the largest and best in the middle.



THE SABLE.

THE SKUNK (*white-backed*).

ALTHOUGH this is not so expensive a fur, great dexterity is required in procuring the animal, for it has to be killed at one stroke before it has time to defend itself in its natural way, as, like most of this genera, when irritated it emits an unpleasant odour, so much so that the skin would be destroyed, and everything it comes in contact with. The white-backed skunk, as it is more rare, is consequently more valued. Although a nocturnal animal, according to Darwin, conscious of its powers, it roams by day about the open plains, and fears neither dog nor man. Skunk muffs are much worn at the present day; it takes about four animals to an ordinary muff, and a good collarette three skins, so you see what a quantity of little animals one lady can wear about her.

THE STOAT OR ERMINE.

It is generally called ermine in its winter dress and is a valued fur. Ladies now wear the skin in the shape of an opera or travelling hood. The animal changes its colour from brown to white in the autumn, the tip of its tail only retaining its colour; but in the more northern parts of its habitat, the stoat invariably assumes the well-known white winter dress which constitutes the valuable ermine of commerce. In the highlands of Scotland these changes take place, but not always so in England; you may find it in Durham and Northumberland, and not in Lincolnshire, while in Cornwall and Hampshire it is almost unknown; this change from dark to white has given rise to much discussion; but, in spite of all that is said, there is little doubt that the change is really due to the

necessity of the colour of the animal being adapted to its natural surroundings. The British fur is not so valued as those obtained from more northerly regions, the importation of ermine into England at one time, I think about 1834-5, was 104,000 skins. It would take about six skins to make a muff, and twelve or more to make an opera hood, so the destruction yearly is enormous.

THE SEA BEAR OR FUR SEAL.

Now we come to one of the most valued and favoured skins of this and other countries, but it appears that very few people know from which animal this beautiful fur comes. It is generally supposed that the common seal (*Phoca*) furnishes all the furs, but that is not the case. The family *Octariae*, or eared seals, but not all of those, because some are called hair seals, and do not possess that underclothing of soft fur called seal skin. But the sea bear, really the smallest of the genera, is the seal which furnishes us with that valuable article of commerce, the under fur, from which the long hairs of the outer coat have been removed. The way they do this is very simple, the inner layer of skin being shaved away with a sharp knife, causes the long hairs, which are deeper rooted than the under fur, to fall out.

There are nine known species, of which five are hair seals, four fur seals, and they are up to this date included in the single generic title *Otarid*, the sea lions or hair seals being the largest of all. Fur seals when young are black, but they become lighter with age. The best skins are offered by young males and females. The northern sea bear, as shown in the accompanying illustration, is distinguished at first sight by its short and straight face; in profile this animal measures eight feet in length, so it would take four or five skins to a cloak, and cut into two for a cape.

The otarid are easily distinguished from the



THE STOAT OR ERMINE IN WINTER DRESS.

common seals by their erect position, their fins being more like limbs and not useless fins by the side of the animal, and only of use to them when in the water.

The otarid therefore are less fish-like, the back fins coming forward like feet when in an erect position.

At the close of the last and during the early part of the present century fur seals existed in countless numbers in many parts of the world, but the greed and stupidity of men have succeeded in reducing their numbers in most regions. Fortunately, both for science and for commerce, the seal rookeries of the Prybeloff

Islands in Behring Sea have been placed under such restrictions as to render the animal slaughter compensated by the number of births.

It appears that of the total number of sea-bears about half are males, and the other half females, but all of these do not mix with the females, as they are kept off by the stronger males, and herd by themselves; it is these bachelor seals which are alone allowed to be killed in the Prybeloff.

(To be continued.)



THE SEA BEAR OR FUR SEAL.

LIFE IN WOMEN'S CHAMBERS: A MOTHER'S IMPRESSION.

CHAPTER I.



HERE is no doubt about the growing fascination of the life described in our title, especially for the imaginations of many of our younger lassies whose lines have been lain hitherto in undeniably pleasant places.

As lately as the spring of last year it was my good fortune to receive an invitation to stay for a fortnight with an old school-friend whose eldest daughter had just finished her three years' course at the University, and was generally supposed to have come home now "for good." And assuredly hers was a home in which any gentle, bright-natured woman might have felt it good to be.

An old, sun-warmed Shropshire Hall, with the gables and black, crossing timbers that declare its near kinship to the homes of picturesque Cheshire, far enough in the country to secure the young green of the trees and hedgerows from all contamination of smoke, near enough to the town to admit easily of attendance at lectures or concerts, and for those unemancipated enough to desire it, of shopping, both pleasant and profitable.

The home within walls, moreover, was as attractive as its outward surroundings. Its master and mistress were never more content than when their house was filled with young people, whose number often doubled their own contingent of five; three boys and two girls, if Hetty and Jack, who were twenty-two and nineteen respectively, may be included under that heading.

The dignity too that can only come to a household whose head is deservedly honoured by the community of which it forms a part belonged to it in no scant measure. On all hands it was acknowledged that among the landowners of the country-side few interpreted their public and private duties in as generous a spirit or fulfilled them more conscientiously than Major Bramston. His gentle wife also, my Nita of the old days, aided and abetted his every kindly scheme, and with her children had been wont to throw herself heartily into all the best activities of the villages in the valley.

When Hetty at eighteen had elected to go to College, there had been much pleading against it on the part of her younger friends, and many useful openings for work, of necessity, set on one side at least for the time. But her father and mother had stood by her in her desire for a better equipment for life, and had spared her bright presence in the home as ungrudgingly as they could.

But when I arrived at the Hall to begin my visit in the proud capacity of "Auntie"—elect, if not actual, of all the younger people gathered under its roof, I found Hetty, with the honour of her diploma still fresh upon her, in a flushed and determined mood that allowed little or no room for persuasion. Her father was perplexed and grave, her mother almost tearful, and the rest of the family generally in distracted opposition.

She had been offered work through a College friend under the auspices of one of the many semi-scientific, semi-charitable associations bent on the redemption of the East End of London, and had set her heart on accepting it forthwith, and on "living in chambers."

Half an hour's quiet talk with her, however, easily revealed the fact that, kind-hearted lassie as Hetty was, it was the latter part of her programme that had especially fired her imagination.

"Just think, auntie! Two dear little rooms of my own, four storeys up on the lift, to manage them just as I choose, to be absolutely free to come and go, to live my own life!"

She drew a deep breath and threw out her arms with a swimmer's motion as if she already felt herself instinct with new powers of being.

I could hardly help laughing. Hetty's curly fair hair, dear dimpled little face and radiant blue eyes, seemed so strangely out of place in the solitary surrounding she desired so earnestly. I knew it. She did not. But as the days went by I began to realise, as did her mother, that nothing but that knowledge would ever bring back to her her old content in her home and the much good work that lay ready to her hand there, or even enable her to give herself to it in any way sufficiently to secure her her own self-respect.

So it was decided that Hetty should try her plan for a year; but as I watched the change that came over her mother's face when the decision was made I wondered if ever the younger generation will appreciate the length and breadth and depth and height of the love, faith and self-sacrifice which they are continually demanding and often richly receiving from the elder.

No. 17A, St. Edward's Chambers, W., was to form the direction of Hetty's letters henceforward. Her father provided her with thirty pounds for her furnishing, and smiled a little sadly at her eager petition "to be compelled to live on my own earnings." In the first excitement of her victory she had no thought but of securing it to the last shilling.

"Let me go up by myself, mother. Mary," her college friend, "has promised to take me into her den until I have made my own fit to live in; and I want to manage everything for

myself and then to have you come and see me when I'm settled."

"Mary," while the chief instigator of Hetty's new and unwelcome ambitions had, notwithstanding, been a frequent and favourite guest at the Hall. And although her heart was heavy "mother" said "yes" bravely to this request also.

"Why do Mary and Hetty always speak as if a den were the most delightful-sounding place in the world?" asked practical Bessie, who was sixteen and abhorred nonsensical notions.

"I expect Hetty's room will look just about as much like a den as Hetty looks like a wild beast," replied Jack with a grim twist of the corners of his mouth. "Now if she had seen some of our fellow's places at Rugby! Bird's nests and snakes in bottles on the window-sill, live mice and a hedgehog, and perhaps a tame toad or a tortoise crawling about the floor, half a chemical laboratory in one corner and a muddle of geological specimens in another, ink, crumbs, papers, dust over everything and not a clean rag, or a handkerchief, even, two days after a fellow's washing had come in—she might talk about a den. But, bless me, a girl couldn't let herself be comfortable if she tried! I can just imagine what Hetty's show will be like. Not a chair strong enough to bear sitting down on, tables that upset the first time you go near them, with a lamp on one and half a hundred tea-cups on another, curtains enough to smother a fellow, pictures that can't or won't stay straight on the walls, cushions to take up all the available space left, and foot-stools kicking about on purpose to trip you up—bah!"

Jack staved his enumeration for want of breath, and for once Bessie forbore to take up the cudgels on behalf of her fellow-womenkind.

It must be confessed that Hetty's den when fully equipped would have gone far to justify her brother's sarcasms, although irrational as he would have declared it, its essentially feminine weaknesses afforded her, if not physical comfort, an exquisite mental satisfaction that far out-balanced any other consideration.

St. Edward's Chambers for women loomed large as a red brick pile even in the wide and many-mansioned street of which it formed a part. It probably contained nearly a hundred inhabitants, as eager and self-conscious in their quest of life as ever Hetty had been.

A large proportion of them were young, a larger, perhaps, were growing old rapidly in spite of a pathetic clinging to youth; one here and there had white or grey hair which they were inclined to wave as a banner when everything else failed them. For to live in St. Edward's Chambers was popularly supposed to involve the impressing of a distinct individuality upon your friends and neighbours. The distinctiveness being the matter of the last moment.

And yet with hardly an exception to an old-world mother's eyes as well as to those of the "mere male," their rooms or chambers presented an almost monotonous collection of similar oddities. Early in their existence a clever woman writer pointed out the fact that the inhabitants appeared to clothe their own persons, their walls and their sofas indiscriminately. The "Art Serge" that appeals with curious certainty to the would-be free women of our time as at once economically and aesthetically worthy of their patronage, if it hang in limp folds over a draughty door one day, may be impounded for the making of an equally limp cloak on the next, and finally end its career as a "beautiful patch of colour," concealing a shabby table or even a dilapidated coalscuttle. Art muslin again has a refinement lurking in its penny-halfpenny lengths that is inconceivable to the Philistine mind; while amazing posters, the evolution apparently of Japanese nightmares, are becoming the essential accompaniment of "black and whites," after Whistler, or autotypes of the most extreme Burne-Jones, Rossetti school.

Carved oak bureaux stand out amazed at their own substantiality from a few rush-bottomed chairs, usually manifestly painted or "japaned" by amateur hands, and the

tables continually do justice to the masculine maledictions hurled at them. A sofa bed would be comfortable if it were not for the elaboration upon it of cushions and hangings supposed to conceal its identity, and a hammock chair or two invite to cigarettes and midday snatches of unrefreshing sleep—a consequence of work or excitement pursued mainly by lamp-light.

Hetty's particular art serge was peacock blue, her art muslin a delicate yellow and her floor rejoiced her eyes with a (for St. Edward's Chambers) unusually costly druggot of a rich moss green. Three or four little bookshelves with dangerously slender supports bore their burden of "favourites" proudly, and coloured pots on brackets, photographs of the home folk, and pictures framed, or "drawing-pinned," covered most of the convenient wall space.

At St. Edward's Chambers there were no little kitchens or sculleries such as are attached to many of their kind, to allow of the inhabitants indulging in any very substantial cooking on their own account. Few, if any of the women had any time for such employment of their energy even if they had had the inclination. Luncheon and dinner could be ordered at certain specified hours from the house-keeper's rooms below, and tables were laid and cleared with restless precision by maids who, alas! had little time to rest in, much less waste. What they must often have thought of the surroundings of their deftly set out cover were perhaps best left undetermined. But Hetty at any rate on the first day that I was invited to inspect her little domain had it radiantly ready for admiration.

It was still spring-time, and with the help of a box of daffodils and lilies-of-the-valley from the "Hall" garden, she had turned

her little study into a veritable bower. Her friend Mary, who made her dwelling in rooms on the topmost floor of all, had descended to act as assistant hostess, and a merrier, kindlier or more completely light-hearted couple of lassies never made an odder home welcome.

Already Hetty had begun to take an absorbing interest in her work and to speak of us and our and we as if the association of which she was the newest and probably the youngest recruit was infallibly the refining agency of the century. Mary was perhaps quieter in her faith, but seemed a no less devoted adherent; and I went away to write a long letter of description to Mrs. Bramston to tell her that, perhaps, after all, the young folks could see further along the road of life than we, whose eyes were growing a little near-sighted and too apt to be sensitive only to the lights and shadows of our own immediate circle.

For nearly six months after that I was absorbed in sorrows and anxieties that had arisen nearer my own home-life. Then I heard quite unexpectedly that Hetty had had an accident in getting in or out of her lift that had resulted in a badly broken ankle. At the same time I learnt that her mother had spent some six weeks up in her chambers nursing her, and that now they were both home again together for Christmas at the Hall.

From a rather guarded sentence towards the close of Mrs. Bramston's letter I gathered that there was little fear of Hetty's desiring a longer lease of life in chambers. But it was not until I again accepted an invitation to watch the spring making its welcome conquest of the Shropshire valleys that I heard "all about it."

(To be continued.)

VARIETIES.

FOOLISH LISTENERS.

It is told of Bishop Aylmer that when he observed his congregation inattentive he would repeat some verses of the Hebrew Bible, at which the people stared with astonishment. He then addressed them on the folly of eagerly listening to what they did not understand while they neglected instructions which were readily comprehended.

THE NEWSPAPER NEAREST THE NORTH POLE.

The paper that is published nearest the North Pole is one edited by a Mr. Møller among the Eskimos of Greenland. He set up his office in a place called Godthaab, among a people that did not know how to read. Twice a month he makes a long trip on skates through the country to sell his paper.

At first his paper consisted of nothing but pictures; then he put in an alphabet, then added a few words, and at last came to sentences, until now his journal contains long articles on important topics.

And so this little paper of his has taught the Eskimos of that neighbourhood to read; and what great paper in the world can point to a piece of work more useful and enterprising?

THE WISE GIRL.

"How foolish is the pessimist,
Despondent and forlorn,
Who always when she gets a rose
Goes hunting for a thorn!
The optimist has better sense,
The charm of life she knows,
She doesn't mind a scratch or two
If she can get the rose."

THE DISADVANTAGE OF HAVING WHITE HANDS.

When Mary Queen of Scots made her first attempt to escape from the Castle of Lochleven, she entered the boat in the disguise of a laundress. She carried a bundle of clothes, and had a muffer over her face.

They had not gone far when one of those who rowed said in a joke—

"Let us see what manner of dame this is."

With that he tried to pull down her muffer. "In defence," says a contemporary account, "she put up her hands, which they spied to be very fair and white; wherewith they entered into suspicion whom she was."

The Queen was much put out, and entreated them to row her to the shore, but they paid no attention and just "rowed her back again."

THE CHEERFUL PHILOSOPHER.

"'Twere easy told
That some grow wise and some grow cold,
And all feel time and trouble:
If life an empty bubble be,
How sad are those who will not see
A rainbow in the bubble."

PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE.—Patience is very good but perseverance is much better. While the former stands like a stoic under difficulties the latter makes it its business to vanquish them.

THINK THIS OVER.—By all means, girls, go on learning, but remember that knowledge is worse than ignorance if it does not lead us to live wiser and better lives.

HE SAW HE WAS BLIND.

"Well, John, did you take the note I gave you to Mr. Smithers?" asked a gentleman of his rustic servant.

"Yes, sir," said John; "I took the note, but I don't think he can read it."

"Can't read it! Why so?"

"Because he is so blind, sir. While I was in the room he axed me where my hat was, and it war on my head all the time."

DEFINITIONS.—The "complete angler," as a definition of "a flirt," is particularly happy. Beauty has been called "a short-lived tyranny," "a silent cheat" and "a delightful prejudice;" while modesty has been declared "the delicate shadow that virtue casts." Love has been likened to "the sugar in a woman's teacup and man the spoon that stirs it up;" and a "true lover's knot" has not inapty been termed a "dear little tie."

ALCHEMISTS.—"In their search for gold the alchemists discovered other things—gunpowder, china, medicines, the laws of nature. There is a sense in which we are all alchemists."—*Schopenhauer*.

THE SPEED OF THOUGHT.—"It takes about two-fifths of a second," says a scientific writer, "to call to mind the country in which a well-known town is situated or the language in which a familiar author wrote. We can think of the next month in half the time we need to think of the name of last month. It takes on an average one-third of a second to add numbers containing one digit, and half a second to multiply them."

Odds and Ends.

THERE seems to be no limit to the uses to which the bicycle may be put. The cowboys in a cattle ranch near the Cheyenne River, in America, have been using the machines during the past summer in place of the horses with which they used formerly to collect their masters' herds. When the owner of the ranch first suggested that the cowboys should ride bicycles instead of horses for the work amongst the cattle on the level parts of the ranch, the men looked upon him as being little short of insane. But he persisted, and, the experiment being tried, was found so successful, that the men now declare that they have done better work in some cases than they would have done with horses. When the deep snow renders the use of the bicycles impossible, the horses will again be called into requisition, but not before.

THE national flower of England, the rose, is the oldest flower of which the world has any record. Its origin has never been stated, and it is not mentioned in the Bible before the reign of Solomon; but then it is spoken of in such terms as to indicate that it had already been well known for a long time. It is found drawn upon some of the earliest Egyptian monuments, and upon the tomb of an Egyptian princess being opened only a year ago, several vessels, hermetically sealed, were found, which contained attar of roses. From the Egyptians the manufacture of attar of roses or rose-essence was doubtless taken by the Greeks and the Jews, as it was common to both peoples. It is an extraordinary fact that wild roses grow upon every continent on the globe with the exception of Australia, and even in the Polar regions, where the summer is only of two months' duration, they are to be found, travellers in Greenland, Kamschatka, and Northern Siberia constantly gathering them, as well as at Spitzbergen.

By some extraordinary oversight there is absolutely no public official record of the birth, baptism or confirmation of Queen Victoria. As the Queen was only three degrees removed from the throne at the time of her birth, it would be thought that some document setting forth the fact of her entrance into the world would have been found amongst the mass of public archives, but it appears that the announcement of the birth was all that was deemed necessary by the State officials, whose duty it was to be personally aware of the fact; consequently there is nothing in our public records to show the birth of one of our greatest sovereigns. Of course, there are the private entries of birth, baptism and confirmation in the royal registers kept for the purpose.

A NATURALIST who has been observing ants very closely for some years, and who has written much about them says that each ant of one particular species is regularly washed by another ant who for the time being acts as lady's-maid. They were examined beneath a microscope, and on an ant waking up the assistant ant began by washing its face and then going over the whole body, the insect expressing all the signs of extreme pleasure and gratification during the process. These particular ants, the naturalist found, slept for three hours at a time in relays, the toilet operation being performed upon each set as it awoke.

"To know how to learn, so that when need arises knowledge may be quickly attained, is a better provision for the business of life than is afforded by the largest or richest store of information packed away in the memory—perhaps so packed as to be inaccessible when wanted."

"If ever the happy time should arrive when we are more interested to discover the excellences of our friends and neighbours than their defects, and more anxious to study their ideals than to insist upon our own, a great impetus will be given to moral progress and to the true and cordial brotherhood of man."

A VERY wise edict has lately been put in force in Massachusetts. This entails a penalty upon the wearer of the skin or feathers of any bird which is protected by the laws of that State, as well as upon the person who kills it. Thus any girl or woman who buys these feathers or birds from a milliner to decorate her hat or bonnet runs the risk of a fine or imprisonment as much as the man who has shot the bird. The law is certainly drastic, but the indifference of women to the total extinction of certain species of birds in order that they themselves may be adorned is so great and so increasing, that it needs restrictive measures to bring them to a proper sense of kindly feeling and humanity.

We are not generally aware that whilst we are awake we are continually winking. Every five minutes or so the upper eyelid suddenly drops down, and each time it does so a tear is swept across the eye and washes away any speck of dust or dirt that may have lodged upon it. This action on our part is quite unconscious; but this moisture is perpetually clearing the vision. The eyes themselves frequently become weak from improper use, such as reading by too bright a light, or not sufficient light. Women often ruin their eyesight over fancy work in which the colours are dazzling and the designs intricate. Happily fancy-work is no longer so fashionable as it was, but that, and fine embroidery and lace-work have much to answer for with regard to the short-sightedness of many women, for whose eyes the strain necessitated by the keen attention to minute stitches has been too great.

IN China everything is done backwards. The men wear skirts and the women wear trousers; the Chinese compass points to the South instead of to the North, and whilst the men wear their hair in a pigtail, the women coil theirs into a knot, and oddly enough the dressmakers are men and the women act as labourers. The written language is not spoken, and the spoken language is not written; books are read backward, and they write from the right to the left-hand side of the paper, instead of from the left to the right. White is the colour of mourning, and black is the colour for bridal, the bridesmaids being old women. When a Chinaman meets a friend he shakes his own hand, and he commences his dinner with dessert, ending with soup and fish. Their vessels are launched sideways and they always mount their horses on the off side.

FINLAND is a country of which comparatively little is ever heard, but its women are much more advanced in education and social progress than those of almost any other country in Europe. During the past twenty-five years the schools have been free to both sexes, and in the University of Helsingfors—the capital—there are now two hundred women-students. Two flourishing clubs in the country are solely supported by women, whilst over a thousand women are engaged in the public service, such as post-offices, railroads and telegraph offices. Nearly another thousand are teachers in schools of various grades, it being no uncommon thing to see young men of eighteen who are preparing for a commercial or academic career amongst their pupils. Business engrosses the time and attention of three thousand of the Finnish women, and out of the eighty poor-houses in the country, fifty-two are managed by women superintendents. The population of Finland being small, the total of these figures represent a large percentage of the women of the nation.

THE Emperor Menelik of Abyssinia has become better known to Europe during the last two or three years, owing to the disastrous Italian campaigns against him and the missions that both France and England have sent to his court. Most of the Biblical manuscripts which have passed into the possession of European countries have come from Abyssinia, and it is said that there are still large quantities remaining in the Emperor's keeping. When Ethiopia was invaded by the Mahomedans in the sixteenth century, the Abyssinians placed all their manuscripts in an island of Lake Zana called Debra-Sina, where they were carefully guarded by the inhabitants, who looked upon the books as tutelary deities. The Emperor of Abyssinia has now conquered these "holy islands," and has built a great library in his capital for the safe keeping of the mass of manuscripts he found. The time may come when European savants will have free access to these treasures, many of which are supposed to bear directly upon the earlier history of the Christian religion.

IT is just a hundred years ago since the art of lithography was discovered. Mozart's opera, *Don Juan*, had been most successfully produced at Munich, and after the performance a man named Sanefelder, whose duty it was to stamp the tickets of admission to the opera house, began to stamp the tickets for the following day. When he went to his room he had three things in his hand, a polished whetstone for sharpening razors, a ticket-stamp still wet with the printing-ink, and a cheque for his week's salary. As he placed this cheque upon the table, a draught of wind caught it, and, carrying it up almost to the ceiling, finally deposited it in a basin of water. Sanefelder dried the cheque and then pressed it flat with the whetstone, upon which he had before carelessly placed the ticket-stamp. When he took the cheque from under the stone the next morning, he found that the letters of the stamp were printed upon it with faithful accuracy. It then occurred to him that by this means he could probably simplify his work of copying out the parts of the chorus of the various operas, so he purchased a large stone, and, after making several experiments, discovered the art of lithography, or, in other words, the art of printing from stone.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL.

POMONA.—Goitre or "Derbyshire neck" is an enlargement of the "thyroid gland," which is placed in front of the neck just under the larynx or voice box. The causes of this condition are not fully understood, but locality is undoubtedly a very important factor. Derbyshire and parts of Cornwall and Wales are the districts where the condition is most prevalent. It is supposed by some authorities to be due to impure water-supply, especially to drinking water strongly impregnated with lime salts. As regards the treatment: the first point, obviously, is to remove from the district where the condition prevails. Iodine, both internally and externally, is warmly recommended by some physicians. The progress of the affection is very slow, and when formed it often tends to slowly disappear on leaving the place where it originated.

JOAN.—The condition you mention is a symptom which often accompanies heart-disease, but the term is very loosely applied to any form of difficulty in breathing it would be impossible to say what the condition was without examination. We therefore advise you to have the girl's chest examined by a physician, who will be able to set your mind at rest on this point.

"FLO" AND "ALBERTA."—Moles on the face cannot be cured except by removal. They are best removed with scissors. Afterwards the sides of the wound are stitched up with horsehair. A minute scar is left after the operation.

LOTTIE.—The following is the best method to cure warts and is perfectly free from danger. Having washed the wart and surrounding skin with warm water smear vaseline over the skin round the wart, but do not let it touch the wart itself. They drop on to the wart two or three drops of strong acetic acid, and after waiting for ten seconds rub well into the wart solid nitrate of silver (lunar caustic). If one application does not cure repeat the treatment. We have never known this method to fail.

GIRLS' EMPLOYMENTS.

MANNA (Asylum Attendant).—Your project of becoming an asylum attendant is a good one, and you are likely to find the previous experience of children's nursing of some value. Efforts are being made by the Medico-Psychological Association (address, Hanwell Asylum) to improve the intellectual status of asylum nurses by instituting a system of training and examination. Those who have passed this examination would undoubtedly have a better chance of obtaining appointments than others without special qualifications. There is a large Poor Law Asylum for children at Earlswood, and you would do well to write to the matron asking whether there are likely to be any vacancies in the staff. Ordinarily the payment of asylum nurses begins at £10 a year and rises to £25.

LES YEUX (Civil Service, Post Office Department).—Your short-sightedness might not actually hinder you in the discharge of your duties as a Post Office messenger; but, with the high medical standard now enforced, we think you would run a considerable risk in selecting a Civil Service career. There is, as we have pointed out before, the painful possibility of being thrown out of employment at the end of a two years' engagement.

LAUREL (Lessons in Hairdressing).—Advertise your intention to give hairdressing lessons in the papers principally read by ladies. It is not however a good time of the year for such an undertaking, as fashionable ladies and their maids are out of London during the early part of the autumn.

STEWARDS (P. and O. Co.).—We have recently given information on this subject. The principal companies usually engage as stewards the widows and relatives of their own officers. Possibly your cousin, who is in the service of a Transatlantic company, might be able to further your wishes. We hardly think, however, that the companies would be willing to appoint a very young woman to such a post.

TINK (Copying at Home).—We are obliged to repeat that copying at home is work which can scarcely be obtained in London, much less in a country village. People do their copying now by means of various mechanical appliances, and if they wish it done for them, they send to some well-known office where the work is certain to be done expeditiously and satisfactorily.

A CONSTANT KEEPER (Cookery).—You do not give your address, so we are unable to tell you what would be the best means for you to take to learn cookery in your own neighbourhood. Probably, however, you will find on inquiry that some County Council classes exist, and those you could attend with profit. As you object so much to beginning your career as scullery-maid. You would do better to become a cook, as you have some talent for the work, than to go into a draper's shop, or become a children's nurse, though the last-named occupation is an excellent one for those who are clever in the management of children.

MISCELLANEOUS.

CHARITY BATE.—The motto *Pugna pro patria*, "Fight for your country," is that of the Titchbourne family; but the crest is not the same as yours. *Pugna pro patria*, "I fight for my country," is the motto of one branch of the Ogilvy's, the crest also being different. We do not understand the inversion of the motto, and cannot find out anything about either it or the crest you send, except the above. Many crests and mottoes are the composition of the heraldic stationers.

FIREFLY.—1. The summer season at Bournemouth lasts from the beginning of July to the end of September, and as there is a winter season, we think that October might be a cheaper time, as well as April, May, and June for a visit. They have greatly overbuilt the place, and the price of lodgings and boarding-houses has much gone down of late. Cromer has a very different climate and is bracing, but warmer and drier than Lowestoft and Yarmouth. There is only a summer season, beginning in June and closing by October. Both of these places have a sandy beach, that of Bournemouth is five miles in length.—2. Wedding-cake presentations are not usually acknowledged.

SANDY.—We have inquired about the home but can hear of nothing of the sort. It is probable that you would obtain information of something of the same description at the Y. W. C. A., Central Institute, 310, Regent St., W. But, observe, we do not approve of the plan, and think you should consider well before you act. You should have the full consent and free permission of your fiancé's father and mother.

LOVER OF THREE.—The plant from which Indian hemp is obtained, grows in various parts of Hindustan, where it is called *bang*. It is used to produce intoxication in India, and the drink of which it is a stimulant is called *bang*. The extract is only used in England for medicinal purposes, and it is considered to be a cure for whooping cough; but as its properties are very powerful it would be highly improper to administer it unless by a medical prescription, made for that particular sufferer. You appear to be reading a number of unhealthy books; quite unsuitable for so young a girl. Don't! you will be sorry when you are older and wiser.

ANXIOUS.—You do not give information as to the social condition of the person for whom you wish to find an inexpensive home. Is she a retired governess? or a domestic servant, or has she been in trade? There are "St. Andrew's Cottage Homes" at Clewer, near Windsor, in which are some free rooms; but, however, may not be vacant. Others are at 15s. and others at 20s. weekly. At Blackwater, Hampshire, there is a Cottage Home for a few ladies from 12s. 6d. weekly. Apply to Miss Hillman, Woodbine Cottage. You had better write all particulars to the Secretary of "The Governesses' Benevolent Institution," 32, Sackville Street, London, W. Or, perhaps, still better, to the Hon. Superintendent of the "Y. W. C. A.," Kent House, 91, Great Portland Street, London, W., stating that you want a permanent home for a person past middle age and past work; saying to what class she belongs.

H. LACREY.—1. A George III. half-crown, dated 1817, obverse small bust without shoulders, and reverse, arms on a plain shield, surrounded by the garter, the collar omitted, valued at from 3s. 6d. to 6s. A George III. crown piece obverse laureated bust to right, reverse St. George and Dragon, dates 1818-19-20, valued at from 7s. 6d. to 15s. Take them to some silversmith, who, if he do not take them, would advise you as to where else to offer them.—2. Your spelling is more than usually bad. You write "perservation" for "preservation," "piece" for "piece," "as" for "has," "mcellinious" for "miscellaneous," amongst other words.

A TWELVE YEARS' READER OF "G. O. P." (Liverpool).—Beeswax only, or a mixture of yellow soap and beeswax melted together, is the proper thing for the inside of a feather bed, not soap alone, which soon dries, and becomes powder. It is better to use very little even of the beeswax and soap, but instead, to purchase a very stout good ticking, 80 close in texture that the feathers cannot get through it.

SAY AND SEAL.—Miss Elizabeth Wetherall (Susan Warner) died in 1885. The date of her book, *Melbourne House*, is 1864; *Say and Seal* was written in 1860 by the two sisters, Susan and Anna. The latter wrote under the name of "Amy Lotthrop." The last book that we know of by her was *Stories of Vinegar Hill*, published in 1871; but there are books by the sisters which are dated in 1880-1882. The unfinished nature of many of their books leads to constant inquiries about sequels to them.

PESS HULLFAX.—1. The "spade guineas" (of George III.) of 1787, but were discontinued after 1799. The proof spade guinea of this reign issued 1787, with plain edge, is worth £1 18s.—2. The works of Swift, published in 1766, 18 vols. 12mo., to which edition there is sometimes added *Letters*, 6 vols., and *Supplement*, 3 vols., forming altogether 27 vols., are valued at about £4 4s.

STAR.—The offering of incense in the Jewish Church was not a special and distinctive ordinance of their religion only, because it has formed a part of the religious ceremonies of most ancient nations. Doubtless, it had a symbolical significance, as well as an offering to the Deity (real or supposititious), such as rendered to none but the Deity. But, over and above this, it was of hygienic importance and value; as in a great concourse of persons of all conditions of life, some with infectious breath, and some with old and soiled clothing from houses where there had been contagious disease, such fumigation was not only hygienically desirable, but agreeable to the other worshippers. There is an allusion to incense in Rev. v. 8., where the "vials full of odours," are described as typical of "the prayers of saints," also in chap. viii., 4. See also Malachi i. 11.

GLORIA.—Dr. J. Eadie, in the *Bible Cyclopaedia*, says, "The Second Temple did not contain the ark. Whether it was seized among the spoils when the city was sacked, or whether it was secreted and afterwards destroyed, does not appear. The Jews think it will be restored when their Messiah appears." Dr. Sir W. Smith, in his *Smaller Dictionary of the Bible*, says "The Ark was probably taken captive or destroyed at Nebuchadnezzar's."

Prideaux's argument that "there must have been an Ark in the Second Temple," is of no weight against express testimony, such as that of Josephus. "PERAUTE QUI ANTE NOS NOSTRA DIXERUNT" is from Donatus, a learned grammarian, the instructor of St. Jerome. It is translated, "Words that those persons had never existed who give utterance to the very same thoughts that occur to ourselves." An exclamation to which many people give utterance in the present day, no doubt, and which finds its best analogy in our English adage, "There is nothing new under the sun."

A ROLY POLY PUPPY (Moscow).—1. Your English is wonderful for twelve years old. You may make your bad temper much better, if you will invariably count twenty before you attempt to speak. If you can control yourself so far, the victory will be half won. Pray to God for His grace to help you.—2. We should always give cats cooked meat when domesticated; but you must remember that in their wild state they would eat it raw.

GREAT REFINEMENT.—You give no idea of the tastes nor the vocation of your intended husband, which we should know, to give you a good suggestion for a present. If fond of horses and riding, a silver-mounted whip or gold horse-shoe cravat pin. If a reader, a book on his favourite studies; or else some nice articles for the toilet—such as brush and comb in a leather case, or a small leather travelling bag, sufficient for an absence of a day or two. Your acquaintance with his habits and pursuits must render you a better judge than an utter stranger.

E. M. H.—There are farmhouses in Kent and Sussex and elsewhere, prepared for the reception of boarders. The Great Eastern Railway has, for some years, issued yearly a printed list of farmhouse-lodgings, which may be obtained at any of their stations and offices in London. We have heard of other railways had done the same, and as you have plenty of time, you might inquire at their various offices.

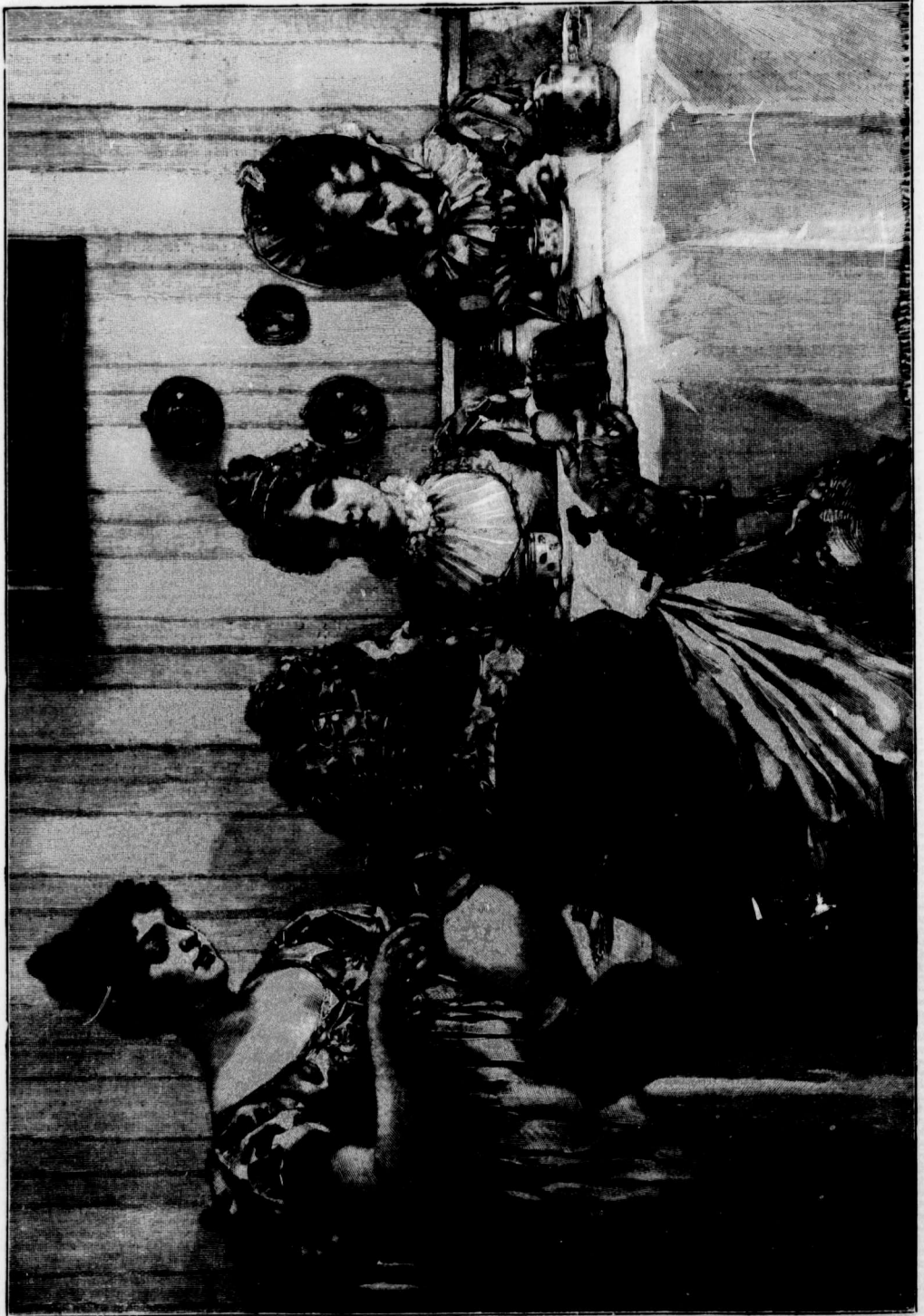
E. M. H.—We should hope that this feeling of shyness will wear off in time and give place to a happy confidence and pleasure in each other's society. You will need much love and trust to enable you to bear the test of marriage.

S. C. A. L.—It would not be "rude" to speak to a man—"a widower"—who is unknown to you except by sight; it would be very forward and intrusive to persevere to force your acquaintance on a stranger, especially a man. How could you be "really fond of him?"—we suppose you mean "fond." There is no terminating the word "spoke."

WILD IRISH GIRL.—1. March 7th, 1870, was a Friday.—2. Birds should have covers over their cages to keep them as dark as possible when they go to roost; but there should be some aperture for ventilation.

AGNES.—MS. has been read, declined and returned to you. The question is not one of etiquette but of wisdom and propriety. An exchange of letters, or a correspondence between a young man and a girl, who are not betrothed to each other, should be begun only with the knowledge and consent of parents or guardians, who are able to judge how far it would be wise to permit it. Such letters should be always open to inspection, and in no sense private. Platonic friendships have been found, by long experience, to be dangerous.

MARGUERITE.—A situation as lady nurse, or children's maid, where an under nurse is kept, is comparatively rare; and much experience in the physical care, as well as more training of infants and young children is an essential qualification. At only seventeen and six months you could not be thus qualified. It is a situation of great trust, and only persons, say from twenty-five to thirty years of age, could inspire sufficient confidence for such a position. But you might advertise, of course.



COFFEE AND SCANDAL.