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THE EMPRESS OF JAPAN GOES OUT FOR A WALK. (THE ADOPTION OF PARISIAN COSTUME.)

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IN SPITE OF ALL.

IDA LEMON, Author of "The Charming Cora," "A Winter Garment," etc.

CHAPTER XX.

CECIL MUSGROVE was ill for many weeks, and during that time it seemed to Beattie that she entered into another life. Thorough in her joy, so in her grief and anxiety she could be possessed by no other feeling. No one knew, however, the extent of the suffering she endured. It was not morbid, because there was nothing morbid in Beattie's nature, but perhaps she indulged in needless accusations as to her own former pride and heartlessness. She felt she had misjudged her would-be lover, and the possibility of his dying just when she was growing to care for him, and of her never being able to explain herself to him, saddened her as with a cloud which would rest over all her life. All her former pleasures and interests, the many gaieties in which, as the season progressed, she was asked to take her part, wore a very different aspect from what they had done last year. All the time, even though she might banish it from the foreground of her thoughts, the consciousness of an impending sorrow and a present dread was with her. Sometimes Mr. Musgrove was reported better, then there was a relapse. It was not till spring had come that he was said to be out of danger. He was not yet to return home, but to go to the seaside with his mother and a nurse. The likelihood of a meeting was therefore still postponed for some weeks, if not longer.

During this time Beattie and Norah had corresponded with some frequency, and had really become intimate. In all her distress there was no one to whom Beattie could turn at home for genuine sympathy, and in her deepening inner life, the awakening of her soul to its own nature, she was not likely to find any response in the beings of either her uncle or her aunt. It was to her girl-friend that Beattie poured out all her thoughts, and in Norah she found someone who was not likely to laugh at her aspirations, nor take a superior attitude in face of the little exaggerations and errors of judgment which youth, inexperience, and intensity of feeling bring with them at any crisis. To Norah, who had grown quietly in spirit and in mind, even as in her bodily development, everything was much simpler than to the perplexed and enthusiastic young creature who wanted to do and be great things at a moment's notice. Beattie never broke her word, and when she vowed to dedicate her life to higher purposes than it had yet known, should that other life be spared, she no sooner heard such was the case than she was anxious then and there to devote herself to good works, and to do all in her power to show her gratitude. The reaction after the long strain made her happiness the more intense, and everyone who came in intimate contact with her noticed it. Yet neither Mr. nor Mrs. Swannington had any notion of all that had passed within the being of the girl whom they had seen daily.

"Beattie seems rather quieter than she used to be," her uncle had said once; "but I suppose she is fretting about that poor fellow Musgrove."

And Aunt Ella had answered, not so heartlessly as it sounded—

"She'll learn sense if he dies."

When she was again the life of the house they saw nothing deeper than her natural joy at his recovery. Her efforts at patience with her aunt, who although well again, was no longer quite so amiable as of old, passed unnoticed; neither did they observe that her former good-nature and affectionate consideration for those with whom she came in contact had deepened into an earnest desire to deny herself for the sake of others.

One day she asked leave to go and see the parlourmaid, who was ill in the hospital. Aunt Ella shrugged her shoulders.

"My dear Beattie, how can you wish to see a servant when it is not necessary? For me, I detest them all. But Barton was better than this silly Eliza. Tell her from me if she gets better soon I will take her back."

"It is a glorious day," said Mr. Swannington. "Whatever do you want to go to visit sick people for? Go to the Park."

"I would rather see Barton," said Beattie.

Aunt Ella laughed.

"Beattie is becoming a model young woman. I think it must be the fierce-looking curate who preached so tiresomely on selfishness last Sunday that is responsible for it. I notice she is making red flannel garments for the poor—she who hates her needle."

Beattie reddened. She did dislike needlework, unless it were on a thing that could be finished almost as soon as begun; but there was a consumptive girl of whom she had heard, and she was trying to make her some warm clothing. Aunt Ella had chanced to enter her sanctum, and found the garment side by side, it must be confessed, with a book and a bottle of barley sugar.

However, they let her have her own way when it did not clash with theirs, and she found, as is usually the case with people who are really in earnest, that there was plenty of good to be quietly done without breaking away from the restrictions which were placed upon her by those in authority.

At last a day arrived when, calling on Mrs. Gilman, they were told that on the previous evening her husband had inquired for Mr. Musgrove, who had returned home and resumed his ordinary life. "He was asking after you," she added, and Beattie, at whom she more especially looked, found herself blushing with a joy she had scarcely the art to conceal.

"To-morrow," said Mrs. Swannington, when they had left, "is Saturday. You and I will call at his house. It is but suitable we make inquiries."

"To-morrow! After all this long time! To-morrow!"

All that night she scarcely slept for thinking of the possible meeting of the next day. How would he look? What would he say? Would his illness have altered him? Would he be glad to see her? He had asked about her; she had been in his thoughts. How long, long ago it seemed since that afternoon at Crabsley, when she had asked him not to speak to her of love! If he had felt for her as she did now for him, how cold and light and even cruel her manner must have appeared. But he would soon see now that all was different.

Usually she was not sufficiently careful in her dress to satisfy Mrs. Swannington, who frequently had to send her back to retie a veil or choose another pair of gloves, but to-day she was fastidious to a degree. Her spring walking costume, for all it looked so simple, had cost nearly as much as Norah Gilman was able to spend on clothes for a year; but then, as Aunt Ella said, style is everything, and one must pay for it. Her hat was most becoming, and all the little etceteras of her toilette, so trivial yet so important, were in perfect taste. She was so long before the glass that, for once, she kept her aunt waiting instead of fidgeting downstairs while Mrs. Swannington adorned herself. The latter, when she appeared, said nothing, but nodded approval. Beattie was not thinking of effect, but only desired that her lover should take pleasure in the sight of her.

During the drive Mrs. Swannington, who was also a little excited, made from time to time disconnected remarks and ejaculations. Beattie was too agitated to say much; she was pale and trembling with nervousness. To her, this meeting with one who had been near death had something sacred in its character.

They were informed that Mr. Musgrove was at home, and were shown into

the library. The house, which had been shut up, was not yet quite in order. But Beattie felt glad to be in this room, which was more especially his own, rather than the big drawing-room, which was formal and unhomelike. The library opened into a small sitting-room, and as she sat there, her heart beating to suffocation and her eyes dilated, the handle of the door was turned. She looked away. Now that the moment had come she felt a longing to avert it. She was afraid. But it was not he who entered. Involuntarily she gave a great sigh, half of relief, half of disappointment, as the figure of Mrs. Coverdale, his sister, appeared.

She greeted the visitors with her usual somewhat chilling politeness. She was indifferent to Mrs. Swannington, but of Beattie she was inwardly jealous. She had thought her brother too attentive to her the night they had dined together; she was always secretly afraid of Cecil marrying. She had a little boy who would, if things remained as they now were, inherit his uncle's and his great-aunt's money. Accordingly she was a very attentive sister. As a rule Cecil, in whom family affection was not particularly strong, did not encourage the advances of his relations, but he was sometimes glad to take advantage of them. And at the present time, when people were constantly calling, it was a comfort to have a sensible woman who knew whom to receive and whom to send away, and who was not too cordial to gossiping individuals of her own sex.

"I could not refrain from coming to inquire after your brother," said Mrs. Swannington, who would be amiable at any cost. "His illness was such a shock to me. When last I saw him he was in quite excellent health. In fact, he was staying at my country house."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Coverdale; "but that was some time ago."

"In the summer, as a matter of fact."

Mrs. Coverdale smiled sweetly.

"I remember now. He mentioned that he had been with you for a couple of days. Cecil always has so many invitations. Do you know, I think your niece—she is your niece, is she not?—is rather altered since I met her here? She is thinner. Have you been unwell at all?" she inquired of Beattie.

"Oh, no. I am never anything but well," said Beattie, smiling.

"Ah!" drawled the lady. "How fortunate for you. I suppose it is only, then, that you have got a little older. Girls always look different"—turning again to Mrs. Swannington—"after their first season."

"I suppose she thinks I have gone off," said Beattie to herself. "I hope he won't."

"We are going, I trust, to see Mr. Musgrove," said Aunt Ella, changing the subject.

"I think he is in," replied Mrs. Coverdale. "I will inquire."

"Oh, I am sure he is in," said Mrs. Swannington promptly. "The servant told me so."

"He shall be informed that you are here," said the languid lady, and extended a hand towards the bell.

"Have you told your master that Mrs. Swannington and Miss——"

"Margetson."

"Miss Margetson are here, Simpson?"

"Not yet, madam."

"Do so, then."

She did not feel it incumbent upon her to explain that when the servant had announced to her her brother's visitors she had given no instruction that he was to be told. He left this matter to her management, as he was not always eager to see callers.

Again poor Beattie flushed and paled as the door opened, and she was further embarrassed by a consciousness that Mrs. Coverdale's fine grey eyes were coolly scrutinising her. Naturally emotional, it required all her self-control to behave with that absence of display of feeling which good breeding imposes. He, however, had no such difficulty. He had shown more at many a casual meeting with her than now, when she whom, almost the last time he saw her, he had asked to be his wife, laid her hand in his and looked up at him with her heart in her eyes. He was quite unchanged, except that he was a little thinner and paler. To Beattie, who had gone through so much on his account, it was almost a surprise that in him there was no difference; to hear the same calm, half-quizzical tones, to see the same look in his eyes, the same smile, and to notice that his comments on things were of the same order as they had been before his illness. Why not? But she was inexperienced, and she had fancied that the nearness to another life, the realities of pain and bodily weakness, the necessity of relying on the tenderness and care of others, would have made him—for the present, at any rate—more indifferent to the trivial things of this world, more transparently genuine in his manners, and more ready to dwell on the lovable side of human nature. She did not analyse her feelings, only she was conscious of a subtle disappointment; and, strangely, the fact that he was just what he had seemed to her formerly, made things easier for herself. Her love for him, though no less real, did not any longer overpower her. She was again mistress of herself. It was an intense happiness to be near him, and for the present she was content to sit quietly by while he and her aunt talked, only now and then exchanging remarks, which were equally uninteresting to both, with Mrs. Coverdale.

"When we are alone it will be different," she thought. "He will not be quite like this when the others are not by. He purposely does not say much to me."

Mrs. Swannington could not refrain from conversing on his recent illness and congratulating him on the heroism which she believed to be partly the cause of it. He, however, disclaimed anything of the sort.

"That, my dear Mrs. Swannington," he said, "is a mere fiction. I assure you I never saved anybody's life, nor desired to. I am not certain that if I had done so I should have been rendering a great kindness. You know it is a debated question whether existence is a boon. I remember a wise friend of mine remarking that man was a creature burdened with life and threatened with immortality. I often wonder, as the majority of mankind are sufficiently wretched, so much fuss is made of the saving of human life."

"Cecil," said his sister, "you will shock Mrs. Swannington. How can you talk so?"

"Mrs. Swannington, like myself, is a philosopher," he said, laughing. "And, moreover, she is tolerant of opinions not in accordance with a narrow creed, are you not?"

Aunt Ella shrugged her shoulders, and turned the palms of her hands outwards.

"I," she said, "am nothing if not tolerant. But I think, myself, it is enjoyable to live if only one's digestion be in order. I have no patience with people who are always making themselves unhappy because the world is not square and the moon does not shine by daylight. Still, Mr. Musgrove, you are a bad man (is he not, Mrs. Coverdale?) to be so ungrateful when your life has been spared. Ah, we were all most anxious, I can assure you."

"Well, it is very kind of you, Mrs. Swannington. At any rate, I am grateful for your giving me any thought at all. It certainly was a narrow escape. My relations, who are more pious than I, had me publicly prayed for, and my aunt, who is a most estimable old lady, attributes my recovery entirely to this fact."

Beattie flushed up to the roots of her hair. How could he speak in that light and jesting manner? She thought of the many times she had fallen on her knees in the solitude of her own room, begging that he might live and not die: how often in church, when prayers were offered for those in sickness, she had said his name in her heart: how she had told Norah that someone she cared for was very ill, and asked her to pray for his recovery.

"And why not?" she said involuntarily, surprised at the earnestness of her own voice.

"Ah," said Mrs. Coverdale, with a laugh which was not destitute of mockery, "Miss Margetson is shocked at you."

"Then I must beg her pardon," said Cecil, smiling. "Miss Margetson knows that I would on no account hurt her feelings."

As she met his eyes, her own, which had been flashing, suddenly grew dim with tears, why she scarcely knew.

"Beattie, you must know," said Mrs. Swannington, turning to Mr. Musgrove, "has become very edifying of late. When next you come you will doubtless see her engaged in knitting comforters or some such thing. I tell her, we shall yet see her in the Salvation Army. But come now, we must be going, my dear."

"And I have not had a word with you," said he, again looking at Beattie. "Do stay to tea, Mrs. Swannington. It will be here directly"

And he crossed the room and took a seat by Beattie's side, while Mrs. Swannington, with a sigh of relief at this move on his part, addressed herself to the task of flattering Mrs. Coverdale into some show of interest in herself, though, as she said afterwards, it was like trying to set an icicle on fire with a lucifer match.

"Is this true that I hear of you?" asked Cecil.

"Is what true?"

"That you have become desperately in earnest?"

Beattie laughed.

"One can't always be a child," she said. "I am getting older. Perhaps I am beginning to take things more seriously."

"I hope not," he said. "You were always so refreshingly happy. You took life as it was. You didn't want to improve anybody or anything. You hadn't a mission. You weren't a blue-stocking, nor a philanthropist, nor any of the heavy things which most women are nowadays. Don't change, Beattie."

He called her by her name for the first time, as if involuntarily. She blushed with pleasure and again her eyes filled. And yet, though it was evident he thought of her, as he spoke to her by her Christian name, his voice was not lowered, and did not linger on it, and his tone was not that of a lover. To the girl, who was conscious of the alteration of her own feeling towards himself, a new sensitiveness had come with regard to everything he said and did. But she would not believe he did not care for her. She had misjudged him before. She would not again.

"Now tell me," he said, "what you have been doing all these months?"

While she talked to him he was aware that she was less frank, less spontaneous than she had been. She was not so in reality, but so much of what she had done had been bound up with the thought of himself that she was shy in recalling it. If only she had been able to tell him everything it would have been different, but the presence of Mrs. Swannington and Mrs. Coverdale, with their metallic voices and small talk, made it impossible for her to say anything of all that was in her heart. When, before very long, Aunt Ella, seeing that their *tête-à-tête* was not progressing very favourably, and that there was an evident desire on Cecil's part to again make the conversation general, asked that the carriage might be ordered, Beattie felt an unwonted sense of depression steal over her, a consciousness that something had been missed which could not come again.

Cecil parted from them with the expressed hope of calling to see them before long. He shook hands warmly with Beattie and thanked her for coming. Mrs. Swannington saw no cause for uneasiness.

"I think it will be all right, my dear," she said, "if you are careful. Did you notice how massive all the silver was? Mr. Musgrove looks the same as ever. I think he was as attentive to you as he dared be before that woman. Woman!—she is only a statue. Fancy to be married to her! The poor husband!"

When they had left, the statue said, "That Swannington woman is not good form. I rather wonder at your intimacy with her."

"I am not intimate," said Cecil.

"She speaks as if you were. She has an aggravating way of appropriating you."

Mr. Musgrove raised his eyebrows slightly. But he said nothing.

"Women understand each other," he thought.

"The niece is better," went on Mrs. Coverdale.

"She is a dear little thing," said Cecil. "And I am very fond of her."

"I should say the feeling was reciprocated," said his sister, with the suspicion of a sneer.

He laughed, and shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh," he said, "Beattie Margetson is not quite an ordinary girl. She is absolutely without affectation. Perhaps, if anything, she is a little too transparent."

And he changed the subject.

(*To be continued.*)

HOW TO WRITE ENGLISH VERSE.

By FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE, M.A., Author of "Sent Back by the Angels."

PART IV.

TROCHAIC VERSE.

"Mȳ Ūn | clĕ hād | ă Sūn | dăy hāt |
With brīm | ĕxtrēmelȳ wide; ||
Oŭr bā | bȳ īn | ĭts hōllŏw sāt,
Ănd dīs | ăppēared | ĭnside." ||

This, as my readers are now well aware, is a quatrain of Common Measure; it is Iambic Verse of 8, 6, 8, 6.

Now for a little experiment. Cut away the first word of each line.

"Ūnclĕ | hād ă | Sūndăy | hāt, |
Brīm ĕx | trēmĕly | wīde; ||
Bābȳ | īn ĭts | hōllŏw | sāt— |
Dīsăp | pēared ĭn | side." ||

What is the result? The whole beat and swing of the verse is altered. Its centre of gravity is shifted. Its accent is thrown forward. Instead of

"Bărŭm, | bărŭm, | bărŭm, | bărŭm, |
Bărŭm, | bărŭm, | bărĕe. ||"

the lines now run—

"Bārŭm, | bārŭm, | bārŭm, | bārŭm, |
Bārŭm, | bārŭm, | bārĕe." ||

In the nomenclature of prosody what has taken place is this:

The metre was Iambic. It has become Trochaic.

The trochee is in fact the iambus, or iamb, turned the other way about. It is long and short – ⌣, instead of short and long ⌣ – |.

I say everything a good many times over. It is the only thing to do if you want ordinary people to remember. Not that you, fair reader, are ordinary; but the others.

Trochaic metre is not so native to English verse as is Iambic. It is slower, statelier, more monotonous. It has rather the flow of a river than the movement of a living thing. Through its comparative lack of flexibility it lends itself to few combinations. Indeed purely trochaic stanzas are seldom written. In the decapitated lines that you have just beheld and scanned, you noticed (or you ought to be ashamed of yourself) that the last foot of each line instead of being a trochee – ⌣ | was in fact only a long syllable – .

Let us now take a severely trochaic line. It shall be a line of 3 trochees:—

"Lōrd, Thȳ | wōrd ă | bīdĕth, |
And oŭr | fōotstĕps | gūidĕth; ||
Whō ĭts | trūth bĕ | liĕveth, |
Lĭght and | jōy rĕ | cēivĕth." ||

This stanza serves my present purpose particularly well. To begin with, the metre is uncommon; and, probably, this simple and metrical hymn is the most familiar example that our language contains. But it answers another use in the present connection. It shows the strangeness—the un-Saxon quality—of the trochaic beat, and the consequent difficulty of managing it. In the second line you notice that the accent of the first foot has to be forced to make a trochee of it at all—

"Ànd our | footsteps | guideth."

Nobody without constraining necessity would lean so heavily on a poor conjunction. Again in the third line the innocent relative is pushed almost into interrogative prominence—

"Whò its | truth be | lieveth." |

You will find the same thing everywhere in trochaic verse. Conjunctions, like little boys in a street row, are shoved into the front and great hulking substantives skulk in the background. I hardly know a better test of a verser's mastery of technique than his handling of trochaic lines.

One could not easily find a finer example of trochaic verse as it is commonly written in English—that is with a long syllable (–) instead of a trochee (– ⌣) at the end of the even lines—than this stanza from Tennyson's "Lord of Burleigh":—

"Wēepĭng, | wēepĭng | lāte ănd | ēarlȳ, |
Wālkĭng | ūp, ănd | pācĭng | dōwn; ||
Dēeplȳ | moūrned thĕ | Lōrd ŏf | Būrleĭgh— |
Būrleĭgh | -hoūse bȳ | Stāmfŏrd | tōwn." ||

Please read all this poem, over and over; and Aytoun's "Battle of Killiecrankie," and Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" and "When the Hours of Day are Numbered." They will show you how trochaic verse works out in the hands of craftsmen who represented every degree of mastery, but all of whom wrote good and rhythmic verse.

But that bit of "The Lord of Burleigh" you must learn by heart and make your example. It is an admirable specimen of English trochaic verse in its most characteristic form.

Now take a specimen of this verse in its rigidly correct form, that is four trochees in each line, instead of three trochees and a long syllable in the even lines. This can never be of more than curious interest. It tires; it is cumbrous; it is artificial. It has an old-man-of-the-sea persistency. It is a hurdy-gurdy in the avenger's hand.

Tīptōe | īf yŏu | stānd ănd | hearken,
Yŏu măy | heār thĕ | fāirīĕs | tīmīng
(Whĕn thĕ | dūsk bĕ | gīns to dārkĕn)
Tō thĕ | hārebĕll's | crȳstăl | chīmīng.

And when the lines rhyme in pairs, instead of alternately, that besetting persistency is aggravated.

Tīptōe | īf yŏu | stānd and | hēarkĕn |
Whēn thĕ | dūsk bĕ | gīns tŏ | darken, ||
Yŏu măy | hēar thĕ | fāirīĕs | tīmīng |
Tō thĕ | hārebell's | crȳstăl | chīmīng. ||

A trochaic metre of great popularity is the following:—It consists of 3 trochees in the odd lines, and 2 trochees and a long syllable in the even lines. It may be written in stanzas of almost any length. Since it has been specially adapted as the vehicle of recent hymn writers, my example shall be taken from a well-known hymn of Godfrey Thring's:—

"Hìgher, | thèn, and | hìgher |
Bèar the | rànsom'd | sòul; ||
Eàrthly | tòils for | gòtten, |
Sàviour, | tò its | gòal. ||
Whère, in | jòys un | thòught of, |
Sàints and | àngels sing; |
Nèver | wèary | ràising |
Pràises | tò their | Kìng." ||

Slightly varied—that is with the long syllables transferred from the even to the odd lines—this metre has a very different effect. It no longer carries any suggestion of lofty thought or of spiritual motive, but drops into an easy jog, humorous and confidential. One of Thackeray's cheeriest ballads, "Peg of Limavaddy," is written in this metre.

Its formula is— – ᴗ | – ᴗ | – |
– ᴗ | – ᴗ | – ᴗ ||

Rìding | from Cole | raîne |
(Fàmed for | lòvely | Kìtty)
Càme a | Còckney | boûnd
Ùnto | Dèrry | cìty; |
Weàry | wàs his | soûl, |
Shìver | ìng and | sàd, he ||
Bùmped a | lòng the | ròad |
Leàds to | Lìma | vàddy. ||

You notice how the conjunctions and other verbal little fishes were too many for Thackeray.

A very difficult and very uncommon trochaic metre is this that follows. Of course it is mainly, if not exclusively suitable, to mere verses of ingenuity. No one has managed it better than Mr. Edwin Hamilton, from whose "Dublin Doggerels" I quote (– ⏑ ᴗ | – ᴗ)—

"Ì re | mèmber |
Mèeting | yòu ||
Ìn Sep | tèmber |
Sìxty- | twò." ||

I have now put before my students all the commonest forms of the trochaic stanza. But it is important to understand how infinite are the possible modifications.

One of the most important of these is embodied in the following stanza:

Down the street of By-and-by
He that stands to gaze may spy
Sad and weary token,
Ruin'd arch and rotting stone,
Wains of house-goods overthrown,
Houses wreck'd and broken.

Instead of regularly alternating rhymes, we have here two lines rhyming together; then line 3 waits for its rhyme:

Then lines 4 and 5 rhyme together, and line 6 rhymes with line 3.

This change can be carried further. There may be three lines rhyming together—a triplet of rhyme; then a waiting line; then a triplet again; and then line 8 rhyming with line 4.

There may be two pairs of rhymes before the waiting line; or there may be four lines rhyming together.

And here is a musical little stanza—

"Fāthĕr, | heār thȳ | chīldrĕn's | cāll, |
Hūmblȳ | āt thȳ | feēt wĕ | fāll,
Pēnĭ | tĕnt, cŏn | fēssĭng | āll:
Wē bĕ | seēch Thēe, | hēar ŭs." ||

But in this connection enough has been said and shown for the present.

I will now ask you to study for a little while a very characteristic form of trochaic verse. It is a natural measure, adopted in its essentials by Indian Sagamores very long ago, and only humanised and popularised by Longfellow in "Hiawatha."

"Should you ask me whence these stories,
Whence these legends and traditions,
With the odours of the forest,
With the dew and damp of wigwams,
With the rushing of great rivers,
With their frequent repetitions,
And their wild reverberations,
As of thunder in the mountains?
I should answer, I should tell you,
From the forests and the prairies,
From the great lakes of the Northland,
From the land of the Ojibways,
From the land of the Dacotahs,
From the mountains, moors, and finlands,
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
Feeds among the reeds and rushes.
I repeat them as I heard them
From the lips of Nawadaha,
The musician, the sweet singer.'"

Four trochees seem to form the ultimatum of the English line. Five land us in sheer burlesque:—

Ìf you | wànt ex | pèri | mènts in | mètre, |
Mòre or | lèss re | dòunding | tò in | strùction, |
Hère you | hàve a | lìmping | lìne of | tròchees— |
Fìve poor | tròchees— | coùnt 'em | if you | dòubt me— |
Slìpping, | shàmbling | onè be | hìnd the | òther, |
Lìke to | guèsts who, | soùsed up | òn the mòuntains,
Pàtter | ùp and | dòwn the | stàirs at | Gràsmere,
Shèdding | slìppers | thàt the | hòst has | lènt 'em,
Heèlless, | lìmp, and | meàsured | fòr a màmmoth.

Whenever you have, as in "Locksley Hall," a very long trochaic line, you will find that in reality it is two lines printed as one because their separateness is not accentuated by rhyme in the odd lines.

"Comrade leave me here a little |
while as yet 'tis early morn;
Leave me here, and when you want me |
sound upon thy bugle-horn."

I want you, my dear students, to study these various trochaic forms for a full month; reading them out aloud, and working out examples in every mould. You should read the whole of "Hiawatha"; and, when you feel thoroughly familiar with the lapse and flow of trochaic measure, you may study two examples in complicated stanza.

The first of these is the "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" of Mrs. Browning; and the second is "The Raven" of Edgar Poe. The metrical form of the latter poem was in all probability suggested by the former, and that fact, or that likelihood, is of great significance. It shows us how metal may be transmuted in the alembic of a master of wizardry. I suppose as a piece of sonorous music, "The Raven" is almost, if not absolutely, matchless. Later on, when you know a great deal more, you shall take up "The Raven" again, and learn from its speech some of the deep things of harmony. Even at the present stage it will teach you something of the possibilities of trochaic flow, and something of its impossibilities too.

The last exercise that I will ask you to perform is to transpose these trochaic forms into iambic forms. You know how to do it. Prefix an unaccented syllable to every line* and *voila tout.*

For the present my little task is done. But pray remember that yours is only beginning. You can learn to swim only in the water, and you can become a verser only by making verses.

In the next volume I hope that the Editor will give me space for an article on blank verse, and another on some of the finer points of general workmanship.

* In the case of the short trochaic line of Mr. Hamilton's, two lines must for this purpose be counted as one.

VARIETIES.

A Good Wish.

As half in shade and half in sun
This world along its path advances,
May that side the sun's upon
Be all that e'er shall meet thy glances.—*Moore.*

An Imp.—Imp once meant a child, and did not convey the modern suggestion of mischievousness. Shakespeare, speaking of the children in the Tower, calls them imps. Jeremy Taylor, in one of his sermons, speaks of "the beautiful imps that sang hozannas to the Saviour in the Temple."

How to be Happy.

"She that is perfectly wise," wrote an old philosopher, "is perfectly happy: nay, the beginning of wisdom makes life easy to us."

It is not enough to know this; we must print it in our minds by daily meditation, and so bring a good will to a good habit. We must practice what we preach, for philosophy is not a subject for popular ostentation, nor does it rest in words, but in deeds.

Hold fast to Love.—Always hold fast to love. We win by kindness and conquer by forgiveness.—*F. W. Robertson.*

Which Horn?

While some cows were passing the house, one of them lowed.

"Oh, mamma," exclaimed little Clara, "one of the horns blew! Which was it?"

Curses from a Lark's Tongue.—Among the superstitions that still linger in Shetland is one which represents that the lark has the power to curse, and possesses as many curses as there are black spots on her tongue, bringing accident or misfortune to whoever hunts after her to her hurt or that of her young.

THE GROOVES OF CHANGE.

By H. LOUISA BEDFORD, Author of "Prue, the Poetess," "Mrs. Merriman's Godchild," etc.

CHAPTER VI.

A SORT of tacit understanding seemed to be established between the Professor and Deborah in the months that followed. Amongst a whole room full of girls he often found himself, as it were, lecturing to one girl in particular, Deborah Menzies, who, with eager eyes, sat drinking in every word he said, taking rapid notes, and occasionally breaking into a brief smile when she fully grasped the Professor's meaning. Then he found considerable pleasure in correcting her papers. They were always original, and red ink was fast losing its terrors for Deborah, or became a burning joy when the word "Excellent," in the Professor's bold handwriting marked his approval of her work.

One June morning Deborah waylaid the Professor as he was hurrying out of school. She held a large bunch of roses in her hand which she presented to him rather shyly.

"Please I asked grandmother to send these for Mrs. Norwood. It is so kind of you to mark my papers 'Excellent.' It makes me very happy."

The Professor broke into a pleased little laugh.

"I mark your papers according to their merit. You need not thank me for that; but how could you guess that my wife is so fond of flowers, I wonder?"

"She looked as if she loved them," said Deborah simply. "I saw her one day in the street."

"Well, she must come and thank you for these herself. Your mother lives not far from here, I understand," and Deborah retired in a whirl of happiness.

"I have found a playmate for you, Lettice," said the Professor to his little wife that day. "She looks just about as old as you do. I should say she is thirteen or fourteen."

"Are you talking of the little girl who sent me these roses?" inquired Mrs. Norwood, with cold dignity. "It is too absurd for you to talk as if I were not grown up, when I shall be twenty next birthday; but if you wish me to be kind to the child, I'll go and call on her, Johnnie, and ask her out here on Sunday sometimes."

"She is nearly as tall as you are, and twice as clever," went on the Professor banteringly, "and she works like a steam-engine."

"I don't want to be clever," pouted Lettice. "You've got the brains and I've got the looks," and then the feud died out in a burst of laughter.

So a new joy crept into Deborah's life, for a strong friendship was quickly established between herself and the Professor's girl-wife, who treated her on terms of absolute equality. Many a happy Sunday was passed in the Professor's tiny house in St. John's Wood, and, bit by bit, the story of Deborah's childhood leaked out, her complete isolation, her passionate admiration for Miss Laing, the paying guests, the old ancestral hall and her grandfather's desperate fight with poverty, and her own ambition to earn money.

"Shall I ever?" she asked the Professor one day. "Am I clever enough? I promised grandfather to try and be clever."

"Go on as you are going at present," he answered briefly, "and leave the earning alone."

"How could you?" said Mrs. Norwood reproachfully, when Deborah was gone. "Why didn't you tell Deborah that she was out-of-the-way clever and could do anything she liked?"

"Because I have no intention of spoiling her. She is utterly unconscious yet," said the Professor.

Summer came and went, and the autumn term was drawing to a close. Deborah's heart was heavy, for it had been decided that she and her mother were not to go to Boscombe Hall for Christmas. The journey was an expensive one, and the holidays not very long, and to stay quietly in London was considered to be the best way of spending the vacation, but Deborah's heart turned to the haunts of her childhood with sick longing. It was the last morning of school and there was a general flutter of excitement amongst the girls as they stood in knots discussing holiday plans. Deborah stood a little apart, lonely and forlorn. Suddenly the Professor came into the classroom to fetch something from his desk. He turned to Deborah with a smile.

"Good-bye," he said, stretching out his hand. "I must wish you a happy Christmas. I suppose you and your mother are off to-morrow?"

"No," said Deborah, with a little catch in her voice. "We are not going home. We stay in London for Christmas."

"Indeed! my wife will be glad to hear that, for we are going to hire a room near us and give a Christmas party, and she was only saying yesterday that she wished she could have you to help her to decorate. There will be tableaux, and music, and recitations. You will be able to give us that scene from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, won't you? and perhaps you may press that beautiful friend of yours into the service."

How a few words seemed to transform Deborah's outlook. Her eyes were shining with excitement.

"Oh, it will be lovely!" she gasped. "Are you sure you want me?"

"Quite sure," said the Professor heartily. "My wife shall write to you about it."

So it came to pass that the holidays that Deborah had so dreaded were some of the happiest days she had ever spent. There was rehearsing and decoration, and the culminating excitement of the night itself. The Professor had taken considerable trouble over Deborah's recitation, which was the scene of the country players, of which Deborah had caught the exact humour.

"It will be the best thing of the evening," said the Professor to his wife, rubbing his hands, "and the child has not a notion of it, and is not a scrap nervous; she is so unselfconscious.

Miss Laing had entered with great spirit into the tableaux, and was well pleased that all the beautiful parts were assigned to herself, whilst Deborah's exultant pride in her friend was a thing not easily to be forgotten.

"Oh, mother," cried Deborah, when they were fairly started in a cab on the evening of the entertainment, "it will be the most beautiful party you have ever been at in your life! You can't think how lovely Monica looks as Marie Antoinette."

"For goodness' sake keep quiet, Deborah, or you will arrive all in a mess. Even now your sash is crooked."

"Oh, it does not matter a bit how I look," said Deborah cheerfully. "I've only got to say things. I hope I shan't forget."

The room was already full of people when Deborah and her mother arrived, and little Mrs. Norwood, with a flushed face, was receiving her guests with a childish grace that was infinitely charming. Deborah took up a quiet position at the end of the room where she could obtain a good view of the stage and drink in every word of praise or admiration that was bestowed upon her friend.

The tableaux followed each other in rapid succession. The lights in the room were lowered so that the stage might shine out in strong relief. About half way through the entertainment the door opened and a gentleman in evening dress, a late comer, slipped into the room. Deborah turned her head and scanned the newcomer, who took his seat quietly beside her, and then her heart began to beat more quickly. It

was the friend of her childhood, David Russell, bronzed, it was true, and looking years older, but there was no mistaking the kind eyes and the firm, clear-cut mouth. He instantly became absorbed in the tableau before him, the crowning beauty of the evening—Marie Antoinette on her way to execution. He caught his breath and broke into an involuntary exclamation of recognition. Years had failed to efface the memory of Monica Laing, and the girl who sat by his side saw that he knew Monica again in a moment through all her disguise of powdered hair and fancy dress. Would he know her too, she wondered; but her thoughts took a new channel, for the Professor was signalling to her to come up to the stage. The tableaux were ended and it was time for her recitation.

She took up her position in the middle of the stage, a tall slim girl in a white frock, and introduced her recitation with a brief explanation of the scene she was about to recite. In a moment the Professor saw that she would command the attention of her audience. The scene was so present to the girl's mind, that she could not fail to bring it before her hearers, and presently there was a ripple of laughter from one end of the room to the other. Pyramus was there, and Thisbe, the wall Deborah represented by making a chink in her fingers. The whole thing was life-like, down to the lion who roared so sweetly. All—the least intellectual of the party—recognised that the reciter was clever, and some murmured that in so young a girl it was genius, and there was a perfect roar of applause as the girl ended and quietly stepped off the platform. She had forgotten David's presence for the time being, but again wondered vaguely at the end of her recitation if he would recognise her as the little girl to whom he had given the doll. Yes, clearly he did remember her, for he was pushing his way eagerly towards the front of the room. Her lips parted in a half smile as he came near her, and then a great lump of disappointment rose in her throat, for he brushed straight by her, making his way to Miss Laing, who stood just behind.

"I wonder if I may introduce myself to you? Have you forgotten me? Don't you remember we met five, six years ago, was it, at Boscombe Hall?"

His voice was trembling with impatience, and Monica accorded him a smile, and held out her hand.

"I did not recognise you at first. It's Mr. Russell, isn't it?" and then, with a slight gesture, she signed to him to seat himself at her side, and Deborah withdrew into a window seat, feeling how great was the gift of beauty, and what power it gave you in the world.

Presently Monica caught a glimpse of the little woe-begone face, and good-naturedly motioned to her to join them. Deborah reluctantly obeyed the summons.

"Here is another friend of earlier days," said Monica to David. "A very faithful friend she is of yours. Have you forgotten Deborah Menzies?"

"Oh, don't you remember the doll?" questioned Deborah, with a bursting heart.

(To be continued.)

HOSPITAL SKETCHES.

By O. H.

IV.

A "SNAP-SHOT" would show a little spring-cart, jolting along a country lane in the evening light, with three people squashed in the narrow seat only "made for two." An old farmer is driving, with his hat on one side, and his face a beam of proud satisfaction. For have not Sister Elisabeth and Nurse Frances been to tea with him and his missus? And didn't they praise his rich clotted cream! And are they not sitting by him now, making merry over the drive, and admiring his Dartmoor pony?

"Aye," he says, "paid up twenty pounds for the hoss—if you'm wanting to buy, and t'other folk b'ain't willing to sell, you've got to pay fancy price. 'Tis like a young chap courting a young wumman; nothing ain't too much to give for her."

A red harvest moon burnishes the river, and shines on the odd trio in the cart. Elegant Sister Elisabeth is not accustomed to carts, springed or springless, and her long veil floats in mild protest. The little nurse, squeezed in the middle, is struck with the humour of the situation, but it wouldn't do to laugh, as the host continues his stories in broad Devonshire, or discourses of the late "powering rains," or of his sons "gone furrin'."

"Your son had fever abroad, daddy?"

"Aye, he had all of it." (Is that every disease that flesh is heir to?) "Reckon you've a-bin furrin', too, nurse? And what countries have ye bin to, might mek so bold?" And so the conversation jerks along with the jolting cart till the station is reached, and the nurses travel back to the great hospital town, and the old patient turns his horse's head towards his remote farm once more, waving a farewell to his guests.

"Thank ye, zure, for the honour to my missus, an' so long to ye, my dears. 'Tis like the soldiers, 'love ye and leave ye.'"

The little nurse had learnt the vernacular, and knew it expressed true sentiments more genially than "town-talk," so she called her good-bye through the carriage window as the train started—

"So long to you, daddy, so long!"

V.

A WILD night of storm: the hurricane blowing up from the sea, and the savage winds shaking the hospital wings as a wild animal shakes his helpless prey before he kills it. As the rain lashes the windows with fury, and the sound of the fog-horn comes up through the darkness, those who watch through the night, and those wakened by the storm, can but pray "for those in peril on the sea."

In the early morning nurse is bustling about making the beds, and the women talking to each other.

"What, grannie, a-crying!" says one.

"A-thinkin' o' they I've lost to sea," sobs the old lady.

"An' my boy a sailor, too. Pray God he ain't aboard to-night," a mother says.

"An' even our nurse—bless her!—ain't laughin' and singin' this mornin'."

"Maybe her've a lover over seas."

But nurse is busy consoling a poor young wife whose husband sailed yesterday for a three years' voyage. It would have made the hardest heart ache to see that parting by the hospital bed.

Another little tragedy unbosomed to her in the night would have enriched the pages of a theosophic society. An inexplicable, yet simple, true story—and how shall we say the supernatural does not exist?

A little old maid had been reminded (but she never forgot) by the storm, of that cruel night when her lover was drowned "years agone." "I'd always feel down-hearted a-Sunday—for 'twas on a Sunday, nurse, as my Herder went down, and just such a night as this. An' I was writing a bit of a letter to'n, for all that I was so frightened of thinking of 'n in the storm. An' then I heard a great crash—just ten minutes to eleven, it wor—an' I looked up, an' a glass candlestick on the mantelshelf was shivered in two, like as if 't'ad had a shock. An' then I see'd my Herder standing beside me, in his macintosh an' sea boots, an' all the water streamin' off of 'n. An' landlady, her called up over-stair—

"''F I didn't know Miss Smith's sweetheart was to sea, I should declare I see'd 'n in the passage not a minute sin'.'

An' two days after the news come. They tried to kep' it from me, but I knowed.

"An' ten minutes to eleven that night it wor that the ship foundered, an' he went down."

VI.

A PICTURE which an artist might well have painted—an artist who loves beautiful dead Elaines. Or a study of the poet's threnody "In quiet she reposes."

> "Strew on her roses, roses,
> But never a spray of yew."

This is a case of "kind death, beautiful death," when he comes as an angel, stilling pain; as a sculptor, chiselling features in marble perfection; as a young god, kissing maidenhood. And she lies there in her "young moon of beauty," the pathetic eyes closed, the black hair lying loose around the whiteness of her face. She had been playfully called "the Lady of Shalott" in life, and now she looks more than ever like the doomed and lovely lady lying in her boat, and floating down to Camelot, with mournful face turned to the stars, and her dead hands clasped.

But to those who have loved and nursed her, she is more than a picture or a poem, and they kiss the fair form fondly, and strew the little hospital bed with flowers.

And death again in more awful guise—death an avenger, death an inevitable doom. One may be familiar with the coming of death, but he never loses his terrors, and his shuddering, awful awe and mystery. A nurse, with professional calm and outward unemotion, is quietly doing all that is necessary for the already discoloured body; but inwardly her soul is shrinking with awe, and her nature quailing at the horror of it. Whether unavailing or not, her prayers rise for the poor creature who had never learnt to pray for himself. And she knows that of all the insoluble mysteries in this so mysterious life, the most unfathomable and fearful is death.

What would be our condition if we did not know that?

> "For as in Adam all die
> E'en so in Christ shall all be made alive!"

FROCKS FOR TO MORROW.

By "THE LADY DRESSMAKER."

BOATING GOWN OF WHITE SERGE WITH NARROW BLACK STRIPE.

THE gathering up of information on the subject of the frocks for to-morrow is a matter of no little difficulty in the month that immediately succeeds the sales of July. Indeed, I notice that many of my fellow writers frankly give it up, and declare that where nothing exists there is nothing to be got; that there is nothing new in the way of dress, and that they cannot be expected to invent.

For my own part, I always find the sales extremely instructive, both in the matter of the things that people purchase, and those they do not. Being summer clothing, if there be a great run on any special articles, you may be sure that the best people who buy are sure they will be worn next summer. Now the two articles of dress most purchased this year were white piqué coats and skirts, and muslin blouses. The white piqué coats are very much to the fore this season, with skirts of another kind; and, as this idea arrived late in the season, we may expect that it will be one of the decided styles of next year.

The muslin blouses purchased were mainly of the very thin book-muslin kind, which can be worn over coloured under-bodices, the latter being also sold in all the large shops; and the two prevailing hues, I am told, are pink and mauve. Now, if this be the case, those of my readers who are clever may manage to produce both the muslin blouses, and the coloured silk slips for them, very much less expensively at home, for the muslin is cheap, and so is the lace, and the silks can be got even at a lower price than two shillings. Besides a fine sateen would answer quite as well if the muslin be not too thin a one;

though, of course, the present fashion is for those of very gossamer texture. We have found out then that the oft-threatened blouse will still be here next season. No very great change has taken place in it, except that it has become more ornate, lighter, and altogether prettier than it was at first. Then, too, we are wearing muslin blouses on occasions where we should have worn cotton, and even for cycling we have adopted a more dressy style of blouse, in which we go out to afternoon tea, or even luncheons, on our useful steeds.

A friend of mine, who is always well dressed, has these cycle blouses made of black and white striped silks, trimmed with Valenciennes lace. They have had the large sailor collar to them, and have been charming garments, with the great advantage of being readily cleaned, without unpicking, by a first-class cleaner. I saw one that had been cleaned three times. Of course, they are lined throughout, the inner bodice being made to fit. If the lace be Valenciennes, it should be real, if possible, or at any rate, a very good quality of imitation. The sailor collar is now a feature of all the new blouses, and is worn outside the coat; it is trimmed with flat insertion, and edged with an inch-and-a-half wide Valenciennes lace. It is very becoming, and gives a dressy look, which the generality of blouses formerly lacked entirely. This sailor collar must be made of the silk, on both sides, with an interlining of thin muslin, as it must be firm, and should not, of course, show a lining only should it blow up. It is worn below the band at the neck, and is generally put on with it, the neck-band having the same abundance of trimming as if it were absent. A bishop's sleeve has been the fashionable sleeve for them this year, a pretty trimmed cuff being added, to fall back from the hand. I have been particular in describing these blouses, because I think they can be worn, both in the autumn and the spring, and they are quite the most useful and pretty introduction that has appeared for many seasons. The sailor collar in no degree takes away from the trimness needed for the bicycle; it adds, on

NEW CAPE, AND EARLY AUTUMN GOWN.

TWO NECK RUFFLES.

the contrary, a graceful look to it, which it much needed.

The extreme length of the sleeves just now, particularly of those used for evening dress, is quite remarkable. They really nearly cover the hands; quite as far as the middle of the fingers; that is to say, the lace frill does, not the sleeve proper, though that is cut very long indeed. There is no great width, nor extreme fussiness about them, and they are not extremely wide. The general dress for afternoon, and all high-necked dress occasions, has been some thin material over silk; and it is generally embroidered net, or very fine silk gauze, over a colour; mauve and pink being in great favour, and green also is very much liked. The length of these dresses in front has been wonderful. They really dragged, and seemed, at a distance, to be quite as long in front as at the back. Nearly all are finished with a narrow flounce. These high-necked bodices, with long transparent sleeves, are now the favourite dinner gown for the restaurant meal, which has become so very fashionable.

Our illustrations show all there is of this month's styles. The first is a boating gown, made with a straight-cut jacket of white serge, striped with a hair stripe of black or blue. The skirt is quite plain, and a mull-muslin blouse with tucks is worn with it.

In the "new cape and early autumn gown" we show the very latest idea in the way of capes, which is quite a return to a very old one of some years ago. The frill or flounce round the edge was worn about twenty-five years ago, with the same cape of large size. Gauze over coloured or white silk, with gauze frillings, has been the material of these capes this season; the *rêvers* being of the silk, covered with *guipure* or other lace. They are made to match the dress. Very frequently, and in this case, the colour of the under-silk corresponds.

The seated figure in this sketch wears a silk grenadine, with a green silk lining, the bodice being of the same, with black velvet ribbon of narrow width over it, and black *guipure* on the bodice. The skirt is made with the shaped flounce, which is headed with a black *guipure* over a green ribbon. The hat is made of crinoline, and tucked white gauze, with white feathers and green velvet.

Foulard dresses have been much worn, but it seems to me from the prices charged for them at the sales, that the shopkeepers expect that they will be fashionable next year in their present styles. Red foulards have been much used in Paris, and here in England blue and white ones may be always considered fashionable. Green ones have been in demand, but they have been rare; and I daresay we shall see them next summer. The fashionable trimmings for them have been tucked white *mousseline de soie*, *guipure* lace, and narrow ribbon edgings.

For the autumn months, cloth will be more worn than either serge or tweed. Indeed, nearly everywhere I see it being prepared for the new coats and skirts, and if trimmed at all, it is with *passementerie* or braiding. Tucks and pipings too are much used, the latter being generally in white or a contrasting colour. These trimmings need the skill of a real tailor to put them on; and the same may be said of the trimmings of black velvet, laid on white muslin, which are so much seen. It is extremely difficult to lay them on evenly, unless you be experienced in the holding of them while working.

The last illustration represents two neck ruffles. Although I call them ruffles, the truer name for them would be boas, as they so generally reach to the waist, and are finished with small bows on each end, and fastened at the waist with two fancy pins. This is a very comfortable way of wearing them, as they do not slip off the neck, which they are apt to do when of such a short length; and you are really more at ease when they are not tight round the neck when the weather is hot, as it often is in the middle of the day. The first ruffle is made of a coarse, white, large-meshed net, spotted with black chenille dots. It is made in two puffs, which are gathered closely in the centre, and sewn on a black satin ribbon. It should be larger at the back, and gradually reduced, so as to be narrower at the ends. It may be finished at the ends by a frill of about six inches in length, of the same net, which is intended to hang down to the waist in the front. The longer boas are made of *chiffon*, net, or gauze frills, edged with narrow black velvet, and gathered on a satin ribbon, in the way indicated in our drawing.

RAMBLES WITH NATURE STUDENTS.

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

Hemp (*Cannabis Sativa*).

Hemp is such a graceful plant, that it would be well worth cultivating in our gardens, if it were only for its rich green leafage; but my hemp bed has now an additional charm in that its ripe seeds attract all kinds of small birds which haunt the slender stems, flitting in and out in search of the coveted provender.

YOUNG BLUE-TIT.

Four species of titmice are especially active, and may be seen all day long, generally head downwards, creeping about like little mice, twittering cheerfully to each other as they pursue their busy search. These charming birds abound in my old garden, owing to my having attracted them to the place for the last thirty years by keeping a little basket filled with fat outside my dining-room window. This basket has been well-known from time immemorial to the successive generations of tits in the neighbourhood.

These birds need a diet of fat in the winter months to enable them to bear the cold, just as the natives in the Arctic regions feed on blubber or whale fat to supply themselves with the warmth needed to sustain life.

It has been a great pleasure to me and to my friends to watch, not only the titmice but robins, chaffinches, wrens and nuthatches enjoying the contents of this basket.

OWL CLAW.

Fascinating bird pictures are formed as angry little skirmishes arise, crests are raised and wings outstretched in vehement protest against undue greediness.

Some years ago I placed an empty coco-husk above the basket; it had a small entrance hole at one end, and, as I expected, a blue titmouse built its nest and laid five eggs in it.

The bird was tame enough to allow me to lift down the husk and show to young visitors the little mother sitting on her nest.

When the eggs were hatched the busy parents were hard at work from early morning till late in the evening bringing green caterpillars and small grubs to feed their young family.

Knowing that the feeding process began with daylight, and continued without ceasing until dusk, I was able to make a calculation as to the number of caterpillars destroyed by a single pair of these birds in one week, and I found it amounted to about four thousand six hundred. We can therefore judge of the value of such birds in ridding our gardens of insect pests.

When the young blue tits were fledged and were leaving the coco-husk one by one to begin life for themselves in the tree branches, I retained one for a little while that I might take its portrait (as seen in the illustration), and fearing lest it might suffer from hunger, I placed it at intervals in a cage on the lawn, where I had the pleasure of watching the affectionate parents come back to feed it through the bars.

The drawing was soon completed, and I need hardly say the little one was allowed to have its liberty.

Birds' Feet.

It is quite worth while to observe the characteristic variations of form in the feet of birds; they will be found to be wonderfully adapted to the kind of life they live and to the food they have to subsist upon.

When I chance to find a dead bird, I usually retain its feet, attaching them to a card and allowing them to dry slowly within the fender. In this way I have made a small collection, which includes specimens from the various divisions of the bird-kingdom, and very useful I often find it for purposes of reference.

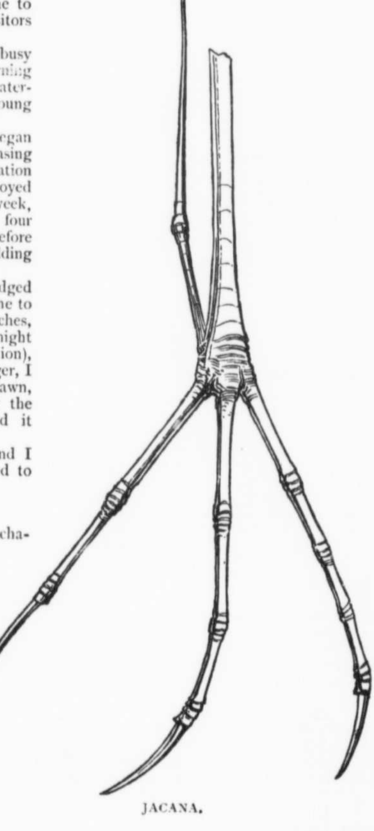
Eagles, hawks and owls (all of which are known as raptorial or seizing-birds) are provided with strong, sharp claws, with which they clutch and kill the animals and birds they feed upon.

A glance at the claws of the owl shows us that the grip of such a foot cannot fail to squeeze to death a small rat or mouse.

An owl swallows a mouse whole, and next day the bones and fur are thrown up in the form of a small grey pellet; the amazing number of bones to be found in these pellets goes far to prove the value of owls as rat and mouse destroyers.

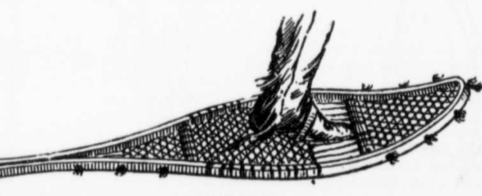
The water-rail and moor-hen appear to be links between land and water birds; they can swim short distances by means of a membrane on each side of the toes, but their lives are mostly spent in threading their way through the sedgy herbage which grows on the margin of ponds and lakes.

The true swimmers (*natatores*) include all such birds as swans, geese and ducks; we can see how easily they propel themselves in any direction by means of their webbed feet, which so admirably fit them for their aquatic life.



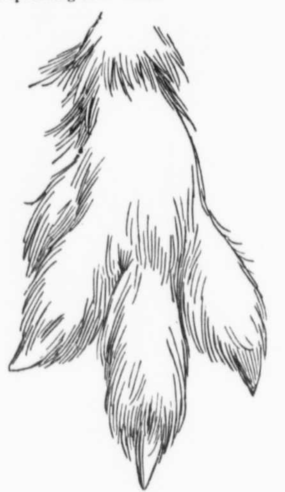
JACANA.

I possess the feet of a curious foreign bird, the jacana, which frequents Brazilian lakes where water-lilies abound, and by means of its long toes can walk upon the leaves and find its insect diet.



SNOW-SHOE.

The light weight of the bird is spread over a considerable area, so that it is borne up on the leaf-covered surface of the water much in the same way that a traveller in Arctic regions is supported on his journeys by means of his wide-spreading snow shoes.

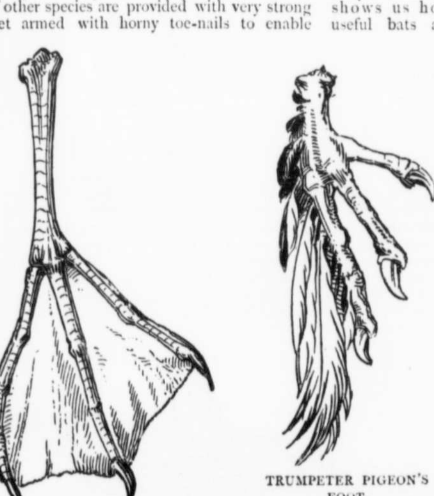


FOOT OF PTARMIGAN.

A ptarmigan affords us a specimen of a bird well protected against the effects of cold by having its feet thickly furred to the very claws. Its plumage is pure white in winter, so as not to be readily seen upon the snowy ground, but in summer the feathers change to grey and brown, colours which make the bird inconspicuous amongst grey rocks and heather.

Some trumpeter pigeons I kept at one time had oddly feathered feet; one could not imagine for what purpose the feathers grew along the toes, they seemed neither useful nor ornamental; I came to the conclusion that they must be a freak of nature, and one of the results of domestication.

Grain-eating birds (*gallinaceous*) such as turkeys, fowls, pheasants and a large number of other species are provided with very strong feet armed with horny toe-nails to enable them to scratch up the earth in order to find their food. The foot of a common fowl will afford us an example of this class of birds.



DUCK'S FOOT.

TRUMPETER PIGEON'S FOOT.

I would call attention to the long claw of the lark, the use of which was, I believe, a puzzle to naturalists, until it was discovered that by its means the bird was enabled to grasp and carry away its eggs when any danger threatened their safety.

The lark's nest being built upon the ground is exposed to many dangers, and when the mower's scythe has laid it bare, the mother-bird has been observed carrying away the eggs one by one in her long-clawed foot. It has also been suggested that the hind claw may tend to break the shock of alighting on the ground from a great height; in either case it offers an interesting instance of provision for a bird's special need.

When we reflect that there are more than ten thousand species of birds, inhabiting every variety of situation and fitted to every climate, we may form some idea of the need of adaptation in their structure.

In these slight remarks on birds' feet, I only attempt to draw my reader's attention to a very wide subject which they may like to study further from time to time as opportunity may occur.

Bats.

A long-eared bat was brought to me to-day; it had been found in a window-box amongst some flowering plants.

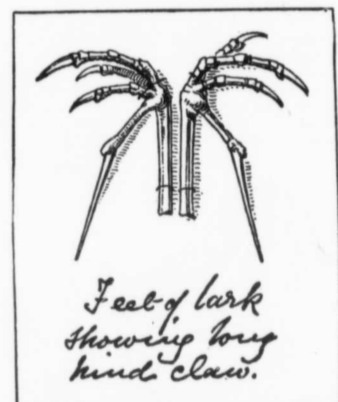
When bats will eat either flies or raw meat, one can keep them as pets as long as may be desired, and very curious and interesting they are.

This one obstinately refuses food of any kind, I therefore have placed it in some ivy branches, so that when evening comes it may take wing and feed itself.

I remember keeping a similar specimen in my childhood, which became very tame and amusing.

I had more time then to catch flies for it, and it consumed at least forty blue-bottles daily. This fact shows us how useful bats are in keeping down the insect hosts throughout the summer and autumn.

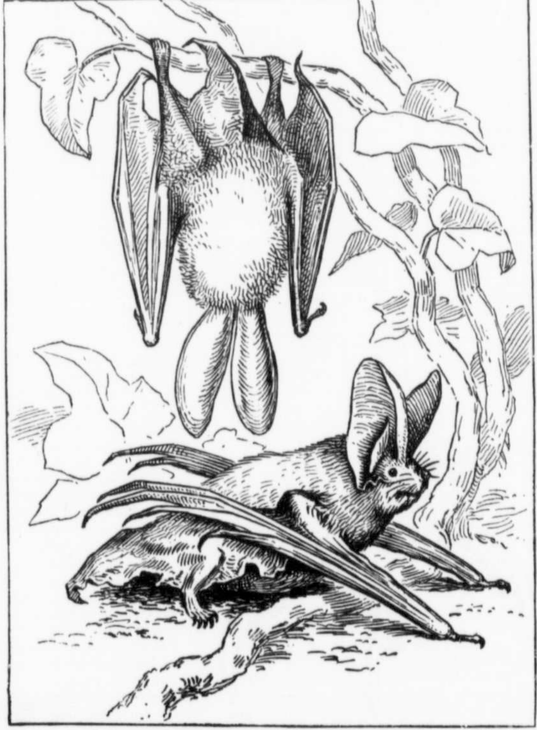
Some of the old trees in my woods have hollow stems, and in these the bats congregate in large numbers; one is reminded of the fact by the powerful and far from agreeable odour these trees emit as we pass.



Feet of lark showing long hind claw.

The illustration shows a long-eared bat when resting head downwards.

A moment or two after alighting it folds up its long ears and places them nearly out of sight under its arms, and then the little creature looks like a mere ball of grey fur.



When on the ground a bat can only scuttle along in a very awkward fashion, as if on hands and knees, and finds great difficulty in taking flight from a level surface.

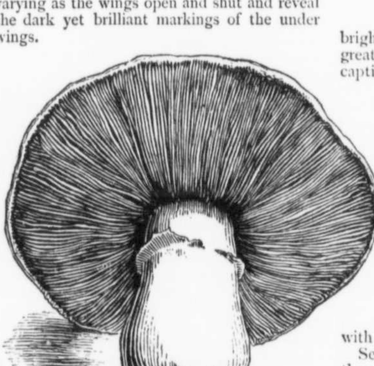
I have somtimes watched a bat in my room where, on warm summer nights, they occasionally pay me a visit, and I observe that it generally makes its way to a curtain and climbs up by its hooked wings until it is high enough to dart off into the air.

Bats should never be wantonly destroyed, for they are perfectly harmless and extremely useful. They carry on at night the work that swallows are doing throughout the day—clearing the air of millions of flies, gnats and moths, which would otherwise be a torment to us and very injurious to the farmer and gardener.

Butterflies in Sunshine.

I have been fascinated this morning by seeing one of nature's lovely wayside pictures. On the pale lilac flower heads of a tall sedum six or seven richly-tinted butterflies sat basking in the warm sunshine.

Peacocks, red admirals and tortoiseshells formed a most beautiful mosaic of colour on the soft mauve flowers, and the tints are ever varying as the wings open and shut and reveal the dark yet brilliant markings of the under wings.



AGARICUS CAMPESTRIS.

There must be something very attractive in the honey of this particular stonecrop, for its blossoms are the resort of insects of all kinds; bees, wasps and flies hover over them all through the hours of sunlight, quite a busy throng ever coming and going.

I like to take a seat for a while near this plant in order to watch the characteristics of different insects. Some are very business-like, they come for honey only, interfere with nobody, and go away as soon as they are satisfied; others are winged busybodies, buzzing around disturbing peaceable visitors, themselves idle and interfering with those who desire to pursue their own quiet work.

The butterflies are busily engaged, each drawing up nectar with its long proboscis, enjoying sunlight and sweet food. Perhaps they even possess a touch of vanity, and are conscious of some pleasure in exhibiting their lovely wings. If so, they may surely be excused seeing how truly beautiful they are.

It is well worth while to search amongst nettle leaves in early summer in order to find some of the jet black, prickly caterpillars from which these handsome butterflies develop, and by keeping them in a box, well supplied with nettle leaves daily, we may see for ourselves the curious chrysalides which shine as if made of gold leaf and hang suspended head downwards, held securely by the small hooks with which the pointed end of the chrysalis is provided. Then in due time out come the exquisite butterflies; their delicate wings, unspoiled by wear and tear, show their

BOLETUS EDULIS.

bright colours to perfection. Perhaps my greatest pleasure is ultimately to set the captives free and see them soar away into space to enjoy their brief life of summer flowers and sunshine.

Fungi.

We are now being reminded of the approach of autumn by the appearance of various species of toadstools. They spring up in the woods, on our lawns, or on decaying tree-stems; and, as the wildflowers and fruits are nearly over, we shall find in them a new and extremely interesting field of study.

Let us collect and examine some of the different kinds of fungi we meet with so abundantly in our daily walks.

Seeing that there are considerably over a thousand species of named fungi, ranging from the microscopic films and moulds which appear on decaying fruit, stale bread and other substances, up to the giant puff-ball, which sometimes measures a foot in diameter, it is clear that we shall only have space for a few general remarks upon the commoner species of fungi we are likely to meet with.

We are all familiar with the edible mushroom (*Agaricus campestris*), so we will select it as a type of the agarics of which I believe there are several hundred species. It is well to know the right terms to use in describing a fungus, so we will trace the growth of one

HYDNUM REPANDUM.

from its beginning and learn the parts of which it consists.

If we dig up a mushroom and examine it carefully, we shall find that it has sprung from a network of white threads which is called the spawn or *mycelium*. Resting here and there upon this network are small nodules which will grow into mushrooms in due time; they first appear above the ground as white balls which, as they rise up and gradually expand, divide into two parts, namely, the cap, which is botanically called the *pileus*, and the stem or stipes.

We notice next a thin membrane which envelopes the cap. This is torn away as the pileus enlarges; part of this veil or *volva* remains on the stem and is called the *annulus*, and part clings to the outer edge of the cap.

We take off the top of the mushroom and reverse it, and now we see thin plates or gills radiating from the centre of the cap. If we cut one of these gills out and lay it on a sheet of white paper, we shall find after a few hours a quantity of dark brown grains which are called spores. From these arises the *mycelium*, from which the mushroom springs. These spores vary in colour in different species; some are pure white, some are purple, some have different shades of brown. They also vary in size, but are usually so exceedingly minute that one writer declares a

CLAVARIA.

single fungus can produce as many as ten million spores.

Thus far my description has applied to the agaricini or gill-bearing fungi, but we will now turn to the second order, the polyporei or pore-bearing fungi.

Under a large tree on my lawn I find in autumn a great abundance of toadstools about the size, shape and colour of penny buns. If I cared to experiment in that line I know they would make a perfectly wholesome dish for the table as they are the well-known *Boletus edulis*.

The pileus is a rich shining brown colour above, but when we examine it beneath we shall see, instead of the gills of the agaric order, an orange-coloured spongy substance consisting of tubes or spores.

Other species of this order are woody excrescences growing out of decaying tree-stems.

A material called amadou, used for making fusees, is obtained from several kinds of *polyporus*.

Yet another species is *Merulius lacrymans* so well known by the name of "dry rot," which is far too frequently met with in old timbered houses.

As the threads of the mycelium penetrate the wood, they reduce it at last to a state of absolute rottenness. This process may go on quite secretly for years, but suspicious cracks become apparent in our wainscot, and when some panels are removed there we see visible evidence of the dry rot. Large patches of a

grey velvety substance are spreading everywhere, covered with drops of water which gives the specific name of "lacrymans" (weeping) to this most destructive fungus.

In the third order of fungi we find, beneath the pileus, spiny projections or teeth.

If we happen to light upon *Hydnum repandum*, a species not uncommon in woods and damp shady places, we can observe in it a good specimen of this structure. Then, again we notice the curious *Clavarias*, mauve-coloured, white, yellow and bluish grey, which spring up on our lawns at this season. They dry very readily and form interesting subjects for a collection.

Pezizas are also worth searching for. I found a brilliant orange-coloured one on our common to-day and could not resist bringing it in, so as to watch it giving out its spores when breathed upon. They are shot out like little jets of smoke, and it is amusing to see the fungus thus energetically sowing itself far and wide.

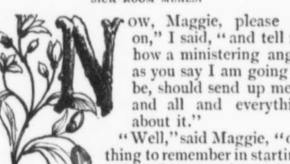
Any of my readers who may desire further information on this subject will find in Dr. M. C. Cooke's *British Fungi*, an excellent guide into this field of special study to which the specimens of to-day have drawn our attention.

A MINISTERING ANGEL.

By JOSEPHA CRANE, Author of "Winifred's Home," etc.

CHAPTER IV.

SICK-ROOM MEALS.



"Now, Maggie, please go on," I said, "and tell me how a ministering angel, as you say I am going to be, should send up meals and all and everything about it."

"Well," said Maggie, "one thing to remember in starting, is that a large tray is very little heavier than a small one, and so there is less crowding of what you place upon it. If you put a cushion under the tray of course it steadies it very much. In case of a chronic invalid I think it is very much better to have a small bed-table made."

"What are they like? I don't think I have ever seen one."

"Any village carpenter can make you one in deal, and you can stain it any wood tint you like. It stands on four short legs, a ledge runs round three sides of it so as to prevent what is placed on it from slipping off, and the fourth side is scooped out. You can place it on the bed with the legs on either side of the sick person's thighs, the hollowed out part making it comfortable for him. You need not put a tray upon it, but lay the cloth on the table itself."

"I will get one made for Aunt Elsie, and let her have it as a surprise on her birthday, which is a fortnight from to-day. But now please go on with the hints."

"Well, I think it is well to have everything as convenient as you can," said Maggie, "and consequently small things in the way of china are better than large."

"I suppose we have used what we had and not thought about it," I said.

"Yes, but really in any town you can get small articles that cost very little. A tiny creamier, a little tea-pot and small hot water jug, and small sugar-basin and salt-cellar. You can get many things in red glass which considerably lightens up a tray. A tiny plate or dish for butter is best and it looks much prettier if you make the butter into a few balls and put a spray of parsley on it, than to send up a piece cut off. I prefer a large tumbler for drinking out of as there is less chance of its contents being spilled, and for milk, an opaque glass is best."

"We can drive into Ancastle to-morrow and buy all these things; I know a shop where I am sure we shall be able to get them."

"Very well, that will be delightful. Then—well, it is always desirable to have quite a fresh napkin or cloth on the tray. I know one cannot be put on every time, but if the cloth is folded carefully and put under a weight, it will look fresh much longer than if this is not done. Everything on the tray should be spotless, and the knives and silver and glass brilliant."

"One cannot have small things for dinner as easily as for other meals," I remarked.

"You can get small vegetable dishes with partitions in them, and I think a hot water plate is nice for an invalid. The meat can be placed upon it, and then he can help himself from the vegetable dish, and I think it always looks more appetising than when helpings of different things are all placed on the one plate. About puddings, I think they are very much nicer if made in a small separate dish than if a helping is placed on a plate or a big pudding either whole or begun is sent up."

"Aunt Elsie would, I think, often like something in between her meals, but she gets tired of milk and beef tea, and really I cannot think of anything else."

"There are many little things that one can have by way of variety. By the way, beef tea is considered to be a very deceptive thing, much as it is used, for it is expensive and not particularly nutritious. If you want to make it really nourishing, a little prepared food such as Ridge's or Mellin's should be added to it."

"I never quite know if cook makes Aunt Elsie's beef tea properly," I remarked. "What is the right way?"

"I will go and fetch my note-book, and you can take down a few recipes which I copied verbatim from an excellent authority on invalid diet.

Beef Tea.

Ingredients one pound of gravy beef.

Time required, about six hours.

One pound of gravy beef should be placed on a board, and minced up very finely, all the skin and fat being removed. The meat should then be put into a saucepan with a pint and a half of cold water, half a salt-spoonful of salt, and a little pepper. When just boiling, remove the saucepan to the side of the fire, and let it simmer gently for five or six hours with the lid on. Next pour off the beef-tea and let it get cold.

It is well to remove all fat from the beef-tea before warming it up for use. But it is better not to strain beef-tea, as this removes all the little brown particles which are most nutritious.

Another recipe given me by a friend is simply to put one pound of shin of beef cut small and the bones broken into a covered jar with one pint of water. Place this in a slow oven for four hours.

"Have you a recipe for chicken broth?"

"Yes, here it is."

Chicken Broth.

Skin and chop up half an old fowl or chicken, then place it in a stewpan with a quart of water, adding a sprig of parsley, a bit of mace, a crust of bread, salt and pepper.

When sufficiently boiled take off the broth, strain it, and skim it when cool. It is stronger than any other meat tea.

"Do you like any of the beef essences?"

"Liebig is an excellent stimulant," answered Maggie; "but now for small meals. An egg beaten up with brandy and milk is very acceptable to some people. It is much nicer if you put half a teaspoonful of hot water with the egg before adding the brandy and milk. A sandwich is also very tempting, but it must be very daintily made, the slices of bread very thin and the crust taken off. The meat is always nicer, especially if for a person of weak digestion and possessed of few teeth, if it is minced up, and a few drops of Liebig moisten it nicely. Some meat pounded in a mortar and after the gravy has been added served with some toast makes a nice little meal."

"Sometimes Aunt Elsie thinks milk does not agree with her, otherwise she likes it and it does."

"Milk is a perfect food and really contains all the nourishment required by the body, but there are many people who cannot take it cold or uncooked. If the milk is heated and thickened with arrowroot or powdered biscuit it is often found to be easily digested. Sometimes milk causes what is called 'sourness of the stomach,' and in this case a pinch of bicarbonate of soda should be added to each glass of it. If a third part of barley water is added to milk it makes a nice variety. Milk tea which some doctors recommend is made by using boiling milk instead of water when you are infusing the tea. A glass of good white wine added to a pint of boiling milk also makes a nice drink."

"Aunt Elsie is not dieted in any way," I said, "but as a rule what should one do about a patient's food?"

"Well, generally the doctor will give you definite instructions about it, and they must be strictly carried out, for on doing so sometimes the life of the patient depends. In fever and typhoid cases the diet usually is only liquid. Milk in these cases is generally ordered warm or cold, plain or diluted, and a quart in the twenty-four hours is considered sufficient to keep a person alive. Solid food that has been warmed after first being cooked should never be given to a sick person, but beef-tea or mutton or chicken broth can of course be reheated."

"What is the right thing about stimulants?"

"The doctor orders the quantity the patient is to take, and that amount should not be exceeded. Always measure the quantity, and do not dilute wine unless there is any difficulty experienced in swallowing. When wine or spirits have to be diluted water or milk is used, though seltzer water or apollinaris water are nice for diluting champagne."

"When people are very thirsty I suppose one can always let them have water."

"Yes, but it must be carefully filtered. There are many things also which quench thirst. I will tell you of some."

Barley Water.

One quart of cold water should be added to one ounce of barley and boiled for about half an

hour. When strained it should be sweetened and a little lemon juice added to it. Milk used instead of water is more nourishing but not so effectual for quenching thirst.

Toast and Water.

Take a slice of bread or a crust and brown it before the fire. Put it into a jug and pour a quart of cold water over it. Cover the jug and let it stand for quite half an hour before using it.

"In fever of course there is nothing like ice. You can get it in a block which is much better than several small pieces, and then take off a little at a time. You can break ice by a strong needle forced into it with your thimble. You can keep ice in an ice bowl by the patient's bedside. If you have not got such a thing, an excellent substitute is made by stretching a piece of flannel or lint over an ordinary bowl, and tying it tightly with an elastic band so as to have it quite stretched. The smooth side of the flannel or lint should be uppermost."

"Should one keep food in a sick person's room? I fancy I have heard that it was not good to do so."

"No, it should never be kept in the room or by the patient's bedside. It is a very unhealthy plan to begin with, and often has the effect of taking away a person's appetite. When a meal is over the tray containing the food or the bed table should be removed out of the room, and the next meal brought in freshly at the right time."

"How can one feed helpless people?"

"You should raise the patient gently by passing your left arm behind his shoulders, or by putting your hand behind the pillow and raising both the head and the pillow at the same time. You can do this with one hand while you give the food with the other, using a spoon or feeding cup. You should always put a towel under the patient's chin so that if anything drops the night dress may not be wetted, and it is well to wipe the mouth quite dry afterwards."

We went the next day to see Ansella, and found that Maggie's arrangement for her to pull herself up with was most successful.

"I can pull myself up quite comfortable, miss," said Ansella. "I only wish as I could stay so when I am going to have my meals, but my back do ache so, and the pillows aren't any support."

"No, I am afraid they are not," said Maggie. "Now, Nell, if you will help me we shall easily concoct a bed-rest."

Of course I was willing and eager to learn, and so I watched carefully to see what she did.

"Do you think there is any strong rope in the house?" asked Maggie.

"Yes, miss," said the little sister whose name we discovered was Janie. "There was a box come for mother from Ancastle yesterday, and it had a rope round it."

"Run and get it if you think we can have it," said Maggie, and the child obeyed.

Maggie took an ordinary chair and turning it upside down placed it behind Ansella whom I held up as she did so. Maggie put several pillows on it and Ansella pronounced it most comfortable. The rope Maggie had used for fastening the chair to the head rail of the bed.

"I was wanting to have my night-dress changed this morning," said Ansella, "but mother she had to go off early to the laundry and Janie can't help me with it. We tried, but, dearie me, she did pull me about so. I said, leave me be, Janie. I'll wait."

"Perhaps we could do it now for you," said Maggie.

"Well, I don't like to trouble you, miss," said Ansella.

"We shall like to make you more comfortable, and it will be no trouble," said Maggie. "Can you get the night-dress, Janie?"

"Yes, miss, it's airing by the kitchen fire."

"Well, see that it is quite aired and nice and warm," said Maggie, "and then roll it up and bring it to me."

And Janie ran off, soon reappearing with the night-dress, which felt, as Maggie told her, "as dry as a bone." And Janie beamed with delight at the praise. Both Maggie and I were amused to see how eagerly the little girl watched all we did and promised to learn so that she should be of more use to her sister than before.

"Now, Ansella," said Maggie, "I must draw the night-gown you have on quite up towards your shoulders, and see," she continued, suiting her curious actions to her words, "it can be done so nicely under the bedclothes without uncovering you at all."

"I can slip my arms out, miss, I think," said Ansella, and with Maggie's help she did so.

"Now, Nell, the clean night-dress," said Maggie, and I handed the article to her.

Maggie then put a big shawl over Ansella, for as she was sitting up the bed-clothes did not quite reach to her face, and drawing away the soiled night-dress over Ansella's head she quickly put the warm one over her. Then she helped her to slip her arms into it, and drew it down to the shoulders. Then she slipped it over her head and drew it down comfortably in place.

Ansella looked very nice and comfortable, but an expression of pain every now and then had not escaped Maggie's sharp eyes.

"Yes, miss," said Ansella, "I do suffer so at the bottom of my back, and my elbows, and there by the shoulder blades."

Maggie removed the bed-rest and quickly investigated matters, doing it all so quickly that Ansella was hardly uncovered at all.

"My dear, I must see to you, or else you will get quite sore places where the skin happily now is only red and tender," said Maggie.

"What can be done, miss?"

"Well, every day the places should be carefully washed with warm soap and water, and when they are quite dry, you should powder the place with oxide of zinc, equal parts, or else finely-powdered boracic acid. But there are many other things that can harden the skin wherever there is pressure. Rubbing the place with wine or eau de cologne is a good thing."

"We haven't either in the house, miss," said Ansella looking disappointed, "not to speak of them powders with the funny names you've just mentioned."

"No," said Maggie smiling, "but I think in spite of that that I shall find something. What is in that bottle? Is it the right label?"

"Yes, miss, it's the methylated spirit of wine. We use it for a spirit lamp," said Janie.

"That will do. It looks nice and clean. This hardens the skin," said Maggie, "and you or your mother should paint over the places on your sister every day and then powder it with common rice powder."

As we walked home I asked Maggie what should be done if the skin was broken.

"Zinc ointment is very healing," said Maggie, "but the art of a good nurse is to prevent bed sores, which are most troublesome things and extremely painful."

(To be continued.)

OUR SUPPLEMENT STORY COMPETITION.

LOVE AND WAR.

A STORY IN MINIATURE.

First Prize (£2 2s.).
Lucy Armstrong, Birkenhead.

Second Prize (£1 1s.).
"Shamrock," Dublin, Ireland.

Third Prize (10s. 6d.).
H. Cope, Liverpool.

Honourable Mention.

Eva Brown, Darlington; Alma Browning, Dartford; Nellie Cobham, Folkestone; L. A. Cooper, Ipswich; Elsie Maude Garnett, Burton-on-Trent; Margaret Christina Haynes, Bristol; C. M. Iggulden, Farnborough; Lorna Doone, Plumstead; "Lorna," Peebles, N.B.; Annie S. Murphy, Carlow; Janie Laughlin, Glasgow; Florence Moss, Peckham; "Pohsib," Reading; Ethel Risely, Peterborough; "White Heather," Edinburgh; Nora Wren, North Bow, E.

To the Competitors.

My dear Girls,—I am afraid you must have had some difficulty in summarising my little story, as forty-eight competitors have overstepped the limits prescribed by the Editor. Let me remind you also that misspelling and faulty punctuation put the writer at a serious disadvantage, and that very diminutive and close handwriting betray an inclination to elude the Editor's rule in regard to space.

This being said, let me now compliment you on the quality of the work that has been submitted to me. While scores of the papers beside me are marked G. and V. G. (good—very good), not one is marked V. B. (very bad).

Courage donc, en avant!

Your affectionate friend,

Patricia Dillon.

FIRST PRIZE ESSAY.

Love and War.

Madame de Ligny, having lost husband and daughter at one fatal blow, lives for 5 years in morbid seclusion at her ancestral Castle, "Les Tourettes." She then adopts Eileen, orphan child of her former Irish governess, and the little girl soon becomes an arch-favourite with the servants, especially the motherly house-keeper, Louise and the soft-hearted cook Augustin. Arthur de Ligny, son and heir of the Château, is a Cuirassier de la Garde Impériale. He and his mother are mutually devoted, but separated by the gloomy reserve which even Eileen's sunny presence cannot quite dispel from Madame de Ligny's mind. Arthur is kind to the pretty little stranger but she is afraid of his deep voice. Thanks to the timely suggestion of Louise, Fanchon Ledru becomes the playmate of Eileen. The sturdy, eleven-year-old peasant in Tourangelle costume and already engaged to her André Moreau, is a complete revelation to the Irish child. Time passes, but at 18 Eileen is still a child in appearance, kept so by Madame's express desire, though Arthur considers that she ought to "come out" like other girls of her age and position. War is declared between France and Germany, and

the turning point in Eileen's quiet life has come. Arthur joins his regiment after an emotional parting from his mother, whom he commends to Eileen's charge as he kisses her in farewell. He is accompanied by his tenant and godson, Jacques. Great anxiety is felt on the estate as the war progresses. The "*Times*" is ordered from England and Eileen reads aloud the accounts of the numerous battles so disastrous to the French. Arthur writes, describing the gory fight at Wörth in which Jacques saves his life. The Countess awakes to renewed sympathy with her tenants and, to intercede for André Moreau (who is in undeserved trouble with his officers), she and Eileen drive to Tours, the seat of the Provisional Government. The horrors of war meet them at every turn and the Countess generously throws open her Dower-House to the sick and wounded. Soon, German soldiers are billeted upon "Les Tourettes" and its tenants. General von Stein and his nephew Eugen are honoured as guests by the ladies of the Château, and Eugen is attracted to Eileen. Arthur, having fought gallantly and escaped with a wound, now reappears to the joy of all, and a delightfully mysterious visit is paid to him in "La Maisonette," before it is quite understood that General von Stein has neither power nor wish to harm him. Paris capitulates after a four months' siege, and the Germans receive marching-orders shortly after Eileen has refused Eugen. Arthur, having dreaded the possibility of losing her, asks for her hand in marriage, and they come to a happy understanding in their peaceful country home, whilst in Paris, meanwhile, the Communists are raging.

LUCY I. ARMSTRONG.

OUR NEW PUZZLE POEM.

APUZZLESOLVER.

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

1. Solutions to be written on one side of the paper only.
2. Each paper to be headed with the name and address of the competitor.
3. Attention must be paid to spelling, punctuation, and neatness.
4. Send by post to Editor, GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, Paternoster Row, London. "Puzzle Poem" to be written on the top left-hand corner of the envelope.
5. The last day for receiving solutions from Great Britain and Ireland will be October 17, 1898; from Abroad, December 16, 1898.

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

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

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

OUR NEXT STORY COMPETITION.

STORIES IN MINIATURE.

Subject:—"THE G. O. P. SUPPLEMENT FOR SEPTEMBER."

THE BACK OF BEYOND.

By FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE, Author of "The Calling of the Weir," etc.

We offer three prizes of TWO GUINEAS, ONE GUINEA, and HALF-A-GUINEA for the three best papers on our "Story Supplement" for this month. The essays are to give a brief account of the plot and action of the story in the Competitor's own words; in fact, each paper should be a carefully-constructed *Story in Miniature*, telling the reader in a few bright words what THE GIRL'S OWN STORY SUPPLEMENT for the month is all about.

One page (that is a quarter of a full sheet which consists of four pages) of foolscap only is to be written upon, and is to be signed by the writer, followed by her full address, and posted to The Editor, GIRL'S OWN PAPER, in an unsealed envelope with the words "Stories in Miniature," written on the left-hand top corner.

The last day for receiving the papers is September 20th; and no papers can in any case be returned.

Examiners:—The Author of the Story (Frederick Langbridge), and the Editor of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

MISCELLANEOUS.

RENA.—The very best book on gardening for the price is Robinson's *English Flower-Garden*. It is a delightful and useful work. There is also a cheap little book and very practical called *Hardy Perennials*, by Mr. Wood, published by Upcott Gill.

A SUBSCRIBER.—Wash the shelves with a solution of alum and water, and try sprinkling some "insecticide" over them, such as is employed for black-beetles and crickets.

CHRISTINA—We have nothing to recommend for taking away the smell of a new tapestry carpet. Only exposure to the air will remove it in course of time.

MONICA.—To make a simnel cake, called by you a "Mid-Lent cake," beat one pound of butter to a cream, add the whites of six eggs beaten to a froth, likewise beat-up and add the yolks; then take ten ounces of powdered sugar, and add to the cream, with one pound and a half of currants, one pound of flour, five ounces of candied citron, three ounces of candied lemon-peel (cut in thinnish pieces), five ounces of almonds, blanched and pounded, and a little cinnamon, allspice, grated nutmeg, and salt; beat in all these ingredients separately; then roll out a paste of flour and water, fill with the mixture, tie up in a pudding-cloth, and boil for three hours; remove the cloth, brush over the surface with egg, and bake in a slow oven till the crust be hard. The process is a long one.