Girls Own Paper

ALF COOKE LEEDS

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"An Old Scotch Garden"
from the painting in the Royal Academy by J.H. Lorimer

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IN SPITE OF ALL.

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

CHAPTER XII.

ALTHOUGH nearly a year had passed since he had seen her, Michael had by no means forgotten or ceased to care for Beattie. However, being a healthy-minded man and full of interests, he could not let the thought of her spoil his life. Rather, putting aside as well as he could the fear that she and he would never be more to one another than they were now, he prepared himself to be worthy of her and to be able to give her all that lay in his power. He made the most of his opportunities, studied French, attended lectures, visited hospitals, and through the influence of Dr. Lemâitre, with whom he was staying, and who was a personal friend of M. Pasteur, became acquainted with some of the leading French scientists. The past year had greatly changed him, and for the better. His love, the death of his brother, and the zest with which he had given himself

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"'ANY FRIEND OF MISS RAVEN'S IS WELCOME.'"

to the acquirement of knowledge had acted on his character, making it deeper and stronger, and bringing about that difference which is apparent to anyone who has had any experience of human nature, the difference between one who has theories about life, and one who lives. Suffering is a great educator. Where it does not embitter, it cannot fail to ennoble by the very necessity for endurance which it involves. To Michael's temperament doubts were not easy. He was a man of action rather than a man of thought, or rather he combined action with thought, and there is less danger of unbelief to such natures than to the purely intellectual. There was much in his intercourse with the scientific world, and in the material side of the studies he prosecuted to turn him from the simple faith of his childhood, but he never abandoned it. When a man knows what to believe he knows what to do, and this is half the secret of contentment.

The young Englishman had many acquaintances in Paris, but few of them were of his own nationality. He had once or twice wondered, when he first went abroad, whether he should come across the artist-friend to whom Beattie had alluded. It would have been nice to see someone who knew her, but neither at the house of the English chaplain nor elsewhere had he encountered her, and gradually he had forgotten that such a person existed.

One bright morning, however, as he passed the Salon du Champ de Mars he could not resist going in to look again at some of the pictures he had already seen. There was one by Doyen that somehow reminded him of Norah. It was called "Le Chapelet," and represented the kneeling figure of a girl at prayer. There was something in the contour and expression of the face that recalled her to him far more than the photograph he had of her, taken at the nearest market-town four years ago, and which required imagination to invest it with any charm. There was another picture which also had an interest for him, though of a totally different kind. It was that weird and almost terrible study of Moreau de Tours, "Les 'fascinés' de la Charité."

There was rather a crowd round this last, which indeed could not fail to command attention, especially among those who do not care only for what is pleasing in art. The rapt, entranced faces in the picture, some of them horrible, some almost beautiful, with the individuality of the person showing in each, were very remarkable, and although the Englishman did not care for the sensational, or indeed in its modern sense the realistic in pictorial representations, yet he could not but own the power with which the subject was handled. He was still looking at it when he felt someone push gently but firmly past him, and then a voice at his elbow said, in remonstrance—

"But no, my dear, do not regard that. It is not fitting."

The speaker was a Frenchwoman, and she had stretched forth a detaining hand and laid it on the arm of the girl she addressed, who, however, did not pay the remotest attention to her, but having conquered for herself an excellent position, was now quietly scrutinising the picture.

The other gave a little sigh and abandoned herself to the inevitable, for indeed the back view of her companion, as exhibited to Michael, testified to a determination that was certainly associated with independence. Michael, somewhat amused, gave a sidelong glance at the vanquished, and beheld a tiny, wizened old woman, not more than five feet high, and certainly not likely to enjoy being in a crowd where she could not see anything. Even Michael, who was a foot higher, had lost something by abandoning his post to the young woman, who now occupied it. "She deserves to succeed," he said to himself, smiling, for there had been something persistent and masterly in the pressure by which, without rudeness, the young lady had insinuated herself into her present position. Looking at her, Michael concluded that she was not French. There was a complete absence of style, coupled with a certain impression of solid serviceableness in her apparel, that did not suggest even a provincial Frenchwoman. Presently she turned her profile towards the old lady, who, as if for protection, was still grasping her sleeve, and said in French, but with an unmistakably English accent—

"It is most interesting. If you do not care to see it, go on to something else, and I will join you."

"But, my dear Miss Raven," began the old lady, and finished her sentence with a little shriek, for someone, stepping backwards, had trodden heavily on her foot.

The delinquent offered profuse apologies, which, considering his probable weight, for he was a big, fat fellow, were indeed called for. The little foot which madame was lifting so plaintively was not formed to support so great a pressure. At the sound of her cry her companion had at once turned to her, and with as much steady resolution as she had evinced before, pushed her way out and led her friend limping away. Michael, seeing the latter was suffering, and feeling that his profession and the nationality of the young lady, of which he had now no doubt, might justify his interference, followed them and proffered his assistance.

"Can I be of any use to you?" he asked addressing the younger woman. "I am afraid the lady will not be able to stand about now."

And indeed madame was supporting herself on one leg, like some pathetic little bird, tears of pain running down her cheeks.

Margaret, for it was she, gave a sigh of relief.

"How good of you," she said, without hesitation. "If you would fetch us a conveyance of some sort I shall take her straight home. Careless brute, why couldn't he look where he was going?"

Margaret's language was more forcible than elegant, but Michael sympathised with her.

"The Frenchman would probably say madame's foot was so small he must be pardoned for not seeing it," he said smiling at the old lady. And as madame understood and was not too old to enjoy compliments, she smiled back at him through her tears.

"It is a nothing," she said. "The pain will doubtless soon cease. But for the moment!" and she made an expressive gesture.

"The gentleman is going to fetch a fiacre, madame. You will not care to stay now, and you won't need to walk at all."

Madame expressed her gratitude. She was a pretty little woman, with a face like a withered apple, black eyes, and tiny features. By the side of the substantial Margaret she looked like an old doll.

Michael returned and escorted her to the cab, madame thanking him volubly. He had very little idea what she was saying, however, as she spoke exceedingly fast, opening her mouth scarcely at all, and directing her words to his coat-sleeve, which was a bad conductor to his ears.

But Margaret was anything but unintelligible. While madame was babbling at his side, she directed to him several remarks in the outspoken way which was natural to her. She was never the victim of shyness, and she was unaffectedly glad to see an English face, especially one which inspired her with confidence.

"The exhibition is a striking one, isn't it?" she said. "Of course, there is a great deal that's not at all in the line of English people, but then there's no need for the French to consider our prejudices. Mrs. Grundy is purely insular," isn't she?"

"Oh, I expect she has her counterpart abroad. But anyhow, some of the studies one sees would hardly appeal to French people, would they?" said Michael.

"Perhaps not. But everyone has not the same tastes. There must be liberty in art, you see. The thing is not what subject an artist chooses, but what skill he uses in its treatment; if he is true to the laws of art he is a good artist. What he is as a man is another question."

Michael said "Oh." He did not feel called upon to argue the subject with this strange young woman, and he was a good deal amused at her.

"I am an artist myself, you see," said she, as if in excuse for having laid down the law. Michael said "Oh" again, this time with more respect.

"That's why I am interested in things that madame doesn't care for. She likes just what is pretty. Still, it was selfish of me to drag her about. She hates crowds; don't you, madame?" (They were supporting her between them; she with a hand on the arm of each of them.) "Now here is the cab. I will get in, and then perhaps you will assist her. Thank you."

Michael inquired what address he should give to the cabman, and then standing with head uncovered, he watched them drive away.

"That's a rather unconventional young lady, I should imagine," thought Michael to himself. "But I like her. And, by Jove, what a forehead she's got."

With which he dismissed her from his mind.

But that evening when he was discussing "Les fascinés" with his host the incident returned to him, and suddenly he had an idea.

"Why," he said, "her name is Raven, and she is English, and she is an artist. Suppose she should be Beattie's friend!"

The notion that he had been so near someone who could give him information of his lady-love and let his opportunity pass was a somewhat aggravating one. Not of course that he could be by any means sure that this was the girl to whom Beattie had alluded the first evening he had met her. There were possibly more English girls than one who were called Raven, and were art students in the French capital. Still, he regretted he had not thought sooner of her possible identity. He was comforted by recollecting however that he knew the name of the street in which she, or at any rate the old lady lived, though the number of the house had escaped his memory. Even on the presumption of their possessing a mutual friend he would not be justified in forcing his acquaintanceship upon them, neither was the old lady's injury of a nature sufficiently serious to call for inquiries on the part of a stranger. But still, he might perhaps if he went into the neighbourhood meet them again. He felt it was worth a trial if only for the sake of hearing Beattie's name mentioned.

Accordingly, the very next afternoon he strolled in the direction of the quiet road in which madame resided, but he saw no sign of either her or of the young artist, and having traversed the whole length of the street twice, going up on one side and down on the other, and then reversing the order of proceeding; having also looked in the direction of open windows in the hope that a wizened old face, or a resolute young one would bow recognition to him, and having met with no encouragement he proceeded homewards, to the relief of the *sergent de ville*, who did not wish to have to follow suspicious characters in the hot sunshine.

But the following Sunday, as he was coming out of church, whom should he see but Miss Margaret, unaccompanied by madame. She did not notice him at first, and although she had been willing to air her ideas very freely at a first interview with a stranger, yet she looked altogether so proper and so severe that Michael did not like to attract her attention. He walked slowly till they had got clear of the people who separated them, and then for a moment they were close together. As he passed her he looked at her rather hard, and Margaret, feeling someone staring at her, was about to wither him with a glance, when her eyes meeting his anxious ones, the frown changed to a smile and she bowed.

Michael raised his hat.

"I was afraid you weren't going to see me," he said. "I should like to inquire how madame's foot is?"

"Oh," said Margaret, "it is quite well now. It was bruised at first; and she is not very good at bearing pain. Poor madame, she can't look after herself at all."

"Do you take care of her then?" Michael ventured to ask.

Margaret laughed.

"She is supposed to be taking care of me," she said. "But I am afraid she has rather a hard time of it."

Michael thought it very likely.

"I hope you will forgive me for detaining you a moment," he said, "but I could not help hearing your name the other day. It is Raven, is it not?"

Margaret drew herself up a little stiffly. Michael noticed the action, and said, after a momentary hesitation, during which Margaret's clear grey eyes were fixed inquiringly and with somewhat embarrassing directness of gaze upon him: "I only ask, because I got it into my head you might be the friend of—of some one I know."

Margaret said "indeed." But her manner was not encouraging. She made Mike feel rather uncomfortable, as if he were acting in a way that was not gentlemanly, but he thought none the less of the young woman who combined with a somewhat unusual frankness and independence, an evident strength and fearlessness that were doubtless her safeguard.

"She talked a good deal about a schoolfellow of hers, a Miss Raven, who was studying art in Paris," went on Mike, trying to avoid using Beattie's name, until he was sure this was really her friend. "And as you told me you were an artist, it was not unnatural I should think you might be she."

Margaret, having concluded by her study of Mr. Anstruther's physiognomy rather than from his stumbling words that he was perfectly straightforward, became natural again and set him at his ease.

"My name is Margaret Raven," she said, "and I was at school in London before I came here."

"Then," said Mike, his last doubts vanishing, "do you remember Miss Margetson?"

"Beattie!" said Margaret, in a delighted voice. "Of course I do. Why, she was my greatest friend. Do you know her? Have you seen her lately? Suppose, instead of standing here, you walk a little way with me, will you? Then," she added, blushing, "Beattie must be the means of introducing us to each other."

"I daresay I could find some one else to do that," said Mike, "if you think it improper for us to walk together on so slight an acquaintance. I see you go to this church, although I have never noticed you there before. I know Mr. B. and his wife."

"Oh, that is not necessary," said Margaret. "Circumstances alter cases. And I can see you are a gentleman."

"I hope so," said Mike laughing. "Perhaps you would like to know my name."

And he introduced himself.

"I have heard it," said Margaret. "I believe Beattie mentioned you in one of her letters."

At this Mike grew very red, and looked so pleased, that Margaret, not seeing why such a small thing could gratify a person particularly unless there were special reasons, forthwith formed a conclusion which was not so far wide of the mark, as hasty conclusions are apt to be.

Thus, having conquered the first awkwardness, and neither of them any longer afraid that the other would think uncharitable thoughts, they went along in a state of mutual satisfaction, and they found so much to say, and were so interested, that they arrived outside madame's house a great deal too soon.

"Do you know," said Margaret then, "I think you had better come in and make your inquiries in person. Madame will, I am sure, be gratified, and she is a dear little creature. You will lose nothing by making her acquaintance."

Mike hesitated, but as he would be late for luncheon anyhow, he thought he would not lose the opportunity held out to him, not of seeing madame, but of being longer in the society of some one who knew Beattie Margetson and was sufficiently enthusiastic about her, and who was in receipt of letters from her once a month at the least. Of course these letters were answered, and next time she wrote she would be sure to mention him. Mike felt disposed to do anything Margaret wanted, that so she might have a good impression of him, and perhaps speak kindly of him to Beattie.

Madame, attired in a violet gown with a loose jacket to it, and wearing a head-dress which was perfectly bewitching, was sitting in an attitude of Sunday leisure in a low chair in the *salon*. Beside her were curled three beautiful cats which, as Michael subsequently discovered, were named, from their relationship to one another, Monsieur, Madame and Mademoiselle. When Madame Duclos rose the three cats rose likewise, arching their furry backs and forming a procession behind her. Madame Duclos was too polite to show any surprise at the sight of the young man who had been so considerate for her, and who, moreover, had made rather an impression on the little Frenchwoman, who was as full of romance as she could be, and who in her youth had had three tall lovers ready to shoot themselves or each other at her command. At the same time she was saying to herself, "That Marguerite! And what has she been about now, I wonder?"

Margaret explained.

"Here, dear madame, is Mr. Anstruther. We met outside the church; and he stopped to inquire after you. And it turns out we have a mutual friend, so I brought him home."

"I am charmed to see you, monsieur," said the little lady, and she moved towards him with her tiny hand outstretched, while Monsieur, Madame and Mademoiselle advanced a step likewise. "Any friend of Miss Raven's is welcome.

And indeed I am glad to be able to thank you—as I fear I did not the other day—for your kindness. The young men of the present day are so degenerate. They have no thought, no pity; and when one meets it one rejoices."

She pointed to a chair close by the one she had vacated. Then she again seated herself, and Monsieur, Madame and Mademoiselle sat down likewise.

"We are about to partake of *déjeûner*," said Madame Duclos. "You will give us the pleasure of your company."

Margaret went to give the necessary orders with a good deal of secret amusement.

"Dear little madame, I cannot complain that she curtails my liberty. I thought she would accuse me of being forward and unladylike, and, in fact, Anglaise, and she receives him with open arms. It is a good thing that I am capable of looking after myself, for she has no idea of looking after me. He might be a thorough villain, for all she knows."

But madame had more sense and more perception than Miss Margaret gave her credit for. She had known a great many men, good, bad and indifferent, before that young lady's mamma was out of the nursery, and her judgment was worth as much as Margaret's, and perhaps a little more.

(*To be continued.*)

CHILDREN'S WAYS AND SAYINGS.

By A MOTHER.

MR. EDITOR has asked me to talk a little about the ways and sayings of two little people of whom I see a great deal. He thinks that it would be a pleasure to many mothers and brothers and sisters to tell and read of the funny and sensible sayings which fall so simply from the lips of children, and are forgotten in the hurry of every day. He has chosen me to begin by gathering a handful of little ways, and he would like the other mothers to take up the story.

As Mrs. Meynell has lately pointed out, children are better appreciated now than they have ever been before. They used to be crammed with lessons from morning till night, like John Wesley's scholars at Kingswood, who had to get up at four and never had any play. They were admired in proportion to their power of leaving childish ways behind, and their own spontaneous growth was neglected. There were other children of the type of little Nell, in whom mawkishness was fostered as a grace, but few people watched children's minds, and observed their simple working.

How sad it is to read in the life of Francis Place about the Stuart Mill children in their schoolroom. Mr. Place went to stay at Jeremy Bentham's beautiful home at Ford Abbey in Somersetshire, where the Mills were living in 1817, and describes as follows the lessons of John, Clara, Willie, and Jim, of whom the eldest, John, was only eleven years old.

"Mill is exceptionally severe. Lessons have not been well said this morning by Willie and Clara. There they are now, three o'clock, plodding over their books. Their dinner, which they knew went up at one, brought down again. . . and no dinner will any of them get till six o'clock. This has happened once before since I came. The fault to-day is in a mistake of one word."

Mr. Place tells his wife that Mrs. Mill was a patient soul, hating wrangling, who managed to avoid quarrelling in a very admirable manner. In these days, when James Mill's well-meant cruelty would be condemned by all, Mrs. Mill's avoidance of quarrelling seems less admirable. We might indefinitely multiply instances of the old methods of crushing nature out of children, but we will only recall a few.

There is little Edmund Verney, not yet three years old, whose great-grandmother, Lady Denton, pleads in 1639, "Let me begge of you and his mother that nobody whip him but Mr. Parrye (his tutor); yf you doe goe a violent waye with him you will rue it, for i veryly beleve he will reseve ingery by it."

In the next age we read of the little Duke of Gloucester, who was the one survivor of Queen Anne's eighteen babies. His mother doated on him, but yet she thought it inevitable that her stolid "*Est il possible*" husband should constantly belabour the poor little fellow with the birch rod. One would think that the eager boy who took such pride in his troop of boy-soldiers would have easily survived a more reasonable system.

Even where people did love and rejoice in children they were too apt to think such love unworthy of a true believer. I cannot resist quoting the exquisite and pathetic lines of Isaac Watts, which are less known than some of his less beautiful poems, though they give such insight into his tender heart and his creed.

"Where'er my flattering passions rove
I find a lurking snare;
'Tis dangerous to let loose our love
Beneath the eternal Fair.
Nature has soft but powerful bands,
And reason she controls;
While children with their little hands
Hang closest to our souls.
Thoughtless they act the old Serpent's part;
What tempting things they be!
Lord, how they twine about our heart,
And draw it off from Thee!
Dear Sovereign, break these fetters off,
And set our spirits free;
God in Himself is bliss enough;
For we have all in Thee."

This was a strangely perverted lesson to have learnt in the school of the Master who "set a little child in the midst" of His disciples. We may be thankful that the instincts of the doctor's own loving heart witnessed to a primitive doctrine older than that of his day.

But gloomy and repellent as was the old severity, when little Quetitia Pilkington "was frequently whipped for looking blue of a frosty morning," it did not necessarily ruin children body and mind. The senseless admiration and attention which many people show to little ones nowadays, kills the child in them as effectually as the undue severity of the past. Let children once know that they are admired and that their droll sayings are repeated, and they lose their fresh charm and become affected apes of their elders.

So before beginning these little tales about children, I should like to deprecate any participation by the babies in such records, or any knowledge of them. The bird deserts the nest when she knows she is watched, and the charm of a child dissolves and is gone if it once realises that grown folks are studying it.

Perhaps the most delightful stage in children is that from the age of two to three, when they are safe from the knowledge of their own individuality and perfectly free from self-consciousness.

The babies I am going to talk of are Agnes and Tom, aged six-and-a-half and two-and-a-fortnight. They live in the depths of the country, so that Agnes sees few new faces and meets with no flattery. She has never been at a loss for companions, as her fancy has called up familiars ever since she could talk at all. She tells us sometimes about the country called "Home Italy," from which she came to live with us. She had a mother there who hit her one day, and Agnes "accidentally hit her back again." This seems to have caused a coolness, for from that day Agnes deserted her old home and her "young father, who knew nothing about horses," and came to live with us. She often tells us tales of the strange manners of Homeos and Charmos and Hopfrog, which are places near Home Italy,

and of the monks who are all married, especially one Zamros, who was Agnes' special friend.

But since the advent of Tom with his curly gold hair, and legs which go pat-pat everywhere in sister's train, Agnes has had an added charm of motherliness, and a decided increase in her love of dolls and small animals. In the old lonely days she used to be the mother of a visionary family of children who filled her little world. There was Tarey-Mary, who was Agnes' own whipping girl, and who made marks with a pencil or "punty" on mother's best books, or hid new boots, which turned up after a month at the bottom of mother's clothes-basket. Then there was Lucy, who was the companion of Agnes' serener moments, and Lazarus, who had shabby clothes and was put into new trousers whenever patterns came for father from the London tailor. There were many more, and you might hear Agnes at any time on the lawn or in the nursery struggling with the angry passions of her numerous family; but they have faded into the background now that the dolls can be wheeled in a pram like Tom's, or put in the corner and made to say "sorry bad."

Even the dolls are not always in request, for Tom is beginning to be able to join a little in the games. Agnes is fond of playing at church, and fat little brother is useful as the congregation. Agnes makes up the first lesson very nicely out of such reminiscences as "And Moses said, let the people go," but it is a little disconcerting to have to stop in the middle and remove Tom from the table to which he has clambered, as she firmly tells him "people don't stand on the table in this church."

When it is a wet day Agnes plays "mothers," and the dolls have a severe time of it; or "engines," and she and Tom dash about and have collisions. But when it is dry the little pair gather dandelions and patter off to feed the guinea-pigs or "gimpey-digs" as Tom calls them. It is to be feared that primroses and the choicest plants in mother's garden are sometimes borne off in Tom's fat fists as an offering to the pets. There are three generations of these small people who eat with their chins and say "week, week." Sooty and Blackie and Andrew and Brownie and Bruno are fat and well-liking, but poor Katy fell ill and died one day, so that Agnes wailed and could not be comforted. She stopped crying at last to go and bury it in the rain in her long-suffering garden, where the wooden ponies have funerals when three of their legs have been knocked off by Tom. Agnes soothed her grief by saying "Rock of Ages" as she buried her poor pet in the rain, and it was impossible to tell her this was profane when one reflected that our Lord had said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father." A friend asked Agnes if her favourite had died of old age. "No," she explained sorrowfully, "of young age." The next day Mrs. Guinea-pig had three babies, Harry, Isabel and Alice; they looked exactly like commas, and were a great consolation to Agnes. She is small enough to creep into their low house and put out their bran in the long trough. How eagerly she watches while black Andrew with his brown collar and the other big ones enjoy their meal, envying sorely the easy manners of the "gimpey-dig" dinner-table where Harry, Isabel and Alice are allowed to sit in the trough to eat their share with no reproofs from Blackie and Sooty.

The time when Tom is in his element is in the early morning. He wakes at about 5.30, and sleepy Mum and Farvey are an easy prey. "Blind, pull it," is his first remark, and when he has been popped into a warm dressing-gown and provided with a "lugga-bicky" as he calls a sweet or sugar biscuit, he proceeds to "buccaneer" for an hour or two. For his mother this period is one of athletic sports calculated to develop all the muscles connected with leaping. Every jug and box and chair has to be sleepily fielded out of the way before Tom is let loose, else the points of vantage, such as the mantel-shelf and the chest of drawers, would be swept at a blow. The snooze which follows is soon rudely broken, for Tom has an amazing ingenuity in devising fresh "clime-ups," as he calls them. The towel-horse has been applied as a daring escalade to the high chest of drawers, and Mum leaps from her uneasy sleep at the clinking sound of a lapis brooch following two halfpennies to the bottom of the ewer, while Tom, perched aloft on the drawers, murmurs softly as he watches the nice hard things gurgling through the water.

When tired of aiming candlesticks and candles at his recumbent parents, Tom applies "climent" (namely the aforesaid towel-horse) to the bed, and then giddily hoists it on Farvey while he tries to reach the shoes he has lodged on the bed-head, muttering "shoe, fro' it," the while. Much dragging about by the indefatigable Tom at last broke off the foot of poor "climent." Next morning we heard the fat one tumbling about on it and murmuring sadly, "Climent broke—part short;" no rebuffs however would deter this Arctic explorer, and when "climent" was banished to the dressing-room, he was discovered perched unsafely upon the slope of the clothes-basket, which he had rolled on its side and scaled with the skill of a Blondin.

The next morning, when even the basket was reft from him, Tom consoled himself by aiming bits of "lugga-bicky" at the treasured objects on the mantel-shelf, and smashing sister's picture in a glass frame by the precision of his aim. Mother's "marmles," as he calls her crystal and other necklaces, have all been put away until the destroyer shall have become a wiser if a sadder man. Their attraction was overwhelming, and when broken, they could be pursued under the bed with all the pleasures of the chase.

Agnes looks on the reckless career of Tom with the eyes of a sage. "Ah, you'll have lessons one day, Tom," she moralises, mournfully, as she reflects on the copy she hates so much, in which the o's will not look round, and the letters all turn the wrong way.

One day she bursts into the "dimet," as Tom calls the dining-room, and says despairingly to mother, "I wouldn't mind being a bird or an engine, but the life of a girl is horrid, especially lessons." However, the greatest trial is the writing. Reading involves such delights as, "One day Mamma said," "Conrad dear," and "The Raggedy Man," while history is so attractive that Agnes already talks to us at meals about Lanfranc and the white ship.

Tom shows no signs of eventual greatness, yet some of the ways in which his little mind works are very nice to watch. He likes to have a word for everything, and if he does not know a new one he makes an old one do, or invents one. The bed into which he creeps when his pink feet are cold with buccaneering he calls his "toes-house," and the bulges on the poker which he waves at mother and father as he sits on the bed he calls "hoops." Trays and rings and all round things are also hoops. "Poker, like it," he shouts. "Poker fly," and waves it, hoops and all, over the bed which is his war-path.

Tom and Agnes have been very different in their early vowel-pronunciation. For Agnes, eggs and legs were always aggs and lags. "I won't have medicine on my hind lags," she said once, on a lotion being rubbed into her shoulders; whereas to Tom, eggs and legs and beds and Teds have always been "eegs and leegs and beeds and Teeds." "Mummy beed," he always wakes up to say when 10 o'clock is near, as he plants a determined "leeg" outside the crib into which he is netted at 6.30.

Most of Tom's words end in "cotch," for some unknown reason. A picture story-book about Joseph is his most treasured possession, and he is never tired of looking at Doughfig in his coat of many colours in conversation with the patriarch Jaycotch, or the still more stirring picture of the butler and the baycotch recounting their dreams to Doughfig. One evening he sniffed a little on the landing, and then said "baycotch," foreseeing the "hampam" or sop-in-the-pan, of which he gets a share when we have eggs and bacon for tea. His sense of smell has been excellent from infancy, when he would struggle to smell the "uffs" in the garden, as he called the flowers. He already goes rides on father's bycotch, and shouts the word if he only sees a bicycle bell lying on the settle. His daily airing is taken in the mail-cotch, unless it is very wet, when he rides gleefully in the donkeya-cart.

"The destroyer," as we sometimes call him, is a very warm-hearted little man, and much can be done with him by simple corner-punishments. He wails for some time in retirement, and then says tentatively, "Solly bad," hoping to come out, and truly conscious that it was not right to pour his Mellin gaily over the breakfast-table, or to illustrate the remark of "Wine-glass, fro' it." One day Agnes tumbled and howled in a room hard by. Tom thought Agnes had been naughty, and said appealingly, "Sister—corner—c'ying—solly bad." But though a devoted brother at heart Tom is not sentimental, and will sturdily punch sister if she climbs into the lap of "mya mummy," as he calls his mother. He is as yet unacquainted with fear, and when hardly one and a half years old he staggered off down the drive on his own account. Some large cows were passing, and father watched ready to help Tom's hasty retreat. So far from fleeing before the enemy, Tom picked up a stone and threw it at them, shouting "Shoo." In the warm summer days a hue and cry was raised for the vanished treasure, and he was discovered by mother outside the gate, sitting comfortably in a wet ditch, and bathing his gold head with rare ecstasy.

Tom's vicarious penitence reminds me of Agnes's early grasp of Plato's ideal theory. Father had been hearing her say her prayers, and after blessing many friends, he asked her if she wished anything else blessed. "Ve chairs," she suggested. "Why, what good could a blessing do to them?" said father. "Make vem into arm-chairs," said Agnes deeply.

Certainly Mr. Norman Gale is right when he sings—

> "The gods who toss their bounties down
> To willing laps
> Neither forgot the violet's scent,
> Nor planets in the firmament
> The outposts of a mystery!
> They gave to man the undefiled
> Bright rivulets and waters wild;
> They wrought at goodly gifts above,
> And, for the pinnacle of love,
> They fashioned him a little child."

I hope that Mr. Editor will have his wish and receive many stories about other children as wise and as foolish as Tom and Agnes. If the babies themselves never know that they are listened to they will grow up as naturally as Harry, Isabel, and Alice in the bran-trough, and have the blessing which will make them grow into the arm-chairs they were meant to be.

DOCTOR ANDRÉ

By LADY MARGARET MAJENDIE.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE heat and oppression of the air were appalling. Dr. André went to one of the great public baths and refreshed himself with abundant hot water. He breakfasted at a *café*, to-day food would have to serve instead of rest. It was not yet ten o'clock when he got to the hospital.

The great bare wards were throbbing with heat in spite of ice and fresh sprinkled vinegar. The night-nurses had just gone off duty, and fresh reposed sisters had taken their places, but their faces were very grave and there was a total absence of the usual bright chatter.

It was terrible, so many had died in the night. One patient, a young man in the prime of life had seemed better the day before, but during the awful heat of the night the fever returned with violence, and at daybreak they closed his eyes.

The house-physician pronounced three more nurses to be unfit for duty, broken down, and telegraphed to Orléans for more help.

As Dr. André went his rounds through the wards his heart sank more and more.

About two o'clock a little sister with a kind face came up to him and said quickly, "You are wanted in No. 6 private ward, *docteur!* Someone you know has been brought in, and has asked for you!"

André followed her with a cold misgiving at his heart.

No. 6 was a little single bed ward, with the luxury of a very large window and shutters. All superfluous furniture and draperies had been stored away when the old hospital had been turned over to the infectious cases.

André's misgiving was only too fully justified when he saw the occupant of the bed. His faithful friend, the *pasteur*.

"You here!" he exclaimed, trying to hide his consternation as he took both his hands. "You here, my friend? Oh, why did you not send to me before?"

"I am lucky to find this room," said Father Nicholas painfully. "It is all very good. They will take care of me, and I shall see you sometimes."

"And now you must not talk," said André assuming his professional manner. "You must be very quiet. You will try to be so—Father, will you not? it is your best chance."

Turning to the sister he gave all the necessary instructions both for remedy and alleviation. He could not stay long with his old friend, not so long as he fain would have done, for this day proved the most fatal of the whole epidemic at the hospital. Hour after hour passed in a hand-to-hand struggle with Death, doctors and nurses alike, and still Death won the battle. In the evening the workers looked at each other with a kind of despair.

The last thing, late at night, Dr. André looked in once more on his friend. The night-nurse had come in bringing fresh energies and resources with her. Father Nicholas was wandering in the misty world of delirium, the temperature was fearfully high, the power of swallowing low.

André could not leave the hospital; he lay down for a few hours' sleep on the house-doctor's bed towards morning, but he was oppressed by breathlessness and a weary pain in his arm and shoulder. Dr. Rougemont came in once; he looked at him keenly but said nothing; he brought him an armful of pillows and a cup of coffee tasting strangely of brandy, after which he slept a deep exhausted sleep for three hours. He was glad not to have had to go home. It would seem so empty and silent. The tears rose to his eyes as he suddenly remembered that all the little kindly services hitherto done for him so lovingly by little Fifine were at an end now. He should never again see the little wild waif with her gleaming black eyes and tangled elf-locks.

But this was no time to give way. He was up and exchanging duty with Rougemont by five o'clock. The night had been one of suffocating heat. In the wards the fatal mortality continued. Father Nicholas was terribly ill. When the morning broke, bringing not a breath of air, not a whiff of early freshness, the night-nurse went off duty with tears in her eyes; she looked at her gentle patient, who had borne the cruel sufferings of the night without one complaint, who lay now with sunken livid features and blackened lips. She said a low farewell under her breath, she felt that she should never see him alive again.

Dr. André looked in, and did what he could for him, trying fresh remedies, new efforts to relieve the painful restlessness which oppressed him.

When his resources were exhausted André stood beside him, and taking up a little worn Bible by the bedside he began to read the fourteenth chapter of St. John. The familiar words seemed to penetrate the dull sense of pain.

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but——"

The young man's voice faltered, and for a moment failed. The tribulation was there, everywhere with them.

It might have been mechanical, but it came with a strange power to comfort and sustain—when the sick man, this prostrate servant of God, took up the words. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

He grew more still after that, the restless hands clasped each other, some all-absorbing habit of thought gathered the wandering senses into the familiar attitude of prayer.

That afternoon Dr. André looked in on Sœur Eustacie and her heavy charge of Gaston's orphan children. He found her with other children of the neighbourhood brought in to be under her care, some in the very height of the fever. It was evident that she could not go on without help.

André bethought himself of Nanon, and rushed off to his own house.

Nanon was seated by the table and her flower-making apparatus was spread before her, but she was doing nothing. "I cannot see to work," she said, when André greeted her hurriedly, and he saw that her eyes were weak and inflamed with crying; she could not even thread her needle. She accepted his proposal that she should aid Sœur Eustacie with the first animation she had shown since they had taken all that was left of her little Fifine away, and in a few minutes she had established herself at the house of Gaston's orphan children to the great relief of the tired sister.

About six o'clock that evening the heat increased to a degree never before experienced in Paris.

Dr. André coming out of the house of one of his patients reeled against a lamp-post, and stood leaning upon it for a few moments to recover breath.

While he was doing so, there came a sudden blast of hot wind and a whirl of thick foul dust, but a sound followed which brought the light of hope once more into the young man's eyes, a deep distant roll of thunder.

He looked up and bared his head. "Thank God the storm is coming," he uttered aloud.

A thin haggard-looking man was slouching by. He looked up with sunken eyes. "It is coming, yes, but oh, *mon dieu*, too late."

"Jean Paul! your wife? I saw her this morning."

"They have taken her to the mortuary, and I wish I were lying by her side in the common grave."

"Who knows?" said Dr. André. "That may come any moment, any day! My friend"—and he put his hand on the man's thin shoulder—"be brave and say your prayers, they will be heard. Meanwhile what are you doing? Have you work?"

"No. I am out of work. I have been so ever since I had that rheumatic fever, *docteur*. Sophie washed and she was a fine clear starcher. There were a few francs left to bury her."

"And have you left your house? Where do you sleep to-night?"

"In the street, *docteur!* What does it matter? I have no one to mind. Sophie and I come from the Loire," he brushed his sleeve across his eyes.

"Come with me, Jean Paul," said Dr. André gently. "I have a place for you."

He took the man to the *pasteur's* house. Old Amélie was seated by the kitchen stove idle, an unwonted sight.

"Amélie, *ma bonne*," said the young man cheerfully, "here is work for you. I have brought you this friend of mine, Monsieur Jean Paul. His wife died today and he is convalescent from rheumatic fever. Feed him well and give him a bed, and listen, Amélie, write to-night to the Hospice for me to say he is coming there, and see him off after the funeral. Here is money;" he put a twenty-franc piece into her hand.

"Ha! listen! that is good."

Another clap of thunder rolled out; the storm was drawing nearer.

Amélie accepted his orders, she was used to such duties. She placed a chair for Jean Paul, who seated himself apathetically. Dr. André knew that he had left the poor man in good hands, and he hurried away.

As he went along the streets a flash of lightning half-blinded him and the crash of thunder grew loud. The heat was appalling. André wiped the drops from his brow as he reached the hospital steps and went up them.

"The storm is upon us, Benoit," he said to the porter brightly. "This will bring the great change!"

"It is time," said the man gruffly. "You have not heard the last news, monsieur."

"No! what?" cried André.

"Dr. Rougemont is down."

"God help us!" said the young doctor.

It was too true. Rougemont, the house-doctor, had succumbed, a brave skilful man, cool and long-headed, invaluable at such a crisis. He had been removed to a private ward.

André rushed to his work, it would be doubled now.

Two of the sisters were sitting huddled up in the darkest corner of the first ward. As André came in a little shriek came from the beds, a brilliant flash of lightning blazed through the long room, and the thunder cracked overhead like a roar of artillery.

"This will do all the good in the world," he said brightly. But the women were frightened and unnerved. He could only go through them laughing at their fears, telling them that everything would be right now.

By the time he had gone down the wards the lightning never ceased for a second and the thunder cracked and rolled in a splendid uproar of sound. There came a moment's pause while the terrified women held their breath, followed by a great sheet of forked flame glaring on the white walls, the thunder-clap appalling. It seemed as if walls and chimneys must have been struck, as if the whole great building must be crashing down, and this last clamour loosed the flood-gates of heaven, and the rain came down in a straight downpour, so that the whole air was full of the gurgle and splash of abundant rush of water.

"Thank God! thank God!" cried the young doctor as he opened the door of the *pasteur's* room.

The atmosphere was now like that of a hot-house, the drops poured from his brow.

The sister was seated by her patient, and tired out was quietly dozing.

At the first glance at the *pasteur* André shook her awake.

"Quick! quick! brandy!"

It was collapse, and for half-an-hour it seemed like death itself, the pulse was gone, the action of the heart imperceptible.

In vain they threw open window and door, the atmosphere was that of hot steam. André cast off coat and waistcoat, his shirt was wet through and through. He fought on with every device known to science. At last the pulse became better, there was improvement. Then André became aware that there was a change in the atmosphere, a freshness at last. The thunder was rolling away in the distance, the rain pouring steadily down in one continuous rush.

All through that awful night André and the other doctors never rested for one moment. He was sent for from one patient to another, and all the time they were fighting the deadliest foe of life, the collapse of exhaustion.

Hour after hour, time after time, the night porters were summoned into the wards and went silently out with their solemn burdens to the mortuary. But the wholesome rain poured on.

At six o'clock in the morning, the day-nurses came in, fresh from sleep, covering up the patients as they opened the windows wide and let in a rush of fresh damp air, by contrast it felt actually cold.

When they reached Father Nicholas' room Dr. André was just rising from his knees with his stethoscope in his hand.

"It is all right, sister," he said. "He is saved."

"Ah, thank God, thank God!" said the kind little sister. "There is hope all through the wards this morning. Everyone that is left is better."

"Rougemont? I must go to him."

"No, no! Dr. Vallet is there, the temperature is down, he will do."

"That is well," said the young man dreamily. "Then may I rest now?"

The sister took him into the next single ward; it was empty. He reeled slightly, caught at her outstretched hand, and fell down in a dead faint.

The kind little nurse got him safely into bed, and when she had brought him round, insisted on his swallowing a cup of broth before she allowed him to fall into the heavy sleep of absolute exhaustion.

(*To be continued.*)

A FLOWER SERMON.

THE ROSE.

By ALFRED H. MILES.

WHERE lilies light and alders shade
The garden's golden scene,
There moved amid the flowers a maid,
As she might be their queen;
And to adorn her bosom fair
She pluck'd a rose and placed it there.

A smile upon her face confest
The perfume mounting high;
But when a thorn abused her breast
It melted in a sigh:
And ever thus combin'd appear
The rose, the thorn, the smile, the tear.

But beauty withers in an hour.
The rose, the thorn decay;
The maiden sought a fairer flower
That fadeth not away;
And evermore her heart shall bear.
The Rose of Sharon blooming there.

THE PRIZE DESIGN.

CHAPTER I.

I WAS such a plain girl!

Children would laugh at me as I passed by them, and even older people shrank from me, so brown was I of countenance and so ill-favoured.

I lived in a garret underneath the roof of a tall house, and there I used to work at my needle for twopence an hour.

No respectable person ever passed down the dark, narrow street in which the tall house was situated. It was a street of bad repute —"horribly hideous," I have heard it called. But I lived in the garret, far above the noise and dust and drunken brawls below, and I tried to be contented with my lot. If sadness would sometimes take me unawares, I looked for consolation at the strip of sky above me, or at the little trailing creeper which had taken root on an old brick under the eaves, and which nodded its green head at me as I worked.

Ugly as I was myself, I had a passionate love for the beautiful. The sight of a golden-headed child playing in the street below, the faint light of the stars at evening, the stray blossoms that occasionally crossed my path, would stir my heart and bring tears of admiration to my eyes.

Once and once only had I seen the green fields and heard the birds sing and looked upon the softly opening flowers. It was on the occasion of a feast given by some benevolent soul for the benefit of poor workers. That day I had walked as one in a dream. Everything had appeared to me so beautiful and so unreal.

Most of the party had ignored my presence, but one, kinder than the others, had asked me to join in the fun and merriment. But I had thanked her as best I could, and had refused.

I could not dance and shout and jest. I wanted to look about me and to dream.

The darting rays of sunlight, the silvery streams which intersected the meadows, the tall flowers waving their petals in the breeze, provided me with sufficient happiness, and I drank in the beauty just as the bee drinks honey from the roses.

I was never asked again to that annual treat; I was found to be unsociable, ungrateful, morose even. But I retained pleasant memories of the outing.

Over my unbleached linen, over the long interminable seams, all through the long cold nights I drew upon my imagination and passed over again that wonderful day, spent with the bright-hued flowers and butterflies.

My garret was very hot in summer, but in winter all the cold winds seemed to pierce it and to freeze the blood in my veins. I also suffered terribly from want of nourishment.

But one consolation I had through all my troubles. I possessed a talent—a genius some might have called it—which had been born in me and flourished, although it had never been watched over nor encouraged in its growth. I was an artist.

My father before me had also been one, but the world had never known him. He had died of starvation and a broken heart. Some say that one of his paintings had been picked up by a dealer and sold as an "old master." This might have been so; but it matters little now. He died leaving my mother penniless, and I, their only child, survived them, having inherited nothing but my father's talent.

With such money as I could spare I bought paints and brushes and canvas. Sometimes I would go without food for a whole day; sometimes for a week I would live only on bread and water so as to satisfy my craving after art.

No one had ever seen my works but the rats and spiders in the garret, for as I finished them one after another, I stowed them away in a corner with their backs to the light. I was ashamed of my creations, and feared the ridicule of my fellow-workers who visited me sometimes. I knew they would have hated my pretentiousness had they but known that I aspired to something higher than sewing, gathering and joining.

About this time there was a competition amongst women for the painting of a screen. The one who sent in the best design was to have a handsome prize awarded her, and it was whispered that not only money, but also a little reputation, would attend her success.

My frock, a recent gift, from a patron of my father's, was neat and in modern taste, and I would set in the cane chair and ponder over ways and means. I don't know how I dared, but I said to myself, "I also will compete for this prize; it is open to everyone." I said nothing to my confederates about it; but that night and the following day I went without food so as to buy the materials necessary for my work.

I chose for my subject a deep red geranium blossom, which flourished at my window-sill, and framed it with the creeper, whose friendly leaves had ever made my outlook fair to gaze upon.

I am afraid that in those days I worked but poorly with my needle. My heart and brain were on fire, and oftentimes I would throw aside the work that bought me bread and go to my canvas to deepen some shade or bring into relief some shining blossom. When the work was completed, I looked at it critically. No doubt it was very faulty, but still it seemed to me that it had some merit. I wrote down my name and address and fixed it in the corner; then I wrapped up the picture carefully, and, having paid all my savings for an omnibus fare, soon arrived at the great building where many other attempts were awaiting judgment. I gave in my picture to the porter, and returned to my garret gladdened and with a sunny heart. I kissed the red geranium and the shining little creeper, and then sat down to my hunch of bread with as much appetite as if it had been a Christmas cake.

As the day for the judgment arrived, however, my happiness in a measure deserted me, and I could eat nothing for the hope and fear that possessed me.

"If I could only prove that I am not altogether worthless," I kept saying to myself, "then could I be happy!"

You see I was vain in a manner with nothing to be vain about. The everlasting neglect and censure of those around me had rendered me over-sensitive. I knew I could not help being plain, but it hurt me so much when people said that I was foolish! And meanwhile I neglected my sewing. I hemmed

"WHEN THE WORK WAS FINISHED I LOOKED AT IT CRITICALLY."

where I should have gathered, and I cut the garments in an odd and ill-shaped manner.

"If only," I would murmur sadly to myself, "I could give up this work which tires my eyes and heart and could go into the fields and paint the beautiful things which God has created! If only I could sometimes leave this room, which is so dark, and feel that I was free, I would wish for nothing more—unless it were a friend!" Even as I framed this last idea I trembled, and a tear rolled down my cheeks. The word "friend" was one to conjure with, because, though I was poor and ugly, I knew that I was capable of sympathy, and I knew that I could love. But a friend I had never possessed, neither had I ever heard kind words nor felt caresses. I was forgotten by the world; and up in my dusky garret I sat day in and day out, straining my eyes for twopence an hour, unwanted, unsought-for, and alone.

The great day which was to decide my fate arrived. The chosen design was to be placed on a pedestal in a chamber to be seen by all, and the name of the winner to be publicly proclaimed.

I remember that day.

I arrived at the great room, which was crowded with people. My head reeled, my eyes were blinded for a moment, and I almost fainted. Above the heads of the crowds the prize design hung aloft.

It was not mine! It was a rich and gaudy work—a cluster of brilliant peonies, twined with a ribbon round them, and a dancing-girl holding her hands up gleefully in the centre, a piece of colouring beside which my humble creeper and geranium would have faded into dullest insignificance.

My heart was sick, and I felt so feeble that I could scarcely totter homewards. The one hope which had brightened up my path was gone!

I left the building hastily, and in my bewilderment brushed by two men who were standing at the doorway. Dejected and down-trodden as I was, my senses were acute, and I looked up and tried to frame an apology for my brusqueness. But my tongue cleaved to my mouth, and I could not utter a syllable.

I think these men were two of the judges, for they looked like artists. One was young, with long blonde hair and a velvet jacket, the other was older and more simple in appearance.

"What a queer creature!" said the young one as I passed. "Whenever I see anything so dismal and ill-favoured my artistic susceptibilities are offended."

"Hush!" said the other softly. "She may hear, and it would hurt her."

I looked back and gave one glance of thanks to the man who had taken my part, then hurried swiftly onwards.

When I reached my garret the sun was set, and there was a clammy heat in the apartment which almost dazed my senses. My head ached. I was hungry; but there was only a crust of bread and a crook of water on the table. The floor was strewn with unfinished bits of needlework which would have to be completed ere I slept.

I took up the bread and began to eat it in an absent sort of way, when I perceived a note lying on my table. It was from Susan Holt, one of my fellow-workers.

"Look out"—it ran—"they have been running down your work up at the firm. They say the things that you have turned out lately are disgraceful, and you're going to get the sack. Don't lose heart though, for there's plenty of other work open besides turning out shirts at twopence an hour. They want a governess up at the Clownes' at Bloomsbury. Why don't you try for it?"

I did not sleep all that night. The bitter tears rolled down my cheeks unceasingly. I was a failure! Even the common needlework, in which other girls excelled, was to me irksome and difficult. Perhaps, after all, those unkind things which they had said of me were true, and I was dull and foolish.

The next morning I went out of the darksome purlieus where my home was situated in search of Mrs. Clowne's mansion. Mrs. Clowne was the wife of a rich merchant, but she had an evil reputation at the firm. She was a parvenu, and it was said that she treated all inferiors with harshness, if not cruelty.

Still this did not deter me. "Better," I said to myself, "to endure her rebuffs than die of starvation in a garret. Better to earn my bread by work which gives me activity than to sit for long hours, straining my eyes over that for which I have neither skill nor love."

I arrived at the Clownes' home tired and bewildered. The thought of failure no longer daunted me. I knew the sensation of disappointment too well to be ever again crushed by it; but still my heart misgave me as I gazed at the building stretched before me.

It was a vast stucco mansion which shone in the sun's rays with colours that almost blinded one. The flowers before the windows were enclosed in boxes of hideous hue and form, the very windows themselves were curiously ugly, many of the panes being coloured or filled in with imitation stained glass. The garden was arranged in hearts and crosses on one side and squares on the other. I suppose it was what people call a landscape garden, making up in artificiality what it lacked in grace. Nothing was restful in the place, nothing harmonious, and this giant structure, with all its hideous glare, rejoiced in the truly ludicrous name of "Wee Nestie."

I knocked at the door, and a man in bright red livery attended my summons. Having heard my mission, he scanned me from head to foot derisively, and motioned me with a splendid wave of his hand into the sitting-room.

Madame was sitting in a corner doing poker work. She was dressed in gosling green, and her hair, which was the yellowest I have ever seen, was arranged in a high pyramid surmounted by a huge tortoise-shell dagger.

She looked up at me and distinctly shuddered as I approached. Then she asked me my business.

I told it to her humbly enough. I had come to offer myself for the vacant post of governess to her children, I said, and I trusted she would find me worthy.

"Oh, dear, no," she cried, in a shrill key. "It is quite impossible. Your appearance is so distinctly against you. You would frighten my pretty ones." And she laughed. It seemed to amuse her to wound me just as it amuses a cat to torture a mouse. And then the thought of my loneliness arose in my mind, and I spoke to her out of the sorrow of my heart. I think I spoke with eloquence. I told her of my life—my very thoughts. I told her that the pallor of my face was due to worry and starvation, and that it would pass away in time. I told her with all the fulness of my heart how much I loved children, and how firm an idea I had of duty and obedience. I begged her not to judge my mind by my face, and I added further that I was willing to work for her morning and night and ask nothing in return but board and lodging.

I suppose the woe in my words, or more probably the gratuitous offer of my services, made her change her mind towards me, for a moment later she said that "she didn't mind giving me a trial, and that I could begin work on the morrow. My services," she added, "though not altogether light, would be found on the whole most agreeable, for although the boy Jim was perhaps a little troublesome, the girls and the baby were simply angels."

Whereat I took my leave.

(*To be continued.*)

HEALTHY AND HAPPY IN JULY.

By W. GORDON STABLES, M.D., C.M., R.N. ("MEDICUS").

"Happiness depends, as nature shows,
Less on exterior things than men suppose."

As I sit down to write, the old mill bell chimes the hour of six. Rather early to be up and at work is it not, some may say? I think not, and although townspeople will not be stirring yet for hours, we country folks like to catch the first freshness of the early morn. Besides, I have to give girls a word or two of good advice concerning health in July.

Really, if one has gone to bed at a reasonable time, and is refreshed by a good night's sleep, one cannot rise too early in the sweet summer-time, and the cold bath just sets one up for the day.

Last night—there is no harm in my telling you—a youngster of mine, two of them in fact, made a strong, sturdy, good resolution to be out on the lawn this morning as early as the starlings, to wash their faces in the May dew. The farewell words of one were—

"You must wake and call me early,
Call me early, daddy dear."

Well, so I have. They are not down yet, however. One may call spirits from the vasty deep, you know; but the bother is to get them to come when they are called. Yet really, on such a delightful morning as this, it is a pleasure to be awake and out among the birds, the tender leaves and the flowers. Yesterday was a wild and stormy day indeed, and I didn't thank the "howthering" wind for strewing my paths with bunches of my choicest apple bloom. But to-day there is hardly breeze enough to lift a leaf on the sycamores, the sun has changed the laurels into silver, and every drop of dew on my orchard grass here, among which the dogs are gambolling so gaily, is a glittering diamond.

The pink and white blossom on the apple-trees, and the banks of snowy flowers on the cherry really does one good to look at, yes, and makes one better too, for they remind one that God is love.

So do the birds all around me. They positively seem almost hysterical with the joy they are trying to express in song.

Cock-robin—my special cock-robin—has alighted on my arm. He wants me to do a little gardening that he may have worms, for he has four gaping children to feed. "So have I," I tell him. Pussy has pulled the greater part of the dear bird's tail out.

"It might have been worse," he says, "and the tail will grow again."

I rake the flower-border for a little while, the bird picks up the early worms—a whole bill full of them—and off he flies as happy as happy can be.

Early morning is the best time for study, in summer, at all events. You may get through as much work then in one hour, as you can in two at any other time, and it is more easily retained by the memory.

But now I must imagine it is the delightful month of July. The leaves may have lost their first tender tints, but they are still beautiful, and July is a month of flowers, so that it is really a pity not to be out-of-doors all day long.

Fresh air does one so much good. It is one of the steps of the ladder that leads to health. Staying in a room with the window open is not half sufficient for you; for the summer air should be all around you that your lungs may revel in it.

Something to Do.

If you have a plot of garden ground which you do not plant with flowers or something useful, weeds will assuredly spring up there. It is precisely the same with girls' minds. If they have no useful fad or fancy, or no work in which they take an interest, nature, which abhors a vacuum, will speedily sow the seeds of frivolity and vanity therein, and these will grow apace to the utter exclusion of everything that is good and honourable. I hate to preach, but I keep my eyes open, and I cannot help seeing that as the world seems to wax more wealthy, young ladies seem to care for nothing saving external decoration, button-holes and the bike, so that the mind is a mere chaotic heap of weeds. Much as I love and recommend cycling, it cannot be said that it is at all times a blessing, and girls that are never happy save when gadding about on wheels, will never do much good in the world, for evil soon creeps into an empty mind. And we should not forget that evil thrives better than good in the human soul. Weeds grow anywhere and need no cultivation. Why? The answer is, because they are indigenous to the soil, while the flowers are only foreigners. In the same way sin is indigenous, and the virtues, like flowers, have to be cultivated. Now, although I hope for August to write a paper—up to date—upon healthful employments for growing girls, I shall say nothing to-day on the subject, except this: no fad or fancy is of any good for mind or body that one does not take a real and wholesome interest in.

Idleness and Health.

No girl can enjoy good health, bounding happy health, who is idle. Mind and body walk arm-in-arm through life, and don't you forget it. If anything ails either, the other has got to lag and limp also.

There is a very expressive word which we often hear in Scotland, namely, "dwining." It is usually applied to girls in their teens, who are in a rather doubtful state of health, though not necessarily consumptive.

"I'm sadly concerned aboot my bit lassie," a farmer's wife told me one day."

"What is the matter?" I inquired.

"She's just dwining, sir; an' we're gie'n her cod liver oil."

"Cod liver fiddlesticks!" I couldn't help exclaiming. "I'll have a look at the bit lassie."

She was pale, big-eyed and languid, and rather thin.

"Does she do any work?"

"Oh, no, sir—we're weel aff. We can affoord to keep her idle at wir ain (our own) fireside. She does naething a' day but read, read, read."

"Well," I said, "I shall alter all that."

"And cure her, sir? Cure oor Shusie?"

"I'll cure Shusie most assuredly, if you'll do all I tell you!"

This happened over a year ago. I went home to Scotland not long since and saw Shusie. A healthier, happier-looking lassie you would not find in three parishes.

But Shusie is no longer idle. She has a cow of her own, besides a pony. She helps her mammy in making butter and cheese, and she is, moreover, a bee-farmer on a small scale.

Her mother said, "God bless *you*, sir. We did a' ye bade us. We flang the cod-liver oil into the midden, and just gied (gave) Shusie a stake in life, and look at her noo. The warst thing in a' the world—as ye said, sir—is idleness."

Well, I don't know that Shusie's mother's blessing weighs much, but I'd rather be blessed than banned any day. And really it would do one-half the idle dwining lassies good to be drummed off to Klondyke.

Work and Rest.

Work and rest should come alternately, for so Nature hath ordained that they should, but mind, if there be no work of a kind that interests beforehand, no actual rest can follow. Rest should be of a pleasant or recreative kind, such as cycling if the work done has exercised the brain, and entailed much thought and study; if it has been physical, then a rest on the sofa while you turn over the leaves of the good old "G. O. P.," or the pages of the Story Supplement is the right thing.

Cheerfulness.

Well, I was going to say a good deal about this, and argue the question as to whether it can be cultivated or not. But I have only space here to hint that, to a great extent, cheerfulness *is* a plant which is capable of cultivation.

But it depends very much on the state of the system. If the liver or digestive organs are out of order a girl cannot be cheerful though she may pretend to be. Neither can she, if weariness and languor point to a heart that is temporarily feeble. Nor if the nerves are unstrung, or below par. But as cheerfulness has a wonderful effect for good upon the general health we ought to make a strong point of never nursing worries, especially wee ones. These, like mosquitoes, are blood-suckers, and whenever they come buzzing round one's thoughts, the plan is to read or play or work, or do anything in reason that shall give the mind a better colour.

Sleep, in Summer-Time.

You do not need so much as in winter, and you will be better and healthier, by far and away, if you adopt this plan: rise early, dine only in the middle of the day, say 1.30, and have a rest immediately after for a whole hour. Sleep then if you can, at all events, lie prone, and if you can't doze, read. Take two cups of good tea at four or five, not later, and do not eat much supper, though it is not good to go to bed with an empty stomach.

There is no excuse for not keeping the windows open in July. One hour's sleep in fresh air is better than two in a room laden with the poison, of that which has been breathed over and over again.

No heavy bed-clothing in July, please; no feather-beds, but a feather-pillow with the head rather high but easy. An hour before midnight is better than two in early morning, because if you go to bed when just dreamily tired, your slumbers will refresh you. Moreover they will be sounder because you have greater silence around you. No really good sleep is obtained where there are intermittent noises.

The Secret of Fruit-Eating.

For health's sake, I mean. And the secret is a simple one. I should premise that preserved fruits and jams are good if put up by respectable firms and not adulterated with gelatine. A too thick and clammy jam denotes the presence of this addition. Girls cannot learn too young the fact that government does not make any attempt to prevent the poisoning of babies by soothing powders or children by noxious jams and sweets. I should send the directors of dishonest firms, and quacks generally, to a penal settlement or some group of cannibal islands. But the sole object of those in authority is to make up a heavy Privy Purse. They are as bad as I. Lettsom the quack.

> "When patients come to I,
> I physic, bleeds and sweats 'em,
> And if they choose to die
> What's that to I—
> I lets 'em."

Well, but about the secret; eat then only the fruits that are in season; eat only fresh fruit; eat only ripe fruit, and eat fruits that are grown at home in preference to foreign. But many of the latter are fairly good. I could write a very long par for instance, on the banana, the lemon or the orange.

Cooling Drinks.

Fruit syrups are really so much adulterated as a rule that I do not care to recommend them. Plain, non-effervescing fruit drinks, made at home are far better. Expensive lemonades or soda waters are seldom worth the price we pay for them. They are often mawkish and unwholesome, and if one happens to be tired and thirsty with the summer's heat, the juice of a lemon in sweetened water is far better. And better still is a cup of good tea *iced* but acidulated with lemon. Sugar to taste. But it must be sipped slowly to be of much value.

A handful of fine, fresh, medium oatmeal in a jugful of sweetened water with the juice of lemon is beyond all praise as a summer beverage. For it cools and strengthens at the same time.

The Summer's Sun.

If you want to be well in July, you must not look upon old Sol as your enemy. He is your greatest friend, and the more of his rays you absorb the stronger will you be. Never mind if you are a bit brown. I like to see sun-browning with health's pinky show shining through it on the cheeks. So do most men. But such girls are really more cheerful and happier. And more sensible too I think, that is if I may judge from those who visit my caravan in summer, anywhere 'twixt Bournemouth and Inverness. By "sensible" I do not mean grave, but witty and brilliant without flippancy. Therefore I say court the sunshine when it is not really blazing hot.

Faintness.

This is a trouble not at all uncommon in summer after much fatigue. It is caused by temporary debility of the heart, and the treatment is simple but should be adopted at once. Rest in the cool and on the prone, the application of cold water to the top of the head, and smelling salts to the nostrils. Fainting is but a more severe form of faintness. It is too well known to need description. The person should be laid flat on a sofa or anywhere for that matter, with the head on a level with the body. All tightness about neck or waist should be removed, plenty of air given, and, after a minute or two, a little cold water sprinkled on the face. The smelling-salts bottle is useful of course, but should not be held too long nor too close to the nose. Burnt feathers I have no faith in.

HOW TO QUICKLY EMBROIDER CURTAINS AND HANGINGS.

I HAVE spoken in a former article on the desirability of workers producing the maximum of effect with the minimum of effort, and in this article I wish to help the reader to this end by showing how the embroidering of large surfaces may be effectively performed without enormous labour. Fig. 1 shows a portion of a curtain with its border, and we see that if we analyse the design it is most simple in its *motifs*, but that the reader may have no difficulty in carrying out the design I give in A, B and C details drawn on a large scale. The first business is to divide up your material into squares placed diagonally, for it is this spacing that forms the basis of the design. Eight to nine-inch squares would be about the size. Draw out one side by spacing it out as I have shown in A, and having traced it on tracing paper you can, by folding the paper into four, complete the square. You then prick it over to make a pounce of it, and use crushed charcoal in fine muslin if the material is light, or chalk if it is dark to get the design transferred on to the textile to be embroidered, as the powder will pass through the pricked holes; then go over with Chinese white or Indian ink very diluted to fix the design on to the material. It might be well in order to get the lines straight to rub chalk or charcoal on a piece of string and "snap" this on to the textile as carpenters do on wood they are cutting. I should embroider these "feathered" lines in some darker colour than the flowers in centre. If these latter were in yellow then the lines should be in a duller colour, like yellow ochre toned with raw umber, while the "Oxford frame" forming the corners of the squares could be in a more emphatic colour, such as reddish brown. As for the flower centres it will be noticed that I have varied these so as to take away the mechanical look which using the same centre in all the squares would produce. The worker might draw out with compasses and a board and T square several of these centres, and by making pounces of them could put them on at will. Some of them are ornamentalised representations of flowers, while others are almost pure ornament; no direct reference to a particular plant being made. Various tones of yellow can be used, from straw colour to chrome, for I believe in getting variety within the limits you impose on yourself, and slight variations of colour will greatly add to the general effect. The border should be worked on a separate piece of material preserving the same tones of colour. The half squares are intended to be worked all over, leaving the half circles plain, and if flax is used for embroidering the effect will be very rich. The narrow borders on both sides B, which is reproduced full size, should be in darker colours than the rest of the border, say reddish brown. The butterflies (a large one is shown in C) might be varied both in colour and design.

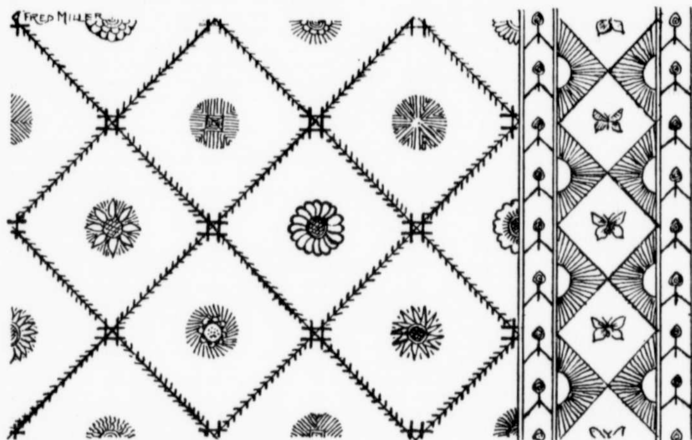
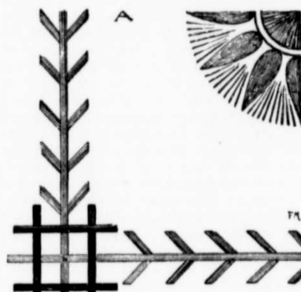
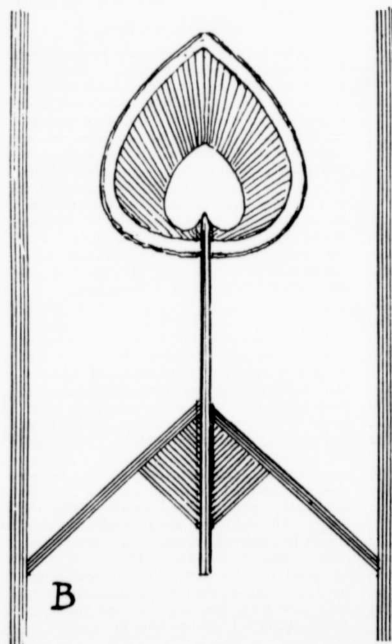
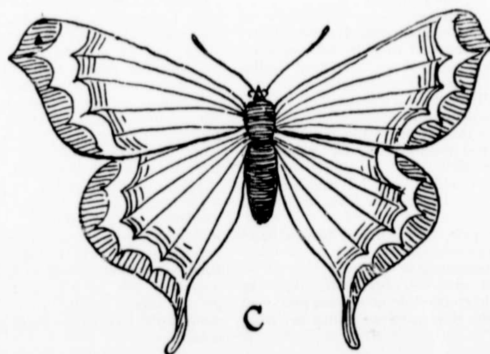


FIG. 1.—*Original design for simple treatment of embroidered curtains or hangings, with border, to be wrought in flax or crewels. For details see* A, B *and* C.

The scheme of colour I have suggested, viz., browns and yellows, would suit a brownish or dull green fabric, but of course the colour of your embroidery depends upon the colour of the textile itself. You might choose a harmony in russets and blues, or blues and greens. Here is a scheme: A in russet or grey brown, with "Oxford frames" in dark blue, while the flower centres could be in turquoise and peacock blues. Those who would prefer a simpler border could adapt that one shown in D, varying the butterflies in shape and colour. If a material such as house-flannel be used then almost any

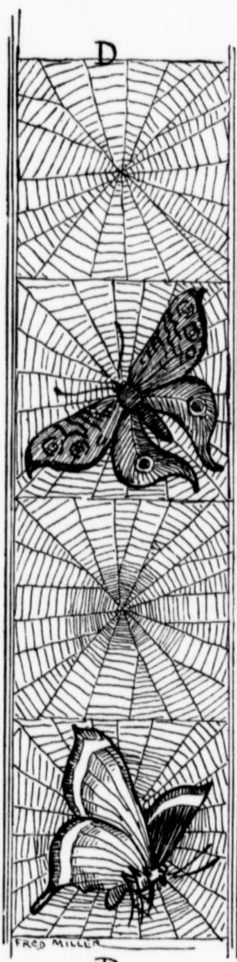






scheme of colour could be employed, greens, browns, blues, yellows or greys.

In Fig. 2 I show a "chess board" arrangement, the details of which are very



Original butterfly and spider's web border which can be used instead of that suggested in Fig. 1.

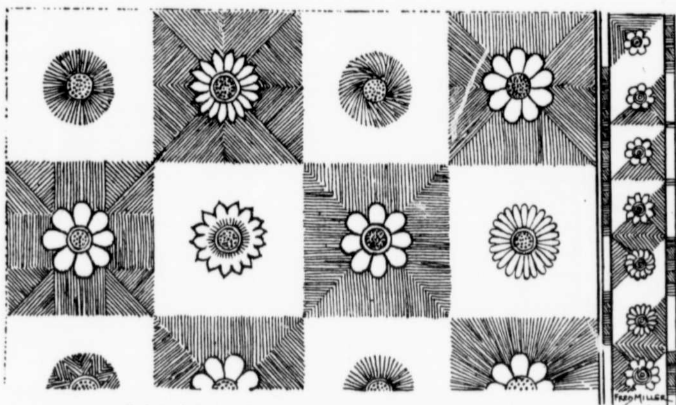


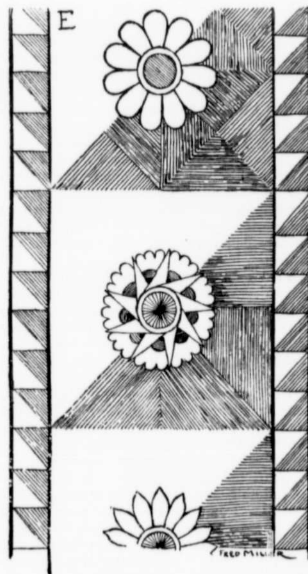
FIG. 2.—Original design for embroidered curtain or hanging, with border, to be worked in flax.

simple. The squares which are worked over should have the stitches taken in different directions, for as I have before pointed out a difference of colour is produced, though actually the same colour is employed by this plan, as the light falling on the flax or silk at various angles will make it show so many different colours. Instead of working over the whole of each alternate square you might do only half, as is shown in detail E, which is an enlargement with modifications of that given on a smaller scale in Fig. 2. The actual effect of the embroidery cannot be judged by the sketch, for a black line on white paper has neither the substance nor quality of the same wrought by the needle. Both in the filling and the border the flowers could with advantage be varied, and the colour slightly so.

If you decide to fill in only half the alternate squares with stitches then the squares should be indicated with just a line of stitches. In both designs, Figs. 1 and 2, the details are so purely geometrical that those with little skill in drawing could enlarge them to the required size, and there are none of those difficulties that beset the worker in carrying out naturalistic designs where variations of colour as well as light and shade were such a bar to many workers. Both Figs. 1 and 2 could be carried out by anyone at all skilled in the use of the needle.

Many adaptations and modifications suggested by the designs accompanying this article occur to me, but I must leave it to my readers to ring variations on these themes for themselves.

FRED MILLER.



Details of border for curtain.

VARIETIES.

IN THE LAND OF EGYPT.—A lady missionary writes from the land of the Nile. "I often ask the women if they ever pray? Most of them laugh at the idea and say, 'We pray! We do not know to pray! Only the men pray. Do you pray?' When I say 'Yes,' they say, 'Truly, truly! How wonderful! Teach us to pray.'"

APPROPRIATELY MOUNTED.

Miss De Style: "Fancy! there is Madame Paris, my milliner, in the riding class."

Mr. De Style: "Where? Oh! yes, that must be her on that high charger."

BOUND TO SUCCEED.—The secret of success is concentration. Wherever there has been a great life or a great work that has gone before. Taste everything a little, look at everything a little, but live for one thing. Anything is possible to a girl who knows her end, and makes straight for it and for it alone.

TRUTH.—Love of truth shows itself in our knowing how to find and value the good in everything.

GIVE CHEERFULLY.—Not to give cheerfully when we give to God is to take all the value out of the gift.

DO YOUR BEST.—The girl who always does her best will find a steady demand for the things that she can do.

A WHEELBARROW FOR COMPANY.

On a Bank Holiday recently a collier going up a street in Wigan met another pitman dressed in his holiday suit of black cloth, but pushing in front of him a heavy wheelbarrow.

"Hello, Jack," said the first, "what are ta doing wi' t' barrow?"

"Well," was the reply, "I've lost t' dog, and my chum Bill's away, and a chap looks such a fool walking out by hissel'."

GENTLEWOMEN WHO DEVOTE THEIR LIVES TO THE POOR.

PART IV.

EYES TO THE BLIND.

"Infinite is the help which man can yield to man."—*Carlyle.*

It is more than a quarter of a century ago that the lady I am about to introduce to you took up the special work of caring for the blind poor who live in and wander about the streets of London.

Seeing that their needs were so great and their condition so forlorn, she gave herself heart and soul to their service, and through all these long years they have been her care and her joy, and what she has been to them can only be known fully to Him who gave her the work to do, though something may be learned from the blind themselves.

She visits them in their homes; she knows the character and condition of each individual among them; she is acquainted with their needs and how best to supply them; she sympathises with their sorrows and understands how to comfort them; and in times of sickness her help and her presence cannot be overrated. She provides them with medical advice and medicine free of charge. She sends those who are weak and ailing to the seaside, and she strengthens and supplements every effort at self-help.

She has drawn towards her many girls of good position with time and talents at their disposal who, under her guidance, visit and read to the blind poor.

To enter fully into the details of this Christ-like work would fill a volume, and certainly would be out of place in a sketch like this; still, I have a plan for showing you this lady in the midst of her blind people, which will interest you greatly if I am not mistaken.

I propose to take you to one of the poorest districts in the neighbourhood of King's Cross, where, in a large hall obtained from a chapel at a small rent, this woman-worker holds a reception every Thursday evening.

She started it when she first began her work, and, with but few exceptions, it has never been put on one side for any other engagement whatever. From one end of London to the other these gatherings are known as "Mrs. Starey's Thursday evening receptions," and stand quite alone in their power of giving and receiving pleasure. Invitations are eagerly accepted, and it must be a serious thing indeed which prevents the arrival of any guest. The hours are from seven till nine, and as a rule they are very punctual. A peculiarity is that the guests never drop in one by one, but always two at the time and, no matter what the weather, they come on foot. It cannot be for the refreshments they hope to partake of, for, except the blind people who come from the workhouses and the very poor who walk long distances, not even a cup of coffee is provided, and yet they will tell you that Thursday evening is the bright spot of their week.

Many of them come very long distances, viz., from Westminster, Lambeth, Hampstead, and Edgware Road, and they would not miss coming for any consideration.

A little time ago I took some friends of my own to the reception, and as we walked up the street leading to the hall, we noticed several dark figures, each attended by a smaller one, walking rapidly in the same direction; indeed, so rapidly and unhesitatingly were they moving along, that one could scarcely believe they were deprived of sight.

Arriving at our destination, we walked up the hall, already crowded with blind people, noticing as we did so many old acquaintances whose faces we were familiar with in our streets. Mrs. Starey received us and directed us to the platform, where the "sighted" were accommodated, and went on to welcome her special guests, to whom she spoke a few kind words while guiding them to the chairs arranged in rows across the hall, which were nearly all occupied although it still wanted a quarter to seven. The hall is anything but beautiful, yet it is called by the guests "The hall of light for the blind," a name given to it by a blind Chinese boy, whom Mrs. Starey's blind people support by their free offerings in the school at Chinchew.

Each blind person is bound to have a guide—generally a child—to bring him or her to the reception. Therefore Mrs. Starey allows threepence a week to each blind person as guide-money—an item which amounts to considerably over £100 per annum.

While waiting for the clock to strike seven we chatted with some of the guests, first to a girl who told us she earned something towards her keep by type-writing; then to a man with a most intelligent face, who raised his eyes towards ours as he spoke in such a way that we thought it impossible he could be quite blind. He gave us a good deal of interesting information about the employment of the blind. He also said that, no matter what privations the blind are called upon to endure, they will cheerfully bear all to preserve their home life, such as it is; their objections to being sent to a home or institute are simply insurmountable. Ninety cases out of a hundred have become blind by accident or through illness, so that a small number only are born blind.

Many of those in the hall, he told us, had seen better days; but blindness soon reduces them; indeed, it is difficult to realise the enormous obstacles in the way of blind people earning a living.

We were specially struck with the face of a man sitting a few rows back from the platform; it had an abiding sadness on it, as if at some time or other it had been suddenly struck with some intense sorrow. I called on him a few days later in his room, which was very clean, for he had a "sighted" wife. I found him knitting stockings.

He speaks even now with reluctance of the time when he lost his sight. He said, "Just at the time when this awful sorrow fell upon me, which is some fourteen years ago, I was about as happy as a man could be. I had married the woman I loved, I had bought a little business with our savings, and we were to start in it in a day or two, when I had finished up some work for my old master; this I was doing when the accident occurred which deprived me suddenly of my sight and every hope at the same time. I dare not even now think of the despair which took hold of me body and soul, and deprived me of faith in the good God and urged me to take my life."

"How did help come?" I asked.

His answer was—

"Mrs. Starey came to us."

With a sad smile he said, "Fancy a man who was going to do such good work in the world sitting here knitting stockings! But it is the only way in which I can contribute to my keep."

This is only one of the many visits I paid to those who had interested me at the reception. I went to one house soon after the birth of a baby, and the mother attacked me at once. "Oh, ma'am, are my child's eyes right? What colour are they? Is my baby pretty?"

After answering these questions satisfactorily, I asked in my turn, "Who looks after you and your family while you are in bed?" Her response was, "Oh, Mrs. Starey provides help for me."

I was very interested to note while visiting the blind in their homes how very clever some of the blind mothers are: they will alter a dress given them by a friend, and make it to fit the child and put quite good work in it; they will do the washing and cooking almost as well as those who have their sight.

To come back to the reception: the clock was striking seven, and as the last sound died away a blind man seated himself at the piano, while another with sightless eyes and earnest face gave out in a clear, firm voice the first verse of the hymn, "Brightly beams our Father's mercy," which was sung by all in that crowded hall. As the second verse was in a like manner given out and sung, one line struck us as very pathetic and filled our eyes with tears, considering that all those singing it would never see anything again in this world; it was "Eager eyes are longing, Watching for the lights along the shore."

This done, the blind man who gave out the hymn offered a very short prayer for them all; and then came a few bright, cheery words from the hostess, who then described the "sighted" visitors on the platform who had come to help her entertain the special blind guests. She did this in such a way that they had no difficulty in picturing us in their minds. She next introduced a gentleman who was about to give a description of his travels in Switzerland. It was, I believe, very interesting, but the truth is that my every faculty was engaged in watching its effect upon the audience. While he addressed them many of the women worked, some were making lace, others doing fine needlework, their little guides merely threading the needles for them, while a few were crocheting petticoats. All paid the greatest attention to the speaker, the slightest noise being at once hushed, while all the faces were directed towards him as though they could see him. We were specially interested in three men who sat close to the platform and who were not only blind but deaf as well. One, however, was not absolutely deaf, for by the help of an ear-trumpet he now and then was able to catch a phrase or two; whenever he did so he conveyed the meaning to the other two by a peculiar method of touching their hands, and they asked each other questions in the same wonderful manner. The lecturer would have found it difficult not to be satisfied with his audience; they seemed to understand every turn. When the address was over any one among the audience was permitted to get up and say a few words, and this two or three of them did in very good English and with common sense.

At length the roll was called by our hostess with the assistance of one of the blind; and now occurred what to us was the most curious part of the proceedings.

As she called out the names, those present answered "Here"; sometimes after the call of a name there was a silence broken by her blind helper, who would look round the room and say, "She has been here but has left," or "No, he is not here this evening," or "She is coming in." His knowledge of the audience seemed to us almost uncanny.

Since we last heard him taking part in the "calling of the roll" he has "sighted the Golden Gate."

After a verse of "God save the Queen" the

evening came to a close; then followed a hearty "Good night and thank you," and each one took his or her way home accompanied by the guide. These receptions sometimes take the form of beautiful concerts or of praise and prayer meetings, for Mrs. Starey's work is definitely a Christian work. A week or two ago Mr. Jackson devoted an evening to them and told them about his Arctic expedition.

Can you not see what a break these Thursday evening receptions make in the monotony of the lives of these blind people? They give them something to think of, something to look forward to, and last, not least, they bring them into communication with the one human being who cares for and loves them.

As to Mrs. Starey, she is like a hen with her chickens. She gathers the blind around her and shields them under her wings of watchfulness and tender care, and at the same time does not pauperise them.

But to return to the reception: one more full of pathos and interest we never attended, and if any who read this sketch of Mrs. Starey and her work would like to be present at one of her evenings they would, I am sure, be heartily welcomed; they could then see for themselves that she is the mother, friend, guide and comfort of the blind poor in their homes, and it will be strange if a strong desire does not arise in the heart to help her in her labour of love.

Of course these weekly gatherings form but a fringe of the work. Every day she is occupied in visiting them, getting suitable employment for those who are capable, cutting out and making clothes for them, providing them with nurses and doctors in sickness, and in sending the weak to the seaside, in fact doing everything for them that a loving mother does for her own household.

To many she gives regular weekly allowances ranging from one shilling to ten shillings. She gives this with a full knowledge of the circumstances of each person, and finds it decidedly the best method of helping.

Some of the cases requiring weekly help are very touching. For example, one of the oldest of Mrs. Starey's blind people was cared for by a loving, good daughter. This girl married a respectable young shoemaker, who became like a real son to the blind old man. All went happily for a time in this humble home; a baby was born, and was the delight of all three, but it died, and not long after this first trouble the young husband, while busy at work, had the misfortune, by the slipping of his hand, to run the gimlet right into his eye. Intense agony of pain followed, and he was for months in the hospital, where he underwent one operation after another. At length by the aid of glasses he hoped to see well enough to do a little work; his own business was gone, but he worked for some weeks at house-painting. At length the eyes speedily lost their sight; his case is now hopeless and total blindness is before him; nor is this all: he suffers such terrible pain in the head that one fears the effect on the brain. Work is impossible. Meantime the blind father has just passed away, and the poor young wife is earning a scant pittance by making gentlemen's ties for a City house. Mrs. Starey is allowing her five shillings a week and helping in every way she can.

Another pathetic case. A blind man died quite lately leaving a wife and five children. He was an educated man and in good position until he lost his sight. Latterly his reason went by the same disease which caused his blindness. Mrs. Starey through the kindness of a friend is able to give weekly help for a year at least. I could tell you of many like cases in which Mrs. Starey proves herself friend and comforter.

She has succeeded in forming a small committee of people like Mr. and Mrs. Peter Graham and Sir Robert and Lady Romer, of whom she can seek advice and support in the many cases of difficulty and sorrow which are constantly coming before her.

Her work is not all sorrowful. There are periods of great rejoicings among her blind. For example, just before Christmas some three hundred attend a special reception which is known as "parcel night," when each person receives at her hands a large parcel containing such things as Mrs. Starey knows she or he most needs. Each parcel is made up and directed with this kind friend's own hands.

This is one of the most substantial benefits of the year. In addition to the parcels which contain clothing, groceries, or bedding, a new half-crown is presented to each person, the gift of one of Mrs. Starey's most valued helpers, Mr. Lindsay Bennett, who is, alas! now passing away.

Mrs. Starey had an intense desire that her poor blind friends should share last year in the Jubilee gladness, and a few friends of hers made this possible. Of course their eyes were closed to all the gorgeous, joyous sights enjoyed by the sighted; nevertheless they had a grand Jubilee reception. Each person received a Jubilee medal, five shillings, half a pound of tea, and a sweet-smelling nosegay.

Lord Salisbury proved himself a friend of Mrs. Starey and her work, and on June 30th he threw open Hatfield for the day to enable her to take down five hundred and seventy blind people and guides, and gave her the use of the riding-school for meals. As they all went over the house the blind felt the carving and objects of interest, and listened eagerly to the descriptions given, and thus, in their own pathetic way, they "saw" everything, and took a most intelligent interest in all. It was a happy party and a glorious day.

Mrs. Starey, who lives at 53, Hilldrop Road, N., would give full particulars of her work to anyone who desired to know more of it.

From my knowledge of Mrs. Starey and her work among the blind in their homes, I can say it is earnest and persistent, filling her time and heart, and demanding her means as well. To use her own words to me: "I do certainly give the very best of my time, strength, and all I have to my blind. They are my portion of my Lord's vineyard, and I would not change my work for any other in the world."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

Musical Jessie.—We think the little girl you mention must be unusually advanced in music for her age. We advise you to write to the Secretary of the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, 52, New Bond Street, London, W. You will receive full details from him of the local examinations held by the "Associated Board." It is a matter of proficiency rather than of age as to when musical examinations shall be taken.

White Laurel.—We should strongly advise you to undertake the study of Italian. It is the easiest of all European languages, and you would readily acquire it, especially as you seem to write English so well. The book we usually recommend is Dr. Lemmi's Italian Grammar; but we presume, as a Frenchwoman, you would prefer a grammar written in French. The reading of Dante in the original will repay any effort in the way of preliminary study.

Peggy.—The names you mention are probably fictitious, although we cannot be absolutely certain. Many thanks for your kind letter.

Meta E. G. Rankilor.—1. *Glaucus*, by Charles Kingsley, is published in a 3s. 6d. series. We believe the publisher is Macmillan.—2. We are afraid we cannot tell you of any cheap and thorough works on Rotifera, Infusoria, and Diatoms. There is *The Rotifera, or Wheel-Animalcules*, by Hudson and Gosse, with coloured plates, in six parts, 10s. 6d. each; supplement, 12s. 6d.; complete in two vols., £4 4s. Perhaps Morgan's *Animal Biology*, 8s. 6d., would suit you; or Dr. Schenk's *Manual of Bacteriology*, 10s. The illustrations of necessity make such books costly. We recommend you to write to Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., 39, Paternoster Row, E.C. (the publishers of the above), saying what you want, and asking if they have issued anything at a popular price.

Belvoir.—You will find all rules relating to the Puzzle Competitions in The Girl's Own Paper itself, and if you consult them, you will see your question answered there. We are glad you are pleased with your success. Your suggestion appears below.

OUR OPEN LETTER BOX.

We still have answers for "Rosebud," and a correspondent, Gold Dust, has kindly copied out "The Doctor's Fee," and sent it to us for her. Hilda Gosling says it is to be found in the January number of *The Sunday Magazine* for 1891. Gold Dust inquires where she can get a poem entitled "Tit for Tat."

Miss N. J. Knight informs "An Inquirer" that the recitation she seeks (describing the telling to a child of the story about George Washington and his little hatchet) is in a book called *American Humour*, one of the *Humour of the Nations* series. Miss Knight adds, for the benefit of "Vee," that there is a serio-comic version of "Old Mother Hubbard" in a book called *Cole's Fun Doctor*.

Kate wishes to know where she can procure the poem called "Kate Barlass," and the author's name.

Lennox wishes to find the poem of George Macdonald's in which occur the two following verses:—

"Alas! how easily things go wrong!
A sigh too much, or a kiss too long;
And then follows a mist, and a weeping rain,
And life is never the same again.

For things can never go badly wrong
If the heart be true, and the love be strong;
For the mist, if it come, and the weeping rain
Will be changed by the love into sunshine again."

We must say we do not recognise the two verses as belonging to the same poem. The first is familiar to us; yet we cannot light at the instant upon the volume in which it occurs.

Belvoir recommends to R. A. T. a book entitled *Stories from Dante*, by Morley Chester, published at 3s. 6d. by Fred. Warne & Co.

M. C. K. inquires the author of the lines under Landseer's picture "The Monarch of the Glen." They are from *Legends of Glenorchay*, and begin—

"When first the day-star's clear cool light,"

Cecily wishes to know the derivation of the surname "Snewin."

MISCELLANEOUS.

Inquisitive.—1. We have answered your question very recently. There is no difference of opinion on the subject of how cheese should be eaten by persons who are acquainted with the rules of etiquette and good breeding in the upper class of society. To put your knife to your mouth under any pretext whatsoever would stamp you at once as an ill-bred person. Place a small piece of cheese on a small piece of bread, and convey it to your mouth without touching the cheese. Butter is served with it, and thus it can stick to it without trouble.—2. You slope your letters so much the wrong way that it dazzles the eyes.

Fatima (Smyrna).—1. English girls do not wear natural flowers in their hats, they are always artificial.—2. The names given to dogs much depend on the breed of the animal. The following are common, Rover, Lion, Jack, Marcus, Prince, Snap, Bruno, Pelo, Jack, Queen, Rigo, Rita, Roy, Spot, Mungo, Sprig, Pero, Haco, Spey, Juno, Turk, Shot, etc.

D. L. A.—When Charles II. was crossing the channel from Brighthelmstone to Dieppe, an inquisitive mariner went up close to him, puffing tobacco in his face. Observing this, the master of the ship desired him to retire further off. Upon which the sailor replied, "A cat may look at a king." This is the origin of the popular saying.

AUNT SEIS.—The seeds have come and we will do our best to grow them. But as they have to be started in heat there is greater risk of their doing well. Ever so many friends are doing their best with them, and some of us have succeeded with the seeds sent last year. After writing your answer we found that we could not send the book as you do not supply name and proper address. Please send them and *Romanes* shall be despatched. Hearty thanks for your great kindness, which must have given you great trouble, we fear.

MARYDEAR.—*Shechinah* is a term not found in the Bible, because it was used by later Jews to express the divine presence. The word itself is late Hebrew, and means "habitation," from the Hebrew "*Shackan*," to dwell. It is first used in the *Targams* as a pariphrasis for God, with special reference to His Presence in the Tabernacle, and Solomon's Temple, though not in Zerubbabel's, for the absence of the *Shechinah* from the latter was among the points where it differed from the former. The visible symbol of it was a most brilliant light, or glory, enveloped in a cloud; so that in general only the cloud was visible, though sometimes appearing out of the cloud You must understand that the name is never applied to the cloud or the glory, but only to the Presence which is indicated by them.

EAST.—The word *typhoon* means a furious whirling storm in the Chinese seas. It is from the Chinese word *Tai-fun*, "the great wind." You have made a confusion between this word and *Tycoon*, a title meaning Great Prince, formerly given to the *Shogoon*, the second or executive ruler of Japan; the supreme sovereign being the Mikado, who had a sacred character, and was supposed to be of divine origin. Since 1809 this has been changed, and there is only one sovereign, the Mikado or emperor uniting the two dignities.

BUDLER.—Anyone who trifles with, and rates lightly the affection of men and lays herself out to obtain it, without intending to return it, is a flirt; and if she delights herself in this she would be likely to become hard-hearted and cruel. It is very difficult to draw the line, and only a conscientious girl can do it, between play and earnest; but your carefulness in this respect need not make you either dull or stupid, and you can be very friendly and kind without flirting.

M. S. D.—When a girl is "out," that is, introduced into society at eighteen, she may wear a veil—it would look absurd in a younger girl.

AMATEUR PAPER-HANGER.—We gave an article in one of our early volumes on paper-hanging. It is quite easy for you and your brother to accomplish it together. You inquire where you can procure cheap cretonne and art-muslin, but do not say where you are living. It would be easy to find what you want in town. The former is sold by all drapers.

SWEET PEA.—At Cheltenham College pupils are prepared for the London University Matriculation, and B.A. and B.Sc. for the Cambridge Higher and the Oxford A.A. The fees for day pupils are from £9 0s. to £20 5s. For the kindergarten £6 6s. to £9 0s. For board and instruction from £50 to £90. The principal of the college is Miss Beale.

LILY.—Linseed oil is used with oil paints to liquefy them to a sufficient degree, and spirits of turpentine to deaden their varnish and likewise to thin them. You must judge for yourself when and in what measure either of these mediums should be employed. Better to procure a little manual which would instruct you in the mixing of colours. A lesson could not be given in a brief answer. You could get one in any artists' materials shop. The spirits of turpentine are likewise required for cleaning the palette when you have used all you require of the oil paint upon it, and the brushes in the same. Nothing else will remove the paint from the bristles.

F. G. E.—The cheapest books which can be had on the subject of stitches in embroidery are Weldon's, which are only twopence a number, and can be had at any Berlin wool shop. A more expensive one is Beeton's *Needlework*, in which there are 600 illustrations. The great work on needlework of every description is *The Dictionary of Needlework, Lace and Textiles*, which will be found on the list of the reference libraries of the South Kensington and British Museums. It is sold in parts.

FIVE YEARS' SUBSCRIBER.—We believe that Millais' "Bubbles" is the property of Messrs. Pears (soap manufacturers), and was not exhibited in the Grosvenor Gallery in 1886. No doubt the owners would oblige you with the information you desire as to the dimensions of the canvas. It is the portrait of his grandson (James) and was painted to order as an advertisement sign. If at their office you might obtain a view of it, but if removed to their private residence you are not likely to see it.

MIMOSA.—We think your moral and mental condition, which appears to be very unsatisfactory, is in some degree to be attributable to a sickly body. As your unhealthy state seems to distress you, there is some hope of your improvement. We can only say, take your case to the foot of the Cross; confess your condition to your Heavenly Father and ask for His pardon and help. In Him you have one "stronger than yourself," and one who calls you "My child." Also thank Him for giving you such blessed work as that of nursing and comforting an invalid mother, and requiting her for her care and support. See 2 Cor. xii. 9, and let those words of promise sink deeply into your heart. So much for the spiritual malady. As for the physical, you should be treated as anæmic. Take a walk every day, go to bed early, always have a useful piece of work on hand, and some interesting book, and ask your doctor to prescribe a suitable tonic for you.

APPLE BLOSSOM.—1. We believe that titles of nobility may be purchased in Germany under certain conditions, but of what value are they? They are of no historical interest, and are what we should call "Brummagem." The surname of the person who bought one would be known not to be really noble. It would be a sad waste of money.—2. The mother-church of Canterbury, St. Martin, is kept in good repair, and is in use. It was built in the twelfth century, and the old Roman bricks are to be seen in the exterior of the walls. We do not think that we have any other church as old as this in perfect repair and in constant use.

MAY.—If you want to get a squirrel, inquire for one at a naturalist's, where birds, guinea-pigs and mice are sold. You do not name your place of residence; but here, in London, there are plenty of such places. No doubt you could obtain one at Covent Garden. We think that if you wished for a tame one you would be disappointed, for they are not entertaining in their ways, though very pretty. They only run round and round on their wheel, which we think a rather painful spectacle, as they never advance a step, and the monotony of the exercise is trying to witness.

LIMITED.—The great book on physiognomy is that by Johann Kaspar Lavater, which you could hire at any circulating library. He was a Swiss pastor and poet, and published his first great work in 1772, and his second (on the same subject) in 1781-1787. He died on Jan. 2, 1801.

WATER-LILY AND MYOSOTIS WITH SELAGINELLA.

FLOWER SPRAY FOR AUGUST.