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SISTERS THREE.

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

CHAPTER XI.

NORAH was white and subdued for the rest of the evening, but as she was a stranger to three out of the four members of the household, this unusual fact attracted little attention. It was taken for granted that, like Edna, she was exhausted by the excitement of the first music lesson, and both girls were dispatched to bed at an early hour.

Next morning Rex hied off to the Vicarage, to work for a couple of hours with the vicar, a scholarly recluse, with whom he was reading for college, and the girls were left alone to pursue their acquaintance. Conversation naturally turned on Rex, but Edna told the story of his discontent from a fresh point of view.

"Father doesn't ask him to choose a profession if he would rather go into

business, but he thinks every man is better for a college education, and that Rex is too young to decide for himself until he is twenty-one. If he works till then, he can do what he likes in the future, but Rex is so obstinate. He thinks he is a man because he is nearly eighteen, and wants to have his own way at once. It makes father so angry."

Norah pursed up her lips. She could imagine that a conflict of wills between



"I WON'T DETAIN YOU ANY LONGER," SHE SAID ICILY, AS SHE ROSE FROM HER SEAT.

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the old Squire and his son would be no trifling matter. In imagination, she saw them standing facing each other—the father ruddy, bristling, energetic—Rex straight and tall, his lips set, his eyes gleaming. They were too like each other in disposition for either to find it easy to give way.

"Boys are a great trial," she said, sighing profoundly. "We have two, you know, Raymond and Bob. They have gone back to school now, and the house is so peaceful. I am glad I wasn't born a boy. They never seem happy unless there is a disturbance going on. But both Rex and your father seem so fond of you. Can't you coax them round?"

"Oh, I daren't! Edna looked quite alarmed. Mother and I never interfere; we leave them to fight it out between themselves. But if they go on fighting for the next three years it won't be very lively, I must say!"

Edna would have been as much surprised as delighted if she had known that the conflict which had so long destroyed the peace of the household was at an end, even as she spoke. No one could fail to notice that the Squire was in an unusually radiant frame of mind at luncheon, or that he addressed his son with marked favour; but it was not until the drive home was nearly over, and the gates of Cloudsdale in view, that Rex enlightened his companion's curiosity on the point. He had cleared his throat once or twice in a curious, embarrassed manner, before he began to speak.

"Er—Norah—I've something to tell you. When we were shut up in that hole last night, I was thinking too. The governor has been very good to me, and it seems ungrateful to stand out about college, when he is so keen on it. It is only for three years. I—er—I told him this morning that I would do my best till I was twenty-one, if he would promise to let me have a free choice after that."

"Oh, Rex, did you? I am so glad. I am sure you will never regret it. You will always be glad that you did what your father wished, even if it is hard at the time. I think you are very, very good and kind, and unselfish."

"All right! You needn't gush. I hate girls who gush," said Rex, curtly, and Norah understood that she was to say no more on the subject, and collapsed into obedient silence.

It seemed a day of good resolutions, for Norah could not but notice that Hilary looked ill and was obviously in low spirits. Her greeting had been more affectionate than usual; nevertheless, the remembrance of the quarrel of a few days earlier still rankled in Norah's mind, and the resolutions of yesterday were too fresh to allow her to be satisfied without a definite reconciliation. The first time they were alone together, she burst into impetuous apologies. "Oh, Hilary, I wanted to say that I'm sorry I was cross on Monday. I don't mind a bit about the drawing-room; alter it in any way you like. Of course you know better how things should be, after staying in

London. I'm sorry I was rude, but I did dust it, really."

To her surprise, the tears rose in Hilary's eyes, and she looked absolutely distressed. "Oh, Norah, don't! I'm sorry too. I didn't think I had grumbled so much. But Miss Carr's house is so beautiful, and when I came home—"

"I know. But it looks ever so much nicer in summer, when the doors are open and the flowers are in bloom. If you like to move the piano, and make it stand out from the walls, I'll give you my yellow silk for the drapery. Aunt Amy sent it to me for a dress, but I've never used it."

"Thank you, Norah; it's awfully good of you, but I shall have something else to do besides draping pianos for the next few weeks, I'm afraid," said Hilary, dismally. "Mary has given notice!" and the poor little housekeeper heaved a sigh; for Mary had been a model housemaid, and it would be a difficult matter to replace her in this quiet country place.

"Mary given notice! Mary! Oh, how horrid! I hate strange servants, and she has been with us so long. Why ever is she—" Norah checked herself with a quick recollection of the events of the last week, but Hilary did not shirk the unfinished question.

"She was vexed because I found fault. I felt cross and worried, and vented it on her. I didn't realise it at the time, but I see now that I was unreasonable;" and to hear Hilary confess a fault, was an experience so extraordinary, that Norah sat dumbfounded, unable to account for the phenomena.

The threatened loss of Mary was too important a family event to pass unnoticed in the general conversation. Lettice was full of lamentations, and even Rex had a tribute to pay to her excellence. "The big, strapping girl, who waited on me when I was laid up? Oh, I say, what a nuisance. I wish she would come to us; she has such a jolly good-natured face."

"If she came to you, I would never stay at your house again. I'd be too jealous," said Norah dolefully. "We shall never get anyone like Mary."

"We may be thankful if we get anyone at all. Girls don't like living so far from the village," groaned Lettice in concert, and the virtues of Mary, and the difficulties of supplanting her were discussed, at length, throughout the afternoon. Hilary's sense of guilt in the matter made her even more energetic than usual in her efforts to find a new maid. She visited the local registry offices, inserted advertisements in the papers, and wrote reams of letters; and, on the third day, to her delight, a young woman arrived to apply for the situation. It was the first time that the duty of interviewing a new servant had devolved upon Hilary's shoulders, for all three maids had been in the family for years, and, in her new doubtfulness of self, she would have been glad to ask the help of Miss Briggs, but that good lady had taken Geraldine for a walk, and there was no help at hand.

"I don't know if she is afraid of me,

but I am certainly terrified of her!" said poor Hilary, smoothing her hair before the glass, and trying to make herself look as staid and grown-up as possible. "I don't know what on earth to say. Lettice, come and sit in the room, there's a dear, and see what you think of her. I shouldn't like to engage anyone on my own responsibility." So the two girls went downstairs together, and Lettice looked on from a quiet corner, while Hilary sat bolt upright, cross-questioning the new servant. She was a tall, awkward girl, untidily dressed, with a fly-away hat perched on the top of her head, a spotted veil drawn over her face, and the shabbiest of boas wound round her neck. "What a contrast to our nice, trim Mary," groaned Lettice to herself, while Hilary cudgeled her brain to think of appropriate questions.

"And—er—have you been accustomed to housemaid's work?"

"Oh, yes, miss. I'm very handy about a house, miss. I'm sure I could give you satisfaction, miss."

"I don't like her voice. She has not nearly such nice manners as Mary," sighed Hilary to herself. "Oh dear me!"

"And—er—can you—er—get up in the morning without being called?"

"Oh yes, miss; I'm fond of early rising. It's never any trouble to me to get up."

"And—er—we are rather a large family, and I am very particular. Are you quite strong and able to work?"

"Oh yes, miss; quite strong, miss. Never had a day's illness in my life."

"And—er (there must be other questions to ask, but it's terribly difficult to think of them. I can't ask her to her face if she is honest and sober—it's absurd)" thought Hilary in despair.

"And—er—er—I suppose you are good-tempered, and would not quarrel with the other servants?"

"Oh yes, miss. Oh no, miss. All my mistresses would say for me, I'm sure, miss, that there never was a girl with a sweeter temper. I couldn't hurt a fly, miss, I'm sure I couldn't, I've such a tender heart."

"I'm sure she has nothing of the kind. I don't like her a bit; but, oh dear, what can I do? If she goes on agreeing with all I say, I have no excuse for telling her that she won't suit.")

"And—er—you would have to attend to all the bedrooms, and the schoolroom, and help the parlour-maid with the waiting. If you have not been accustomed to a large family, I am afraid you would find it a heavy place."

"Oh no, miss; not too heavy, miss. I'm never so happy as when I'm working. I've been brought up to work."

"Yes—but—but—but I'm afraid you would not suit me," cried Hilary, summoning the courage in despair, and determined, at all costs, to put an end to the interview. "I won't trouble you to send your character, for perhaps your mistress might object to give it twice, and I—er—you see—I don't quite know when my present maid is leaving, and I think—I am afraid—"

"Oh, it's no trouble at all, miss. I'll bring it with pleasure. I am sure you would suit me very well. I've always heard of you as such a good mistress, and I'd like to live with you; I would indeed!"

Hilary sat dumbfounded. She was beginning to feel quite afraid of this terrible young woman who stood up before her, looking so tall and formidable, and tossing her head until all the shabby black feathers shook again on her hat. "I—I won't detain you any longer," she said icily, as she rose from her seat. "You can leave your address, and if I change my mind I will let you know." She laid her hand on the bell as she spoke, but, to her amazement, the young woman suddenly flopped down on a chair, and folded her arms with a determined gesture.

"I won't stir an inch till I've had my lunch," she said; and from beneath the skirts of her dress there appeared a pair of stout, hob-nailed boots; from within her muff, two big, brown hands; and beneath the veil, a laughing, mischievous face.

"Rex!" screamed Hilary, at the pitch of her voice. "Oh, you horrible, deceiving, bad, impudent boy!"

"Rex!" echoed Lettice in chorus.

"Oh, oh! how lovely! how delicious! However did you do it? Norah!—Norah! Norah! Oh, do come here!" In rushed Norah, breathless with curiosity, to know what had happened, and the next ten minutes was passed in a clamour of questionings. When had he thought of it? How had he thought of it? Where had he found the clothes? How had he dressed? etc., etc.

Rex paraded the room with mincing steps, and simpered at his own reflection in the looking-glass.

"Old things of the mater's and Edna's. Brought 'em over in the cart, and dressed 'em in the summer-house. What a nice girl I should have made, to be sure. Seems quite a waste, doesn't it? I say, though, I am nearly suffocating with heat. Can't I go and take them off somewhere?"

He was crossing the hall on the way to the cloak room, when who should come tripping downstairs but Mary herself, trim and neat as ever, but casting a glance the reverse of proving at the strange young woman who had come to supplant herself.

"Good morning, Mary. I've come to apply for the place," said Rex gravely; then suddenly picking up his skirts, displayed his trousered legs

underneath, and executed a wild schottische round the hall.

Mary gave a shriek, put her hand to her heart, and sank down on the stairs, brushes and all, in a breathless heap. "Oh, Mr. Rex, oh! I never in all my life! Oh, what a turn you gave me! Oh! oh! oh!" And she gasped and panted till Norah became alarmed, and went up to pat her on the shoulder.

"Don't, Mary, don't! Oh, Mary, I wish it was all fun. I wish you weren't going."

"So do I, Miss Norah. I don't want to leave you, but Miss Hilary—"

"I don't want you to go, Mary. I would rather have you than anyone else."

"Ha! ha! ha!" Rex pranced round the hall in wild delight. "Look at that now! Reginald Frere, Esq., peacemaker and housemaid-waitress. Apply—Brathay Manor—"

"What in the world is the matter? Has everyone gone mad? How am I supposed to write in this uproar?" Mr. Bertrand appeared at his study door with an expression of long-enduring misery, whereat there was a general stampede, and the house subsided into silence.

(To be continued.)



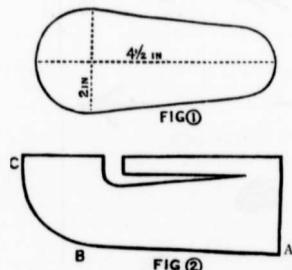
A BABY'S FIRST SHOE FROM OLD KID GLOVES.

WE think "Our Girls" will find this pattern exactly what they want for utilising old evening gloves. We are again indebted to our friend in Antwerp for the idea, which is thoroughly practical and works out well.

not too stiff a kind—exactly according to measurements given. Lay the buckram pattern on the kid and cut that slightly larger all the way round, excepting the centre part of Fig. 3.

A thin silk lining of any delicate shade should be cut the same size as the kid. The

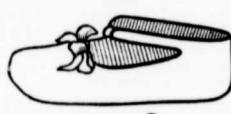
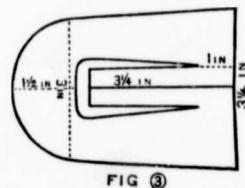
make the sole quite complete in a similar way. When joining the "upper" to the sole, be careful to commence oversewing from the outside at A, Fig. 2, and work up to B, then begin again at A and work round the other side to B. The remaining portion round the toe C requires to be slightly puckered on to the sole to allow room for baby's toes.



Only the long arm pieces are required; cut them off at the wrist and rip up the seam. Figs. 1 and 3 must be cut out in buckram—

seam at the back of the shoe A, Fig. 2, consists of kid and silk lining sewn together from the inside, then insert the buckram, which cannot overlap and cause a hard seam.

Turn in all the raw edges of the silk and oversew them to the kid over the buckram;



Bend the shoe round the top and strap with ribbon or fine silk braid to match the lining, and add a small button and loop to strap.

The toe may be decorated with a bow or pompon of the ribbon used for binding. Sometimes a tiny bell is inserted in the pompon, to the great delight of the small wearer.

"COUSIN LIL."

RAMBLES WITH NATURE STUDENTS.

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

THE AUCUBA.

The bright coral-red berries of the aucuba are now showing in pretty contrast with its light green spotted leaves.

This useful hardy shrub was introduced from Japan in 1783, but as it is dioecious and bears male and female flowers on different trees, no berries were ever seen on the early specimens, for it happened that they were exclusively of the female sex.



AUCUBA BERRIES.

However in 1861 Mr. R. Fortune, the great traveller and botanist, brought over from China some of the male pollen-bearing trees, and now the wind carries the fertilising dust far and wide, and the sprays of red berries appear amongst the foliage in profusion.

This shrub is not only ornamental, but has the useful quality of thriving well in smoky air, and hence we see it so frequently growing in town gardens and squares.

LAUREL-LEAF GLANDS.

I do not suppose that the honey-glands of the common cherry-laurel are often observed, as they exist on the under side of the leaf and are therefore hidden from the passer-by.

We may often have wondered why, in early spring, we so frequently see bees, wasps and flies buzzing about our laurel hedges, and apparently so busy in collecting something which they need at that season. If we examine the back of one of the leaves we shall discover the attraction, for at the base of the leaf and near the midrib are from two to four glands exuding a sweet liquid which affords welcome sustenance to insects. What particular use these glands may be to the shrub itself is not known; they seem to be a peculiarity of the laurel for, although I have examined a large number of shrubs and trees I cannot find similar glands in any other plant, though doubtless some may exist.

The so-called laurel is really a species of cherry, and in favourable years it bears long sprays of purple berries. The true laurel is the bay tree, *Laurus nobilis*; it also bears cherry-like fruits, but only in the southern parts of England.

THE MEALWORM BEETLE
(*Tenebrio Molitor*).

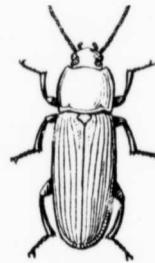
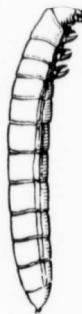
When our feathered pets are of a kind that will not prosper without insect diet, it is always rather a difficult problem as to the best mode of supplying them, during both winter and summer, with food which will keep them in health and vigour.

Ants' eggs are collected and dried and can always be purchased throughout the year, and these afford a useful food for many species of birds although I have not found them always approved of by my own special pets.

Raw meat is another resource, but it is troublesome to prepare and very difficult to keep fresh in hot weather. The one item that seems indispensable in bird-keeping is the mealworm, and, as many people have asked me "what is a mealworm?" I will take it for my subject to-day. If my readers will refer to the illustration they will see a long sort of caterpillar which is the aforesaid mealworm, the larva of the mealworm beetle.

Instead of being soft like an ordinary grub, it is hard and polished, of a brownish yellow colour, and in all respects extremely like the destructive pest called by gardeners the wire-worm. The latter, however, is the larva of a different species of beetle which feeds on plant roots.

The mealworm beetle is always to be found in mills, granaries and bakehouses, in fact wherever flour is kept, for in it the beetles lay their eggs, and these hatch into minute thread-like grubs, which in two years' time



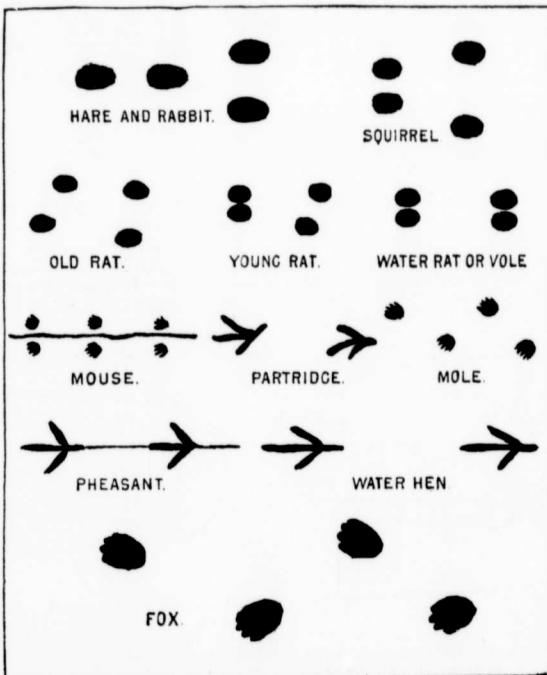
MEALWORM BEETLE.

Magnified about six times larger than life.

grow into flat long-bodied mealworms, perfectly harmless, scentless creatures, easily kept in a tin box filled with barley-meal and flour. They grow and fatten all the quicker if the box is kept in a warm place and some layers of flannel are supplied, as they feed upon flannel as well as upon flour. The flannel should be moistened occasionally with a little beer or water.

At length the worm turns into a curious mummy-like chrysalide, and then into the perfect beetle which, although it is black, is not in any way related to the so-called black beetle or cockroach, which is not a beetle at all, and is of a reddish brown, the male possessing four strong wings.

The mealworm beetle is as innocent and



FOOTPRINTS IN SNOW.

harmless as its larva; I sometimes find a wandering specimen near my bird-cages, and I know I can safely pick it up and restore it to the box where its kith and kin reside, with no fear of its biting or leaving any odour on my hands.

The English nightingale is unfortunately so fond of this insect, that bird-catchers can always trap it with the greatest ease by clearing a space upon the ground and placing some mealworms on limed twigs.

The bird flies down immediately to secure the dainty, and is held fast and caught by the snare so cunningly set.

FOOT-PRINTS IN SNOW.

A heavy fall of snow gives us a clue to the nocturnal wanderings of such animals as hares, rabbits, foxes, rats and mice.

With a little practice, we may learn to recognise their respective foot-prints in the garden and fields.

Some animals run, others leap along; each creature has its own manner of getting over the ground, and what we cannot see when we catch a glimpse of them when their limbs are in rapid action is faithfully revealed by the snow-prints.

We can soon learn hare and rabbit-marks, which always show two feet in front, one before the other, and the hind feet parallel.

The fox runs like a dog, with alternate prints, the squirrel places its short fore-feet close together, and the hind feet widely apart.

Rats vary much in their movements; land and water-rats, young and old rats, all mark the snow differently and are very puzzling to define.

I think mice are the cleverest little people in snowy times; they know that they can easily be seen by owls, so they form tunnels in the snow from one spot to another so that they may go to and fro in safety; their fore and hind feet make parallel marks as they leap along.

If a mole chances to be on the surface of the ground he makes a furrow as he flounders through the snow and his foot-prints are alternate.

I was much puzzled by a three-pronged impression always with a connecting line in the middle, but at last I discovered it to be made by the pheasant; it plants one foot exactly in front of the other, and the long hind toe makes the trailing line between the footprints.

Pigeons and doves, having very short legs, are apt to help themselves along with their wings, and these leave a sort of blurred trail rather difficult to make out until one has seen one of these birds plodding with difficulty through the snow.

With a little study we may soon distinguish the birds that walk from those that run or hop, and once our attention has been called to this subject of footprints, we shall find it a rather amusing interest added to our winter rambles.

OTOLITHS.

As the ground is frozen and all nature seems asleep at this wintry season, we must defer our out-of-door rambles and go into my museum for some otoliths for to-day's study.

The word sounds like something very scientific and out of the way, and yet without knowing it these objects have been constantly upon our dinner-plates, for they are little snow-white bones to be found in the heads of haddock, whiting, gurnard and cod. How these little stone-like bodies assist the hearing of fishes is, I believe, not very clearly known, but that is supposed to be their use in the economy of the fish.

One exists in each lobe of the brain, so that if we wish to find them we must completely divide the head of a whiting, when

boiled, and there hidden on either side we shall discover the otolith. It appears to be quite unattached to the skull, and simply lies in its cavity to aid in the conveyance of sound to the fish's brain.

I may mention a use to which I have put these ear-bones with a rather good result.

Having a store of rose-beetle wings and otoliths I resolved to decorate a banner screen with them in this fashion. I traced, on a

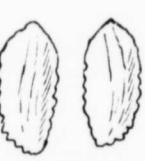
stitches of white silk across either end attached them firmly to the satin.

The plate will give an idea of the effect, which is remarkably good, and my rather original banner screen has, I must say, been much admired.

Rose-beetles are not usually to be found in any number, but an even better result may be obtained by Indian beetle-wings which are sold at all Berlin-wool shops.



Haddock.



Cod.
OTOLITHS.



Whiting.



OTOLITHS.

piece of rich dark green satin, a flowing design of jasmine sprays. With fine white silk I tacked on sets of five otoliths starwise, each star to represent a jasmine flower, while the beetle wings did duty for the leaves. Each otolith and beetle-wing was edged round with fine gold braid which kept them firmly in place and also formed the connecting stems. The beetle wings had to be pierced with a very small needle and each sewn on separately with fine green silk. The ear-bones will not admit of piercing, so two

The otoliths must of course be saved up from our daily repast until we have sufficient for the purpose: the ear-bones of the haddock are, I think, the most suitable for this novel fancy-work.

To add a little varied colour to my screen I embroidered a few butterflies, copied from nature, in coloured silks and introduced them with good effect amongst the jasmine sprays.

The screen is made up with old gold cord and tassels and lined with silk of the same colour.

"IF LOVING HEARTS WERE NEVER LONELY—";

OR,

MADGE HAROURT'S DESOLATION.

By GERTRUDE PAGE.

CHAPTER XII.

THE UNFORGIVEN.

THE following day turned out very wet, but in spite of the rain and Madge's persuasions, Jack persisted in going to his golf match in the afternoon.

Guy stood with his hands in his pockets, leaning against the door-post, when the trap came round, and watched Madge put Jack's mackintosh round him, saying as she did so, "I wish you wouldn't go, Jack. If you get cold you'll perhaps be laid up with pleurisy again."

"But I'm not going to take cold, sister mine," he replied gaily. "It isn't really raining, it's only drizzling. I shall keep this old cape on, and look at the thickness of my boots."

"But it looks so heavy all round, it will be worse later on. You'd better take father's overcoat as well."

Jack laughed good-naturedly, saying, "What about my goloshes and umbrella, etc. You'd better send them in the pram with nurse."

"Hope you'll enjoy yourself, Guy," he added. "You must gently remonstrate with Madge if she talks too learnedly, because I know your brain won't stand it. You know where the cigars are."

"I shall be all right," was the ready answer, and just then Madge hurried past him, out into the rain. A sudden desire to kiss Jack before he went had come over her, and she mounted on to the step, regardless of the rain and the pony's restiveness.

Jack kissed her fondly. "Good-bye, old lady," he said. "Look after Guy, won't you?"

"You'll take care of yourself," she urged, without replying to his question. "And come straight home when you've finished the game."

"I will if I can, but I may have to go in to dinner with Haines," and with a last wave he drove off.

Madge stood and watched him until he was out of sight, then walked slowly up the steps into the hall.

"You'll catch your death of cold," remarked Guy, looking down at her feet. "Hadn't you better change your slippers, they must be wet through."

Madge looked down mechanically and answered, "I never take cold." Then she added uneasily, "But Jack does, he has a delicate chest."

"He's well wrapped up, I don't think

he'll hurt," said Guy reassuringly. "And he won't be out long. You needn't bother about me, I can read the paper."

"Oh! very well!" she replied, rather relieved, "I shall be in the drawing-room if you want anything," and she walked away at once.

Guy went into the smoke-room and threw himself into an easy chair, but it was with rather a disconsolate air than otherwise. He didn't at all appreciate her ready acquiescence to leave him alone, and had hoped she would ask him to sit with her. After an hour's solitude, he finally decided to go in search of her, and throwing away his cigar end, proceeded to the drawing-room.

He found her alone with an open book in her hands and some work beside her. When he appeared she laid down her book and took up the work, and Guy, remarking that he had grown tired of his own company and hoped she wouldn't mind if he stayed, took a low chair opposite to her.

"You read a tremendous lot, don't you?" he asked, as a preliminary.

"Not so much as I used to, I have grown tired of it."

"Have you taken to work instead?"

"No, I very rarely work, except to knit. I am fond of knitting, as I can think all the time."

"I can't imagine what you find to think about. I hardly ever think, and when I do I generally get to the end of a subject in about ten minutes."

"It rather runs in our family," she replied, keeping her eyes rigidly on her work. "There have been some members of it who have written as well as thought."

"Do you ever write?"

"I?—no—I don't want to. There are quite enough writers already, they will soon out-number the readers."

"Still, it might be a pleasant occupation. I should have thought you would have been glad of something to do."

"Oh! I don't mind," and she shrugged her shoulders slightly. "I made a good deal of fuss about it at one time but it wasn't any use. Now I have given up bothering. I can play the piano, dress tastefully and do a little sewing, what more can a woman want?" and her lips curled cynically. "That's all you men expect of us, isn't it?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," and he knit his brow thoughtfully. "Personally I don't see why a girl shouldn't have some definite work, if she wants it. What should you like to do?"

Madge was silent a few moments, then she said in a quiet, determined voice, "I have given up thinking about it; it only did more harm than good. I had a lot of wild, eager dreams at one time; I know better than to indulge in them now."

"I think it's rather pleasant to dream," he said.

"I think it's folly," she answered firmly. "The wisest plan is to make the best of the day before you and let the future be a blank."

"I don't see how one can help looking forward to things."

"It requires a certain amount of training, but one is proof against disappointments and caring too much about things, when one has succeeded."

"Have you succeeded?"

"To a certain extent; sufficient to save myself a great deal of useless fretting."

Guy looked at her curiously. She seemed to him to look so strangely immovable and self-contained, was it possible she had ever fretted and pined about anything?

The study of human nature had not yet been included in Guy's catalogue; he could not read "between the lines" of his fellow-creatures.

"Still, I suppose you are looking forward to coming up to town by-and-by," he said presently. "Jack talks about it sometimes."

"Does he? Well, I suppose that is the exception. I certainly always look forward to being with Jack. Not that I care much about going to London, but at any rate it will be away from here."

"You don't like this place?" inquiringly.

"Like it?" and Madge raised her eyebrows very significantly. "Hate is hardly a strong enough word for my sentiments."

"I think you'll like London immensely," he continued, not wishing to dwell on a subject that was evidently a very sore one.

"What do you think I shall like about it?"

"Oh! everything. The rush and excitement and change. It will have been almost worth while to have lived in a dull place."

"I don't agree with you, and I don't think London will please me. If I have a desire it is certainly not for town life."

"I wonder what it is?" he said, hesitatingly.

She was silent a little, then said musingly, "The new young world, across the ocean, where freedom is not a mere name. I am sick of England. People crowd so here, even the rural nooks are now over-run with trippers and defaced with advertisements, and the air is stifled with forms and ceremonies, bigotry, bickerings, and plagiariasm. There is so much jostling and struggling, with everybody trying to make his neighbour a stepping-stone for himself. I would like to breathe the fresh free air of the Australian bush and live a life untrammeled by

old, worn-out customs and orthodoxes." She tossed her head with a restive movement, while a glow of fervour shone in her eyes. She reminded Guy of a young horse, panting to try its speed, and get free of the harness. "I can't breathe here," she said, "I want to feel free."

"Do you mean you would like the wild life, say, of a sheep-farm? Surely you wouldn't like the way in which they have to rough it?"

"Yes, why not? I should have loved to go out with Jack. It isn't always because they like it, that women sit with their hands on their knees. But there, I am talking nonsense," and she rose as she spoke with a half-impatient gesture. "It is so foolish to dwell on what might have been, or what one longs for. Shall I play to you? Do you like music?"

He would rather have heard her talk a great deal, but he didn't like to say so, remarking instead that he should be delighted.

"You had better make yourself comfortable as Jack does," she said carelessly. "He is fond of music at any time, but he always finds it a great improvement to have his feet off the ground."

"I always did admire Jack's taste," he answered laughing, and disposed of his feet accordingly.

The performance that followed was a great surprise to him, for he had not heard her play before, and had no idea she excelled as a pianist.

Not that he was anything of a judge, but at least he knew, he had never in his life before been able to sit and listen to music for a whole hour without growing weary. Perhaps it was because

her playing was like herself, strange and fitful and fascinating; made up of many phases. Now soft, now fiery, now plaintive and wailing, now weird and harsh and discordant. It held you as her own personality did. You might not quite like it altogether; it might seem eccentric, but for all that you felt drawn towards her, in spite of the faults that persistently repelled you.

When at last tea was announced Guy was amazed to find how quickly the time had flown, and was very loth for her to leave off.

After tea she disappeared, and he did not see her again until about eight o'clock. She was expecting Jack every minute, and he saw by her face she had only come in hopes of finding him.

But time passed, and no Jack appeared, and meanwhile the rain began to fall in torrents.

At ten o'clock it was the general opinion that he was going to remain with his friend for the night, on account of the rain; except with Madge, and she persisted in expecting him every moment, and grew visibly anxious in spite of her efforts to appear unconcerned.

At half-past ten Guy found her at the open door and sought to reassure her.

"It's a good thing he's staying there, such a night," he said, "the old fellow's got a wise head about some things, after all."

It was pitch black and the rain continued to pour in torrents, in spite of the rough wind. It blew it in their faces and Madge shuddered visibly!

"I never knew him stay out for rain before," she said, "and he isn't over fond of Mr. Haines."

"Oh! but he wouldn't think of that on such a night. Don't you think you'd better come away from the door, you're getting quite wet."

She moved away slowly, without replying, and soon after they all retired to bed.

But sleep and rest would not come to Madge, and she lay awake far into the night listening to the wind, as it howled dismally round the house. A superstitious weakness seemed to take possession of her, sending a chill terror through her heart, and to her over-strung nerves the shrieking of the blast was as the cries of a great crowd of human beings in helpless agony. At last, driven almost to distraction with the weight of an indescribable dread, she reached a book and succeeded in reading herself to sleep from sheer weariness.

The next morning very early, as two labourers went to their day's work, they came across a strange object by the roadside. A trap appeared to be overturned in the ditch, and the pony which was harnessed to it had slipped down, and was too entangled in the harness to get up.

They hurried forward and quickly succeeded in cutting the pony free and dragging the trap away.

In the ditch lay a dark object, enshrouded in a large waterproof cape; the form of a man it was, and part of the cape appeared to have got twisted round his head.

With a nameless horror, they unravelled the cloak, and raised the still form; and the cold, dead face that lay upturned to the smiling heavens was the face of Jack Harcourt.

(To be continued.)

SOME NEW MEZZO-SOPRANO SONGS FOR GIRLS.

MANY a little daughter's heart must thrill at the tender feeling of May Hodge's words in "Nobody Else," which is set to music by Herbert Crimp (Keith Prowse). The story is of a deft wee woman who brightened and kept home together because there was,

"Nobody else, you see."

and the air is quite easy and enjoyable to sing. "The Mission of a Rose," by F. Cowen (R. Cocks), is excellent in words and music, and affords good scope for true sentiment and just phrasing. No. 1 key is the most desirable for a mezzo-soprano voice. In a more classic and dramatic style is "The Captive" (La Captive), a posthumous work of Benjamin Godard's (Metzler), suitable to a high mezzo; it requires and repays study, for it contains some lovely passages. The accompaniment seems difficult at first, but after two or three earnest readings it is soon mastered, and the unique and poetic idea of the song is appreciated. An interesting series of sixteen songs with English lyrics by May Gillington (J. Williams), edited and arranged by Dr. Carl Reinecke, is well worth looking through, for some of them are quaint airs of Scarlatti Haydn, Grétry (such as No. 10, "The Prophet of Spring"), &c. No. 14 is J. S. Bach's beautiful "My Heart Now Awake Thee,"

also known under the title of "My Heart Ever Faithful." There is something very appealing in the simplicity and truth of James Whitcomb Riley's verses, "A Life Lesson," the music to which is by Constance Maud (Boosey).

"There, little girl, don't cry!" is the slight refrain, but to girls of an older growth it contrives to teach a happy lesson.

From grave to gay, a lyric to "Sarah Jane" entitled "The Broken Heart" (Cramer), is most laughable yet refined; the words by R. S. Hichens are so neat and witty and the music so plaintively funny, both exactly matching, that it cannot fail to provoke smiles on the most serious face!

Then there is a very interesting little ditty, though it is not written for the feminine gender, namely, "The Mousmee," by Walter W. Hedgecock (R. Cocks); the singing of it is likely to amuse many a father or brother, so we mention it as being delightfully quaint and fresh. In fact quite a small oasis in the desert of common-place themes is this tale of the sweet little Mousmee.

"In her far-away Japan
With its junks and Fu-ji-san
And its tea-houses and temples and the
smiling riksha-man!"

"A Message from Home" (W. Morley) is a prettily conceived story of Mary Mark Lemon's set to very tuneful and easy music by C. Francis Lloyd. "The Dreamers" by Edith Cooke (Cramer) is distinctly interesting and good in every way, and in a lightsome vein. "The Ivy and the Wall" by Reginald Somerville (Metzler), though slight is pleasing, with a gentle moral.

Lawrence Kellie's "Apple Blossoms" (Metzler) describes delightfully in words and music—

"The colour, beauty, wonder of the spring;" of the accompaniment (which one certainly yearns to see in C) we say, "learn it and it will repay you tenfold." Another grand original lay is "The Throstle" by Alfred Cellier (Metzler). Herbert W. Wareing has written a charming Sevillana, "The Mule Bells" (Cramer), which is most characteristic throughout in bright bravura style; and lastly, the plantation song, "Piccanniny Mine, Good-night," by H. Trotter (Cramer) is a darkey's remembrance of a lullaby long ago, and the words and music are written with much taste and feeling, making it very attractive for piano or banjo.

MARY AUGUSTA SALMOND.

"THE CURFEW."

By W. T. SAWARD, B.A.



IN THE TWILIGHT SIDE BY SIDE.

By RUTH LAMB.

PART III

INVISIBLE WALL BUILDERS (*concluded*).

"Support the weak, be patient toward all" (1 Thess. v. 14.)

"Forbearing one another and forgiving one another" (Col. iii. 13.)

DURING our last evening talk, my dear girls, we named one or two of the stones which help towards invisible wall-building. This evening our list will be a longer one, for, as in the case of more substantial structures, the materials are many, varied and always at hand. Here are a few of them.

Readiness to take offence at trifles or even at nothing. Imaginary grievances. Speech. Silence. Pride. *Obstinacy*.

There are persons so over-sensitive, or it may be so miserably self-conscious, that every word or act of their neighbour is supposed to be directed at themselves, and is at once mentally appropriated by them. There are no more active and persistent builders of invisible walls of partition, than are the people with whom self is always to the front.

Mind, dear girls, I do not mean selfpeople in the ordinary sense of the word, those who want the best of everything, no matter at what cost to others. On the contrary, the people I allude to habitually appropriate the worst of everything and are, for this very reason, most uncomfortable people to be associated with. Their characters abound with contradictions, for they are often truly kind, generous and self-devoting, though they make themselves miserable and keep their friends in constant fear of giving them offence by some innocent word or action.

I have no doubt you, my dear girls, can remember schoolfellow or companions of this

difficult type. So lovable in many ways, but so touchy and hard to get on with, that you were never quite happy in their company, because you never knew which of your sayings or doings might be misconstrued. I am afraid that those who are always on the watch for grievances and who take offence so easily, find a pleasure in nursing their imaginary pignores, until they become very real giants to themselves. Turn the light of common sense on these fancied grievances—creatures of a morbid imagination—and they will quickly disappear.

Better still; look at them by the light of the love which "thinketh no evil," and though they may have sprung into being for an instant, they will cease to exist as quickly. It is the nursing and cherishing which gives them all their importance.

Is there one amongst you, my dear ones, who is at this moment pondering over some seeming slight, or mentally repeating a little jest, harmless enough, though in your case it has proved to be "not convenient"—a mere careless word that was uttered without the intent to pain any one, least of all a friend? If so, I beseech you to look at the other side and try to recall to mind the many kind acts and words which have come to you from the same source, but of which you have taken little account.

Has she, whom you now look upon almost as an enemy, been heretofore your friend? If so, is it likely she would inflict pain needlessly and wilfully? Do not believe it for a moment. Set yourself resolutely to banish that one incident from your mind. Let your thoughts dwell on all that has been sweet and pleasant in the past, and you will not only keep your friend but be fortified against future misunderstandings. Nurse your special grievance a little longer and silence will add another stone to help in building an invisible wall between

O SWEET sad hour of rest,
Thou canst not come too soon;
Light lingers in the west
To guide the rising moon.

Sweet curfew hour of peace,
We wait thy solemn bell,
All toils and passions cease,
And, at thy magic spell,

The folding landscape round
Sinks into slumber still;
Only the ivy-crowned
Church speaks from the hill.

Voice from the ages past,
Not for the city's roar,
Some deep seclusion vast
Or unfrequented shore

Still welcomes what thou bringest,
The sweet, calm peace of old;
The vesper that thou singest
Is more than all their gold.

you. How often it happens that, whilst a few misunderstood words have laid the foundations of a wall of separation, a few frank ones, spoken at the right moment, have levelled them again, and the old friendship has been established on a firmer basis than before.

Nurse a grievance in silence and the wall steadily rises. Pride adds stone to stone by suggesting that it would be humiliating to speak first when you were not the person in fault. Defer the frank question which would probably have brought an honest expression of regret from the friend whose word or act has pained you, and still higher goes up the wall. It would have been easy to speak at first and the words—"Believe me, dear, I never meant to pain you; forgive me for having done it, though, but for your telling me, I should never have known," would have sounded very sweet in your ears.

Most likely you would have learned a good lesson from the little misunderstanding. You would have taken yourself to task and owned that you had been too ready to take offence when none was intended, and future misunderstandings would have been avoided.

Sometimes, however, too long a time is allowed to elapse and another difficulty arises. We have not only felt aggrieved, but we have shown it by cold looks, short answers, or by keeping out of the offender's way. She, innocent of all intention to pain us, naturally feels aggrieved in turn and retaliates, thinking the while that no real friend could be so fickle, and that she has been mistaken in giving the name to one who was unworthy to bear it.

Thus the two, who were really so much or each other, drift apart. A thoughtless word or act began the separating wall; silence added to it, pride proved a rapid builder in raising it higher and higher, and obstinacy put on the



IN THE TWILIGHT.

coping stones. A mere grain of sand at first, it has been magnified into a mountain, and now the invisible wall defies every effort to demolish it.

The worst of it is that the warmer may have been the friendship, the closer the relationship, the more difficult will it be to rekindle it and to reunite those whom the merest trifle may have severed.

You will remember, dear girls, the text I quoted as we began our talk a month ago: "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city," and it is easy to understand why this should be.

A passing acquaintance may be very pleasant but very soon ended. It is like a tiny shrub which is easy to transplant and which will quickly adapt itself to a new soil and neighbourhood. The love or friendship of a warm, true heart is like a stately oak whose roots spread far below the surface and, though unseen, give stability to the tree. But if the oak should be uprooted by a sudden storm, it cannot be replaced. As it lies prone on the ground to which it is just united by a few root fibres, it may even put out a few green leaves on the branches nearest to this source of sustenance, but they will not last. The real life is gone.

So it is with great friendships that have been rudely broken. The hurricane which tore up the oak and destroyed the growth of ages may have come and gone in a few hours.

The careless word that began the building of a wall of separation between very friends was spoken in a moment, but it demolished the growth of many happy years. The attempt to restore things to the old footing is like trying to plant anew the shattered oak. The lingering regrets of the erewhile friends and the yearnings for the old companionship are somewhat like the few green leaves which sprang from the prostrate oak—they fade under the combined influences already named. Silence, pride, obstinacy.

It is a happy thing for us if we can look back upon some occasion in our early lives when affection and faith or even forgetfulness conquered the effects produced by hasty words and prevented a breach of friendship. I smile to myself sometimes as I recall one such instance.

I had a schoolfellow between whom and myself a very warm affection existed. We were called the inseparables, for we walked and worked together. Neither envied the other any school distinction. We were in the same class, but each was contented with the second place provided her friend held the first; but we worked and fought together as one, so that no third girl should pass us in the race. My home was about midway between hers and the school, so she invariably called for me on her way thither. Returning, I am afraid we spent a good deal of our time in walking to and fro with each other, so loth were we to part, and we were scolded for being late at dinner.

One day we disagreed about something. Each was sure the other was wrong and neither would give in. We parted in haste. We were early at the dinner-table, but I can answer for myself that my usually healthy appetite was absent, and what food I took was not enjoyed.

We had parted in silence after declaring that we would not speak to each other again; but I was already distressed at the remembrance of our quarrel and hopeful that my friend might be the same. Would she call for me? I asked myself. I would be ready and on the watch earlier than usual; but if she passed the house without turning to look for me, I would keep to my resolution and not even speak. She should go her way and I would go mine.

I watched and waited in vain. There was more than one road to school. She must have

taken the other to avoid meeting me, I said to myself. My heart swelled with indignation, for I had hoped almost against hope and made myself late for school, all in vain. Moreover Louise was absent. I had dreadful thoughts on this score. Had she contrived to stay away because of our quarrel?

I lost two places in class and failed to regain them before I heard from another schoolfellow that she had brought a message to our governess to excuse Louise's absence. "Her aunt is here, but only for the day, so her mother is keeping her at home this afternoon," said the girl. I was comforted after this and recovered one place.

On the following morning Louise met me as usual, and with a smiling face began to tell me of her aunt's visit and of some pretty presents she had brought and which I must go to see.

Coming home, Louise stopped suddenly at the point on the road where we had parted the day before. "We quarrelled here yesterday," she said. "We were not going to speak or be friends any more. I had forgotten all about it. Must we stop talking now?" Blessed forgetfulness! It prevented the building of a wall of separation, the severance of a friendship, and the extinguishing of a love which lasted till death claimed one of us. Ay, and it lasts still in the heart of the survivor.

This may seem a childish story perhaps, but I, after the lapse of many years, rejoice as I look back upon it and thank God that sweet memories were not spoiled and sweet intercourse ended through the nursing of a little grievance on either side.

"Silence is golden," as a rule, but there are many exceptions to it. The silence which is the result of pride or obstinacy has in it no ring of the precious metal. It is the veriest dross to be trampled under foot and contemned.

It would take a long time to instance all the stones that help to build walls of separation, but injudicious meddling and tale-bearing follow closely on those already named.

Sometimes it happens that one who has taken offence at a mere trifling begins to think she may have attached too much importance to a very little matter. Or if she has nursed a grievance she becomes tired of it, and feels that it is interfering with her own peace of mind. She discovers that the blame rests partly on herself, for has she not put the worst possible construction on what has been said or done?

Unfortunately the meddler comes in and begins by condoling, then with busy tongue harps upon the little grievance, which under such treatment gains renewed importance. The meddler has become the mischief-maker. She urges the aggrieved one not to give in, but to show a proper spirit. "A proper spirit!" What is it? Let us look at the life of our Lord and Master. Let us listen to His teaching. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." "Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for them which despitefully use you." "Judge not and ye shall not be judged. Condemn not and ye shall not be condemned." "Be ye tender-hearted, forbearing one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Deal thus with those who have offended you, and you shall find that the only proper spirit is the Christlike spirit, which you, if you are His disciple, are bound to imitate. We have another side of the subject to look at before we leave it. The over-sensitive or unhappily self-conscious amongst our friends and neighbours who take offence at nothing and nurse grievances or meet them half-way, demand alike our pity and kindly consideration. No true disciple of Christ would take advantage of such failings to inflict a needless wound. If you and I are Christians we shall be specially tender and careful in word and

deed when we are in the presence of such, lest we should cause a weak one to offend.

"Support the weak, be patient toward all."

I must mention a few more of the stones which go towards building invisible walls of separation, but without many words of comment. After all our talk on the subject you will find it easy to judge of the mischief they do. Tale-bearing, "the whisperer separateth very friends," Breach of trust. A suspicious temper. Prejudice, Envy, Selfishness, Impatience. The "jesting which is not convenient." Do we not all know how often sensitive natures have been wounded and friends separated by a foolish jest? There is an old saying, "Those who cannot take a jest should never make one," but as we cannot be sure who will appropriate the jesting speech that carries a sting, we should be doubly careful not to mingle venom with our mirth.

I should not like to end our talk to-night, my dear ones, without a word in allusion to another invisible wall of partition of which we are builders, and in which the very stones we have spoken about are part of the materials that go towards its erection.

A prophet of old cried out to God's ancient people, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God." And is it not so to-day with each and all of us who are oppressed with a sense of sin, planned or committed. Do we not feel it rising like a dark shadow between us and Him to whom we owe "life and breath and all things." It stifles the coming prayer, it lifts us from our knees and moves us to shun instead of seeking God's presence. We long for it, yet flee from it, because we are afraid. We know that we do not deserve a welcome. The sins known to us are enough to build up the wall. What of the unnumbered ones? "Who can tell how oft he offendeth?"

Peter was bold of speech and act, boastful too, as we all know; but he, once, in the early days of his Apostleship, understood something about what sin can do. He saw the miraculous draught of fishes and realised the power of the Godhead in Christ. He sank on his knees at the feet of Jesus saying, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Oh, my dear ones, if you and I are sensible of the power of sin in building a wall of separation between us and our God, let us not shrink away in silence and fear. Let us come the oftener to His footstool and pray the more. Let us not say "Depart from me," but "Lord, bring me near to Thee," "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe." "Cleanse thou me from my secret faults." "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Remember what Isaiah said as to the separating power of sin, but thank God also with heart and voice for the Gospel message which brings gladness, comfort, strength, and peace.

We may have vainly looked for a mediator between us and an aggrieved earthly friend; but we have One who will never fail us, to mediate between us and our Father, God, and who is Himself the "way" to the throne of grace. The more we look for help and guidance in the Book of Books, the more we find to cheer and comfort us. We need not want words. God will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask, and we shall be taught how to speak, or without words, the heart-longings we cannot utter will go up to Our Father through our great Intercessor.

We are met half-way by sweet messages, and the invisible wall which our sins have raised between us and God will vanish into nothingness as we listen to the proclamation, "Be ye reconciled to God." "Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition."

OUR PUZZLE REPORT: "A WELL-BRED GIRL."

SOLUTION.

A WELL-BRED GIRL

Never talks during music at concerts or at homes;
Never turns round in the street to see other girls' frocks;
Never laughs loudly when in a public place;
Never coughs when talking to others without raising her hand to her mouth;
Never conveys cheese to her mouth with a knife;
Never loses a post in accepting an invitation to dinner;
Never omits to make her duty call after a dinner-party or entertainment;
Never instils envy in others, but incites them to content;
Never intentionally hurts the feelings of those in an inferior position.

PRIZE WINNERS.

Seven Shillings and Sixpence Each.

Elsie Bayley Hook, nr. Winchfield, Hants.
Mary Jane Bryan, Bryon's Lane, Sutton, Macclesfield.
R. Howse, Maisey Hampton, Fairford, Glos.
Annette E. Jackson, Bournemouth.
May Lees, Waterworks Road, Tattenhall.
L. Morgan, 57, Chardmore Road, N.
Robert Murdoch, 9, Newton Place, Glasgow.
Helen M. Norman, 64, Lilleshall Road, S.W.
Edith Neck, Beatrix Philpott and Winifred Philpott, 83 and 103, Foulden Road, Stoke Newington, N.
G. Rhys, Clyne, Penarth, Glamorganshire.
C. E. Thurber, Untharks Road, Norwich.
M. Utting, Bracken Brae, Thorpe, Norwich.
Florence De Ville, Sevenoaks.
R. A. Wells, Shadingfield, Wangford, Suffolk.

Special Mention.

Eliza Aworth (*equal with prize winners*).
Rev. Alexander B. Orr (*for arrangement of solution*).

Most Highly Commended.

Maud L. Ansell, Florence Eppstein, Edith W. Flint, Ellen A. Fox, Edith E. Grundy, A. L. Hall, Wm. H. Hatch, A. J. Knight, Hildegard A. Löwen, S. Mason, Florence Miller, Rev. V. Odom, Edith F. Sellers, S. R. Smith, Isabel Snell, Annie F. Stoney, Wm. E. Trezise, Mrs. Vaux, Florence A. Wallis, W. V. Wood.

Very Highly Commended.

Muriel V. Angel, Jane L. Campbell, G. Carr, G. F. Chute, E. W. Floyd, Kate Hooker, Cherie Massie, Jeannie D. Massie, A. C. Mellor, M. Oxley, A. Preece, Alice L. Salter, Amelia Salter, Ethel J. Shepard, Fanny Shepard, R. Carr Smith, Florence A. Steele, May T. Stephens, Florence Watson, Jessie Woodruff.

Highly Commended.

Ethel Abigail, C. E. Ainley, G. Aitchison, Mrs. Andrew, L. B. Ashford, Mary E. Bailey, Alice M. Barton, Clara Basin, Ellen Basin, A. J. Batchelor, Janet M. Bell, Violet Biggs, Lizzie Bowring, I. Cargey, Annie J. Cather, May Causton, Lucy Chakona, I. H. Christie, William Clark, Mary G. Coley, J. Ethel Collingham, Elizabeth A. Collins, Daisy Coombs, Amelia Cornall, Helen Cornall, Constance Cumpston, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Ranald Daniel, Agnes Dewhurst, Mrs. A. E. Dobbs, Arthur G. Dunn, Edith Edmonds, F. G. Edwards, B. Fletcher, J. A. Flynn, Agnes M. Ford, Lillie Galloway, Clara Gawthrop, Edith E. Gotobed, Mary D. Gourlay, Louie Green, Ada Greenwood, Ethel Gregory, Jas. W. Halbert, Mary Harrison, Frank S.

Hills, M. Hodgkinson, Eva Hooley, H. Hopkins, Minnie Hudson, Annie Jones, Mrs. Kemp, Ellen H. Kemp, Leonard F. Kemp, P. R. Kemp, A. E. King, Alice F. Knight, Gladys M. Knight, Blanche de Labilliere, Maud de Labilliere, Clare E. Law, John L. Laws, Grace W. Lewis, W. E. Lewis, Florence Lush, Maude Latton, Louise McCready, M. Mackenzie, John H. Marchant, May Merrill, Mabel Merry, Mrs. Amy Moraine, Mrs. F. M. Morgan, May Morris, Florence Morse, Chas. A. Murton, A. Nichols, Carrie North, Rosa Oliver, James Ore, Madge Orford, Gertrude Peace, Lizzie Peacock, Marion B. Perston, F. A. Powell, F. A. Prudeaux, A. C. Pringle, N. E. Purvey, Lily Radcliffe, Ethel Rayner, Edwin Rhodes, Émilie Robertson, A. L. Roofe, Elizabeth Rose, Louie Saggers, Jessie C. Savory, M. Shadforth, Mamie Smart, W. P. H. Smiley, Ada Smith, Grace Simpson, Ella R. Sole, Isabel E. Strong, Dora Sturdy, Constance M. Swan, Mary J. Taylor, Mrs. G. M. Thompson, Miss Thornton-Varley, Edith Tichener, Winifred M. Wakefield, Beatrice C. Walker, Robert S. Watkins, Lilian G. Wayman.

EXAMINERS' REPORT.

A record number of solutions rewarded our effort to instruct a well-bred girl how not to behave. To the sixteen hundred and thirty-one solvers who receive neither prize nor mention we commend the nine precepts as worthy of the most particular remembrance. Abstention from nine unlady-like practices will yield a reward which will last long after the three half-crowns are spent and the "mentions" are forgotten.

In spite of the table of contents, the puzzle was not a poem—excepting in the sense that every work of Art is a Poem. But habit is so strong that many solutions were headed "Puzzle Poem," and in one instance no other title was given, reducing the whole thing to an absurdity. In several other instances there was no heading of any kind, excepting the name of the sender, and the solution resolved itself into a laudation of the solver. "Mrs. A. B., London, Never talks," etc.

Of difficulties there were not, unfortunately, enough, and many hundreds of solutions were substantially correct. It followed, therefore, that the strictest accuracy was required for the prize-winners, and anything more than a trifling variation debarred from mention altogether.

The beauty of a simple puzzle, or one of its beauties, is that it is sure to present non-existent difficulties to the solver, who has been taught by experience to distrust simplicity. Hence "stalks" become "sticks," and we learn with respectful amazement that a well-bred girl "never ticks during music." "Sings," "yawns" and "whistles" in the same connection have originated we know not how. The first is not strictly true, because even the best bred girls sometimes sing during a concert. As to "yawns"—well, we have seen—but never mind, there is no reason why we should go out of our way to be unkind. The statement that a well-bred girl never whistles during music is, as far as our own experience goes, quite correct, but it is not to be found in the puzzle. In the same line at-homes would not do without a hyphen, inverted commas or capitals to denote the special meaning of the expression. You can speak of an At-home as you speak of a concert or any other form of entertainment, and obviously that is the sense in which the words are used in the puzzle. There is a way of punctuating this line which also destroys

the sense; it is by introducing a comma after music and another after concert.

Punctuated thus the line means that you are not to talk during music or at Concerts or At-homes, which is absurd. You may talk at concerts between the music, and at At-homes there is very often nothing else to do.

In the second line hundreds of solvers failed to notice the peculiar roundness of the eye. In such a close competition we could not but regard this as a serious failure. A very few solutions omitting the "round" were admitted into the "highly commended" list, but only because they were exceptionally good in every other respect. Scores of solvers left out the apostrophe after "girls" and as many more put it in the wrong place. This again was a serious error. The "frocks" were very commonly converted into "dresses," but we think, though on such a point it behoves us to speak with much humility, that the former word more accurately describes the picture. But we regarded the difference as of trifling importance.

In the fourth line there was much conflict of opinion between "lifting" and "raising." We need not go into the question very deeply. The picture justifies either reading, and inasmuch as it is not at all usual to lift one's hand to the mouth we have decided in favour of "raising."

In line 5 *conveys* spelt "conveighs," and *cheese* spelt with a z would not do. Neither did "lips" as a substitute for *mouth* commend itself to us. Conveying cheese to the lips suggests a rabbit-like action in feeding, while girls adopt a mode which is less obtrusive and more convenient.

Another awkward point has arisen. Three perfect solutions come from two houses in the same road. In all probability they were evolved in conference. We do not object to this in the least, but it hardly seems fair that more than one prize should go to the conspirators. If we receive an assurance that there was no collusion between the two houses we will review the situation.

The solution commended for its "arrangement" is the most perfect thing of its kind we have seen. It is a beautiful piece of penmanship and combines a solution, a key solution and a running commentary all in one. As it is executed in three different coloured inks each part stands out quite distinctly from its fellows.

In answer to many recent inquiries we ought perhaps to say that we do not require key solutions to be sent.

"Ellen Baron" in a recent award should have been Ellen Bason.

FOREIGN AWARD.

ON A VISIT TO THE COUNTRY.

Prize.—The only perfect solution has been sent by M. W. Noble, c/o Mrs. Ross, 21, Cypress St., Launceston, Tasmania, to whom we have sent the prize of one guinea.

Very Highly Commended.

Florence E. Bapty (Bombay), Norah Shannon (Demerara), George Waterstrom (Victoria).

Highly Commended.

Amy Esam (New Zealand), Annie Jackson (Canada), Elizabeth MacPherson (New South Wales), Mary Ruttonji (India), Louisa S. Thomas (Switzerland).

Honourable Mention.

Winifred Bizzey (Canada), Anna I. Hood (France), Ethel Malone and May Malone (West Indies), Mrs. S. F. Moore (West Australia), Alice E. Riley (Italy).



THE PAIN OF THE WORLD: HOW TO FACE IT.

By MARY CLIFFORD.

SOME one, falling asleep, oppressed by the pervading pain of the world, had a dream. She thought she was sitting in her room alone, weighed down with a sense of the unreachable misery always going on in sight and out of sight, when the door opened and a dear friend came in and sat down silently by her side. Not a word was said, but gradually comfort began to overshadow her, and then there rose a gleam of light shining round and a sense of divine promise was shed abroad.

That dream is a picture of the manner in which relief has come to me in very dark moments. Perhaps all my readers feel we have had a terrible time of pain in the world during the last two years. Armenia, Turkey, Greece, and India, have gone through anguish which we have realised as no sufferings can have been realised before. Telegrams and newspaper reports have reached us, and continue to reach us, while the battles, famines, and massacres, have been actually going on. Blameless people in great masses have suffered these things; there has been no escape for them, or, in our realisation, for us. As a matter of common sense we could only believe that the facts were a good deal worse than any report has represented them to be. We have heard how here and there faith and hope have disappeared, and we have looked into the darkness and thought of those sad words of Martha and Mary, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

It is because of these doubts and misgivings that I have asked you to face this matter to-day for a little while. We want some strong, definite comfort that will not fail when these waterfloods overwhelm us.

Now, as we sit alone, absorbed in these awful sorrows and wrongs—to children and ignorant men and women, to innocent animals, tortured preventably and unpreventably for centuries—what do we see? I see a door open in heaven, and out of it comes Christ, and He enters and sits down with us.

That is just what happened and what has comforted me, when all other comforts for the time failed.

Into this world of sorrow and mystery Christ came. We are never told whether in His manhood He understood the reason of the existence or the entrance of sin and misery into the world. It may have been hidden from Him as it is from us. But He came. All the anguish, the unnecessary suffering, the hereditary suffering, the fatal mistakes, the cruelty, the success of evil, went on round Him, as it does round us, and if any one ever felt the blackness and the burden of it all, He did. He not only felt the miseries, but He felt the dread of them just as we do. As we are, so He was. But all through He was satisfied with God. The name Father was more full and great and real to Him than to any of us; and there never was one moment when His whole being did not say, "My father, my God."

This seems to me solid comfort. We have the simple fact to fall back on that our Lord Jesus Christ, who was in the midst and faced the worst, was never shaken. He knew the Father, and could wait.

Now our Lord must have known the staggering effect on our faith of this mass of suffering. Our own personal trials are not a difficulty, nor are the beautifully borne trials of good enlightened people. We ourselves feel the need of discipline, and we see its valuable fruits in others. It was those things that seem to tell against the justice and the good government of God, that our Lord knew would threaten our belief: the apparent defeat of His purposes when He was put to death; the failure in character of His disciples; the seeming absence of the restraining grace of God; the awful miseries coming on both innocent and guilty in that very city of Jerusalem.

He who realised the force of these things was always trying to prevent His followers from being dismayed and disappointed because of them. Three times, you remember, He warned them, each time with added detail, that He was not at this time going to reign but to die, and in the eyes of men to fail. Much of His later teaching dealt with the period of national chaos that would come instead of the ordered kingdom they had expected. And one of His disciples He earnestly put on his guard against the despair that was likely to follow a great lapse into particularly mean sin. Even to this day non-Christians speak of the failure of Christianity, and it was clearly in our Lord's mind to fortify us against the discouragements which tend to such a view.

All points to this conclusion. We, placed as we are, to education and light and knowledge, are in a position of sore temptation as to doubt and depression. We had better face the matter. Whatever we are, we must be true. We want to see clearly what comfort we have a right to take. Some day, when all is clear, I believe we shall thank God for letting us live here and now.

This paper was thought out chiefly in Cumberland. After a spell of fine weather, rain and storms set in, and instead of lake and ghyll and fell shining in ever-changing lights, the clouds poured down hopeless drenching rain and we wandered wet-footed among bogs and swollen streams and dripping trees. One evening, when the low-hanging clouds oppressed us with a sense of menace and pitilessness, quite suddenly there appeared high up a space of fair sky, gold and crimson and clear pale blue. Instantly we travelled in thought to the mountain top, where the uncertain footing and baffling mists would have vanished, and where with an unveiled sun we should look over the wide view and see the broad beneficent relations and harmony of a great landscape. Now, if we mount and rise above the misery and perplexity pressing

round us, and try to view the world from a little way up and off, what do we see? A world spiritually and morally still in the process of making. Amid much darkness we can see the movement of a tide making for righteousness, and we are conscious of the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters. Against that slowly rising tide is always swelling a strong current of evil, sin, lawlessness, which sometimes seems for a time to have its way unchecked. It is only by long watching that we are sure the tide is slowly winning its way.

"For while the tired waves vainly breaking
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back through creeks and inlets making
Comes silent, flooding in, the main." *

Now the problem is an intensely interesting one how, in such a world, could a holy Creator fit His living creatures to co-operate with His purpose of attaining goodness and perfection?

What we observe is this.

First, a condition of wonderful interdependence. Every living being belongs to all the rest. Past generations helped to make us; we are helping to make those who will come in the future. None live or die alone. If we rise, we lift others up; if we fall, we drag others down.

This is all perfectly familiar to us. We see the unoffending child of the drunkard born with an hereditary temptation to drink, and we see the child of the good father, from no merit of its own, born with healthy instincts and desires. It is this interdependence which brings the hard things. Where would the Arab slave trade of Africa be to-day, if the Christians of the sixth century had not so debased their religion that Mahomet, a reformer on wrong lines, arose?

So here, in mercy, comes in the warning note of pain. Wrong, cruelty, injustice are not evil alone; they are miserable, they hurt. Therefore at this very point we begin to see the law of sacrifice, the law by which the sting of evil may be taken from pain, making it a sacred and even a beautiful thing. According to this law all life is won through suffering. The seed dies before the new germ sees the light. Every birth means anguish, every effort means exhaustion, every victory means a struggle; through the grave and gate of death comes resurrection.

By this law the strong serves the weak, the greater yields its life for the less. It is clear that in the government of the world pain is on the side of deliverance. I know some will doubt whether this is true, remembering the seemingly bad effect of suffering on some natures, the deterioration, selfishness and loss

* Arthur Clough.

of hold on goodness which we have witnessed. But in estimating the effect of a persistent cause, we must ask, not for the exceptional cases, but for the common effects. For one case where pain has produced selfishness I see a hundred where it has produced generosity. It is the inherited sin, and not the suffering, which deteriorates the nature.

Now, we do not forget that the process of making that is going on in the world is twofold. The individual is being made at the same time that the races of men and of all living things are being matured and developed.

It therefore ought to throw light on the question if we ask what has pain done for me personally? Physically it has been a warning note, telling where mischief lurked; mentally it has nerve'd to effort, it has strangely trained our spirits; it has in a wonderful way multiplied our capacity for sympathy, the very weakness of it has brought us into touch with God and man. We see in others what extraordinary beauties it reveals. In the Welsh railway accident last June, a party of ordinary Sunday-school trippers developed sudden heroism. A little boy of ten begged that his mother might not be told how badly he was hurt. A girl with a broken leg and fractured thigh said gently, "Go and see to others." A man enclosed in wreckage held a candle aloft for two hours while his comrades were being dug out.

As I have now been writing a curious thing has happened. A lovely delicate prismatic reflection from a piece of pottery became visible directly a shadow fell upon the sheet of paper. In the light it disappeared, but in the shadow there it lay, exquisite, enchanting.

As we turn from the individual to the masses our hearts fail, I know, and we cease to expect the same compensations or training or results. We think of the horses and mules in Spain and Italy tortured needlessly for centuries. We think with anguish of the sixty thousand massacred Armenians. Or we find ourselves in the midst of an Indian famine, the people suffering in millions, the earth and sky pitiless, the faces of old and young worn to the last point of endurance, patient but hopeless. What does pain do for all these? Can we believe that God cares?

Remember, He is not man, limited, soon exhausted with numbers. His capacity for caring, for realising units, is simply infinite. No idea of God is rational which limits His intellect and will; and this will we hold to be love—love which led Him to give Himself to face pain and humiliation, and be the greatest sufferer of all in permitting and enduring His creatures' pain.

In His life on earth, our Lord was against misery just as He was against sin, and He always removed it as soon as He could. People often merely told Him something was wrong, and knew that when it was in His hands it would be sooner or later be set right.

This is our comfort with regard to the suffering of animals. He is against it; He would have us exert ourselves to end it. The animal creation suffers because it shares our nature and our lot. The compensations may some day be one of those surprises that far more than satisfy us.

"It is sooth that sin is the cause of all this pain, but all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well." *

"Truth ever on a scaffold,
Wrong for ever on the throne;
Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above His own." †

There is no reason to think, from the point of view, that each one of those Armenian victims was not remembered and dealt with as you and I feel we have been dealt with in our sorrows. In every place where there was a massacre in Armenia, there has also been a revival of true spiritual religion. If the results of this Indian famine are to be in any degree a drawing together of races, an improvement of village life, especially by abolishing the fatal power of the money-lender, future generations will bless those who suffered and helped to bring deliverance. Great awakenings seem to ask great prices of pain. The slave-trade was not found an intolerable disgrace till its wrongs were endured and realised.

But there is perhaps a farther extension in the interdependence of creation. How do we know what the effect of the events in this world may be upon the rest of the universe?

The matter is shrouded in mystery. We are told of Job, an honest, brave, good man, who, for some cause utterly unaccountable to himself, suffered long and cruelly. In the end he opened his eyes upon the unseen, and was satisfied; but he never knew—what we know—that wonderful beings belonging to another sphere were looking on and being taught lessons, that they never would have learnt without watching that struggle, to be absolutely faithful in weakness and pain and loss.

How, then, shall we face the pain of the world? First with hope. Remember, the pain belongs to a condition of things that is passing away. He who rules is against the sin, but He is also heart and soul against the misery. He suffers more than we do in the long struggle of deliverance, but the end is sure. The promise is certain that the whole creation will be set free. Therefore let our hope never for one instant fail.

But then we must face it too with willingness—a willingness that can freely trust that infinite power of caring for each living unit of creation. Here, as elsewhere, the path of obedience is the path of insight. A world such as this without suffering would become far more hopelessly sad than anything we have yet seen. "What should we sinful creatures be, if there were no pain?" asks an old saint. We must be willing to meet all our own share of disappointment, and all the possible troubles of those we love, trusting not in any present deliverance, but only in the depths of the character of Him who is over all.

That was a beautiful story of the two sisters. The strong, capable, younger one was suddenly disabled by an accident and taken to a hospital; the weak, incapable invalid was left at home alone. My friend found the younger sister constantly repeating to herself the 23rd Psalm, altering the pronouns to suit it to her sister; "The Lord is her shepherd, therefore she can lack nothing. He shall feed her in a green pasture, and lead her forth beside the waters of comfort."

There is scarcely a more perfect instance of the way in which such trust has been justified than that recorded in the last entry of Captain Allen Gardner's diary. He had gone in 1850 on a mission to the heathen inhabitants of Patagonia. After a year's labour, among immense difficulties, he and his five companions were starved to death at Spanish Harbour. Their remains were found some time after, and pencil notes in a journal. The last ran thus: "Great and marvellous are the loving-kindnesses of my gracious God unto me. He has preserved me hitherto, and for four days, although without bodily food, without any feelings of hunger or thirst."

And then—and this is a very noteworthy point—we must face the pain of the world with a resolute choice and determination not

to spend our lives doubting, "Whenever we stand in front of a mystery which we cannot read, whether of nature, history or experience, we have to choose whether we will still believe in Christ and through Him in the Father, shutting our eyes to every contradiction; or whether we will believe in the contradiction and shut our eyes to the face of Christ. One or the other we must put our trust in, one or the other we must ignore. . . . Shall we trust in the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, His Father and our Father? or shall we trust in the powers of Doubt, Denial and Darkness,—the riddles of nature, of history and of experience?"

We do not suppose that belief is in itself a matter of will—it is primarily a matter of reasonable evidence; but when we have to balance the reasons for and against the trust in an Unseen righteous Person, we are wise to give immense weight to the truth that the one solution that lies like a clear sky behind the mystery and conflict, is that of a Father who is patiently restoring an immense and complicated living creation.

This bracing of the soul has a most definite effect. Miss Frances Power Cobbe tells in her autobiography how as a girl she lost all hope in an unseen holy Being, and was filled with despair; when one day the thought stirred within her, could she not rise up, live actively up to the right, and good she still held to, so that if there were a God, He would approve? From that time she prayed again, and faith in God returned. "Act as though you believed," came as a voice from the unseen to another, known to many of us here, who, hearing it, obeyed and found assurance.

And lastly, set to work. Plunge into the flames and save some one. Run into the waves and throw a rope to the wreck. Brooding over the mysteries of suffering and doing nothing demoralises our whole nature.

Professor Rendel Harris, who said that he went reluctantly to see if he could help the Armenians in their awful distress, told us that he went a pessimist and returned an optimist. As soon as we begin to try to clear away the injustice and misery and wrong, we begin to understand, to hope, to glow with the warm touch of responding hope and love; and to our astonishment, we gradually see that after all joy and light and colour are the predominating things, and not sorrow and darkness and gloom.

For that is the truth. Life, and not death, is what wins and conquers and endures:

"The poet king is great and glad." *

Sick people and sad people turn instinctively to the cheerful, bright friend, and not to the mournful one.

We, who are weak and strained with effort, are far too apt to concentrate our attention on the griefs and wrongs that are crying for redress, and we let ourselves forget that happiness is the evident intention of creation. An observant happy person can add in a hundred little ways daily to the comfort and welfare of the living things he comes near. Do not let the shadow of brooding gloom come over you: "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." One who knew the end of suffering said, with assurance: "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." Yes, and that means that "sorrow is the very stuff joy is made of."

A day will come when we shall thank God that He laid our lot and that of all the beings we long to help, in this still young world of strife and mystery, of happiness and of growth, and, as Dr. Vaughan calls it, of opportunity and wonder.

* Mother Julian of Norwich.
† Whittier.

* E. B. Browning.

OUR CLIMATE.

By "THE NEW DOCTOR."

"UNCERTAIN as weather" is an old saw, but it is none the less expressive for being old. Most of us are inclined to grumble at this uncertainty and, truly, it proves sometimes very unkind. When you have arranged a picnic for Tuesday; when Monday and Wednesday are gloriously sunny and bright, but on the Tuesday, the only day you care about, it pours in torrents all day long, you do wish that our summer was a little more settled.

But there is another side to the question. Settled weather is not synonymous with pleasant weather. The climate of parts of Norway and Scotland is settled—settled rain for three hundred and fifty days out of the three hundred and sixty-five. Nothing can be more settled than the climate of the Sahara or the great Australian deserts, but it does not seem particularly pleasant for all its sunshine.

Foreigners, especially Americans, are always maligning our weather. Let Brother Jonathan say what he likes about our "samples," they are quite as good as his, and if they do not last quite so long, well—we have greater variety!

By the way, talking of weather samples reminds me that a friend of mine, just returned from America, told me that there was little to choose between New York and London as regards weather. Both are subject to the same sudden variations of temperature and atmospheric pressure; in both to-day is as totally unlike yesterday as it will be to-morrow; but in the western land the weather is, on the whole, less pleasant.

Until the "influenza" came to take its place nearly every form of illness that affected us was put down to "our wretched climate." If we had a sore throat, a toothache, a headache, rheumatism, a boil or a corn it was due to the weather. It was "the heat yesterday" or "the cold last night," or "that thunder-storm last week."

Let us think about what the weather can do and what it cannot. But before we consider these points, it is as well to remember that we cannot alter it. We may condemn but we cannot reform it. If, therefore, we are to avoid its pernicious effects we must learn how to combat them, and this we can do.

The weather alone cannot be the cause of any illness or affection, not even that of the most trivial kind. It requires some other factor besides; that factor is resident in ourselves, it is—well—I don't know, neither does anyone even though he gives it a name. Call it individual peculiarity, idiosyncrasy, inherent disposition, liability to certain diseases or what you will. As none of these expressions mean anything definite you do not commit yourself by using them.

When we say the climate is the cause of an affection we therefore mean that the climate together with an unknown factor caused that illness. The latter factor being unknown, we cannot combat it; so we must confine our attention to the former and do our best to render ourselves free from its evil effects.

The conditions of the climate which have an influence upon health may be divided into three groups: first, the state of the weather, for instance, heat, cold, mist, rain and electrical conditions; secondly, those due to position and the local conditions of the soil, such as a marshy, seaside, or mountainous district or a clay or sandy soil, etc., and lastly, some germ or factor residing in the soil which produces some special disease, for example, goitre, malaria or cretinism.

I wish it to be clearly understood that my remarks refer only to the British Isles. Some conditions of the weather, which I have described below as being practically harmless in England, are often exceedingly dangerous in the tropics.

Excessive droughts are not common in England. When they do occur they are accompanied by great heat, and the two together do produce certain disquieting symptoms. Lassitude, giddiness, indigestion and sickness are attributed to this cause. The epidemics and more serious diseases that so often follow great heat or droughts are due to interference with the water supply.

Typhoid fever and hydrocephalus are thought by most people to be due to heat, but both of these are due to germs, and the weather is a very secondary matter, if indeed, it has any causal influence.

Constant rain, and consequently a prolonged moist condition of the atmosphere is held to be the cause of about nine-tenths of the diseases of mankind. Moisture of itself can do little harm. The body is always moist; the skin is never dry during life, it would die if it were. Four-sevenths of the body consists of water, so what harm can the extra moist condition of the air do?

But I do not wish you to say that I disbelieve in the effect of damp in producing illness. I do nothing of the kind. I only say that of itself dampness is not important. It is the combination of damp with cold that does harm. When we come to speak of cold I shall show you what serious results may follow exposure to cold and wet.

Mist may be defined as cold, damp air, and it produces many afflictions of the lungs, due chiefly, if not entirely, to its coldness.

Cold is really a very fertile cause of illness. Its method of action has been "explained" in many ways, but as none of these explanations are satisfactory I shall not trouble you with them.

Cold and damp together produce what are popularly called "chills." These chills are very dangerous and often form the starting-point of many ailments, both trivial and serious. You might live constantly in the rain, if you never got cold, and it would do you no harm, but when once you become cold it is another matter altogether.

We all know how common it is to get a sore throat or a head-cold after being exposed to inclement weather. When one comes to more serious affections, such as pneumonia, it must be remembered that a chill is one of the symptoms, and so one must be very careful not to consider the chill, which is a symptom, as the cause of the disease. We know now that pneumonia is caused by an organism.

Great heat is often responsible for very serious results, not so much in this country as abroad. Sunstroke or heat-stroke is perhaps the most important of these. It is singular, however, that a disease almost precisely similar is sometimes produced by sleeping in the light of the full moon in tropical climates. This rather suggests that it is the light and not the heat which produces this affection. Sunstroke is mentioned twice in the Bible, and is probably one of the oldest known diseases, though for a long time it was confounded with apoplexy.

Besides the ever-varying weather, soil and locality, which are stationary factors, are also important from the point of view of the physician.

There are, as every one knows, malarial

districts, goitrous districts, fever districts, etc., in almost every part of the world.

The Fen country is the last home of malaria in England, and even there it is becoming rarer every year. Doubtless before many years are accomplished it will become, like the "large copper" butterfly of the same country, a thing of the past.

There are many districts in England where goitre or "Derbyshire neck" is common. The best known of these districts is, as its name suggests, Derbyshire. Cretinism, a form of idiocy, also occurs in the same places, and as both this and goitre are due to affection of the thyroid gland, both have doubtless the same cause. This cause is usually said to be excess of lime in the water, but it is doubtful if this explanation is correct.

What can we do to prevent the deleterious effects of climate? When it is hot you can dress lightly; when cold clad yourself warmly, and if it is wet you must do the best you can to remain dry. If you are unfortunate enough to have malaria or goitre you should remove from the district where it was developed. This is all. It needs no physician to tell you that. Your own intelligence could direct you so far.

Everyone seems to know by instinct how to dress lightly when the weather is warm, but it is surprising how ignorant most persons are when it comes to warmth.

The popular idea seems to be that warmth can only be obtained by heavy clothing, and the heavier the clothes are the warmer they must be. As a general rule this is correct, but the proposition upon which it is founded is incorrect. If you were to dress in silver mail and go out into the frost, you would quickly freeze to death, notwithstanding the weight of your garment.

It is not upon the weight but upon the conductivity to heat of the material used that its warmth depends. Most of our clothes are bad conductors of heat. Flannel is one of the worst possible; it is, therefore, one of the best of all materials to wear. It keeps out the heat of the sun in the summer and keeps in the heat of the body during winter.

Another point about clothing. We talk of a warm coat, etc., but no substance used as clothing possesses or gives any warmth of its own. It only prevents the heat manufactured by the body from escaping. Air is a bad conductor of heat, and therefore loose clothing is warmer than is usually supposed.

Singular as it may appear, white is the best colour to wear both in summer and winter, but its extreme impracticability during the rainy months prevents it from being used during winter.

The animals that live in the frozen North change the colour of their costume during winter, becoming white. This is chiefly as a protection against enemies, but it also helps to keep them warm.

The seaside does not agree with everybody. Gouty or asthmatic persons do not as a rule get on well near the sea. This fact is said to be due to excess of ozone in the air.

Talking of ozone, what pretty and romantic tales we hear of this substance. I have heard of it as "The essence of life," "The element upon which health is dependent," that "Life was impossible without it," that "though a gas like the air, it was of a deep and beautiful azure colour," that it had "a most fragrant smell," and that it possessed other virtues as great and many as those of the philosopher's stone!

Always ready to learn and deeply impressed

by the accounts of this most wonderful substance, I determined to make some ozone. I made some, a large bottle full, by no means without trouble or expense. Having taken the bottle full of oxygen and converted as much as possible into ozone, I tightly corked the bottle and took it out of my room into the sunlight so as to be better able to appreciate its "deep and beautiful azure colour." "I must have made a mistake! It differed in no way from the air outside the bottle! Perhaps the quantity was insufficient to present the deep azure colour."

Recollecting the story of the 'Efret who was imprisoned in the copper bottle, I thought perhaps my ozone might treat me in the same manner as the above-mentioned 'Efret did the fisherman. But this substance apparently only possessed good qualities, so curiosity got the better of prudence, and I returned to my room and opened the bottle.

A smell something between that of lucifer matches and chlorinated lime filled the room. I began to sneeze and cough. Tears rolled down my cheeks and I felt half suffocated. I opened the window and threw out the bottle. I must have made a mistake somewhere! But no, I took some of the ozone to one of the most celebrated chemists then alive, and was told "that is ozone sure enough."

I have never used ozone medicinally and I never shall.

Ozone is produced by lightning, and it is said to be the cause of the unpleasant feelings that distress so many people during a thunderstorm. Except at the seaside and during a storm, ozone is very rarely present in the air in an appreciable quantity.

The seaside is not the panacea for all conditions of mind and body that it is supposed to be. I like the seaside immensely myself, and like to see children paddling. But what-

ever may be said to the contrary, man is not a wader, and it can do children no good to paddle all day long—as most mothers consider essential when they take their children to the seaside. A physician once told me that he believed more harm than good resulted from allowing children to run about with their feet in the water. There is another danger in this amusement and one that I personally believe to be far more important; that is that broken bottles are by no means rare at the seaside, and they can inflict wounds of a most serious nature. Children who paddle ought to wear light boots or shoes to protect their feet. Sandals would be splendid things for the purpose. If this matter were seen to and visitors at the seaside would not be so wickedly thoughtless as to throw bottles, sardine-tins and other rubbish into the sea close to the shore half the disadvantages of a seaside holiday would be abolished.

A GROUP OF SCHOOL-BOYS.

By K. E. COLEMAN, Author of "Little Leo," "The Red Topaz," etc.

CHAPTER III.

THE END OF ROBIN KING.

It was the middle of July; it only wanted a week to the midsummer holidays, and the choicer spirits of the Paxton Grammar School were in more than their usual high spirits. Such boys as Robin King, for instance, seemed absolutely to suffer through the impossibility of finding sufficient vent for their exuberant youth.

It was one Saturday morning, and the great school-room was filled with a restless crowd who were counting the half-hours and even the minutes to twelve o'clock, when they would be released.

A sudden inspiration as to how to spend the afternoon came to Robin King as he sat with a sum in front of him, and his thoughts anywhere except with the problem in his exercise-book. The idea was too good to be kept to himself, so Robin surreptitiously tore a leaf from his book, scribbled down the message, wrapped it round a marble, and threw it dexterously across the room to Fergus Hume. Unfortunately Fergus did not see the missile, which, Robin's aim being good, hit him on the nose, and provoked a natural exclamation, which attracted the attention of the master, whose desk was nearest.

"What was that, Hume?" he asked sharply.

"I don't know, sir. Something hit me," replied Fergus; then, catching Robin's eye, he looked hastily round, spied the missile, which had rolled under the form, secreted the paper in his pocket, and innocently held up the marble for the master's inspection.

"Who threw that?" was the very natural inquiry. A dead silence was the only answer. Robin King would have scorned to tell a lie to save his skin; but his code of honour was not sufficiently quixotic to lead him to incriminate himself needlessly, so he fixed his attention on his sum with praiseworthy diligence.

"If I catch a boy throwing anything in school again, I shall cane him," said the master, and Robin winked at Fergus to emphasise the if.

How little did he or anyone think that that was the last prank he would ever play in school!

Twelve o'clock struck at last, and the boys rushed out with shouts of glee.

"Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can."

It was a lovely morning, the first fine day after an unusually long spell of wet weather, so no wonder they were jubilant.

Robin linked his arm in that of Fergus. "Well," he inquired, "what do you think of it?"

"First rate. Who shall we ask to go with us?"

"Wilson, of course, and Jimmy Short, and Spider, and Percy Young, and Dobbie Minor."

"No, not little Dobbie. He's sure to tell his brother, and, if that sneak comes, I for one won't go."

"We'll make him promise not to say anything about it. I like little Dobbie. If it hadn't been for him, I shouldn't be alive now, no more would Spider."

"All right, let him come, only mind you impress upon him that he's not to tell his brother. Hi there, Wilson!"

"What's up?"

"We're going to Bramstone Woods this afternoon. Will you come?"

"Rather! Which way shall we go—by the road or the cliffs?"

"The cliffs, the cliffs!" cried Robin excitedly. "It will be awful sport."

"They're awfully dangerous, you know, especially after rain. I think we had much better not," said Fergus.

"Rubbish! They're safe enough. And I say, boys, if we go that way we shall go through Bramstone, and there's the jolliest little inn, where you can get a ripping tea for nine-pence."

That settled it. Six out of the seven boys interested voted unanimously for the cliffs, and even Fergus gave way, only stipulating that they should go by the road so as to have a chance of reaching the woods alive.

"Mother," said Robin when he had reached home, "can you spare me ninepence? I'm going with some fellows to Bramstone Woods this afternoon, and we're going to have tea at the inn afterwards, and I haven't a penny."

His mother sighed a little as she handed him the desired amount. It was so very hard to make both ends meet, and Robin always spent the modest sum she allowed him for pocket-money the day he received it, so that these additional calls for sixpence here or a shilling there were frequent enough to be felt as a burden. But Robin pocketed the coins with a careless "thanks, mother," little

dreaming of the self-sacrifice which the gift entailed.

He was very much excited at dinner-time, and went off immediately afterwards in the highest spirits. His mother kissed him tenderly at parting. "Take care of yourself, my Robin," she said, little thinking that that was the last time she would see her darling in health and strength.

Robin ran whistling down the road to the appointed meeting-place, and the seven boys started off for their six miles walk in the most exuberant spirits, making the quiet country road echo with their mirth, so that everyone they passed turned to watch them with a smile.

Bramstone Woods were reached at last, and here the boys became riotous. The place was a rocky gorge cleft in two by a brawling little stream, and there were big rocks to scramble over, trees to climb, and here and there an adventurous leap over the foaming beck to be attempted. Robin, always the foremost in danger, insisted on risking his life by climbing an oak-tree, which his six companions all voted as impossible; however, he reached the ground in safety with no worse mishap than torn breeches, a catastrophe of too frequent occurrence to disturb him at all, though it might give his mother some hours of patient toil to mend them.

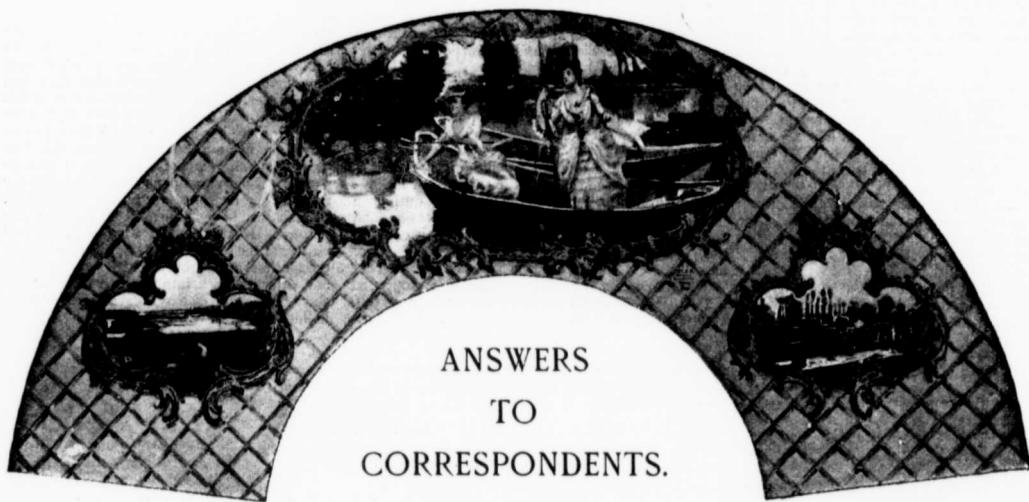
At length they grew tired of scrambling, and, with thoughts of tea in their minds, set off for the village of Bramstone, which lay a couple of miles distant on their homeward way.

"Tea for seven, with lots of jam and cake, and as quick as ever you can, please," was Fergus Hume's comprehensive order, and the landlady, who had some knowledge of the grammar-school boys, hustled about and did her best to satisfy her impatient guests.

They were so uproarious over their tea, that she put her head into the room more than once in fear for her crockery; but, wonderful to state, nothing was broken, and at last, their appetites satisfied, and full of the satisfaction which a full stomach affords to a boy all the world over, the party prepared to set out on their homeward journey, leaving the landlady to contemplate the ravages they had made in her provisions, and lament over the smallness of her profits.

"Now for the cliffs!" cried Percy Young, as they filed out of the doorway.

(To be concluded.)



MEDICAL.

AGGIE.—There are several hospitals in London devoted entirely to the treatment of diseases of the skin. Every large general hospital has a department given up to this specialty. The rule in most hospitals is that you may do so, and obtain a letter from a subscriber for your second visit. A list of subscribers is placed in the hospital. At some institutions this rule (which is more a form than anything else) does not obtain.

"DEVOTED READER."—It is not possible for us to tell you exactly what is wrong with your daughter's hair, because you do not supply us with sufficient information. Does her hair fall out from every part of the scalp, or only in patches leaving bald places? If the former, washing the head occasionally with boracic acid solution (1 in 40) may do good. If the hair falls out in patches, applying a simple ointment will help to cure the condition.

MARGARET.—There are a thousand and one preparations for strengthening the hair, some of which are very efficacious. Lotions and pomades containing cantharides and rosemary are among the most trustworthy.

S. FIELD.—The symptoms you describe are in all probability due to your ear trouble. The best advice we can possibly give you is to go to the hospital where you were originally treated.

PHYLIS BROWNE.—You say "I think I have very poor blood, and not much of it," yet "I don't think that I am anaemic." What do you suppose anaemia is but "very poor blood and not much of it?" It is only in severe anaemia that the lips become white. The symptoms you describe are those of anaemia, and therefore we refer you to the advice we gave you first. The diet you are having should be taken after meals. If you prefer taking physic in the form of pills, you might take "Blaud's pill" instead; one pill twice a day after meals.

"RONALD'S DARLING."—"Nervousness" is a comprehensive term, and unless you furnish an accurate description of your particular case, it is hopeless for us to suggest a remedy. By nervousness, do you mean shyness? Do you feel nervous when talking with your friends, or only in the presence of strangers? In the presence of all strangers? or only of those of the opposite sex? Have you been nervous all your life? If not, for how long have you been troubled? What other forms, if any, does your "nervousness" take besides shyness? Are you subject to fainting-fits, palpitation, breathlessness, shuddering, indigestion? Any symptoms that might suggest anaemia as a cause of the trouble? Lastly, do you belong to a "nervous family?" When you have answered these questions, we would be able to supply you with some definite information. As to whether your nervousness would interfere with your following nursing as a vocation—well, it depends upon the answers to the above questions.

"OLD GIRL."—We agree with the opinion expressed by your medical man as to the nature of your affection—it is eczema. Of course we do not know what you have tried in the way of treatment, but we suggest one of the following applications: Calamine ointment, boracic ointment or ichthiol ointment. Unless you suffer from gout, rheumatism, diabetes, or kidney disease, internal medication is not required.

MARY.—The nerves of a decayed tooth can be destroyed by various means, both chemical and mechanical. The mechanical method is the most satisfactory, but this of course must be done by a dentist. If you have decayed teeth in your jaw, it is exceedingly important either to have them extracted or properly stopped, for they are a constant danger to health.

GIRLS' EMPLOYMENTS.

ADA and MILDRED B. (*Nursing in a Children's Hospital*)—You are both too young to be admitted as hospital probationers. There are so many girls like yourselves who prefer nursing children to grown-up people that it is difficult to obtain admission to large hospitals such as that in Great Ormond Street, London. If at the age of two-and-twenty or thereabouts a vacancy could be found for you, it is probable that you would have to pay a fee.

We are sorry for Ada, who lives in the country, and cannot get a girl friend. But we hope she might find a good opening in a school for girls, or in a governess's service. We hope she might be utilised in studying ambulance work and hygiene. Very likely

the Secretary of the National Health Society, 50, Berners Street, London, W., could tell her that some course of lectures is being given by one of the Society's lecturers in her part of the country, and, if not within walking distance, at least within a bicycle ride of her home. Some knowledge of dressmaking, and especially of the cutting-out of children's garments, might profitably be acquired during these years of preparation, for supposing that at any time the hospital career should have to be abandoned, it would be possible for both our readers to earn a good living as trained children's nurses in private families.

AUILLIE (*Waitress in a Hotel*)—Waitresses are comparatively little employed in hotels of any size and importance. But there can be no doubt that if you could obtain hotel experience it would be of great service to you should you in after life wish to go out as waitress for private dinner-parties and other entertainments, where women are not frequently preferred to men. Try to obtain a situation as still-room maid, and then work your way up. Your idea of cooking lessons from a professional waiter is an excellent one, and should certainly be carried out. A point to consider is that it is not easy to change from private to hotel service, or vice-versa. Hotel work offers the fuller training of the two. Either waitress or a parlour-maid, however, who thoroughly knows her work, is always sure to obtain employment.

ANXIOUS BEGINNER AND A GENERAL FOREMAN'S DAUGHTER (*Lady's-Maid*)—Why does "Anxious Beginner" think she must know French well in order to obtain a situation as lady's-maid? This is not in the least degree requisite. But what is necessary is a taste for dressmaking, and "A General Foreman's Daughter," who confesses she does not much like this kind of work, had better perhaps turn her attention to some other occupation, such, for instance, as that of children's nurse, towards which she seems to have some inclination. Dressmaking, millinery, and hairdressing are crafts a lady's-maid should understand. A pleasant, companionable manner is also, of course, a strong recommendation.

ISABEL DE SAY (*Army Nursing*)—No nurse is received into the Army Nursing Service until she has been trained in a general hospital. For this purpose we should advise you to try to obtain a probationship at the London Hospital, or, otherwise, at St. Thomas's.

GUN TINNS (*Cookery*)—Is there much chance for a girl to get a living by cookery? Certainly; the best of chances. We hear continually of the amazing difficulties ladies encounter in engaging cooks, even when they offer most liberal wages. Also there is a good opening in any large town for an active, energetic woman as visiting cook, who would superintend affairs in the kitchen when a dinner-party is impending. There is in your own town of Nottingham a school of cookery where you would be well taught. We think Miss Carey, of the Ropewalk, Nottingham, would be kind enough to give you information concerning it if you applied to her.

RITA (*Photography*)—In the photographic trade it is remarkable how short a time it is before a girl, holding negatives, but girls who are only capable of doing the finishing touches to the prints earn comparatively little. Try, then, to become an expert photographer and be content with nothing less than doing the best work. So many girls fail from want of ambition. The Polytechnic, in Regent Street, is an excellent school for a beginner, and many persons learn there in order to enter the trade afterwards.

WHITE GERANIUM (*Scholastic*)—People advertise little for governesses; but on the whole, you would be most likely to see such advertisements in the morning papers, or in such weeklies as the *Gardian* and the *Journal of Education*. The registry kept at the Governesses' Home, in Harley Street, is an exceedingly good one. You might also apply to the Teachers' Guild, 75, Grosvenor Gardens. But, despite registries and advertisements, the truth remains that a teacher usually obtains a post through the recommendation of her own character and qualifications. Your other question being of a medical character cannot be dealt with in this column.

MISCELLANEOUS.

E. C. H.—We have heard of the chain letter, and should think it an excellent way of collecting small sums of money, either used or unused, but preferably the latter, as it saves a girl to expend money to collect the used ones; nor can we ever comprehend what any "philanthropic person" would do with a million of old stamps!

ANXIOUS TO DO RIGHT.—The wife of a Baronet is Lady So-and-so, or Dame So-and-so, whether in speaking or in writing. You would address her as "Lady Smith." A Baron's wife would be addressed in writing, by her equals, as "The Lady West." With the wife of a Knight, it would be the same as that of a Baronet, only not Dame. The fact of their having sold their estates, and become impoverished, would not affect the question. We have only one title in Great Britain which goes with the castle and estates, and that is the Duke of Norfolk's second title, borne by his eldest son, i.e., the Earl of Arundel. This title goes with the castle of that name.