

SELECTIONS.

Human Builders.

All are architects of fate, Working in these walls of time, Some with massive dooms and great, Some with ornaments of rhyme. "Nothing useless is and low, Each thing in its place is true, And what seems but life show Strengthens and supports the rest. "For the structure that we raise This is with materials fitted, Our to-days and yesterdays, At the blocks with which we build." —Langfellow.

A Beautiful Simile.

This rhyme Is like the fair pearl necklace of the queen, That burst in dancing, and the pearls were split; Some lost, some stolen, some as relics kept, But never more the same, we side pearls. Ban down the silver threads to kiss each other On her white neck. So is it with this rhyme. It lives dependently on many lines, And every mislaid line differs; Yet is there one true line, the pearl of pearls: "Man dreams of Fame, while woman wakes to love." —Fenwick.

Not Alone.

No one is so unscathed by fate, No one so wholly desolate, But some heart, though unknown, Responds unto his own. Responds, as if with unseen wings An angel eaves his quivering strings, And whispers in its song, "Where hast thou stayed so long?" —Langfellow.

The Good Man's Departure.

Why weep you, then, for him, who, having won The honors of man's appointed years, At life's blessings all enjoyed, life's labor's done, Sincerely to his final rest has passed; While the soft memory of his virtues yet Lingers like twilight hues when the bright sun is set. —Reput.

WHAT OUR BOYS ARE READING.

Professor Sumner, of Yale, has been examining the flash story papers so widely read by boys, and in Scribner for March gives some earnest words of warning to parents, accompanied by specimens of the types described in the stories. Here is one:

Another type of hero very common in these stories is the city youth, son of a rich father, who does not give his son as much pocket money as the latter considers suitable. This constitutes stinginess on the father's part, although it might be considered pardonable, seeing that these young men drink champagne every day, treat the crowd generally when they drink, and play billiards for \$100 a game. The father, in this class of stories, is represented as secretly vicious and hypocritically pious. In the specimen of this class before us the young man is "discovered" in the Police Court as a prisoner, whence he is remanded to the Tombs. He has been arrested for collaring a big policeman, to prevent him from overtakeing a girl charged with pocket-picking. He interefered because he judged from the girl's face that she was innocent, and it is suggested, for future development in the story, that she was running away from insult, and that the cry of "stop thief" was to get help from the police and others to seize her. The hero, who is the son of a man worth five millions, and who is in prison under an assumed name, now sends for his father's clerk and demands \$1,000, saying that otherwise he will declare his real name and disgrace his family. He gets the money. He then sends for a notorious Tombs lawyer, to whom he gives \$500. With this sum his release is easily procured. He then starts with his cousin to initiate the latter into life in New York. They go to a thieves' college, where they see a young fellow graduated. His part consists in the taking of things from the pockets of a hanging figure, to the garments of which bells are attached, without causing the bells to ring. Of this a full-page illustration is given. The two young men then go up the Bowery to a beer saloon where the hero sustains his character by his vulgar familiarity with the girl waiters. Next, they hear a row in a side street. They find a crowd collected watching a woman who hangs from a third-story window, while her drunken husband beats and cuts her hands to make her fall. The hero solves this situation by drawing his revolver and shooting the man. As he and his friend withdraw unobserved, the former wards off the compliments of the latter by saying modestly that he could not bear to stand there and see such a crowd looking on, and not knowing what to do, so he just did the proper thing. Next day the hero, meeting the thieves' college graduate in the corridor of the Fifth Avenue hotel, agrees to receive and hold for him any booty he may seize in the bar-room; which he does. At night he and his friend go to a disreputable masked ball, where the hero recognizes his father in disguise amongst the dancers. Securing a place in the same set, during a pause in the dance he snatches the mask from his own and his father's face at the same moment. This startling incident is enforced by a full-page illustration. A friend suggests the question, What demon of truthfulness makes the artist put such brutal and vulgar faces on the men? In this class of stories, fathers and sons are represented as natural enemies, and the true position for the son is that of suspicion and armed peace.

LIFE LENGTHENED.—In all countries and all latitudes, the well-to-do live longer than the poor by an average of eleven years; this shows the deleterious influence of an anxious mind on the bodily health, the anxiety for to-morrow's bread. Pensioned persons live indefinitely long; poor-house of Great Britain can any day turn out a large army of men and women among the eighties and nineties who have been in these institutions for twenty and thirty years, owing in great part to an habitual feeling of confidence that some provision is made for the future, and the mind is at rest; but it must not be forgotten that the cleanliness, the plain food, and the regular habits, compulsory in those institutions, contribute greatly to the end.

FARM HOUSE CHAT.

Always in the dismal, stormy days I think of the farm houses all over the State, and wonder how they manage to keep a cheerful fire-side. Where there are restless little children it takes wonderful courage and patience to keep the glimmer of sunshine indoors, when all outdoors is dark with the driving storm, everything soaked and dripping, even the house itself springing new leaks in the most unexpected places.

When my children were small, the regular business of a rainy day was "to have good times"; first, with the household work, which with the children's help can be made almost as good as a play, if one will but take time and let them enjoy their eager fussing. What fun they can have with bits of dough. A little board, rolling-pin, little plates, or even pieces of broken crockery, a lump of dough and a chance at the stove-oven, will make a child happier than the most costly toy; and what is better, they do not get tired of this play-work, but are always ready to help mother cook, and make up really little cakes and dainty tarts to serve up on the "play-lunch."

The favorite game of stage-coach will often occupy a whole forenoon, and the amount of time, string and patience that goes into the harnessing alone is really wonderful. Of course the boy takes jealous charge of this department, with gallant hobby-horse for leader, a long line of well-matched chairs for team, and the big rocking chair for coach, with baggage-rack on the long rockers behind. The girl is equally busy packing the small trunks, boxes and bags for red baggage, dressing dolls in traveling reg., and even manufacturing an enormous wardrobe or two out of pillows and old clothes. If there are several boys all wanting to harness, drive, and do the same thing at the same time, the mother can teach them how much more fun and business there is when each has his own trade and sticks to it for a whole hour or two. One may start a hotel in a far corner of the room and deal out refreshments when the stage gets in. To make and hang his sign, set his table, and put his house in order, ought to keep him out of mischief quite a breathing spell.

Another little fellow may keep store and express office, having the serious sport of selling all the strings, whips, trunks, provisions, everything needed by the stage driver, hotel keeper, and all the passengers. So much business requires capital, and I will let out the secret that our "play money" was cut out of bright new tin. Some of those half-dollars are about the house yet, and the sight of one recalls many an old game of hook-agout, peddler, circus, ham organ, etc.

When children are tired of active plays, they will, if properly taught, put the house in prime order, and settle down quietly to the charming game of "paste-pot and scissors." I used to make a low table by laying a board upon two chairs, and if rough cover it with a newspaper. Then the little ones could draw up their low seats and have a grand time cutting big letters and pictures from old papers and almanacs, and pasting them into any old volume that may be condemned to this style of decoration.

A box of colored crayons or water-color paints fairly glorifies this sort of play, and the delight of the young artists over their green horses, pink cows and rainbow tinted "maas and ladies," will convince any reasonable mother that art culture in its rudest form is a paying thing for the little ones.

Playing school is a great treat for the older ones, especially when mother can take a little rest (?) and play school-ma'am, introducing, perhaps, some of the pleasant forbidden things of her own school days. In the district school when I was young, drawing a picture was a capital crime, and the unskilful artist, if caught, was doomed to stand out in the floor a weary long time, and hold at arm's length his poor little scroll for the school to goggle at.

Times are now so changed that drawing has its honored place in our best schools, and also, I hope, in the rainy day entertainment of these farm children I am thinking about. There is learning to write, at first with copies on a slate, then with all the dignity of pen and ink blots, and finally the tremendous business of a real letter with clean envelope, postage stamp and everything regular. My children felt pretty far advanced when they could write me a confidential letter with the news that they "wood like to mak sum molasses candy."

Reading, spelling, geography and multiplication table may have a share in the rainy-day pleasures, if they will leave off their airs and not be too bookish. Reading by turns a good story, reading in concert, "spelling down," taking journeys all over the Atlas into new countries and among strange people, and finally singing the multiplication table to the tune of Yankee Doodle is a very good closing exercise for our "play-school."

Some mothers find good use for the busy little hands in cutting and sewing carpet rag, braiding and knitting rags, piecing quilts, etc.; and a fair amount of work makes play all the merrier, if the mother has so loved and governed her children that she has them "well in hand" for business or pleasure. This loving and governing must be thorough-going, quiet and steadfast as the flight of time, never fussy and meddlesome and nagging, for the golden rule applies here as well as elsewhere, and to remember one's own young days and how we ought to have been treated is often a very good guide now that we hold the governing power. Affection for children is not so much a matter of course as most writers seem to consider it, but is one of the excellent things that may be cultivated and will always flourish in a good soil.

I have known a few parents who were always ready to confess that they never loved their children, and several more whose actions told the same story. We are all sure to meet at some bleak corner of life the sour and early parent, who is always grumbling that his children are stupid, awkward, never able to speak for themselves, etc., and who can see with half an eye that he has always treated them so rudely they could not possibly acquire the self-respect and unconscious ease so essential to good manners.

But this is not properly stated, for what I

mean is this: If children are treated as they ought to be they will never need to acquire self-respect and ease of behavior, which are, or should be, a precious birthright, not to be destroyed by the parent, but wisely encouraged. Let no one sneer at this by saying that two-thirds of the children need to be spanked for their impudence, sent to the Industrial school for their laziness, and generally brow-beaten and scolded for their other faults.

Again, I say it is the parents who should be blamed and "trouneed," if you please; for they have dared to bring these lives into the world, and then by neglect, or indifference, or hatefulness, or silly over-indulgence have spoiled them, or failed to bring them forward in harmony with the best and noblest conditions of life.

TOTAL DEPRIVACY AND ORIGINAL SIN. Are comfortable doctrines for those who will not study so earnestly the welfare of their children as that of the promising colts, calves and other farm products, or the business, whatever it is, by which they hope to make money. It is said that Mark Twain will make no confession of love for his children, but says that he "respects them for the sake of their father."

This seems to have a slight taint of selfishness, but these family matters are apt to be governed by the shortest-sighted selfishness. Can we not see that old age will find us the weaker party, and that we shall wish to be respected, and perhaps even loved by our children? Do we say they owe us respect and affection, because of the food, clothing and shelter given to their helpless years? But do not we owe them all that care of helpless years for having dared to bring them into the world. When it comes to these prime treasures of life, respect and affection, we may be disappointed if we expect something for nothing. One of the non-loving mothers said to me: "I shall be sure to give my child a good education and a chance to be somebody. I would rather see it dead this minute than to think it would grow up such a failure as some children are."

I said to her: "Then you must begin by loving your child. Keep it close in your heart all the way if you wish to guide its future. No sham or pretense of affection will do; and even with genuine love and patience it is also a great study all the way along how to manage most wisely. But then there is no other business in this world so noble as this of raising good and happy children—no other so worthy of careful study—no other in which self-sacrifice is so sure to bring happiness and the reward of well doing."

Now I did not really get off this speech, so sleek and smooth as it has been written. There were in the course of it about a dozen peevish and jerky exclamations from the woman who did not wish to listen to such stuff. Ah, indeed, we "preachers of righteousness" do have a hard time of it.

About a year ago one of my congregation told me that she thought I was doing more harm than good with all my talking and writing; for I could not make people over, and was far more likely to offend them. So she hit me pretty hard in return for a suggestion that her big girl of 11 years old should be taught to dress and undress herself before being sent away to school. The mother and daughter were visiting me, and I was never more astonished than when the former—who has nearly always lived on a farm and worked hard for a living—acknowledged that this stout, bright, healthy girl could not so much as change her own apron, or wait upon herself, as many a little girl four-year-old is easily taught to do. Of course I tried to improve the occasion by talking in a general way about our "motherly duties"; but, as a missionary, I had no rights that my friend was bound to respect, and so I lost my friend then and there.

Still I am not cured, but go on riding my old hobby at such a pace that to-day it has carried me far off the track and away from my present topic; at least I think the last chat suggested certain advantages we have in educating children on the farm, and promised to show up the bright side of them. Perhaps everybody can see as plainly as I can, but if the spirit moves me strongly in that direction I may go on in a future chat.—Mary Mountain, in Rural Press.

BAKING-POWDERS.—The modern baking-powders, as a rule, consist of tartaric acid and carbonate of soda, which evolve the necessary gas, when in contact with water, to make the bread light, leaving behind a residue of tartrate of soda. In practice, they are made by mixing together these two substances (first thoroughly dried and powdered) in nearly equal proportion, and then diluting the mixture thus made with any cheap material—such as flour or rice—equal to add to the bulk, and enable an apparently greater quantity of baking-powder to be sold for a given sum. Many excellent food authorities have objected to the use of baking-powders thus made, on the ground that it behooves us to be careful how we add to the already sufficiently large amount of mineral matter which we naturally consume daily. We should hesitate before we advised the whole bread of a family to be thus prepared, though for some of the minor articles of food only occasionally used, they may do little harm. Unfortunately, some of the manufacturers of baking-powders are guilty of the addition of alum in considerable quantities.—Dr. Hulsebrook.

CELEBRATING FOURTH OF JULY.—Potter's American Monthly publishes, in the department of "Notes and Queries," the following statement concerning what is called a "Fourth-of-July Family" living in Allentown, Pa. The parents, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Ward, have been married a little more than ten years, and the births of their eight children have succeeded each other in this regular order:

- July 4, 1869, a daughter, Bridget, living;
July 4, 1871, a son, James, dead;
July 4, 1872, a son, Barney, living;
July 4, 1873, a son, dead;
July 4, 1874, a son, Charles, living;
July 4, 1875, a daughter, Mary Ann, dead;
July 4, 1876, a son, dead;
July 4, 1877, a son, Winnie, living.
- It is mentioned in the statement that "Somebody" complains because the father has been unable to take part in Fourth-of-July celebrations out of town.

BABY MARION IN CHURCH.

Baby Marion went to meeting To hear her granpas preach, "Tis Thomas time, I must be good, I mustn't laugh nor sneer. "I've got my new bonnet on, And my pretty feathered hair, And my hair-died in my little muff, That's like Aunt Jane's white cut." So Marion went to meeting, As a roselid sweet and fair, She piped up in the singing, And bowed her head in prayer. She waved her wee wee lambs-ear-bonnet To her little phynams Gran, And tried to wipe a little tear, From off her mamma's face. She threw kisses to a lady Who sat across the aisle; Gave Dr. Maids some candy, Which made the phynams smile. She climbed upon a pewee, Whispering, "Danna, my little ball! I wish danna'd hold her, But then, perhaps he'd fall." Then Marion went home again, And jumped on papa's knee; "We all have been to meeting," "Danna we are dead, just you."

"Danna preached, 'A little baby Slept in the barn with cows; And men came and divin presents, And then they made him l.s.'"

—Christian Advocate.

RUSSIAN EXILES IN SIBERIA.—The Pall Mall Gazette has a harrowing account of the life of Russian offenders who are banished to Siberia. The exiles who live in the mines are consigned to the worst type and political offenders of the lot. They never see the light of day, but work and sleep all the year round in the depths of the earth, extracting silver and quicksilver under the eyes of taskmasters who have orders not to spare them. Iron gates, guarded by sentinels, close the lodges, or streets, at the bottom of the shafts, and the miners are railed off from one another in gangs of twenty. They sleep while recesses hewn out of the rock—very kennels—into which they must creep on all fours. Prince Joseph Lubomirski, who was authorized to visit one of the mines of the Oural, at a time when it was not expected, he would ever publish an account of his exploration in French, has given an appalling account of what he saw. Convicts racked with the joint-pains which quicksilver produces; men without hair and eyebrows had dropped off, and who were gaunt as skeletons, were kept to hard labor under the lash. They have only two holidays a year, Christmas and Easter; and all other days, Sundays included, they must toil until exhausted nature rob them of the use of their limbs, when they are hauled up to die in the infirmary. Five years in the quicksilver pits are enough to turn a man of thirty into an apparent senecarian, but some have been known to struggle on for ten years. No man who has served in the mine is ever allowed to return home; the most he can obtain in the way of grace is leave to come up and work in the road gangs, and it is the promise of this favor as a reward of industry which operates even more than the lash to maintain discipline. Women are employed in the mines at all sorts, and get no better treatment than the men. Polish ladies by the dozen have been sent down to rot and die, while the St. Petersburg journals were declaring that they were living as free colonists; and, more recently, ladies connected with nihilist conspiracies have been consigned to the mines in pursuance of a sentence of hard labor. It must always be understood that a sentence of Siberian hard labor means death. The Russian government will know that to live for years in the atrocious tortures of the mines is humanly impossible.

MILLIONS OF STOLEN MONEY.—The thirteen life companies which have collapsed since that set of thing began, are still in the hands of receivers. There is not the least probability that any of the baker's dozen will ever get a fresh start. Each proved so utterly rotten when daylight was let into it that it could never again get business, even though the insurance department gave permission to go ahead. The whole thirteen companies are managed (or mismanaged) by respectable men—men of good social standing—who attend the fashionable churches, and think it would be a good thing to take the ballot away from the working class. Not having the figures at hand just now, I cannot say exactly how many millions these respectable, religious, snuff-restriction gentlemen have stolen, or permitted to be stolen from the confiding policy holders, who were credulous enough to trust them. But the gross amount is no trifle. The liabilities of the Continental foot up \$5,300,000, and the receiver thinks that if the policy holders live long enough, they may ultimately get thirty-five cents a dollar. The liabilities of the Security amount to something over \$4,000,000, and it is doubtful if over twenty cents on the dollar will ever be paid. It would not be much out of the way to put down the aggregate stealings, or misappropriations, or whatever they may be called, at \$15,000,000. A large part of this sum was unquestionably squandered in loose management; but another large part was certainly spent by the officers in extravagant living.—From the Hartford Times.

A NARROW RAILROAD.—The narrowest railroad in the world is between North Billerica and Bedford, Massachusetts, a distance of eight and a half miles. The track is 10 inches wide. The engine and cars are proportionate with the width of the track. The passenger cars are an aisle in them and a seat on each side, instead of two seats, as in a full-grown car. There are 20 seats in each car. The train runs 12 miles an hour. One grade on the road is 135 feet per mile. The train consist of two passenger and two freight cars and an engine. The cars and engines have air brakes and all the modern improvements. Ordinary cars weigh four times as much as these little coaches. The cost of the road is \$4,500 per mile, and the running expenses are about one-fourth that of ordinary trains.

Of the 6,000,000 Roman Catholics in the United States, 1,237,000 are said to be Germans.