

WEST SHORE BOYS AND GIRLS

By Emily A. Kellogg.

"Don't fail to see the pond lilies at Lincoln park," was the injunction given a visitor to Chicago. "They are something rare and famous." And so they are. They have been the greatest attraction at that very beautiful park for the past two summers. Their formation, their fertilization and the regulation of their temperature was a great cost in both a scientific and financial way, even before the roots were brought from afar with which to stock them. Four continents have contributed of their floral treasures, and these exotics have required the most careful attention and study of their habits lest their constitutions should be undermined.

Although strangers to their present home, and to each other, individually, they have a strong bond of union—a family bond. With the exception of two or three cousins (and quite near cousins) they are all members of the *Nymphaea* family. When you are scientific and dignified you will call them by this, their botanical name, for they are such regal ladies as to deserve the most courtly address. The family name comes first. These botanic names, too, all mean something, and their common names are generally a translation into our common tongue of the more learned title. Now, our names mean something, or did originally. But few of us retain the characteristics for which our names were given to our ancestors. Not many of the Taylor family know how to handle a goose, while thousands upon thousands of the Smiths would be quite chagrined (and foolishly so) if required to make a living with hammer and forge. But these botanic families hold fast to their family traits and deserve their names.

The *Nymphaea* family is so named because of its queenly beauty and its watery home, for a nymph is goddess over the pure and running water.

Here at Lincoln park two African beauties grow side by side. The *Nymphaea Zanzibarensis*, or purple lily, tells you, by its name, of its old home, if you remember your geography lessons; while its sister, the *Nymphaea Dentata*, though much like our common pond lily, gains its name from its white, tooth-shaped petals. Among the most brilliant of the group are the rose colored lilies. These are the *Nymphaea Devonensis* and the *Nelumbium Nuciferum*, or crimson lotus of Japan. You will see, by the way, that this last named lily is not quite "one of the family," but is one of the cousins, and a very noted one. In ancient times it flourished in Egypt and was then regarded with great reverence. The botanists of these older days were not so scientific in their classifications as the great Swede, Linnæus, and called this flower a lotus, just as they did the *Nymphaea* lotus, which is also a sacred lily. The *Nelumbium* has a curious, spiral growth in the stalks of both leaf and flower. They are removed by the Hindus and burned as wicks in their sacred lamps. The lotus of the Nile has been for centuries the favorite flower of Egypt, and is often to be seen in statuary and other works of art. But it blooms in Lincoln park as modestly as though it were unknown to ancient art. A gay lily is the yellow one from Florida, quite unlike the little, yellow buds we find in our northern waters. Two of our own native white lilies are also growing in the pond, but too modestly refrained from blooming in the presence of the foreign beauties the day I saw them. The *Nymphaea Pycnantha* tells you by her name that she is a dwarf. She comes from China, and has a thrifty growth and blossoms freely. Her little, white blossoms are numerous and beautiful. But the queen of all, as you may know by her name, is the *Victoria Regia*. The *Nymphaea* are proud, indeed, to call this regal flower cousin. This noble blossom, in its best estate, measures twelve inches across. The ones I saw were not so large, but very beautiful. They are of a rich cream color, and on the second day turn rose color. But the great, round, green leaves are the greatest wonder. They measure from four to five feet across, and are of marvelous structure, being smooth on the upper side and turning up around the edge like a jelly cake pan. They will bear up a considerable weight; a child has been floated safely upon one of them. But to understand its strength of structure you must have one of these great leaves turned over. Then you will see the great veins running out from the stem, like a fan, and the smaller veins crossing and re-crossing the greater ones. This is nature's plan for graceful strength, and served as a model, we are told, to the man who conceived the plan of the first Crystal Palace.

Have you ever played "progressive observation?" It is somewhat in the line of the game of senses previously suggested in WEST SHORE. The leader of the game must spend some time and thought in preparation. On a round table he arranges all sorts of things, as a ball, a knife, a pocket-book, a pen-wiper, a spoon, a glove, etc. He should have a great variety of small things. When the table is ready the leader covers it. Each observer

is furnished with pencil and paper. The leader then removes the cover and gives all three minutes to observe the articles on the table. At the bell tap the cover goes on again, and for three minutes each is busy making a written list of everything he has noted. The leader now taps the bell and calls upon one of the party to read his list, while the others check off on their lists what he reads. The next one then reads from his paper the names of objects omitted by the first one. All continue in this way until every list has been read and checked. Prizes may be given in this game, the first being for the longest list, the second for the largest number of objects not mentioned by any other observer, and the booby prize, of course, for the shortest list. In using prizes it is important that they be inexpensive. Even if some are able to purchase costly gifts, it is a bad example to set. It is very easy to let the matter degenerate into a purse rivalry. This is foolish and pernicious among adults and doubly so among the young, who, above all, should ignore in their social circles the question of poverty and riches. To award costly prizes might also stimulate that desire for unearned gains, which is the bane of the gambler's life, and is to be resolutely shunned. Let the girls make the prizes, and thus exercise their taste and ingenuity for the general delight. You may possibly think best to purchase the booby prize. A jumping-jack presented to a stalwart youth, or a pewter tea set to a blooming girl of sixteen makes great gaiety; yet your own sense of humor may improve on anything there is in the shops. In "progressive observation" great skill may be exercised in arranging the table, and the leader should be one of the most mature of the party. It is quite improving to compare notes as to what guided each in observing the objects. One will classify naturally by material, mentally grouping the wooden articles and the woolen ones, etc. Another's eye will group the articles as they lie together on the table. Those who are ambitious of improvement will be glad to try the game over again. In this case let the leader re-arrange the articles before allowing the new trial. Old and young will join together in this game with great enjoyment and marked improvement in the power of observation—one of the most valuable of our faculties, and one which is of great practical use in the greatest of games which men call *Life*.

TALKS AT HOME.

IV—THE COURTEOUS RESPONSE—Emiline and Gussie were chatting over their sewing last night, when Emiline casually remarked: "I saw Mr. Barnes yesterday and he said he had a note from you a while ago."

"And why," asked Gussie, with a flash of her eye, "did he not answer my note?"

"Why," said Emiline, trying to recall the conversation, "I don't know. He seemed to think it did not need any answer."

"Well, I wish people would show common politeness about answering notes. I wrote to him more than three weeks ago, on business of our committee, and asked him to either answer or let me see him at once. Here he waits all this time and then mentions to a third party that he had a note from me. I like that," and Gussie gave a scornful toss to her head.

Few young people, or old people, for that matter, are particular to respond promptly to notes, letters and invitations. Like our Mr. Barnes, they "seem to think" no answer is required. I say "seem to think," for it is largely lack of thought. They do not thoughtfully consider the matter or they would act more wisely and more courteously. If Miss Gussie had met Mr. Barnes and had asked him the same question, the answer would have been most kindly and promptly given, or he would have accused himself of great rudeness.

A prompt response is even more urgent a duty in the case of receiving an invitation. It is only justice to the friend who gives you an invitation that you let her know at once whether or not it is accepted by you. I once invited a large company of friends to attend an evening entertainment and spend the night at my home. I lived in the country and at such a distance from supplies as to render such an invitation an almost heroic act of hospitality. My invited guests had abundant opportunities of understanding the difficulties of my situation, and I had asked for a response, yet only one of the five families included in the invitation had the grace to reply. Do you think I felt very amiable as I prepared lodgings and table for these good people and awaited in suspense their possible arrival?

Every boy and girl should understand the obligation to write to the host or hostess upon arriving home from a visit. A short note is all that is necessary, merely a pleasant, friendly, grateful word, telling of safe arrival and acknowledging the kindness which made the visit a pleasant one. I remember a social sin of omission of which I was guilty. I had made Lydia a visit and upon my return home neglected, through girlish carelessness, to write the little note. I realized my discourtesy when it was so late that I was ashamed to write. I do not know whether Lydia has forgiven me, for I never had the moral courage to ask her; but I have not forgiven myself and have never been able to recall that visit with satisfaction, and all because I was guilty of neglect. Neglect is the one unpardonable sin against friendship. You may sin grievously through hasty temper or foolish, impulsive actions, but cold neglect can never hope for forgiveness.