Country Boys Make Good Soldiers.

Within a year past the recruiting flag has been hung out in many of our New England towns and villages by officers of the regular army detailed for the purpose of gathering volunteers to fill up the ranks of Uncle Sam's forty regiments of infantry, cavalry and artillery. Once recruiting stations were maintained only in big cities like New York and Boston, but the material secured there was not of the best. Secretary Proctor had an idea that the country youth were better qualified, morally, mentally and physically, for a soldier's life than the dregs of our floating urban population, and under his direction recruiting parties, each headed by a commissioned officer, were sent into rural New England, New York and some portions of the west.

The experiment is said to be working admirably so far as the welfare of the army is concerned, though the officers do not enjoy the necessity of moving from one town to another, drumming up recruits as a crommercial traveler drums up trade. The new system of enlistment and the various minor reforms have had a marked and instantaneous effect upon the character of the army. The soldiers are happier and more contented, and desertions are fewer than they have been for many years.—Boston Journal.

N. P. N. U. No. 538—S. F. N. U. No. 615

EARTH'S SWEET STRAINS.

By shaded path in May,
I wander lost in dreams,
Through leafy bowers play
The sun's warm golden beams.

From velvet beds of moss
The gold white daisies spring,
The leaves above me toss,
The robins sweetly sing.

A spider here has spun
Its web from fern to fern,
And dewdrops in the sun
Like kingly jewels burn.

The wood beyond is lost
In wondrous mystery,
By countless sunbeams crossed,
By shade of bush and tree.

From song of mating birds,
From tree and flowered sod,
Come the adoring words,
"How wonderful is God!"

And soul and thought respond
To nature's sweet refrain,
And joining earth's glad bond,
I echo earth's sweet strain.

—Flavel Scott Mines in Ladies' Home Journal.

Proud of Her Grandmother.

Miss Lottie J. Matthews is a bright and smart young woman of Southington village, who is confident that she has the most wonderful grandmother there is in Connecticut. Miss Lottie had read a lot of articles in the state press in the past year about grandmothers, purporting to be the smartest in the world, simply because they had pieced bed and crazy quilts containing several million pieces, more or less, and her pride of family was piqued more and more. Finally, she couldn't endure the glory of other grandmothers and of the procession of quilts any longer, so a day or two ago she "took her pen in hand" and wrote a letter to the editor of the Meriden Journal, saying that "her attention had been called," and so on, to several "articles in your valuable paper," and so on, and "therefore she took the liberty," and so on, "to trespass on your valuable space," and so on. Miss Lottie closed her epistle with this laudable tribute to her grandmother:

I think my grandma, Mrs. Sarah Matthews, who resides in Southington, is equally smart with other quilt piecers. She is nearly eighty-four years old, has had twelve children, of whom eleven are living at the present time. During the last year she has pieced by hand these quilts: "Log Cabin," "Birds of the Air," "Borrow and Lend," "Diamond," "Solomon's Temple" (better known as "Pineapple") and a silk crazy quilt, puttidg on all the fancy stitches, embroidering many of the pieces by the eye (no stamping), beside nearly enough blocks for a "Chip Basket," seven silk crazy pincushions, five velvet crazy chair cushions, one silk crazy sofa pillow. All of this was done inside a year with other work. This seems worth mentioning.

An Alumnæ Meeting.

The Ingham Alumnæ association, of New York and vicinity, held its semi-annual meeting at the Fifth Avenue hotel a few days ago. The president, Mrs. Camden C. Dike, of this city, presided. Rev. James Roy, LL. D., the principal of Ingham university, and Homer Hall, president of its board of directors, were at the meeting as delegates from Le Roy, the seat of the university. Mrs. Lillie Burleigh Reid, acting recording secretary, read a long report of the meeting last October. After other business was attended to the members listened to reports of the condition of the university by Mr. Hall and Dr. Roy.

Mrs. Imogene Brown, once a pupil of Ingham, sang several songs admirably. Mr. Ferguson, tenor, sang "Star of My Heart" and a duet from "The Martyrs" with Mrs. Brown. Miss Wickham, contralto, sang "O Mio Fernando." Miss Florence Burleigh Reid recited two poems, "The Clown's" Baby" and "Love Is Enough." Miss Reid recites with effect, and her gestures are exceedingly graceful and appropriate. Miss Jessie Dike recited a coquettish poem called "Shadows" with much charm of manner and melody of voice. Among the women present were Mrs. Dr. Bryant, of New York; Mrs. Maria Upton Hanford, Mrs. L. L. Langdon, Mrs. Julie Creamer, Mrs. Charles Ham and Miss Margaret Morton, of Rochester.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Some Population Statistics.

In 1850 the states and territories west of the Mississippi river had an aggregate population of 1,720,344, and the country west of the Missouri, excluding Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Missouri, had a population of only 132,597; in other words the population of the vast region west of the Missouri in 1850 was not as large as the population of Omaha is today.—Edward Rosewater's Omaha Address.

A Deposit of Cold Lead.

Cashier (to tough looking customer)—Do you wish to make a deposit?

Tough Looking Customer (presenting pistol)—If yeaze. Out wid de boodle!—Kate Field's Washington.

Could Be Fired.

"Is this building fireproof?" asked the man with blue glasses and a large gripsack.

"Not if you're a book agent," replied the janitor conclusively.—Washington Star.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

The Garden Bird.

There is a little bird in England called the garden bird, which we have been learning about in school, and I thought some other children would be interested in it too.

The little husband and wife not only build a house for themselves, but they also make a garden around it.

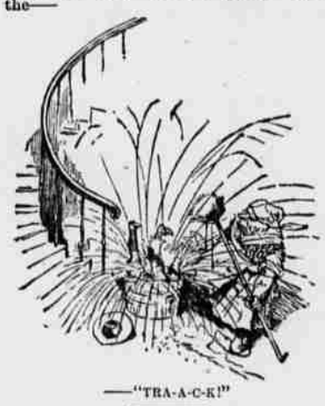
After having made up their minds to build, the first thing they do is to find a nice spot of ground, with some kind of shrub growing near the center of it. Then they pile green moss on the ground all around the shrub. Next the birds bring long green twigs, which they have broken from off the branches of trees, and stick them into the ground so that they will lean against the top of the shrub like the framework of a small tent. One side is left open for a door.

When the little house is built the birds at once set to work to make their garden. The husband bird does the heavier work, and all around the house he clears off a space for a lawn, carrying away every stone and stick and every bit of straw that is in the way. He then covers the space with the finest green moss that he can find, and upon the velvety lawn he lays many pretty berries and pink flowers, and as often as the flowers fade he takes them away and brings fresh ones.

This house, which is three feet long and more than a foot high, is very large for two little birds. Indeed the house is ample enough to accommodate a family of twenty. The garden, too, is large in proportion and is sometimes six feet long and even longer. It is said that the people in that far off country think so much of these birds that they never harm them. And now you may wish to know how this little warbler is dressed. The top of his head, his back, his wings and his tail are brown and his breast a greenish red. In size he is about the size of a robin.—Edith Jackson in New York Mail and Express.

He Had His Way.

"Don't slide down now, you'll"—"Yes, I will. Here I come! Clear the—



—"TRA-A-C-R!"

An Inquisitive Parrot.

Polly is about 15 years of age and is a native of Africa. One morning when she was amusing herself by talking there was a little girl in the next room repeating what she said, when suddenly Polly stopped and listened with her head turned in the direction of the voice and said: "Who are you? Who are you?"

She was on the top of her cage one day when there was a noise in the street. I went to the window to see what it was, and Polly said to me, "What's the matter?" in a very mild voice. As I took no notice of the bird she said again in a very angry tone, "What's the matter?" I answered her by saying that a boy was trying to get his little brother into the house, which seemed to satisfy Polly.—New York Recorder.

The Boy Wanted to Get Out.

A certain Washington avenue merchant is father to a very bright boy not quite five years old. Several weeks ago the youngster passed through a siege of the mumps. After his recovery prudence compelled his confinement to the house for a few days, but he grew very restive. One day he saw his little companions playing outside, and put in a plea to join them. He wanted to get some fresh air, he said.

"Then raise the window, dear," said his mother. The window, by the way, was protected by a screen.

"Mother," said the little lad reproachfully, "how much good do you suppose strained air will do a boy like me?"—St. Louis Chronicle.

"Not Acquainted."

Nell is a sweet little year-old girl;
Ben is a bright little three-year boy;
They romp together with locks awhirl
And hearts brimming over with love and joy.

Wistfully spoke little Ben one day:
"Oh, mamma, I hope my Nell won't grow
Up into a girl, like Grace or May!
I don't like girls—I don't, you know!"

"But I'm sure," said mamma, my boy likes me,
And was a girl once, dear little Ben."
Quick came the answer, "Well, you see,
I wasn't a'tainted with you then!"

—Youth's Companion.

A Child's Invitation.

There is a certain taking air of precocity in permitting children to pose as grown people in sending out invitations to their little parties. But after all how much prettier, childlike and simple is this form of invitation, which comes from Canada:

> My mother wants to know if your mother will let you come to my party, Saturday, the 21st, from three to six.
> 166 Deer Hill avenue. CHARLES HULL.

Modern Conveniences.

Little Dick—What's mamma got her teeth in a tumbler for?

Little Dot—Mebby they ache. Wish I had that kind.—Good News.

Mrs. Burnett's Ambitious Boy.

It will interest many to know that Mrs. Burnett is to have for one of her books a new and especially convenient channel of publication, the press, publisher and bookseller being all under the same roof with the author. Mr. Vivian Burnett, Mrs. Burnett's son, is to dedicate his new printing press and make his first business venture by printing in the form of a little book his mother's paper on "The Drury Lane Boys' Club," the account of her own experience in a helpful experiment among London street boys.—Scribner's.

WOMAN'S CONVERSATION.

She Should Learn to Excel as a Listener When Talking with Men.

The first great fundamental principle in the now waning fine art of conversation is, paradoxical as it may appear, to be silent, to listen intelligently, to be sincerely interested, to be sympathetically responsive, to draw out the best points in your friend or companion. This requires in preparation a study of every topic of current interest, a well fed, well read mind, a good memory, an honest interest in every phase of life and thought and a heroic unselfishness and mortification of the spirit equal to that with which the old martys smiled and sang while the fagots blazed and the burning oil steamed.

The listener who waits with eager and ill-concealed haste for you to finish your story that she may tell the better one of which it reminds her is not the kind of woman who creates a salon or acquires a following of choice spirits.

And the finishing course in this art of talking is to learn how to answer easily, brightly, to the point, to convey the idea that you understand but still are not satisfied with what you have learned. So many people quench one's enthusiasm with the answer that says "Oh, I know all about it now." There is a wide gulf between the good talker and the good conversationist. The former is aggressive, demands recognition and monopolizes attention. The latter, with finer art, more subtle grace, is quiet, unselfish and tactful, and must of necessity have a wider range of subjects than the former. To talk well one needs to be acquainted with but few themes, since one can guide the conversation in these channels, but to listen well one must be ready to stand and deliver upon anything, from the silver question to the newest thing in lace or the favorites on the turf.

The suggestion of topics is the finishing touch of the social education. It is something that cannot be taught. It is like the old physician's experience that makes his opinion more valuable than the student's. It requires wisdom, tact, quickness of thought, and decision and more of the unselfishness that is the root of all courtesy. If you know your guests for the dinner or reception it is well to sit down and think out what they are most interested in, and then inform yourself, not with an idea of talking, but of listening.

There is nothing more exasperating to the specialist than to have some one attempt to tell him all about his own specialty, nothing more subtly flattering than to be made to advance his ideas by adroit questioning. For the unexpected encounter tact, which is genius and experience, which is the mother who gives it life, will come to the rescue. The world is full of talkers, but the art of conversation languishes while the people chatter.—New York Sun.

Education in Eastern Peru.

Pedagogy has had its share in educating the inhabitants of the Montana, working in a languid manner, not going deep into anything. Pedagogy, not supplemented by adequate books here, must content itself consequently with merest rudiments and those stirred up into a weak emulsion with fanciful stories—strange, rhapsodical text books, resulting, as one might presuppose, in filling the young mind with vagaries, in creating a thirst for knowledge without quenching it. Ever and again the departing traveler is besought by his host to send him "a good history of the world," a "new geography" or some long wished for classic volume. In the towns of eastern Peru are schools of considerable size, supported by taxation, aided by small fees from the patrons, heralded always by the conspicuous sign, "Escuela de la Municipalidad," a circumstance of some importance in itself, keeping before the eyes of all the fact that education is a matter of public concern, is a thing desirable, and, such as it is, easily obtainable.

Further advertisement of a school's existence is afforded when in session by the vociferous babel of a hundred or more brown little youngsters vying with each other in proofs of application, which proofs seem to consist in studying lessons aloud. Each chacra also has its school, usually instituted and maintained by the dona, and here again the orthodox scholastic babel breaks the stillness which else reigns like a drowsy Sabbath.—Courtenay De Kalb in Harper's.

A Good Word for Bacteria.

"We must not think too hardly of bacteria," says Dr. H. W. Conn, of Middletown Wesleyan university. "It is true that they are the causes of evil, that they produce disease, but it is also true that they do good. They are our enemies, but they are also our closest allies. It is true that without them we could not have our smallpox nor our yellow fever, we could not have our diphtheria nor our scarlet fever, neither should we have any of the epidemics. But when we remember that it is through the agency of these organisms that we bake the loaf of bread that comes to our table; that without them we could not get our vinegar or our lactic acid; that without them we could not make our ensilage; that these bacteria give the buttermaker the aroma of his butter; that it is the decomposition products of the bacteria that the cheese manufacturer sells in the markets.

"When we remember their agency as scavengers, how it is that they keep the surface of the earth clean and in a constant condition for the growth of plants, their value to the soil in decomposing the dead bodies of animals and plants, and thus enabling the same material to be used over and over again for the support of life, and lastly that it is only through their agency that plants were originally enabled to get hold of nitrogen at all, and that we may hope for a continuance of a supply of nitrogen to the soil—we will recognize that the power of bacteria for good far outweighs their power for evil."—New York Telegram.

Kenneth MacAlpin.

A Dublin citizen (I think a dealer in snuff and tobacco) about the end of last century had lived to a good age and in great repute under the name of Halfpenny. He thrivêd in trade, and his children prevailed on him in his latter years to change the name, which they thought undignified, and this he did by simply dropping the last letter. He died and was buried as Mr. Halpen. The fortune of the family did not recede, and the son of our citizen thought proper to renounce retail dealing, and at the same time looked about for a euphonious change of name.

He made no scruples of dropping the unnecessary h, and that being done it was easy to go into the Celtic rage, which Sir Walter Scott and "The Lady of the Lake" had just raised to a great height, and he who had run the streets as little Kenny Halfpenny came out (in full Rob Roy tartan, I trust) as Kenneth MacAlpin, the descendant of a hundred kings.—"Concerning Some Scottish Surnames."

Parallel Cases.

Mrs. Grumpps—There are thousands of occupations in which men have places which women should fill. Why shouldn't women be druggists? Answer me that.

Mr. Grumpps—This cottage pudding isn't good at all. How did you make it?

Mrs. Grumpps—I took a few handfuls of flour and some milk and a few eggs, I forget how many, and some sugar, I think, and I believe I added some salt, and maybe some baking powder, don't know how much. I never measure.

Mr. Grumpps—That's why.—New York Weekly.

Willing to Do Likewise.

Wandering on some land belonging to Earl Derby, a collier chanced to meet the owner of Knowsley face to face. His lordship inquired if the collier knew he was walking on his land.

"Thy land? Well, I've got no land mysel'," was the reply, "and I'm 'like' to walk on somebody's. Wheer did tha' get it fro'?"

"Oh," explained his lordship, "I got it from my ancestors."

"And wheer did they get it fro'?" queried the collier.

"They got it from their ancestors," was the reply.

"And wheer did their ancestors get it fro'?"

"They fought for it."

"Well, begad," said the collier, squaring up to the noble earl, "I'll feight thee for it!"—London Tit-Bits.

The Time to Kill Household Pests.

The warm weather is here and some of the flies are already on hand. Of course nobody will buy fly paper now or kill off the flies that are about to begin to raise families. Prevention is rarely thought of in connection with insects or vermin. The first flies, the first roaches and the first rats are always allowed to increase. We are a nation of bad housekeepers and are not improving.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The color of amber is of all shades, from pale straw to deep orange. A species called the Falernian, from its similarity in color to the celebrated rich, golden wine of that name, was the most prized by the Romans.

A society with the cognomen of "Improved Order of White Men" would receive the cordial indorsement of the average wife.

Older Sister—Clara, I'm surprised to see you soak your bread in the gravy; it's exceedingly bad form. Clara—Well, it's awfully good taste.

UNNECESSARY RISKS.

Stuyvesant—Half the world never knows how the other half lives. Madison—That's what comes of living in flats without an air shaft.