

Birds of the Forest.

O fellow! fellow! fellow!
Across the pine-roofed hollow,
Song-tinted breakers
On the wood's wild acres;

The Mysterious Diamonds.

BY ELIJAH KELLOGG.

A notable woman for decision of character and strictness of discipline was "Ma'am" Price, as she was called, who taught school in Portland, Me.

The school-room was in Mrs. Price's own house, which stood in Turkey Lane, so-called from this circumstance: A man who lived in the street invited the Rev. Samuel Dean to dine with him and partake of a turkey.

When the children carried Ma'am a present, she would frequently take the diamonds out of the cotton in which they were kept, and let them handle the precious stones, telling at the same time how she shelled them out of the bean-pod, and how surprised she was.

I suppose if I don't spoil this mystery I shall have a score or more of letters from my young readers inquiring how these diamonds come in that pod. This is not known certainly. What did the neighbors think?

Well, my father said that a vessel arrived at Portland from Brazil, on board of which were several varieties of precious stones. The master of the vessel was an admirer of Miss Polly, and it was supposed that he stole the diamonds from the precious stones on board the ship, and put them in the bean pod.

The vessel was never heard from, and therefore, the captain never came back to claim Polly, or to tell her where the diamonds, which were not of any great value, came from.

The mystery made a great stir at the time.—Youth's Companion.

A NEW INSTRUMENT FOR SCIENCE.—There is now in operation in the Laboratory of Central University, Richmond, Ky., an interesting apparatus that records in a beautiful manner the motion of the earth in its hourly progress through space.

The principle upon which the instrument is formed is, that a delicately constructed pendulum will continue to oscillate in the same direction as started, and preserving that plane, mark the movement of the earth beneath it. The principle was demonstrated by Foucault, a French philosopher, in 1851; was verified in Boston at the Bunker Hill Monument, and lastly again at Yale College.

The apparatus hitherto employed has been cumbersome, and the results obtained somewhat vague. The experiments, nevertheless, bear historical interest, and are related in modern text-books on physics. It has devolved upon Kentucky to furnish the scientific world with a finished and mathematical demonstration of this beautiful phenomenon, together with the apparatus for producing the result so as to be proved in a school-room or laboratory.

The instrument is about six feet high, consisting of an iron tripod and delicate pendulum. There is an index attached to the upper portion of the pendulum, and when the pendulum is started this is perfectly still. In six minutes the earth's motion becomes apparent, and the needle shows about one degree of deviation. In one hour the movement is so marked that the distance traversed by the earth may be estimated from its data.

It is said that the famous Eddystone lighthouse is about to fall. It was completed in 1769 and has consequently done nearly one hundred and twenty years' service.

The Land of the Midnight Sun.

The Rochester Union makes the following extract from a private letter dated at Tromsøe, Norway, July 3: We steamed into this pretty Arctic town night before last, and shall make our home here a week longer, while a portion of the party finish their northern trip around North Cape to Vadsoe.

I have quoted the story as it was told to me. Mrs. Price and Polly always declared most emphatically that the diamonds grew in that bean-pod, and I certainly believe the old lady found them in the pod, as she did. Mrs. Commodore Preble saw her shell out the diamonds, and so did Mrs. Matthew Cobb, who lived in the large house on the eastern corner of High and Free streets.

That is not all. The very day before the old lady died, Miss Sarah Jewett asked her,—"Ma'am Price, did you truly shell those diamonds out of a bean-pod? Hadn't the pod been opened? Was it whole like the other pods?"

"Bless you, Miss Jewett, how could I tell. You know folks don't look at every bean or pea they shell, except there's one that won't open easily. I was shelling and looking at the children to see that they were all in their seats, when I felt something hard under my thumb. I looked into my lap and there were two little shining things among the beans, and another rolled out of the pod under my thumb when I took it up."

Miss Jewett had one of the stones set in a ring, that is now in possession of William Gould, of Windham; John Campbell, a relative of Polly's, had another; but where the third one is I do not know.

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A Lion Story.

Some time ago, in Tunis, a Sicilian of Rinaldo's circus excited general admiration by his manly beauty and feats of strength. He was in the habit of overcoming a lion during the performance, which, however, was trained to succumb.

The proposal was accepted, and on the day appointed the bey and a large company gathered round the pit where the lion was kept. The beast had been there three days without food, and was found furious. The iron door of the pit opened, but instead of the athlete, a trembling dog was thrown forward, which timidly took refuge in a corner.

The lion seemed astonished at missing his prey, but after rolling over a few times, made another jump, which was also avoided. Pity for the dog induced the bey to order a cord to be lowered for him; and while the lion was gyrating preparatory to a renewed spring the dog intelligently seized the cord with his teeth and was drawn up. As he ascended, the lion sprang again, but was too late.

At this moment the Sicilian appeared, calm and fearless. He was in a rich circus costume, and carried a heavy mace. He took his position in the same corner previously occupied by the dog. At first the lion did not perceive him, but, on turning, his eye expressed a vague inquietude. He slowly withdrew a few steps, watching his enemy with a furtive and sidelong glance.

The occupation of the place is fishing, mostly herring and codfish. All are well-to-do; no rich and no poor. The people are intelligent, the masses receiving a fair education. But what a queer place and what queer customs! From the belfry of the church, between the hours of 8 at night and 6 a. m., a man shouts the time of night through a large tin horn at intervals of every half hour.

There will be rest in the eventide. All day long the farmer may stand between his plough-handle, turning the yielding soil; may endure the burden and heat of the day; may be burned by the scorching rays of the sun, or be drenched by sudden showers, but by-and-by the sun furls his banner of light, the birds cease their singing and fly home to their nests; the eventide has come, and tired man and weary beast find rest.

All day long the smith may ply his hammer while huge drops of perspiration roll down his smoke-begrimed brow. He belongs to the class that must toil for their daily bread, and work with him has become second nature.

Judge Rowe, writing to the Philadelphia Weekly Times, relates the following incident of the night after the battle of Fredericksburg: "When, on the return to Marye's Heights, the command first filed in from the road, there appeared to be a thin line of soldiers sleeping on the ground to be occupied. They seemed to make a sort of row or rank. It was as if a line of skirmishers had halted and lain down; they were perfectly motionless; their sleep was profound. Not one of them awoke and got up. They were not relieved either when the others came.

They seemed to have no commander—at least none awake. Had the fatigues of the day completely overpowered all of them, officers and privates alike? They were nearest the enemy, within call of him. They were the advance line of the Union army. Was it thus that they kept their watch, on which the safety of the whole army depended, pent up between the ridge and the river? The enemy might come within ten steps of them without being seen. The fog was a veil. No one knew what lay or moved or crept a little distance off. The regiments were allowed to lie down. In doing so, the men made a denser rank with those there before them. Still those others did not waken. If you looked closely at the face of any one of them, in the mist and dimness, it was pallid, the eyes closed, the mouth open, the hair was disheveled, besides, the attitude was often painful. There were blood marks also. These men were all dead. Nevertheless, the new comers lay down among them and rested. The pall of night concealed the foe now. The sombre uncertainty of fate enveloped the morrow. One was saved from the peril of the charge, but he found himself again on Marye's Hill, near the enemy, face to face with the dead, sharing their couch, almost in their embrace, in the mist and the December night. Why not accept them as bed-fellows? So they lay down with the dead, all in a line, and were lulled asleep by the monotony of the cries of the wounded scattered everywhere."

On THE FLY.—"Landlord?" "Yes, sir." "What's that?" "Butter, sir." "Does it belong to the league?" "Sir?" "Has it any ambition to excel as a base ballist?" "I don't grasp your meaning, sir." "Well, it should, for it's the best fly-catcher I ever saw."

"Oh, I see! John, take this away, and bring the gentleman some of the muffin butter."

Silence prevailed.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

A GENERATION is fifteen years.

Wretched Homes.

There are various methods of making home wretched, which are usually found out without the aid of a receipt. But if any one wishes to know the secret, we venture to give a few hints, which may be useful—not by way of helping our readers to reduce them to practice, but rather with a view to their avoidance.

A common proverb makes a smoky chimney and a scolding wife the worst of domestic plagues. But there are worse than these. A smoky chimney shows there is a fire, at all events, and if the chimney smokes it is the builder's and not the housewife's fault; and as for a scolding wife, why she may possibly teach her husband philosophy, as Xantippe did Socrates.

A dirty wife is far worse. A wife may scold, and yet be clean and thrifty. But a scolding slattern is a terrible nuisance at home, and very soon will succeed in making a home thoroughly intolerable for even the most pacific and contented dispositions. If with dirt there be waste, the acme of discomfort will be reached. Money spent recklessly, and without any useful product of comfort—what is the end of this but poverty and vice? And drink, the great cause of waste in poor men's houses—expenditure on that which not only wastes a man's substance, but ruins his moral and physical capacities, and we have reached a point of discomfort beyond which we cannot go. Drink is the demon of tens of thousands of homes, which but for it might be happy.

But there are many minor sources of discomfort, which worry and fret impatient minds, and render homes thoroughly uncomfortable. Ill-trained children, unaccustomed, because untaught by early discipline, to curb their little tempers, are a source of discomfort in many homes. The neglect, perhaps the ignorance of mothers themselves ill-disciplined in youth, is mainly to be blamed for this.

Ill-cooked meals—perhaps a small one; but not so small either. Bad cooking is waste; waste of money and loss of comfort. Whom the church has joined in matrimony, ill-cooked joints of meat and ill-boiled potatoes have often put asunder. There is, indeed, a sound economy which may be exercised by women in the culinary department, very much to the saving of the husband's purses as well as tempers. Among the "common things" which educators would teach the working people, certainly this ought not to be overlooked. It is the commonest and yet most neglected of the branches of female education. Perhaps it is even thought below the dignity of being called "a branch" of education at all. But cooking, which really is the art, when properly cultivated, of making a little go a great way, is infinitely more valuable and important to the comfort of homes than tambour work, crochet, netting, or back-stitch—not to speak of music and drawing. The art of cooking eclipses them all in point of value.

An unwholesome house is always uncomfortable. The atmosphere is depressing to the spirits, and it debilitates the frame. Its influence may not be felt or perceptible—excepting by our sense—that of smell—and yet it is most powerful. Even the temper becomes peevish and irritable; and the depression leads to a craving for stimulants, which, in its turn, leads to an aggravation of the evil. Children become querulous, sickly and complaining; how can they be cheerful, breathing poisoned air, as they often do? The children cry, poor things, finding vent in tears and sobs; they are beaten when they should be sent out in the open air, or, later in the evening, put to bed. And thus the home is made very uncomfortable.

These unfortunate children—how our heart pities them! Brought into the world helpless, they are left amidst the gloomy association of depravity, dirt, and disease; and they hang about the sordid dwelling an infant brood, imparting no joy to the home—only so many gaping mouths to be fed—increasing its squalor and discomfort. Often children are cuffed and scolded for no fault of their own; the ill-temper engendered by dirt and drink is visited severely upon them. Tolerable tempers are made bad, and bad tempers are rendered cruel; and thus they grow up to mature years with the stamp of savage life upon them, without any idea of the comforts of home; familiar with the spectacle of daily recurring vice.

In better circles home may be made intolerable in other ways. Peevish and querulous tempers spoil the repose of many households. "Better is a dinner of herbs, where peace is, than a stalled ox with contention." There are people who are always making a fuss, and will not let you be quiet; these have the knack of making even dining and drawing-rooms intolerable. They are as unwholesome as even a roomful of bad air could be. Moping and whining, discovering all manner of frets and aches and imaginary woes—grumbling at the maids—finding cause of alarm in everything—such people rarely fail in making homes intolerable, and driving forth those who had hoped for, and who were entitled to find, peace and repose therein.

An eminent Scottish divine happened to meet two of his parishioners at the house of a lawyer, whom he considered too sharp a practitioner. The lawyer jocularly put the question: "Doctor, these are members of your flock. May I ask, do you look upon them as white or black sheep?" "I don't know," answered the divine, dryly, "whether they are black or white sheep; but I know if they are here long they are pretty sure to be fleeced."

ONE person dies at each pulsation of the heart.