

CHILDREN'S CORNER.

TIMELY TOPICS FOR OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Some Amusing Home Games for the Little Ones—Cousin Anita's Surprise—The Baby Elephant—Blowing Out the Candle.



Y pa's the best managerie That ever any one did see; I need no pets when he is by To make the days and hours fly. For any bird or beast or fish I want he'll be when'er I wish. For instance, if I chance to want

A safe and gentle elephant, He'll fasten on his own big nose One of my long black woolen hose, And on his hands and bended knees Is elephantine as you please, And truly seems to like the sport Of eating peanuts by the quart. Then, when I want a lion's roar, He'll go behind my bedroom door And growl until I sometimes fear The king of beasts is really near; But when he finds my courage dim He peeps out, and I know it's him. And he can meow just like a cat—No Tom can beat my pa at that— And when he yowls and dabs and spits It sends us all off into fits, So like it seems that every mouse Packs up his things and leaves the house.

Then, when he barks, the passers-by Look all about with fearsome eye, And hurry off with scurrying feet To walk upon some other street, Because they think some dog is there To rush out at 'em from his lair. And oh, 'twould make you children laugh

When daddy plays the big giraffe, He'll take his collar off, you know, And stretch his neck an inch or so, And look down on you from above, His eyes so soft and full of love, That, as you watched them, you would think

From a giraffe he'd learned to blink. 'Tis as a dolphin though that he is strongest as it seems to me, And I don't know much finer fun Than sitting in the noonday sun Upon the beach and watching pop, As in the ocean he goes flop, And makes us children think that he's A porpoise from across the sea. And when he takes the tin tube out, And blows up water through the spout, The stupidest can hardly fail To think they see a great big whale! And that is why I say to you My pa's a perfect dandy too, The very best managerie That ever you or I did see, And what is finest, let me say, There never is a cent of pay!

—Gaston V. Drake, in Harper's Round Table.

Beats Him.

Several rhyming games are given among these Round Games, and the following is simply a variety of some of them:

A slip of paper is given to each player, who is requested to write in one corner of it two words that rhyme.

The papers are then collected and read aloud, after which every one is expected to write a short stanza, introducing all the rhymes that have been suggested.

When the completed poems are read aloud, it is very amusing to observe how totally different are the styles adopted by the various authors, and how great is the dissimilarity that exists between the ideas suggested by each one.

Victory at Cedar Creek.

Evidence accumulates that the defeat of the morning at Cedar Creek would not have been turned into a victory during the afternoon if it had not been for the arrival of Gen. Sheridan. The story is told that a Confederate officer of deservedly high reputation present at the first interview between Gen. Early and Gordon, after the latter's surprise and defeat of our troops, quotes this dialogue:

Gen. Early—I congratulate you on your great victory. Now we will go into camp.

Gen. Gordon (in surprise)—Into camp? Why, what we pursue?

Gen. Early—No, we have done a great thing and we'll not run any risk. So their army rested, in a bad condition, and defeat afterward followed. It was all due to Gen. Sheridan, who showed the same tenacity and grip which afterward were conspicuous in his pursuit of Lee after the Five Fork victory.

Cousin Anita's Surprise.

Dona Sofia Laura Micaela Silva de Peralta de la Cordoba de Sanchez e Ybarra de Escobedo had never seen snow before. In the sunny land where she was born, the roses bloomed their sweetest in midwinter, and the nearest approach to a snow bank had been the hedge of great white callas in the backyard. Therefore, when the saw myriads of downy flakes fluttering from the sky in the new, strange land which she now called home, her wonder and delight knew no bounds.

"Oh, mama," she cried, running to the window, "I want to get some!" But her mama only shook her head and

said it was too cold to go out doors. The little girl stood contentedly a long, long time watching the fairy-winged things. She did not notice when her mama left the room; but, at last, turning to speak to her, found herself alone. Presently a thought struck her. There was no one in sight. Seizing her pail, which she had so often filled with sand on the shores of the far-away Pacific, she opened the door and ran out. Scurrying across the yard to where a drift gleamed white and cold in the morning sun, she scooped up a bucketful of the shining crystals and hurried back into the house. The journey was repeated again and again.

Her dolls had all been dressed and redressed, and the box of pretty bits of ribbons and laces, which grandma had given her for the numerous family, had been looked over and over again, but still she was not happy. Her throat felt queer—and her heart, too, when she thought of how she had disobeyed her mama—her good, kind mama! Oh, why had she not waited? After dinner, she crept softly upstairs. Her mama stood in the south room, motionless, her looks betokening the utmost amazement. On the pretty light carpet, all around, were stains as of a recent flood, and from some limp, dejected-looking pasteboard boxes on the dresser drops of grayish water were oozing.

The little girl stood breathless for a moment; then she ran across the room to a trunk which stood in the corner. It was empty.

"Mama, mama," she cried in dismay, the tears starting to her eyes as she gazed from the empty trunk to the scene of desolation about her. "It was to be a lovely birthday surprise for Cousin Anita—and now it's all gone."

And little Dona Sofia Micaela Silva de Peralta de la Cordoba de Sanchez e Ybarra de Escobedo sobbed afresh.—Eleanor Root in St. Nicholas.

The Baby Elephant.

A very good imitation of a baby elephant can easily be got up by two or three of the company, who are willing to spend a little time and trouble in making the necessary preparations. In the first place a large gray shawl or rug must be found, as closely resembling the color of an elephant as possible. On this a couple of flaps of the same material must be sown to represent the ears, and two pieces of marked paper for the eyes. No difficulty will be found in finding tusks, which may consist of cardboard or stiff white paper, rolled up tightly, while the trunk may be made of a piece of gray flannel, also rolled up. The body of the creature is then constructed by means of two performers, who stand one behind the other, each with his body bent down, so as to make the backs of both one long surface, the one in front holding the trunk, while the one behind holds the tusks one in each hand. The shawl is then thrown over them both, when the result will be a figure very much resembling a little elephant. The services of a third performer to take the part of keeper to the elephant are required. If the persons chosen for this capacity have good inventive faculties the description of the elephant given by him may be made to add greatly to the amusement of the scene.

Blowing Out the Candle.

No end of merriment has frequently been created by this simple, innocent game. It is equally interesting to old people and to little children, for in many cases those who have prided themselves on the accuracy of their calculating powers and the clearness of their mental vision have found themselves utterly defeated in it. A lighted candle must be placed on a small table at one end of the room, with plenty of walking space left clear in front of it. One of the company is invited to blow out the flame blindfold. Should any one volunteer he is placed exactly in front of the candle, while the bandage is being fastened on his eyes, and told to take three steps back, turn round three steps, then take three steps forward and blow out the light. No directions could sound more simple. The opinion that there is nothing in it has often been expressed by those who have never seen the thing done. Not many people, however, are able to manage it—the reason why, you young people will soon find out, if you decide to give the game a fair trial.

Oddly Colored Squirrels.

Some oddly colored squirrels are said to have been taken near Belleville, Ont. A black squirrel with numerous white spots was killed by Hurl Austin, and another man got a fox-colored black squirrel. The queerest two were black squirrels, one with a red tail and the other with a big white spot on the breast and one on the back.

A cream colored black squirrel and a "snow white" one, both rufous brown on the under parts, were killed.

Such groups of odd animals are often noted in certain neighborhoods. In some places freak robins will be seen every year; in another it is oddly colored quail.—New York Sun.

Almost every trust and monopoly in the country is asking for higher duties. What they need most is not higher duties, but a higher sense of duty.—Indianapolis News.

PECAN CULTURE.

Interesting Facts About a Growing Southern Industry.

One of the growing industries of the South, and one which appeals to the average farmer to help him out in seasons when drought or other causes have ruined his crops, is the raising of pecan nuts.

The pecan tree is found in almost any part of the South where the soil is fertile and abundantly watered; for this reason it is generally to be met with on the banks of streams. It is a most curious tree in some respects. I have seen them growing in row-like rows, straight as a Lombardy poplar, and at a distance resembling them. At other times I have met with them fringing the banks of water courses for miles and having every appearance of weeping willows. The leaves are seen in nearly every shade of green, are smooth and pointed, and range in length from six to eighteen inches; the nuts also vary greatly in size and color (paper shell, soft and hard shell pecans, ranging from thirty-two to forty-eight pounds to the bushel and in colors all the way from a very dark brown to almost white). There has existed in many parts of the South an erroneous idea that pecan culture would not pay, that the time necessary to fully mature a tree under ordinary conditions would be too distant to warrant any large outlay either of time or labor; and this belief in many cases would undoubtedly be a true one but for the present practice of budding with a scion of cultivated tree to a stock of a fully matured wild tree. By this process the farmer gets a crop in two years in favored localities. I have seen buds which were set in June of one year grow fully two feet and make off-buds during the same season, the next year blossom and grow five and seven feet, and the year following bear a peck of nuts. The method of budding which has proven most successful in the South is as follows: In the fall of the year matured trees not over two feet in diameter are topped; that is, all the upper limbs are cut off and in their places small shoots grow out. Some time in the following June and during a spell of dry weather a ring of bark is cut from one of these shoots and on the bare wood is bound a bud from a cultivated tree; in about two weeks under favorable conditions the new growth will have started. The experiments of grafting have been tried but have proven unsuccessful with this variety of tree. The pecan tree needs a great amount of water after it has attained a reasonable size; in large trees we often find the tap root extending down thirty and even forty feet.

If the ground about the trees is planted with some thick grass like the common blue grass of the South the soil will thus be protected from being washed away by the floods. A tree in full bearing will average ten bushels of nuts a season. I have known them to yield as high as twenty bushels a year, but this is exceptional.

The nuts bring all the way from four to fifteen cents a pound, the cultivated varieties being hard to obtain even at this latter figure. They will average four dollars a bushel. At forty feet apart there will be one hundred and eight trees to the acre. It will thus be seen what a large profit there is even to the small farmer with only a few trees in his orchard. The nuts are generally gathered on shares, the owner of the trees getting half the profits. Sometimes, however, labor hired by the day is employed; wages in this case are from one dollar and fifty cents to two dollars and a half a day. Boys armed with light files climb the trees and knock off the nuts, which are then gathered into baskets and taken to the separator houses. Here they are put into revolving drums and polished by friction with each other. They are afterwards poured into shallow shutes which are pierced with various sized holes, the largest holes being placed at the ends. As the nuts slide down they drop through the holes into different bins according to size, and are thus sorted out. The oil from nuts which have matured too late for market is now extracted and commands a big price as a medicinal and high grade lubricating oil. Given a warm climate with rich soil and abundance of water, and pecan culture is bound to be successful.

The pecan tree is comparatively free from insect pests. The common tent caterpillar in some districts makes its appearance in the height of summer, but it may easily be destroyed while in the cocoon stage by burning with kerosene. Squirrels, opossums and coons use the pecan for food, but they may readily be prevented from reaching the limbs by a smooth piece of tin with projecting edges nailed around the trunk of the tree. To protect the young trees from the depredations of rabbits, crated boxes eighteen inches high are placed around each tree. It is a well-attested fact, as is proven in the Old World, that the pecan tree will bear annual fruit for hundreds of years, even surpassing the olive tree in this respect. The demand for nuts is constantly increasing, and new markets for the product are constantly being found. New York, St. Louis and Atlanta, Ga., are the principal centres of distribution at the present time.

BILL ARP'S WEEKLY LETTER.

SAGE OF BARTOW PASSES HIS SEVENTY-FIRST MILE POST.

QUOTES A FEW NURSERY SONGS.

Declares That Moses Experienced Many Trials and Much Tribulation—What Julius Caesar Said.

"How many miles to Milybright?" "Threes score and ten."

I can't help thinking of that old nursery song, for I have just passed my seventy-first birthday and am therefore just seventy years old. It is like crossing the Rubicon, and like Caesar I may say "The die is cast." I have reached the allotted age, and now every day that I live is a personal privilege—a favor not promised nor deserved. There is something solemn and serious in the word, for scripture and ancient history seemed to have made it significant. There were seventy elders of Israel and the Lord sent out seventy missionaries, and man's age was set down by degrees from 900 to seventy, and there the Lord called a halt, and Moses saith that all the excess is labor and sorrow. Moses was feeling very blue when he wrote that. The old man lived to be 120 and had a troubled time, but I know some men and many women who lived past eighty and whose last days were their best days. Those who have lived right or tried to and have been unselfish and are blessed with a good wife or a good husband and loving children can take all the risks that attach to four score years. Labor and sorrow do not necessarily follow old age. Sydney Smith said, when he was seventy-four: "I am at ease in my circumstances; in tolerable health; a tolerating churchman—much given to talking, laughing and noise; I am, on the whole, a happy man, have found the world an entertaining world and am thankful to Providence for the part allotted me in it."

Longfellow lived to be seventy-five. When he was seventy he wrote his friend Childs: "It is like climbing the Alps; you reach a snow-crowned summit and see behind you the deep valley stretching miles and miles away, and before you other summits, higher and whiter, which you may have strength to climb or you may not. Then you sit down and meditate and wonder which it will be. This is the whole story."

Dr. Holmes saw much fun in everything that he couldn't help making funny rhymes about an old man:

"But now his nose is thin And it rests upon his chin Like a staff; And a crook is in his back, And a melancholy crack Is in his laugh."

Then he was sorry that he wrote it, for he says:

"I know it is a sin For me to sit and grin At him here."

The doctor didn't expect to live to be eighty-five, for long ago he said: "Our brains are seventy-year clocks; the angel of life winds them up once for all, then closes the case and gives the key to the angel of the resurrection."

But an old man is not obliged to have a crook in his back nor a crack in his laugh. We see many aged men who are straight as an Indian and have not lost the musical tone of their voices. Habit and pride of person have much to do with this. I know an aged matron, a neighbor of ours, who when she is sitting hardly touches the back of a chair, and yet she is not stiff or awkward—always graceful, always beautiful. She is kind and gentle in her age, and has a warm welcome wherever she visits. If she cannot hear all that is said she is not embarrassed, for she says what she lacks in hearing she makes up in seeing and reading and is thankful for the faculties that are still left her. I never saw her with a troubled look, though I know she has had trouble and deep grief. Now contrast such a woman with one who is always complaining of her hard lot, or saying something disparaging about her neighbors!

But the old-time mothers had some excuse for bent shoulders, for it was the fashion to sleep on pillow and bolster, and it was the fashion to lean the child while it was nursing.

Habits began in childhood and continued in motherhood will never be broken in the decline of life. I believe that the habits of the girls of this generation are an improvement on those of the past. They do not lace like they used to, and they carry themselves more gracefully. They have better fitting shoes and corsets. They have more comfortable seats at school and are not allowed to lean forward to their books or slate or writing pad. The life insurance companies have at last discovered that women live as long as men, if not longer, and policies are issued to them on equal terms. The longevity of both sexes is increasing, slowly but surely, and the only drawback is intemperance—whisky and opium. Were it not for these the three-score-and-ten limit would soon be advanced to four score and give us a stronger and handsomer race of people.

Shakespeare gave us some types of old age that seem to have fitted the time in which he lived, but they are very rare in ours. Prince Hal said to Falstaff: "Have you not all the characters of age—a moist eye, a dry hand, a yellow cheek, a white beard, a decreasing leg, an increasing corpulence? Is not your voice broken, your wind short, your shin double, your wit single and every part about you bloated with antiquity?"

I deny the picture. As somebody said, I deny the allegation and defy the alligator. There is some of it that does not fit me, I know. These poets are too fond of poking fun at old men. The age bears ought to come along. The scripture says that old age is honorable and that the young men shall rise up when the old men come in at the gate. The old men are the balance wheels of all the machinery of government. If it were not for them, the boys would run away with the wagon. There must be wheel horses with breeching on to hold back when going down a hill. What are we here for? We can't climb a tree or jump a ten rail fence any more, nor kick a college ball nor ride a bicycle, but these things are non-essentials and don't have to be done. We can look after the grand children and point a moral and tell them a tale and teach the young ones how to shoot without carrying a pistol in a hip pocket. Solomon says that the glory of an old man is his children's children, and he might have said that the children who have no grand parents did not have their share of happiness in this world.

But old age has its triumphs and consolations. It has passed all selfishness and vain ambitions and takes comfort in memories and philosophic meditation. It realizes the wonderful progress of art and invention, for

we old men remember when there was but one little railroad in the United States and no telegraphs; when the old stage coach carried the mails and postage was 25 cents a letter; when there was no kerosene oil and no matches, no steel pens and but few books of any kind. Old age is not alarmed about politics or the downfall of the government, for these same periodical excitements have agitated the country as far back as we can remember. It is the same old song, but it does not disturb our serenity. When our old cook concluded to quit, she advised my wife to look 'round and "get a settled woman to take her place." "These young niggers ain't got sense enuf to stay anywhere long and dey will be runnin' off after every scurabion and funeral and p'ano dat comes along. Better get a settled woman." Age

is a little us wonderfully and it looks like a pity that we have to shuffle off this mortal coil about the time we have gotten some sense and learned the lesson of life.

But we must accept our destiny with grace and gratitude, and may the Lord give us 'An age that melts in unperceived decay, And glides in modest innocence away.' —Bill Arr, in Atlanta Constitution.

LIVING WORDS FROM THE PULPIT.

CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP.

"There is Another King, One Jesus." Acts 17:7.

Paul and Silas stand before the authorities of Thessalonica indicted for treason. These messengers, so the charge ran, that "There is another king, one Jesus." The same charge was used, as a political club, to bring Pilate into line, by the mob that surged around the judgment hall. "If thou let this man go thou art not Caesar's friend."

The relation of Jesus Christ to civil government has been a living, burning, disturbing question through all the Christian centuries and never more vital than now.

Some of us remember that cry that was once made, "Cotton is king," and that later "Corn is king." And now the air is full of jangling voices, "Capital is king," "Labor is king," "Gold is king," "Silver is king." Let us list-n't to the diviner voice which the centuries are proving true, "there is another king, one Jesus."

Every great principle of human progress, whether mechanical, political, or religious, has run the gauntlet of sneering criticism before it has been established. A stupid English lord proposed to swallow the first engine that should cross the Atlantic. A brilliant Boston lawyer called the Declaration of Independence "a string of glittering generalities." But the generalities were emphasized into realities by the nation's month-long motto of France—Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, has been averily learned a drama between two men. But liberty is not license—that is a lie everywhere. Liberty means that every man is a law unto himself, subject to a law within. Fraternity means that in a new relation with Christ we enter a new relation with all the world. The true ruler of France is not Louis XIV, nor the Directory, but that other king, one Jesus.

When our Lord, standing before Pilate, answered the question, "Art thou a king, then?" he both affirmed his royalty and revealed its nature. "To this end was I born, that I might bear witness to the truth." Not by force of arms, but by craft or selfish compromise; but by the enthronement of truth does Christ reign by teaching men to know and obey the truth of human relation, obligation and privilege. The state is to be taken up into the gospel scheme and is to be snatched and fulfilled in the Christian Commonwealth.

The state is a moral organism. One man is not altogether man. Human nature cannot manifest itself wholly in the individual. It does not develop in isolation. Hence, emergence of very necessity, out of the soul of humanity, itself, family life, social life, religious life, political life.

Civil government has thus a true basis in human nature, a divine sanction in Christianity and a noble end to serve in the development of the race. That is a mischievous theory of government that defines its purpose to be merely to repress violence and preserve order. Spencer says, "Is not government essentially immoral? Does it not exist because crime exists?" The seed of anarchy lies in that theory. (It is not far in that direction to the red flag.) The true purpose of government is to build up the true humanity. It not only suppresses crime, but achieves nobler conditions of human welfare, as in the Revolution of '76.

It was of the aggressive character of Christian civilization that Jesus was speaking when he said: "I am come to send a sword upon the earth"—that is, uncompromising opposition to everything that degrades or enervates humanity.

In the visions which John caught of Jesus in glory He was crowned with many crowns. All occupations, all activities, all relationships are to be permeated with His spirit. The Christianity is something more than a system of moral truths, more than ecclesiastical duties, more than spiritual raptures. It is a supremely vital and practical thing, touching life in all its relations and at every point.

Christianity is weak to-day because of its isolation. It has not yet learned to use the function of civil government to nobler ends. The consecration of political power now in the hands of the Christian church would work as great a reformation in the world as that under Luther.

The stinging words of Cain's Marcus are timely as he turned to the Roman crowd and denounced it as a detached and disorganized company—"Go, get you home, you fragments." Our citizenship is yet too unsteady. We bear our public duties too casually. The remedy for many evils in municipal and federal government is in our own hands. In our day we are not only responsible to Caesar, but, in a measure, we are responsible for Caesar himself; for we too make Caesar. In part, we shape public policy.

Every Christian should in a sense, appropriate the words of Jesus, "To this end, was I born, that I might bear witness to the truth."

NAFETALI LUUCOOL.

A Christmas Legend in Belgium. The children of Belgium have a charming Christmas legend about Santa Claus' Pony. They always place their wooden sabots on the window ledge, stuffed full of oats, hay, and fodder for the "dear Christmas pony." In the early morning they run on tiptoe to look; and behold! the hay is all gone, and the shoes are brimming even with toys and sweetmeats. Then the children clap their hands with glee, and wish they could only have waked in time to see the pony munching his oats. That would have been such fun! —St. Nicholas.