

"These elders—our betters by a trick of chance—commanded no respect, but only a certain blend of envy—of their good luck—and pity—for their inability to make use of it. Indeed, it was one of the most hopeless features of their character (when we troubled ourselves to waste a thought on them which wasn't often) that, having absolute licence to indulge in the pleasures of life, they could get no good of it. They might dabble in the pond all day, and hunt the chickens; climb trees in the most uncompromising Sunday clothes; they were free to issue forth and buy gunpowder in the full eye of the sun—free to fire cannons and explode mines on the lawn—yet they never did any of these things. No irresistible energy hailed them to church o' Sundays; yet they went regularly of their own accord, though they betrayed no greater delight in the experience than ourselves."

Here is a delightful description of their greatest friend and boon companion:—

"To be sure, there was an exception in the Curate—who would receive unblenching the information that the meadow beyond the orchard was a prairie, studded with herds of buffalo, which it was our delight, moccasined and tomahawked, to ride down with those whoops that announced the scenting of blood. He neither laughed nor sneered, as the Olympians would have done,"

but contributed much valuable information as to the marauding Indians, &c., and was, in fact, according to the children:—

"A distinctly able man, with talents, so far as one could judge, immensely above the majority."

I must apologise for such long quotations, both of which are taken from the first chapter. They are merely typical, and something equally good might be found on every page; but readers of the above excerpt will be able to judge of the distinctive quality of these charming papers, and of their merry, engaging simplicity. I wish I had two long columns (like Mr. Swinburne) in which to expatiate on this delightful book; but, as space fails me, I must content myself with begging our readers not to miss the delectable sketch entitled "A White-washed Uncle," and the beautiful little paper called "The Finding of the Princess," every word of which is the most exquisite prose poetry; "The Argonauts," which is a very comic account of a stolen boat and an adventurous expedition. "The Roman Road" is the name of one of the chapters towards the end of the volume. I like this chapter better than any other, and well remember reading it, when first it appeared in "The Yellow Book" last year, and rejoiced when it re-appeared in these pages, as I had been eagerly watching for its re-issue. It is always difficult to praise a book adequately; the too frequent use of superlative and admiring adjectives is apt to prejudice readers of reviews unfavourably. Nevertheless, I will venture to say that I think "The Roman Road," and the conversation recorded thereon between the boy and the artist, is one of the most remarkable pieces of modern English prose. This "Golden Age" is decidedly worth buying, as one can turn its pages over again and again with fresh pleasure in each perusal. Mr. Swinburne ends his appreciation with these pregnant words, which I will quote as a final to my own review: "Praise would be as superfluous as analysis would be impertinent. If others think otherwise, I can only say, in the words of the best and wisest of women, who ever was underpaid at any price, 'They are born so, and will please themselves.'" A. M. G.

Review.

Children.—This is the first number of a quarterly magazine (price 6d.), issued in the interests of the North Eastern Hospital for Children. Since 1877, a small paper has been brought out by the Children's Association of this Hospital; but it is thought that there is room for a larger and more ambitious paper than its predecessor.

The April issue contains charming illustrations of Prince Alfred and the Princesses Margaret and Victoria Patricia of Connaught, reproductions from photographs given specially for that purpose by H.R.H. the Duchess of Connaught.

John Strange Winter has a bright article on "Some Children I know"; mostly dealing with those of her own family, who have no doubt furnished some of the delightful types of children in the popular novelist's books.

The magazine is bright and smart, and illustrated throughout, and should be widely read. Its chief object, we take it, is to help towards educating children to take interest in Hospitals, and in the lives of children not so well off as themselves.

An amusing little story is told of a young clergyman who comes in to a Hospital and asks if he may see a little girl from his parish of about seven years old. The Sister says, Certainly, and in walking up to the child's bed the clergyman explains that he finds it often so difficult to talk to children, and asks the Sister if she would give him a pencil and a small piece of paper, as he finds it often a good plan to ask the child to write down her favourite text, that often leading up to a little chat on religious matters. After saying, How do you do, and so on, the clergyman gave the child the paper, and asked her to write down (while he went and looked at the other children) her favourite text. The little girl looked so pleased, and commenced to write immediately. On his return she handed him the paper, and the following is what she had written:—

"The rose is red,
The violet blue;
They both are sweet,
And so are you."

Bookland.

WHAT TO READ.

"Democracy and Liberty," by William Edward Hartpole Lecky.

"East and West," essays by Sir Edwin Arnold, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., with 41 Illustrations by R. T. Pritchett.

"Boer and Uitlander: the True History of Late Events in South Africa," by William F. Regan, with Portraits, Map, &c. (Digby, Long and Co., 18, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.)

"The Courtships of Queen Elizabeth: a History of the Various Negotiations for her Marriage," by Martin A. S. Hume, F.R.H.S., editor of "The Calendar of Spanish State Papers of Elizabeth," with Portraits.

"Madagascar in War Time:" The Experiences of "The Times" Special Correspondent with the Hovas during the French Invasion of 1895, by E. F. Knight, author of "Where Three Empires Meet," &c. With numerous Illustrations and Map.

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