

YOUNG FOLK

Lost on the Plains.

Wee Gretchen's father and mother were Germans, only a few years over from the Fatherland when they purchased a farm on the rolling prairie, and began to make the most of their roomy surroundings.

It is a well-known fact that Germans are good neighbors, first, because usually they will work faithfully, and not only increase the value of their own property, but by so doing enhance that of the farms adjoining; and, second, because they will economize and keep ahead of expenses in the most surprising fashion.

Gretchen's parents were no exception to the common rule.

The father was up betimes, and the good mother, with sleeves rolled above her dimpled elbows, made things buzz about the little shanty.

Gretchen was only three years old, and ran about the yard, which, having only a fire-brake for a fence, was a yard on rather a stupendous scale, it is true. But the baby did not care, she trotted hither and thither, now after speckled Biddy, and now after lazy old Bowzer, who slept all day on the sunniest side of the house.

Sometimes she could hear her mother singing quaint old German songs, and sometimes the cheery whistle of her father, plowing, over in the north part of the claim, reached her ears.

If she was hungry, she ran to the door and made her wants known, departing from thence to divide half of her bread and butter with the dog.

But one day a neighbor called upon Gretchen's mother, a German woman, also, who had known them in the dear Fatherland, and for quite a while the baby was forgotten.

When they went to call her, no sweet little voice answered, and no little blue frock and rosy face was visible.

"Why, where can the child be?" exclaimed her mother, and there was a vague alarm, even then, in her question.

"She cannot have gone far, I have been here such a short time."

"Two hours," said her mother, "just two hours since I last saw the shine of her dancing yellow curls—for she won't wear her bonnet. We can see so far. You look slowly in every direction, and I will do the same. Even the dog has disappeared; he is no doubt with her."

But look as they would, long and steadily not a glimpse of the little one could be seen.

"She is lost!" gasped the mother. "Oh! what will her father say? She is lost on the plains! I—oh! how could I forget her!"

And then sighing tearfully to her caller that she would soon be back, she flew in the direction of her husband.

It was a long run, and panting, almost ready to faint, she paused at last at his side.

"Gretchen!" she wailed.

"What of my Gretchen?" he asked, sternly, for the baby was the apple of his eye, and he had more than once chided his wife for her apparent carelessness.

"Gone! Wandering away! Lost!"

"Lost on the prairie, and the sun not two hours high! Run on down to Smith's; get help. We must scour the plains before night-fall. My poor little darling!"

He had detached the horses from the plow as he spoke, and mounting one motioned his wife to mount the other, and he was off in the direction of another neighbor, always keeping a sharp eye on the outlook for his baby.

"Bowzer is with her," he thought, "he will be some protection, and may lead us to her."

It was perhaps a good hour before anything like a party was formed, and started in different directions, and the sun was, by this time, creeping far down toward the western horizon.

"Gretchen! Gretchen!" they called, but no baby voice answered.

"We must find her before dark," cried the half-frantic father.

But the sun hid its glowing face, and the stars came slowly out one by one, and nothing had been discovered.

"She will perish before morning," sobbed her mother; "the nights are cool, almost cold, and she had on only a little slip; and some wild animal may find her. O baby! baby!"

The long night passed, no one had slept. There had been a flash of lanterns far and near for many miles; for the searching party became larger and larger as the news spread. Mothers hugged their own little ones and said to husbands and sons, "Go!" and with their own hands cleaned and filled lanterns and fire-arms—for three shots were to be fired when the little one was found, living or dead; though they whispered the last word for fear it might reach the ears of father or mother.

Morning dawned bright and clear, and with a dogged perseverance all kept on with the search, tired and hungry though they were.

"We must find her," said her white-faced father, "where could her little feet have carried her that we cannot overtake them?"

The noon hour passed, a few kind neighbors sent out a cold lunch for the wearied party, night came again, and as yet no little Gretchen.

The mother was lost in despair.

"She is dead," she said, "my pretty little one; born near the home of my girlhood. She will never be found alive now, in all the chill night, without water or food. Oh! if I could but die, too!"

"Nay," expostulated a friend, "thou art wicked so to speak, thou hast thy husband, live to comfort him—and the baby may yet be found."

But when the third day of the search came, and found them still with no word or tidings, even the bravest were disheartened.

"She has reached the distant river," they said, "in trying to get to the water, perhaps she fell over the steep, shelving bank, and was drowned."

"But the dog?"

"He will doubtless remain near where she has disappeared, or—what can have become of her otherwise?"

No one could answer.

"You have been kind, friends," said the father, in his broken English, which was now most pathetic, "but I will not ask you to spend longer time in the search. As for me, I shall keep on until I find her or some tidings of her. Take my wife back with you, she is ill and worn out."

Women wept over the story, men felt their eyes grow dim, and a few kept on with the search in an unobtrusive way, saying, as had the father:

"We must find her."

And the days came and went until two weeks had passed, and only two persons now were still looking for the poor little baby. Those two were her father and neighbor lad, a stupid German boy who had particularly loved little Gretchen.

They were following the course of the river, perhaps five miles from home, when very suddenly the boy gave a shout that caused his companion to pause quickly.

"What is it?" he cried, huskily, "her dress, or—"

For answer the lad pointed far out over the prairie.

"What is it? I see nothing."

But the stupid fellow could not answer, save by wild, almost hysterical gestures at first, then a sudden spring forward, and he was off in the direction in which he had pointed.

The anxious father followed him as swiftly as possible, to find him at last in a slight depression of the ground, with his arms about the neck of old Bowzer.

Yes, Bowzer beyond a doubt, and neither starved nor dead, but decidedly comfortable and overjoyed at meeting them.

"Gretchen!" said the father, in trembling tones. "Where is your little mistress?"

Bowzer could not talk, he frisked and jumped about, but, alas! not a question could he answer.

"Wait!" said the boy, then he turned to the dog, whistled and started in the direction of home. The dog bounded to his side and then as suddenly stood still.

"Come on!" said the boy, "let us go home."

But the dog refused to obey his commands though the great yellow eyes seemed to burn with eagerness.

"Come on!" still sternly said the lad giving him a sharp kick.

With a howl the dog ran off and turned his head in a certain direction.

"She is that way," said the lad. "Come!"

The father followed blindly, he did not comprehend, he felt that perhaps he was about to look upon her wasted form, what idea the boy held he could not understand.

But they passed swiftly along, the dog trotting by their side contentedly. Not until quite at its door were either aware of a house, and such a funny house as it was.

Nature had given a slight knoll to this part of the prairie and a dug-out had been built in it. A very comfortable house enough, sometimes, and one many a hardly pushed homesteader has been compelled to live in for a time.

The lad pounded loudly upon the low, wooden door, a look upon his face that set the father's heart beating with a wild, new hope.

"Come in!" said a rough voice.

The door was flung open and revealed one small dark chamber, in shocking disorder, as if kept by a man; but seated upon the floor *alice*, fat and rosy as ever, was Gretchen.

"My baby! my little one!" said the father, in wild ecstasy, as he hugged her to his heart, while the boy who had so helped in finding her, stood on his head for one supreme moment of intense happiness.

A man unshorn, in careless attire, glanced up from a book he was reading. He had heard the words of the father, but as they were spoken in German, only understood their meaning by the scene before him.

"So, the little one has at last found her father. I do not understand her tongue, and could not even make out her name."

"But how came she here?"

"She was crying on the prairie late one night. I heard her and the bark of her dog. I brought them both home with me and have tried to make them comfortable."

The poor father tried to thank him, but failed, he only looked up toward heaven and grasped his hand. Then they started joyfully homeward.

What a glorious reunion that was, though the mother cried and cried. And the good neighbors one and all flocked in to hear the wonderful story.

"How came it her rescuer never heard about her being lost?" asked some one.

"Oh! he is a queer old chap, a recluse, and lives so much alone and in such a queer way no one ever even remembered to ask him."

One of the results of the little Gretchen's adventures was that she had captured the heart of the lonely man who had been compelled to shelter and care for her.

Almost every day he came to see her, and taught her good English. Not only that, but as the years crept on he taught her many other things; and she became a charming girl, well read, gentle bred, and quite fitted to possess the small fortune her god-father, as he termed himself, left her at his death.

But she was never lost again, the whole country saw to that, and particularly the good father and mother who watched over her with such zealous care; the yellow curls were seldom out of their sight until she became old enough to know the dangers on the plains.—Arthur's Home Magazine.

Gentlemanliness.

Kindly feelings, quick sympathies and gentle manners, joined with true self-respect form the basis of that gentlemanliness which is so naturally admired and coveted. Vulgarity, which is so much dreaded and so much misunderstood, consists in the absence of one or all of these qualities. It is not vulgar to wear a coarse coat or a cheap gown; but it is essentially so to dress in fine cloth or costly silk at the expense of one's creditors or one's peace of mind. It is not vulgar to make a mistake in the laws of etiquette; but it is so to sneer at the one who makes it, to ridicule ignorance, to berate the aged, to scorn honest frugality. A true gentleman may be poor or rich, but he will be neither a miser nor a squanderer; he may be slenderly or thoroughly educated, but he will be neither envious or supercilious; he may speak a provincial dialect, but will not use slang; he may be reserved, but will not be cunning; he may be known or unknown to fame, but will be neither obsequious nor contemptuous.

Not so Stupid as He Looks.

Jane—You seem to be unhappy, Emma.

Emma—Yes, I have been deceived in my husband. When I married him I supposed that it was not my money but myself he loved.

And now you have found out that it was not you at all, but only your money he was after.

Alas! That is what I know now for a certainty.

Well, there is one consolation for you, and that is that your husband is not as stupid as he looks.

Health Department.

Tooth Powders and Tooth Washes.

Powders and washes for the teeth should be used with great care. Regarding them, especially, the well-worn but pertinent caution to beware of strolling vendors applies with deepest import. Every one has a desire for white and beautiful teeth, and the itinerant who boasts loudly of the power of his preparations to "whiten the blackest teeth, to look like ivory in one minute!" catches the popular ear and sympathy on the spot. There is nothing remarkable in the fact that what he claims can be demonstrated. Any chemist or apothecary can concoct a preparation which will do all this—and more. If used but a short time it will destroy the enamel, and with it, of course, the entire set of teeth; since the phenomenal result is and can be reached only by the destruction of a small portion of the outer surface of the enamel. The result is the same whether the agent be wash or powder, since the latter simply contains the chemicals of the former in an undissolved form. All strong acids or alkalis should be avoided in the mouth, and if there is doubt as to the composition of any preparation in this respect, let it be tested with a bit of litmus paper. This paper can be obtained at any drug store, and is in two colors—blue and red. The blue, if dampened with an acid solution, will turn red, and the rapidity and intensity of the change will indicate the acidity of the solution. The red indicates alkali by changing to blue, in the same manner.

Tooth-powders, as a rule, should be soluble and slightly antacid. There is a class of insoluble powders which are of the most dangerous nature, of which powdered charcoal is a notable example. These consist of fine, sharp particles, which being pressed by the brush between the teeth and gums or lodged between the teeth, may cause the most serious results, even to the destruction of the gums or the cement. The use of the brush in connection with powders, washes, or other treatment of the teeth, should be gentle. Bleeding of the gums is always a danger signal. It shows that the skin has been broken, inviting the absorption into the system of any poisonous or foreign matters which may be present in the mouth. If the gums are very tender, a soft brush should be used, and used very gently, till they have hardened sufficiently to withstand more vigorous treatment. Even then, the liability will be to err on the side of harshness.

The Art of Prolonging Life.

Exercise is essential to the preservation of health; inactivity is a potent cause of wasting and degeneration. The vigor and equality of the circulation, the functions of the skin, and the aeration of the blood, are all promoted by muscular activity, which thus keeps up a proper balance and relation between the important organs of the body. In youth, the vigor of the system is often so great that if one organ be sluggish another part will make amends for the deficiency by acting vicariously, and without any consequent damage to itself. In old age, the task cannot thus be shifted from one organ to another; the work allotted to each sufficiently taxes strength, and vicarious action cannot be performed without mischief. Hence the importance of maintaining, as far as possible, the equable action of all the bodily organs, so that the share of the vital processes assigned to each shall be properly accomplished. For this reason exercise is an important part of the conduct of life in old age; but discretion is absolutely necessary. An old man should discover by experience how much exercise he can take without exhausting his powers, and should be careful never to exceed the limit. Old persons are apt to forget that their staying powers are much less than they once were, and that, while a walk of two or three miles may prove easy and pleasurable, the addition of the return journey of similar length will seriously overtax the strength.

Born-Blindness Preventable.

Statistics taken from the reports of Fuchs, Magnus, Howe and the committee of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom, show that at least thirty per cent. of all blindness in Europe and in this country is caused by preventable disease at birth. The census of 1880 gives a total of about fifty thousand blind in the United States. Of these, at least fifteen thousand have been blind from birth. And yet, this disease is well nigh absolutely preventable, and in its incipency, easily curable. This statement is borne out by facts, as will be seen by reference to the reports of the large lying-in hospitals, where the methods of prevention have been in operation. After these means were put into operation, there was practically an entire disappearance of the disease. The method consists in wiping the face and lids clean and dry immediately after the umbilical cord is tied. The lids are then opened, and one or two drops of a two per cent. solution of nitrate of silver are instilled. Except in premature children the reaction from this treatment is very slight.

It is obvious that our first duty is to arouse our teachers and writers on obstetrics to the necessity of instructing their pupils as to the proper care of the eyes of the child from the very instant of its birth. Let them be instructed to wash the eyes with some antiseptic solution, and examine into their condition at each visit, for at least a week.

The Hair.

The hair is the covering of the roof of "the home of thought and palace of the soul." Where baldness, which sometimes occurs in quite young persons, is hereditary, it is doubtful if anything can be done to prevent or remedy it. Avoid "restoratives" and other nostrums, and, as a rule, do not use pomatums or oils upon the head. The thorough use of a moderately stiff brush will greatly promote the health of the scalp and prevent the falling of the hair without other application. The hair should be occasionally washed, and if there is much dandruff, the yolk of an egg will be much efficient in removing it. Work the egg with the fingers well into the hair, a little at a time, to bring it in contact with the scalp; then wash it out thoroughly with water, and the hair will be beautifully clean and soft. Avoid all shampooing liquids; those used by barbers are strong potash solutions. They call it "Salts of Wormwood" and "Salts of Tartar," and use it without knowing its real nature. It is very effective in cleaning but ruinous to the hair. If the falling of the

hair is not prevented by thorough brushing, some stimulating application may be made. Half an ounce of the tincture of cantharides added to a quart of bay rum will answer better than most "hair tonics." But the mode of dressing the hair must be controlled almost entirely by the fashion. It will be considered by many of our lady readers a necessity to dress the hair in the fashion of the moment, but we should endeavor to counteract, by careful treatment, any injurious effects, such as overheating of the scalp, which produces dandruff, irritation, and possible baldness. Whatever style is adopted during the day and evening, the air should be given the utmost freedom during the night. All cannot employ artists to direct the efforts of the hair-dressing maid, but every one can see to it that simplicity and an appropriate ensemble are presented. Nothing is more unseemly than to see a noble, dignified face marred, and its true beauty destroyed by some coquettish or frivolous arrangement of the hair wholly out of keeping with the general bearing of the wearer.

Fortunately, the custom of the hour demands that the short-comings of one head shall be supplied by some other head, and from this necessity has grown up the present great trade in human hair. It is estimated that more than a million pounds of human hair is annually marketed, to say nothing of the product of the home market, which finds its supply largely through the periodical craze for "short hair," which some women experience, when the product of the barber's shears generally finds its way to other fields of adornment.

The Solomon Islands.

It is more than three centuries since the Spaniards discovered the Solomon Islands, one of the large Pacific groups. The most detailed account of that expedition has never been published. It is the journal of Gomez Cotoira, the chief purser of the fleet, and a translation of the manuscript was recently made for Mr. Woodford upon his third visit to the Solomon Islands. He has just returned to England from his latest excursions, during which he followed the track of the Spanish ships through the long chain of islands, and was able satisfactorily to identify almost every place minutely described by him. He had little difficulty in identifying even the anchoring places of Spanish fleets. It is an interesting revelation of the islands as they were 300 years ago. Some places then described as having quite a large population are now found to be without inhabitants, the people having been exterminated by head-hunting expeditions. It is very interesting, also, to find that on islands where new dialects are found every ten or fifteen miles, Woodford has been able to identify words recorded by the Spaniards at the places where they heard them.

Columbus had kept his records in a painstaking and methodical manner like old Gomez Cotoira, the world would have been spared the long and still unsettled controversy as to where he first landed in the Western World. If his efficiency as a navigator had not greatly exceeded his descriptive talents the discovery of the New World would probably have been left for some later explorer. His statements are often obscure, parts of his journal cannot be reconciled with other portions, and he is very sparing of details and makes statements that are irreconcilable with the present topography of the Bahamas. It seems most likely that Watling Island was the first land he discovered but the question will probably never be conclusively settled.

Target Practice on Board a Man-of-War.

Telegraphing from Bantry Bay, a correspondent with the Iron Duke says:—At the time of writing the official returns of the shooting have just been made up, and they show that the same number of shots were fired in just half the time occupied on the previous day, with a considerable improvement as to scoring. During the firing I stood on the spar deck, and when one of the big guns in the upper battery, which is immediately beneath, belched forth its smoke, and flame, and shot, the effect was tremendous. There was a distinct upheaval of the deck, and the rush of wind was like a blow upon the face. Upon one occasion, standing too close to the rail, I received so sharp a crack upon the drum of either ear as to cause me severe pain. This was my own fault, for I had neglected to take the precaution of placing cotton in my ears. On board a man-of-war every man and boy has his particular duty to perform in time of action, and during target practice everyone must be at his post. Down in the stowage the surgeon is ready to receive the wounded, the chaplain is standing by him to assist in binding up wounds or to administer spiritual consolation to the mortally injured. By the side of a small table laden with phials and bandages is the open case of surgical instruments and the amputation table with its waterproof sheeting is all ready to hand. A peep into the lower battery horrifies one. Only blood is wanting to complete the picture—half-naked men with determined faces and the light of battle in their eyes rushing hither and thither handling huge guns as if they were playthings. It is a fact that during target practice the smell of gunpowder excites the men and puts them on their mettle, and the guns are hauled twice as smartly as on other occasions.

A Cruel Father Smartly Punished.

By the prompt and sensible intervention of a police-constable a case of savage cruelty, practised by a drunken father on his own daughter, a child of six years of age, has been brought to light and submitted for the consideration of the magistrates at the West London Police Court. The charge against Henry Dunn, the father incriminated, was that he assaulted the child by beating her savagely with a leather strap, and that at the time of committing the offence he was excited by drink. The offence was not denied, but it was urged that the defendant was only chastising the child. Such a plea no magistrate could accept, and drunkenness of the father could only be considered an aggravation of the offence. Most people will think that in consigning a wretch of this character to imprisonment for one month the magistrate acted with unnecessary leniency.

The Difference.

Wife—What is the difference between the words induced and compelled?
Husband—There is a great deal of difference. For instance, a man who is induced to marry a woman is compelled to live with her afterwards.

An Exciting Experience.

For myself, I was "chopped down" once, and once only. It happened in this way. In the midwinter of 1879, I had occasion to visit the chief camp of the Little Madawaska. Coming from the city, and to a camp where I was a stranger to all the men, I was not unnaturally regarded as a pronounced specimen of the greenhorn. I took no pains to tell any one what the boss already well knew, that is, that I had been a frequenter of the camps from my boyhood. Many and many a neat trap was laid for my apparently "tender" feet, but I avoided them all as if by accident. As for climbing a tree, I always laughed at the idea when it was proposed to me. I always suggested that it might spoil my clothes. Before long the men, by putting little things together, came to the conclusion that I was an old stager; and, rather sheepishly, they gave over their attempts to entrap me. Then I graciously waved my hand as it were, and was frankly received as a veteran, cleared from every suspicion of being green.

At last the day came when I did wish to climb a tree. The camp was on a high plateau, and not far off towered a magnificent pine tree, growing out of the summit of a knoll in such a way as to command all the surrounding country. Its branches were phenomenally thick; its girth of trunk was magnificent. And this tree I resolved one day to climb, in order to get a clear idea of the lay of the land. Of course I strolled off surreptitiously, and, as I thought, unwatched. But there I was much mistaken. No sooner was I two-thirds of the way up the tree than, with shouts of laughter, the lumbermen rushed out of the surrounding cover and proceeded to chop me down. The chance was too good for them to lose.

I concealed my annoyance, and made no attempt to descend. On the contrary I thanked them for the little attention, climbed a few feet further up, to secure a position which I saw would be a safe one for me when the tree should fall. As I did so, I perceived, with a gasp and a tremor, that I was not alone in the tree.

There, not ten feet above me, stretched at full length along a large branch, was a huge panther, glaring with rage and terror. From the men below his form was quite concealed. Glancing restlessly from me to my pursuers, the brute seemed uncertain just what to do. As I carefully refrained from climbing any further up, and tried to assume an air of not having observed him, he apparently concluded that I was not his worst enemy. In fact, I dare say he understood what was going on and realized that he and I were fellow-sufferers.

I laughed softly to myself as I thought how my tormentors would be taken aback when that panther should come down among them. I decided that, considering their numbers, there would be at least no more danger for them than that which they were exposing me to in their reckless fooling. And, already influenced by that touch of nature which makes us so wondrous kind, I began to hope that the panther would succeed in making his escape.

The trunk of the pine was so thick that I might almost have reached the ground before the choppers could cut it through. At last it gave a mighty shudder and sagged to one side. I balanced myself nimbly on the upper side, standing myself by a convenient branch. The great mass of foliage, presenting a wide surface to the air, made the fall a comparatively slow one; but the tremendous sweep of the draught upward, as the tree-top described its gigantic arc, gave me a sickening sensation. Then came the final dull and thunderous crash—in an instant, I found myself standing in my place, jarred but unharmed, with the snow thrashed up all about me.

The next instant there was another roar, or rather a sort of screaming yell, overwhelming the riotous laughter of the woodsmen; and out of the confusion of pine-boughs shot the tawny form of the panther in a whirlwind of fury. One of the choppers was in his path, and was bowled over like a clumsy nine-pin. The next bound brought the beast on to the backs of a yoke of oxen, and his cruel claws severely scratched the oxen's necks. As the poor animals bellowed and fell on their knees, the panther paused, with some idea, apparently, of fighting the whole assembled party. But as the men, recovered from their first amazement, rushed with their axes to the rescue of the oxen, the panther saw that the odds were all against him. He turned half round and greeted his enemies with one terrific and strident snarl, then bounded off into the forest at a pace which made it idle to pursue him. The owner of the oxen hurled an ax after him, but the missile flew wide of its mark.—Charles G. D. Roberts, in ST. NICHOLAS.

Ladies of War.

Not content with appointing the Queen, his grandmother, to the colonelcy of a crack dragoon regiment, and inducting her to a portrait painted of herself arrayed in the light blue tunic and gold-embroidered shoulder straps of the corps, Emperor William has now issued a decree ordering that all the female employes of the postal service shall in future wear a uniform composed of dark blue tunic with yellow-cloth facings, collars and cuffs and adorned by a suitable number of silver-plated buttons. As yellow is an exceedingly trying color to the complexion, the various post-mistresses and clerks are reported to be on the verge of a mutiny, which would certainly paralyze the Imperial Mail Service in more senses than one. Like his brother monarch of Dahomey, whose body-guard is entirely composed of amazons, the young sovereign of Germany seems to be bent on endowing Venus with the attributes of Mars and not only his venerable grandmother, but also his mother, his sisters and various other of his female relatives have been appointed to colonelcies and captaincies in his army, and appear at reviews dressed in the embroidered and laced tunics of their respective regiments.

The Horse Blew First.

A veterinary surgeon told his assistant to give a powder to a sick horse.

"You take the powder," he explained, "put it in a tin tube, open the horse's mouth and blow the powder down his throat."

Not long afterward the assistant came back, looking as sick as people ever get to be.

"Did you give the horse the powder?"

"I tried to. I put the powder in the tin tube, forced open the horse's mouth, put the tube between his teeth, and—"

"Did you blow the powder down his throat?"

"No; I was going to, but the horse blew first, and powder went down my throat."