YOUNG FOLKS.

A Child's Thought.

Mrs. Hunt dropped her sewing every now and then to glance at the "Little Lord Fauntleroy" figure near her and to wonder why he was so quiet, and of what he could be thinking. He was standing before the window with his hands clasped behind his back, evidently much preoccupied, for his brows were knitted and there was a wistful look in his eyes.

She did not disturb him, but waited for him to speak. He was very old for his years. After a few moments he said slowly and with a bit of a wail: "Mamma, I don't want to die."

"Why, Donald!" exclaimed Mrs. Hunt, startled, "What do you mean! Who put that idea into your head? Are you sick, dear?" She dropped her work and ran to It was the first time she had ever ard him mention death, and a pang shot through her.

"You must not think of such things, Donald, you are not going to die, dear—not for—"

"But sometime I will, Mamma," persisted Donald, "and I think I'm going to die soon—to-morrow, p'raps; I don't want to one bit either. Will you feed my pony and put water on my plants?"

"I won't have to, Donald, for you are going to live a long time. Why, I have lived a great many years and I expect to live a great many more. I shall die before you do; you must not feel that way—"

"Why do we have to die, Mamma? I think it's mean. Won't we smuvver with the ground all on top of us? I'll jest kick it off." Then he thought a moment, "But I couldn't move, could I? Oh, dear! won't we ever get alive again?" And his eyes swelled with tears.

"Don't think about it, Donald dear. Run out and play. I am sure your pony needs feeding. If you feel sick, tell me right off; do you hear?"

Donald moved slowly out; he seldom hurried. Then Mrs. Hunt heard the bell of the scissors grinder.

"Donald," she called, "give these scissors to that man to sharpen."

"Oh, Mr. Man!" cried Donald, running down the walk, "Here's sumpin' for you to fix."

The scissors grinder took the shears. He was a very old man, with a kind, intelligent face.

"Can I watch you do it?" asked the little fellow.

"Yes, laddie, sit ye down on the stoop here and tell me your name."

"My name's Donald Hunt, 10 Summit Street, Watertown. What's yours?"

"Mine? Why, let me see—it's so long since—they call me 'Old Tom,' child, but I'm only a poor scissors' grinder."

"Haven't you got any other las' name?" and Donald looked at him with pitying eyes. "Why, but you're a funny man; don't your foot get tired, working that wheel all the time?"

"Yes, sometimes."

Then was silence—only broken by the whirr of the wheel and the noise of the shears.

"Your hair's jess like snow," observed Donald. "Were you born that way like my white kitten?"

"No, laddie; I was once a boy like you, with long yellow curls and lively spirits, but I'm an old, old man now."

"I am sorry," said Donald. "Are you going to die."

"Yes, pretty soon; I can't last much longer."

Donald was silent a moment and then asked: "Do you want to die."

"When I'm tired and sick and hungry—then I do; but no matter, I'll be ready when the time comes."

"I don't want to die. I want to live here allus, and have fun and ride my pony. Did you know I got a pony, a little Shetland, with great big hair? Papa bringed it to me my las' birfday. I'm five years old and I'm strong, too. I went to give the pony some water yes'day, and—what do you think—the pail was old, I guess, cause when I lifted it, the bottom of it jess busted right out and got my feet all wet." The child laughed pleasantly but soon grew sober again. "I feel as if I was going to die to-morrow."

"Why?"

"'Cause I've lived such a long, long time. Mamma says she's going to live a long while yet, and that I'm going to beat her and live still more. When she dies, Papa'll have to be my Mamma, won't he? Then when he dies and leaves me here all alone by myself—why, then I'll be in trouble, won't I? Will my pony die too? I wonder if it'll hurt. Jess think, you can't move nor breeve, nor anyfing. I think its jess awful."

"Let me tell you something," said the scissors grinder, seating himself beside Donald on the driving block and looking into his great eyes. "Yes, we've all got to die sometime—the trees and the birds and everything—whether we like it or not."

"Why?"

"Nobody knows. Flowers die. Your kittens die, don't they? No one knows why. There, little man, run and pick me a dandelion from over there, a nice yellow one, and a grey one."

He brought the blossoms and laid them carefully on the old man's knee. The scissors grinder held up the yellow one. "See, Donald, this one is you—strong and sturdy and bright; it has a long time to live—"

"No, it hasn't," objected Donald with a wise shake of the head. "It'll wilt and die, jess like it allus does—'cause I've picked it."

His old companion smiled. The youngster was keen.

"Yes, yes, but pretend we hadn't picked it—it would have a long time to live, if it were in the ground, wouldn't it?"

"Yes," Donald assented, and then added quickly, "if my pony didn't eat it. Papa turns him out in the yard lots of times and ties a rope to him so he won't run away."

"Well, now you see this gray one; it is the yellow one gone to seed; it was once strong, and young, like you, but it has lived a long while and grown gray—like me and it will die soon. See, it is very weak. I can blow it to pieces just by breathing on it. You will live to be gray and then you will die and it won't hurt any more to die than it hurts the old dandelion to be blown and destroyed; because it is ready." ew gently and the feathery stalks in the air. But we are different We have souls. Now, when on't hurt any more than I hurt n; you won't feel a thing. Just your body dies, just the little hand stops moving, but not you, your mind, your spirit. Oh, my dear child, how can I make you understand?"

"I think I understand; you mean the thing I think wiv doesn't die?"

"Yes, yes, that's it. Aren't you glad?" And you will be happy and all your friends will be with you. But, I must go now."

"Must you? Good-bye, and thank you. I'm not 'fraid any more. I think p'raps I'd like to die," and the child threw his arms about the old man's neck and kissed his wrinkled forehead.

"Good-by," said the old man with a choke in his voice. "He is a little angel already," he added to himself.

Donald stood there, with the scissors in his hand, watching him walk slowly down the street and listening to the tiresome ding dong of the bell. He waved his little hand to him, as he turned the corner.

"Come again!" he cried. Then he ran joyfully into the house. "Oh, Mamma," he said. "I'd jess as lief die as not. The scissors grinder told me all about it. He's a awful nice man. It's only jess my body that's going to die—I'm not. But still, I wish you'd bury me on top the ground and then, when it snowed, Mamma, you'd come and cover me up, wouldn't you?"

THE ENGLISH CENSUS.

Figures Regarding London.

The population of London—that is, the London of the Registrar-General, or practically, the administrative county of London—was found to be 4,211,743, showing an increase of 396,199, or 10.4 per cent. upon 1881, as compared with an increase of 11.7 per cent. for the whole of England and Wales. This difference is referred to by the report as a notable fact, inasmuch as it is the first time that such a phenomenon has presented itself. London having been found in every preceding intercensal period to have gained more or less in its proportions as compared with the country at large. The report continues:—

"Suggestion has been made that the explanation of this apparent relaxation in the growth of London, as compared with the country at large, may lie in the fact that the census of 1891 was taken only a week after Easter day, when a number of persons who had gone away for an Easter holiday had not come back from the country. It is possible that this may have had some slight effect upon the enumerated population in those quarters that are mainly inhabited by the class that is wealthy enough to take prolonged holidays; but it is difficult to suppose that it could have had any sensible effect upon the agggregate population of the whole town, especially when it is recollected that, if many Londoners migrate at Easter into the country, many countrymen on the other hand pay a visit at that season to London."

HOW THE PEOPLE LIVE.

From the section of the report dealing with habitations we find that according to the returns there were altogether in England and Wales 5,451,497 inhabited houses, besides 372,184 uninhabited and 38,387 in course of building. The average number of occupants to each inhabited house was 5.32, against 5.38 in 1881 and 5.33 in 1871. No material change, therefore, has occurred in the last 20 years in the proportion borne by population to houses. The proportion varies, of course, greatly in different areas, being highest naturally in great towns, where space is valuable and the houses are of large size. But for each individual town the proportion has remained fairly constant. A table which gives the proportion for London and all municipal towns with more than 100,000 inhabitants shows that such change as has occurred in the proportions is in a direction that suggests diminished crowding, the proportion of persons per house being, with two exceptions, lower in all these towns in 1891 than it was in 1881. With regard to tenements—by which was understood "any house or part of a house separately occupied either by the owner or by a tenant"—the total number in England and Wales was 6,131,001, which gives, with a population of 29,002,525, an average of 4.7 persons to each tenement, and of 1.12 tenements, or distinct occupancies, to each inhabited house. No fewer than 481,653 of the tenements are brought under the definition of "overcrowded," and in them dwelt 3,258,044 persons, or 11.23 per cent. of the total population, the average number of persons per room being 2.8. The coal-bearing counties are stated to be those where the crowding of dwellings is most severe.

LONDON PAVEMENTS.

A Peculiar Discovery and a Startling Possibility.

A contemporary quotes from a report of Mr. Foulger, the chief engineer of the London Gas Company, some rather startling information about the condition of the London streets. Many of the streets are paved with wooden blocks, laid on a stratum of concrete, which forms a sort of arch across the street. This concrete has become very hard, so that it is quite capable of sustainage the traffic without the support of the forth beneath it; and it seems that in course in years the soil, which is loose and soft, has settled away from beneath it, so that, for example, in Oxford street, it was found in making some repairs, that a man could crawl in between the under-side of the concrete arch forming the substratum of the pavement and the surface of the soil under it. Except for the danger of a sudden collapse of the arch, this subsidence of the soil would not be a serious matter, were it not for the fact that the space between the concrete and the soil is found to be filled with a mixture of gas, which has escaped from the street mains, and air; and if the mixture should attain explosive proportions, which might easily happen, a short circuit of an electric current, or an incautious excavation, might result in blowing the street into the air.

No Interruptions Likely.

Tired Housekeeper—"There! The house is as neat as a new pin at last. I am going to take a nap. Try not to disturb me with your play, my pets."

Little Brother—"What shall I do if any one calls?"

Little Sister—"No need to bother about that. No one ever calls when things are clean."

The smallest tree in the world is the dwarf willow of Great Britain—2 inches high.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE,

How Matrimonial Ties are Made, and Severed in Many Countries.

Kentucky has thirteen legal reasons for divorce.

In twenty years Canada has had but 116 divorces.

Desertion is the most common cause of divorce in Sweden.

Many States forbid marriage between white and Chinese persons.

Paris has nearly one-half of the divorces granted in all France.

Scotland has fifteen divorces to every 1,000,000 in population.

In Austria 14 is the legal age for marriage for both men and women.

The average age of widowers when remarrying is 42, of widows 39.

Of divorced couples in Germany, over 55 per cent. have no children.

Austria has twenty-six divorces to 1000 marriages; Hungary, but 6.

In England to 1,000,000 of population there are nine divorces every year.

In eighty-five years there have been in France 22,865,000 marriages.

The most common cause for divorce in Italy is cruelty from the husband.

In all countries January, June and July are the favorite months for marriage,

There are at the present day 62,062 divorced persons living in Germany.

All marriages in England must be celebrated before 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

In Colorado a wife was granted a decree because her husband cut off her bangs.

Heliogabalus divorced one of his wives because she had a mole on her shoulder.

Italy in the last twelve years has had 2,573,000 marriages and 6690 divorces.

The greater portion of divorced people in France are between 40 and 50 years of age.

Aristotle said that the proper age for marriage was 37 for a man and 18 for a woman.

Twenty-two States forbid by law the marriage of step-children with their step-parents.

The minimum age fixed for marriage in Sparta was 30 for a man and 20 for a woman.

A greater number of widowers remarry in Spain than in any other country in Europe.

In no country has the marriage rate declined so greatly in recent years as in Ireland.

The greater portion of divorce takes place between the fifth and tenth year of married life.

Twenty-five States and Territories forbid marriage between white and "colored" people.

During the last twenty years in England there were 4,872,000 marriages and 6587 divorces.

Seven-tenths of the marriages in every country take place between the ages of 20 and 30.

In almost every country the great number of divorces is granted at the petition of the wife.

In Prussia 18 and 14 are legal ages at which men and women may contract a matrimonial alliance.

The English marriage ceremonies are of three kinds—by banns, by license, or before a registrar.

In Siam the first wife may be divorced, but can not be sold; the other wives may be both divorced and sold.

Ireland has the greatest number of unmarried women between 15 and 46 of any country in Christendom.

In Cochin China the breaking of a pair of chopsticks in the presence of the couple is a legal form of divorce.

Little Denmark is great in the matter of divorce, there being thirty-seven divorces to every 1000 marriages.

In Ohio a divorce was recently granted because "the defendant pulled this plaintiff out of bed by his whiskers."

The marriage statistics of every country show that widowers are more prone to marry maidens than to take widows.

According to the statistics of Mr. Carroll D. Wright there is one divorce to every 479 marriages in the United States.

In twenty years the ratio of divorces to marriages has increased from 100 to 250 per cent. in every country of Europe.

During the last forty years 78,750 divorces have been granted in France on the ground of cruelty; 4700 for other causes.

Switzerland has the greatest number of divorces as proportioned to marriages of any country in Europe—468 to 10,000.

One Greek State had a law that if a man divorced his wife, he could not marry a woman younger than the discarded partner.

Roman law allowed divorce for three causes: the scriptural reason, designs on a husband's life and the possession of false keys.

The marriages with the deceased wife's sister or husband's brother numbered in France, in 1885, 355 per 100,000 marriages.

The decrease in the price of food during the last sixty years has not resulted in an increase in the proportion of marriages.

A Wisconsin man got a divorce because his wife kept a servant girl who spit on the frying-pan to see if it was hot enough to fry.

The average duration of marriages in England is 27 years; in France and Germany, 26; in Sweden, 23; Norway, 24; Russia, 30.

Marriage is a contract, but differs from all others in that it is the only contract minors can make which in a court of law will be held good.

A Tennessee court liberated a wife because "the defendant does not wash himself, thereby causing the plaintiff great mental anguish.

Statistics of most countries seem to show that consanguineous marriages increase the number of insane, deaf, dumb and blind children.

In the last twenty years the marriages in Russia have numbered 11,820,000; the divorces, 18,411, or about one to every 1000 marriages.

San Francisco has the greatest proportion of divorces to marriages of any city in the world. For every 10,000 marriages there are 2233 divorces.

In Illinois a decree was obtained by a long suffering husband because "during the past year the defendant struck this plaintiff repeatedly with pokers, flat-irons and other hard substances."

POETRY.

When Mither's Gane.

It mak's a change in a 'thing' room
When mither's gane.
The cat has less contented croon,
The kettle has a dowie tune,
There's na thing has sae blythe a soon',
Sin' mither's gane.

The bairnies gang wi' ragged claes,
Sin' mither's gane;
There's nane to mend their broken taes,
Or laugh at a' their pawky ways,
The nichts are langer than the days,
When mither's gane.

Wha cheers them when there's ocht amis
Sin' mither's gane?
Wha tak's their pairt in that or this,
An' oot o' trouble mak's a bliss,
Wi' kindly word an' guid nicht kiss—
Dear mither's gane.

The faither's there; but losh! puir man.
Sin' mither's gane,
Although he does the best he can,
He hasna sic a tender han'—
The bottom's oot o' nature's plan,
When mither's gane.

Oh! lonely hoose, oh! empty chair—
The mither's gane,
Yet fancy often sees her there,
Wi' a' the smiles she used to wear,
Whilk brings oor hearts maist to despair
To think she's gane.

—[William Lyle.

Wisht I Could.

Wisht I could go back a little while 'n be a boy again,
A-jerkin' o' the minners with a little crooked pin;
'N hear the frogs a-gruntin' as I git 'em on the jump,
'N me skeered wusser'n they was, when they hit the water plump.

Wish I could go loafin', crost the medder smellin' sweet,
'N feel the sassy daisies a-tickin' o' my feet,
All the while a-noddin' 'n a-smiling up at me—
Wisht I could go back 'n be like I uster be.

Whilst I could go t'morrer 'n find 'em all the same
As they was the day I lef' t' make a bigger name;
'N see dear old mother—always skerry—at the gate,
Like she uster wait fer me whenever I was late.

Wisht I could look in heaven 'n see her thare t'day,
'N git a tender smile o' love, like when I went away;
I feel like it ud help me to battle here with sin—
Wisht I could go back a little while 'n be a boy agin.

—[Atlanta Constitution.

On Lake Erie.

Upon the further, misty hills
Faint gleam a few white sheep that stray
Among the dusky, distant hills,
That melt long miles and miles away.

The swallows from the high cliff's walls,
With ceaseless wings cleave overhead;
And o'er the dark'ning waves their calls
Grow more remote, and now are dead.

And voices, unknown voices, rise
From out the dreaming waves, but we
Can only humanly surmise
Their old, unworded mystery.

Amid the dark, memorial gloom
The star-gleam and the moonbeam steal;
And haply through our human doom
The faint, small, star-like hope we feel.

To-night the waves are long and low,
And we who float upon their breast
Are maddened that we never know
The secret of the water's rest.

—[Arthur J. Stringer.

A Skating Song.

Whisper a song as we glide along, ye pines on the southern shore,
From your branches long, where the cradle song of the south wind plays no more;
Whisper of memories that ye hold in the heart of your great green boughs,
Of a summer's wine that was yours and mine, when the days were long and the nights weren't cold;
Of the whispers heard and the warm love told, and the old, old vows.

Ring with the tune, oh, thou broad lagune, of my steel-clad shining feet.
As I skate away to the end of the day where the twilight and moonlight meet,
Ring with the plashes of oars that plied on your bosom in nights gone by,
To a tale oft told that will ne'er grow old, tho' the nights grow long and the days wax cold,
And the ice has formed in an iron mold o'er your old, old tide.

Echo a line, oh thou stream of mine, of the song of thy great unrest
To this heart of mine from that heart of thine
While I sped to the red-rimmed west.
Echo of faces that used to grow
On your face ere the ice and rime
Had come to frown all your ripples down,
When your face had the blush of a sunset's glow,
And the winds that blew weren't the winds that blow in the winter time.

Horse Reckoning.

A Russian doctor has been experimenting to find how far some of our domestic animals can count. The intelligence of the horse, as this is shown in mathematics, seems to surpass that of the cat or the dog. The instances given by him are interesting, but before they are accepted as authentic they should be verined by the observations of naturalists whose skill and care are unquestioned.

He found a horse which was able to count the mile posts along the way. It had been trained by its master to stop for feed whenever they covered twenty-five versts.

One day they tried the horse over a road where three false mile posts had been pu in between the real ones, and sure enough, the horse, deceived by this trick, stopped for his oats at the end of twenty-two versts instead of going the usual twenty-five.

The same horse was accoustomed to being fed every day at the stroke of noon.

The doctor observed that whenever the clock struck the horse would stop and prick up his ears as if counting. If he heard twelve strokes he would trot off contentedly to be fed, but if it were fewer than twelve he would resignedly go on working

The experiment was made of striking twelve strokes at the wrong time, whereupon the horse started for his oats, in spite of the fact that he had been fed only an hour before.

UNDER AN AVALANCHE.

A Whole Troop Smothered by a Snowslide in the Mountains.

Shots at a Stray Deer Start the Destructive Mass to Motion—Terrible Manifestation of Nature's Relentless Forces on a Triple Mountain Slope.

We had gone out from Fort Owen to open the pass in the Big Hole mountains to enable the wood choppers to get a supply of fuel for the post. It had snowed for seventy hours without a break, and at several points in the pass there were drifts twenty feet high. There were twenty-five of us, under command of a lieutenant, and about noon we had dug our way half through the pass. The mountain slopes on each side were rough and rocky, but the snow lay so deep that each slope looked as level as a floor, though the slant was much sharper than the ordinary house roof. It was a good 1,000 feet to the cedars growing on the ridge, and it made one dizzy to look up and realize the distance.

"We are liable to meet with a disaster here," the officer had said as we began work with our snow shovels in the morning. "There must be no shooting with your revolvers, no horse play, no shouting. If the snow gets started up there not a man of us will ever be found before next June."

The pass ran east and west for a distance of 200 feet and then made a sharp turn to the north. At the turn we had what might be called a third mountain in front of us. The slope was as high as others and pitched to the west, or down the pass. We thus had three slopes, two pitching across the pass and the other lengthwise of it. For the first hour every man was nervous and afraid. Then the feeling began to wear off, and some of the men expressed their contempt of the peril. At the end of two hours the officer had to repeat his words of caution. At about 11 o'clock a fall of snow from the left-hand slope revealed the mouth of a cave about thirty feet above our heads. It was believed by all to be the lair of a bear or panther, and at noon, when the men sat down in the pass to eat their pork and hard tack, the officer started to go up and investigate. Without a word on his part I followed him. The fall of snow had left the rocks bare and revealed three or four small trees, but it was a hard climb to reach the cave. It wasn't a cave at all, but only an indentation in a cliff, with a shelf of rock overhanging it. This overhang extended out for perhaps four feet.

STARTING THE DESTRUCTIVE STREAM.

The men were not all in a bunch, but some of them were even out of sight around the bend. After discovering that we had been duped about the cave we stood looking down and across, and were just moving to get down when one of the men below us jumped up and shouted:

"A deer! A deer! Hurrah, boys! Venison for supper!

The deer was above us, but we could not see it on account of the overhang. All the men had their revolvers, and as they began to flourish them and prepare to fire the officer called out a command and a warning. If they heard him they did not heed him. He was still speaking when three or four shots were fired almost simultaneously and some one cried out that the deer had been hit. It was the concussion that started the snow and it started from the very top of the slope, where the warm sun had softened it soonest. I felt a trembling of the mountain and leaned back under the overhang and as the lieutenant and I stood side by side the avalanche swept over us. Daylight was blotted out in an instant and the grinding, roaring, and crushing were something terrific.

It seemed as if the mountain rocked and pitched like a steamer at sea, and the noise was louder than any clap of thunder you ever heard. It couldn't have lasted over sixty seconds, though the time seemed ten times as long. Then we looked down to find the pass at the soles of our feet. In other words, it had filled up to a height of thirty feet with snow, bowlders, trees, and earth. Two hundred feet to the west of us was the lower mouth or opening—beyond that a plain. The snow had not only fallen from our slope, but from the one opposite. We were struck dumb for the moment, and as we stood gazing blankly the snow started on the third slope. Away up near the crest a ball started rolling, and ten seconds later the snow on a space 300 feet long was moving. Instead of piling up in the ravine it struck and forced the snow down there to the west and followed after.

DISCIPLINE UNTO DEATH.

It was a great river of snow sweeping past us. Logs, trees, and bowlders which weighed tens of tons were borne along like straws, and so swiftly that the eye caught no second glance. All at once there was a check, and right before us a soldier was shot to the surface. It was Corporal Herts, who was probably farther up the pass than any other man. He popped out of the snow head first and at full length, and for perhaps five seconds was within ten feet of us and looking squarely into our faces. He was bareheaded, his overcoat gone, and his face bleeding. He knew what had happened, and no doubt realized his peril, but as he stood there, saved for the instant, up went his hand in a salute to the lieutenant. As his arm dropped he disappeared from sight. It was discipline in the face of death—an instance that will never have its counterpart.

Out of that narrow, rocky pass poured the tide with a fury which scraped it as bare as a floor and tore great rocks from its sides. At the west mouth the snow filled a ravine fifty feet deep and then poured out on the plain for a quarter of a mile. It was no use to look for the bodies. Five hundred men could not have moved that mass in a fortnight. Twenty four men were buried there. It was idle to hope that any of them still lived. Along in the last days of June we found them, one after another, and even then we had to dig. The snow would have smothered them as it rushed down, but with the snow came rocks which crushed some of them to pulp. The corporal who had saluted as he looked into the eyes of death was the last one found. He was at the bottom of the ravine, the body without a shred of clothing, and the arm he had raised had been torn from its socket as he was whirled along with that grinding mass.—[M. Quad.

There are now ninety-two Christian churches in the city of Tokio, Japan.