

R. C. Pink - edited at J. Thomas,
D. Rivers copy to A. Barker
Grammar School Examination

Literature.

TO APRIL.

BY HENRY KIRK WHITE.

Emblem of life! see cheerful April sail
In varying vest along the shadowy skies,
Now bidding Summer's softest zephyrs rise,
Aeon, recalling Winter's stormy gale,
And pouring from the cloud her sudden hail;
Then, smiling through the tear that dims
her eyes.
While Iris with her braid the wilkin dykes,
Promise of sunshine, not so prone to fail.
So, to us, sojourners in Life's low vale,
The smiles of Fortune flatter to deceive,
While still the Fates the web of Misery
weave;
So Hope exultant spreads her airy sail,
And from the present gloom the soul conveys
To distant summers and far happier days.

Ye unsexed spirits, whose wild melodies,
At even rising slow, yet sweetly clear,
Sicil on the musing poet's pensive ear,
As by the wood-spring stretch'd supine he lies,
When he who now invokes you low is laid,
His tired frame resting on the earth's cold bed,
Hold ye your mighty visions o'er his head,
And chant a dirge to his reposeful shade!
For he was wont to love your madrigal.
And often by the haunted stream that leaves
The dark sequester'd woodland's inmost
caves,
Would sit and listen to the dying falls,
Till the full tear would quiver in his eye,
And his big heart would heave with mournful
ecstasy.

OCEOLA:

A ROMANCE.—BY CAPT. M. REID.

(Continued.)

I now remembered the white object I had observed as the man was crossing the corner of the savanna. It was not an opossum, then, but a young dog.

Yes, I heard the cry again: it was the whining of a whelp—nothing else.
If I could have doubted the evidence of my ears, my eyes would soon have convinced me; for, just then, I saw the man emerge from out the maize with a dog by his side—a small white cur, and apparently a young one. He was leading the creature upon a string, half-dragging it after him. I had now a full view of the individual, and saw to a certainty that he was our woodman, Yellow Jake.

Before coming out from the cover of the corn, he halted for a moment—as if to reconnoitre the ground before him. He was upon his feet, and in an erect attitude. Whatever motive he had for concealment, he needed not to crouch amid the tall plants of maize; but the indigo did not promise so good a shelter, and he was evidently considering how to advance through it without being perceived. Plainly, he had a motive for concealing himself—his every movement proved this—but with what object I could not divine.

The indigo was of the kind known as the 'false Guatemala.' There were several species cultivated upon the plantation; but this grew tallest; and some of the plants, now in their full purple bloom, stood nearly three feet from the surface of the soil. A man passing through them in an erect attitude, could, of course, have been seen from any part of the field; but it was possible for one to crouch down, and move between the rows unobserved. This possibility seemed to occur to the woodman; for, after a short pause, he dropped to his hands and knees, and commenced crawling forward among the indigo.

There was no fence for him to cross—the cultivated ground was all under one enclosure—and an open ridge alone formed the dividing-line between the two kinds of crop.

Had I been upon the same level with the field, the skulker would have been no hidden from my sight; but my elevated position enabled me to command a view of the intervals between the rows, and I could note every movement he was making.

Every now and then he paused, caught up the cur, and held it for a few seconds in his hands—during which the animal continued to howl as if in pain!

As he drew nearer, and repeated this operation, I saw that he was pinching its ears!

Fifty paces in his rear, the great lizard appeared coming out of the corn. It scarcely made pause in the open ground, but still following the track, entered among the indigo.

At this moment, a light broke upon me: I no longer speculated on the power of Obeah. The mystery was dissolved—the alligator was lured forward by the cries of the dog!

I might have thought of the thing before, for I had heard of it before. I had heard from good authority—the alligator-hunter himself, who had often captured them by such decoy—that these reptiles will follow a howling dog for miles through the forest, and that the old males especially are addicted to this habit.—Hickman's belief was that they mistake the voice of the dog for that of their own offspring, which these unnatural parents eagerly devour.

But, independently of this monstrous propensity, it is well known that dogs are the favourite prey of the alligator; and the unfortunate

The York Herald,

SCARBORO', YORK, MARKHAM, VAUGHAN, KING, AND WHITCHURCH ADVERTISER.

"Let Sound Reason weigh more with us than Popular Opinion."

Vol. I.

RICHMOND HILL, FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 1859.

No. 21.

beagle that, in the heat of the chase, ventures across creek or lagoon, is certain to be attacked by these ugly amphibia.

The huge reptile, then, was being lured forward by the voice of the puppy; and this accounted for the grand overland journey he was making.

There was no longer a mystery—at least, about the mode in which the alligator was attracted onward; the only thing that remained for explanation was, what motive had the mulatto in carrying out this singular manoeuvre?

When I saw him take to his hands and knees, I had been under the impression that he did so to approach the house without being observed. But as I continued to watch him, I changed my mind. I noticed that he looked offener, and with more anxiety, behind him, as if he was only desirous of being concealed from the eyes of the alligator. I observed, too, that he changed frequently from space to space, as if he aimed at keeping a screen of the plants between himself and his follower. This would also account for his having crossed the rows of the maize-plants, as already noticed.

After all, it was only some freak that had entered the fellow's brain. He had learned this curious mode of coaxing the alligator from its haunts—perhaps old Hickman had shown him how—or he may have gathered it from his own observation, while wood-chopping in the swamps. He was taking the reptile to the house from some eccentric motive!—to make exhibition of it among his fellows!—to have a 'lark' with it? or a combat between it and the house-dogs? or for some like purpose?

I could not divine his intention, and would have thought no more of it, had it not been that one or two little circumstances had made an impression upon me. I was struck by the peculiar pains which the fellow was taking to accomplish his purpose with success. He was sparing neither trouble nor time. True, it was not to be a work-day upon the plantation; it was a holiday, and the time was his own; but it was not the habit of Yellow Jake to be abroad at so early an hour, and the trouble he was taking was not in consonance with his character of habitual inactivity and idleness. Some strong motive, then, must have been urging him to the act. What motive?

I pondered upon it, but could not make it out.

And yet I felt uneasiness, as I watched him. It was an undefined feeling, and I could assign no reason for it—beyond the fact that the mulatto was a bad fellow, and I knew him to be capable of almost any wickedness. But if his design was a wicked one, what evil could he effect with the alligator? No one would fear the reptile upon dry ground—it could hurt no one?

Thus I reflected, and still did I feel some indefinite apprehensions. But for this feeling, I should have given over observing his movements, and turned my attention to the herd of deer—which I now perceived approaching up the savanna, and coming close to my place of concealment.

I resisted the temptation, and continued to watch the mulatto a little longer.

I was not kept much longer in suspense. He had now arrived upon the outer edge of the hommock, which he did not enter. I saw him turn round the thicket, and keep on towards the orangery. There was a wicket at this corner, which he passed through, leaving the gate open behind him. At short intervals, he still caused the dog to utter its involuntary howlings.

It no longer needed to cry loudly, for the alligator was now close in the rear.

I obtained a full view of the monster as it passed under my position. It was not one of the largest, though it was several yards in length. There are some that measure more than a statute pole. This one was full twelve feet, from snout to the extremity of its tail. It clutched the ground with its broad webbed feet as it crawled forward. Its corrugated skin of bluish brown colour was coated with slippery mucus, that glittered under the sun as it moved; and large masses of the swamp-slime rested in the concavities between its rhomboid scales. It seemed greatly excited; and whenever it heard the voice of the dog, exhibited fresh symptoms of rage. It would

erect itself upon its muscular arms, raise its head aloft—as if to get a view of the prey—lash its plaited tail into the air, and swell its body almost to double its natural dimensions. At the same time, it emitted loud noises from its throat and nostrils, that resembled the rumbling of distant thunder, and its musky smell filled the air with a sickening effluvia. A more monstrous creature it would be impossible to conceive. Even the fabled dragon could not have been more horrible to behold.

Without stopping, it dragged its long body through the gate, still following the direction of the noise. The leaves of the evergreen interposed, and hid the hideous reptile from my sight.

I turned my face in the opposite direction—towards the house—to watch the further movements of the mulatto. From my position, I commanded a view of the tank, and could see nearly all around it. The inner side was especially under my view, as it lay opposite, and could only be approached through the orangery.

Between the grove and the edge of the great basin was an open space. Here there was an artificial pond only a few yards in width, and with a little water at the bottom, which was supplied by means of a pump, from the main reservoir. This pond, or rather enclosure, was the 'turtle-crawl,' a place in which turtles were fed and kept, to be ready at all times for the table. My father still continued his habits of Virginian hospitality; and in Florida these aldermanic delicacies are easily obtained.

The embankment of this turtle-crawl formed the direct path to the water-basin; and as I turned, I saw Yellow Jake upon it, and just approaching the pond. He still carried the cur in his arms; I saw that he was causing it to utter a continuous howling.

On reaching the steps that led down, he paused a moment, and looked back. I noticed that he looked back in both ways—first towards the house, and then, with a satisfied air, in the direction whence he had come. No doubt he saw the alligator close at hand; for, without further hesitation, he flung the puppy far out into the water; and then, retreating along the embankment of the turtle-crawl, he entered among the orange-trees, and was out of sight.

The whelp thus suddenly plunged into the cool tank, kept up a constant howling, at the same time beating the water violently with its feet, in the endeavour to keep itself afloat.

Its struggles were of short duration. The alligator, now guided by the well-known noise of moving water, as well as the cries of the dog, advanced rapidly to the edge; and without hesitating a moment, sprang forward into the pond. With the rapidity of an arrow, it darted out to the centre; and, seizing the victim between its bony jaws, dived instantaneously under the surface!

I could for some time trace its monstrous form far down in the diaphanous water; but, guided by instinct, it soon entered one of the deep wells, amidst the darkness of which it sank out of sight.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE KING VULTURES.

'So, then, my yellow friend, that is the intention!—a bit of revenge after all. I'll make you pay for it, you spiteful ruffian! You little thought you were observed. Ha! you shall rue this cunning devilry before night.'

Some such soliloquy escaped my lips, as soon as I comprehended the design of the mulatto's manoeuvre—for I now understood it—at least I thought so. The tank was full of beautiful fish. There were gold fish and silver fish, haddons, and red trout. They were my sister's especial pets. She was very fond of them. It was her custom to visit them daily, give them food, and watch their gambols. Many an aquatic cotillon had she superintended. They knew her person, would follow her around the tank, and take food out of her fingers. She delighted in thus serving them.

The revenge lay in this. The mulatto well knew that the alligator lives upon fish—they are his natural food; and that those in the tank, pent up as they were, would soon become his prey. So strong a tyrant would soon ravage the preserve, killing the helpless creatures by scores—of course to the chagrin and

grief of their fond mistress, and the joy of Yellow Jake.

I knew that the fellow disliked my little sister. The spirited part she had played, in having him punished for the affair with Viola, had kindled his resentment against her; but since then, there had been other little accidents to increase it. She had favoured the suit of his rival with the quadron, and had forbidden the woodman to approach Viola in her presence. These circumstances had certainly rendered the fellow hostile to her; and although there was no outward show of this feeling—there dared not be—I was nevertheless aware of the fact. His killing the fawn had proved it, and the present was a fresh instance of the implacable spirit of the man.

He calculated upon the alligator soon making havoc among the fish. Of course he knew it would in time be discovered and killed; but likely not before many of the finest should be destroyed.

No one would ever dream that the creature had been brought there—for on more than one occasion, alligators had found their way into the tank—having strayed from the river, or the neighbouring lagoons—or rather having been guided thither by an unexplained instinct, which enables these creatures to travel straight in the direction of water.

Such, thought I, were the designs and conjectures of Yellow Jake.

It proved afterwards that I had fathomed but half his plan. I was too young, too innocent of wickedness, even to guess at the intense malice of which the human heart is capable. My first impulse was to follow the mulatto to the house—make known what he had done—have him punished; and then return with a party to destroy the alligator, before it could do any damage among the fish.

At this crisis, the deer claimed my attention. The herd—an antlered buck with several does—had browsed close up to the hommock. They were within two hundred yards of where I stood. The sight was too tempting. I remembered the promise to my mother; it must be kept; the venison must be obtained at all hazards!

But there was no hazard. The alligator had already eaten his breakfast. With a whole dog in his maw, it was not likely he would disturb the finny denizens of the tank for some hours to come; and as for Yellow Jake, I saw he had proceeded on to the house; he could be found at any moment; his chastisement could stand over till my return.

With these reflections passing through my mind, I abandoned my first design, and turned my attention exclusively to the game.

They were too distant for the range of my rifle; and I waited a while in the hope that they would move nearer.

But I waited in vain. The deer is shy of the hommock. It regards the evergreen islet as dangerous ground, and habitually keeps aloof from it. Naturally enough, since there the creature is oft saluted by the twang of the Indian bow, or the whip-like crack of the hunter's rifle. Silence often reaches it the deadly missile.

Perceiving that the game was getting no nearer, but the contrary, I resolved to course them; and, gliding down from the rock, I descended through the copsewood to the edge of the plain.

On reaching the open ground, I rushed forward—at the same time unloosing the dogs, and crying the 'view hilloo.'

It was a splendid chase—led on by the old buck—the dogs following tail-on-deck. I thought I never saw deer run so fleetly; it appeared as if scarcely a score of seconds had transpired while they were crossing the savanna—more than a mile in width. I had a full and perfect view of the whole; there was no obstruction either to the run of the animals or the eye of the observer; the grass had been browsed short by the cattle, and not a bush grew upon the green plain; so that it was a trial of pure speed between dogs and deer. So swiftly ran the deer, I began to feel apprehensive about the venison.

(To be continued.)

A SPIRITED HORSE.—Mrs. Partington has bought a horse so spirituous that he always goes off in a decanter.

The wives along the Mississippi never blow up their husbands. They leave it all to the steamboats, which are sure to do it, sooner or later.

MENTAL IMPROVEMENT.

Whatever may be said about rights and privileges, it is very certain that the man who is seeking steadily to inform his mind and improve his heart, is much more likely to get all these rights and privileges than one who only talks about them; he works surely, although silently. Looking at the subject in this way, it is hard to say whether the necessity for improving the mind, or the pleasure of so doing, is the greater. The necessity may be considered in another light. In this country there is a continual advance of society, a continual rising upward; artisans become employers, employers grow into wholesale traders or merchants, merchants rise into magistrates or get into Congress—and thus they go on. From one rank to another. Now, if a man does not make up his mind to march with those who are going forward, he will, of course, be outstripped by more active competitors. Most persons have a desire to better their condition. We see some go about it in a business-like way; with them every step tells there is so much gained, while others are at a loss, they have no clear notions of what it is they strive for, and waste their time and labor in uncertainty. The persevering meet with little helps and encouragement on every hand; but the slow and unwilling fancy that everything is against them, they neither know what to do nor how to do it. The only hope for such people is in mental or self-improvement.

GROWTH OF LONDON.

By the report of the Registrar-General for 1858, we learn that London has a population of 2,876,000, and it is now the largest by far in the whole world. In 1801, its population was only 958,000, so that its increase has been very rapid for an old European city. It affords evidence of the robust health of Uncle John, and the tendency which he has to spread himself, equally with his smart descendant, Brother Jonathan. The city of London covers a space of 121 square miles, and it has more houses to its inhabitants than New York; as a consequence it is more healthy, and life is of longer duration. In olden times, all the cities were crowded into much less space than those of our day, and they were generally surrounded with high walls; the average duration of life was then much shorter than it now is. A great increase of building space in cities has walked hand and hand with modern civilization.—Scientific American.

THE 100TH REGIMENT ON THE MARCH FROM SHORNCLIFFE TO ALDERSHOT CAMP.—We have been favored with the following extract from a letter received by the last mail from England, and written by an officer of another regiment on a visit at Shorncliffe Camp.

'The next day the 100th Band played on the promenade near the sea shore; they played beautifully several selections from operas, and were led by the band master, who is a first-rate one. On Wednesday morning the Regiment left Shorncliffe Camp en route for Aldershot, and a more beautiful and imposing sight I never saw. They fell in about 6.15 a.m., and at 6.30, they marched off 1155 strong, led by three bands, the 11th Hussars, the Dublin Militia and their own. They played the usual tunes on starting 'the girl I left behind me' and 'good bye sweet one, good bye' . . . carried the colors, it was a lovely sight to see the long line of as fine a regiment as there is in the service, winding down the side of the hill leaving the camp and entering Sandgate. The morning was beautifully clear, and the whole of the Dublin Militia met them on the brow of the hill, and gave the 100th three cheers, which were responded to in grand style. They are certainly a noble body of men, and the most extraordinary thing was that not a single man was absent from parade out of the whole regiment—such a thing in camp where it is so easy for a man to get out is unprecedented. The Band of the 11th halted outside of Sandgate after playing the 100th through the town, and taking up a position on the side of the road played 'should all acquaintance be forgot' as the regiment marched by, and it had a very pretty effect. They marched on to Clarkstone, where every body had turned out to meet them. There a special train was in waiting to carry them to Farnham, whence they would march to Aldershot Camp.—Leader.

Make no enemies, he is insignificant indeed that can do thee no harm.

Agriculture,

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SEASON.

From the American Farmer's Magazine.

Beginning with the homestead, and with the most important part of that—the house of an American Lord, and would that we may never have other lords than of the soil they cultivate—and then going to the bottom, let the air sweep through the cellar, having an entrance one side and an egress the other. Clean out every particle of foul matter. Particularly let no decaying vegetable matter remain to breed fevers. A perfectly clean cellar, the windows open from March to December, and the door from the family rooms to it shut at all times, is the first item towards a healthy house. If the stairs are not sloped properly, if they are not firm, of a regular descent, easy to pass up and down, in the prosecution of the female labors, make them so at once. It may cost a little, but it will be cheaper than to pay doctor's bills; and you know that when the women are brisk, healthy and cheerful, we always have better times.

The next stories will be kept nice of course. They are the peculiar province of the ladies, and it would not be gallant to suspect them of untidiness. But that garret—it sometimes slips between the supervision of men and women and gets neglected by both. See to that. Let the studs be repacked, and the garret swept and ventilated. Slatelined in the garret is not equally a foe to health with slovenliness in the cellar, the first giving only a slight tendency to disease, the other strongly inviting its attacks.

But besides the cellar, there is another lurking place for disease. It is the sink. So much as is in-doors falls to the women, and we feel inclined to answer for them. But what is outside falls more appropriately to the wearers of pants than of crinolines. See that the sink trough is kept as clean as possible. Let this be often looked to. It is well to throw a little plaster about the sink, where it issues from the house, and to use plenty of swamp muck or coal dust, in the reservoir or tank into which it flows, and this should be as far as may be from the house, as in that case large quantities of fertilizing matter can there be prepared for the land.

Going a little further from the house, see to the pig pen, the vault, the barn-yard. The farmer cannot afford to leave even the chip-yard uncleansed. Aside from all considerations of neatness and of health, his fields crave these smouldering substances, soon to ferment by the returning heat of Summer, which, if left about the homestead, instead of being made to enrich the soil, become offensive and injurious to health. There should be a universal cleaning out and cleaning up between now and the 10th of May. If there is any man who can afford to disregard this rule, it is not the farmer. The soil is the great purifier. Its office is to swallow whatever impurities come in contact with it, and to give them back in the form of grasses, cereals, vegetables and fruits. It has ever seemed to us best where no special reason exists for the contrary, as we know there does sometimes, to apply all the manures of the farm in the Spring. In this way you get the return in six months, whereas if they lie over you have to wait three times as long.

For top dressing grass land, there is a most decided advantage in composting green manure with cured muck, leaf mold or something of the kind, and fermenting it, that it may crumble more finely and more readily incorporate itself with the surface soil. For plough land this is important also, but not equally so, for in this case every particle of soil becomes a divisor and an absorbent for the manure. But let us add here that in order to bring out the full effect of the manure on the crop, it should be spread evenly, and, after being plowed in, mixed more evenly with the soil, by means of the harrow or cultivator, than is usual. The cost of this extra labor is of course to be taken into account. The result will be that each of our readers will act on his own judgment, and ten will be losers by not incorporating the manure sufficiently with the soil for every one who will miss the figure by bestowing more labor than is wise.

Grafts should have been cut in February or March. But if they were neglected then, better late than never. If you cut them now, and keep them in a dry, cool place, they may yet be in good order at the time for insertion in May. Do not fail to let every year witness some improvements in the way of choice fruits. Can any possible reason be given, why every man who owns an acre or more, up to the largest farm, should not have plenty of fruit for his family and some to spare?

Be a little indulgent to the boys, as they come from school and commence the summer campaign on the farm, aye, and a little to yourself. April, we have sometimes thought, is the hardest month in the year. There is a sort of acclimation, one has to undergo, which to us used to be more trying than any other month. Teams should be well kept and worked with discretion at this season.

On the important matter of a garden, we said so much in our last, that more seems unnecessary. But let us add; deepen the soil if you have not done it; underdrain, if necessary; manure heavily; and do not fail to have a garden that you will be proud of, and that will be an ornament to your home, and a source of profit.

Now is the time to be setting out fruit trees. If you have been neglectful of the orchard, "turn over a new leaf" from this time. In transplanting young trees, dig the holes large, set the tree at about the same depth it before stood; cut off the ends of any roots that may have been mangled smoothly with a sharp knife; use very little water—none if the ground be moist, and mulch the surface to keep a steady moisture, and an equable temperature, remembering that one tree, properly set and taken care of, will give more fruit than a dozen carelessly stuck down and left a prey to every destroyer. If there are bones on the premises, of which you are not going to make a better use, break them coarsely—finely if the labor be not too great—and put them in the soil around the fruit trees you are transplanting.

Trim the suckers from about the roots of the old trees and thin out the tops if very thick, but be cautious of mutilating the tree by cutting away large limbs. We read of "digging about trees and dunging them," and although the book in which this is contained was not given to teach horticulture, its teachings in this particular are good.

An old apple tree that has been standing long on turf land has most of its roots near the surface. It is a good plan to ascertain by digging how far its roots extend, and then at that distance from the trunk, ten, fifteen, or twenty feet, to dig a trench around the tree, so as to cut off a few of the extremities of the roots, and to fill it with rich earth and a mixture of well rotted manure, with lime or ashes, or both. Rootlets will spring from the old roots, will permeate this newly trenched and manured soil, and the tree will be renovated.

Almost any farmer would contrive to do this trenching with a plough at a much cheaper rate than with the spade. Three or four times around with a stout pair of cattle and a large plow would answer the purpose of opening the soil and mixing with it manure, ashes, lime, old bones &c., as pulvis for the new roots. The earth might then be turned back with the plow, and harrowed and rolled smooth.

Any rough bark on the trunks of old fruit trees should be scraped off with a hoe, or other tool convenient for the purpose. It is well not to wound the green bark in the process. The trunk and lower limbs should be washed at this season, or a few weeks later, with ley. It may be made by dissolving a pound of potash in twelve quarts of water, or by leaching ashes in the usual way, but must not be strong. Trees have been killed by a solution of a pound of potash in a gallon of water.

The effect of a weak solution of potash is, to cause the decaying bark to cleave off from the green bark beneath it and to leave the trunk in a smooth healthy condition, and if not wholly to destroy insects, at least to break up their lurking places and prevent the tree from harboring its own destroyers.

LAND ENOUGH?—How many acres does it take to make a farm? From ten to ten thousand—just as you like, and have the means to hold. If you are a man of business tact and energy, and know how to direct the labor of others, to make them work well and yet keep their good will, the more the land the more you will make. But there are few such men; and if you have only patience to labor, without business tact and energy, always wide awake, and yet always cool, capable of commanding, as well as doing, you may save as much from ten acres as from ten thousand.—Farmers' Magazine.

If some persons were to bestow one half of their fortune in learning how to spend the other half, it would be money extremely well laid out.