

Family Reading.

Language.

Mr. Darwin disproves his own theory every time he advocates it, since he then calls into play powers which humanity alone possesses.

A Pen-Maker.

It is said that in early life Gillott, the pen-maker, worked privately as the employee of half a dozen different pen-makers.

Diamonds.

The merit of diamonds consists in its own peculiar qualities. This gem has intrinsic beauties of its own. It has a limpidity, a brilliancy, a fire appertaining to itself, but above all, an absolute indestructibility far surpassing that of any known product.

Remarkable.

A steambot struck a snag and sank in the Ohio River; several of the passengers were drowned; unfortunately, the foregoing fact is not the remarkable part of the story.

Home Ornamentation.

Every autumn we have delightful summer-like days, when a ramble over the hills or in the woods affords much enjoyment to those who admire the beauties of nature, or can appreciate fresh air and healthy exercise.

How to be Miserable.—Think about yourself—about what you want, what you like, what respect people ought to pay to you, what people think of you, and then to you nothing will be pure.

A young girl living near Bloomington, Illinois, has a pet rattlesnake, which she shelters in her bosom.

Sunshine.

Sunshine is beautiful and joy-inspiring always. All things animate and inanimate take on a new life in its presence. Not a flower but gratefully recognizes it, not a song-bird but carols the sweeter underneath its touch.

A Bad Boy.

They say that the chief astronomer at the Washington Observatory was dreadfully sold a few days ago. A wicked boy, whose Sunday School experience seems only to have made him more depraved, caught a fire-fly, and stuck it, with the aid of some muck-lage, in the center of the largest lens in the telescope.

A California Story.

A wealthy resident of Oakland, accompanied by his little son in an elegant carriage, drew up in front of a house on Fourteenth street.

The gentleman soon shook the Spanish vasquero warmly by both hands, and extorted a promise from him to call the next day at the family mansion.

At the close of his eloquent oration, the wealthy gentleman grasped the Spaniard's unwilling hand, and slipped into it the munificent sum of one dollar.

The literary execution of these plays, as might be expected, is very imperfect. The most absurd anachronisms and solecisms perpetually occur. The Old Testament characters repeatedly swear—a habit to which they are greatly addicted—by "Sanct Peter and Sanct Poul, by Mahoun and the Sybill."

Punch has a pathetic picture of a young married couple on a calling trip. As they wait at the door where they have rung the bell, Augustus is thus cautioned: "Augustus, love, let me beg of you! Do not give way to any insane demonstrations of delight before the servant, if she says they're not at home."

The Moralities.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries these plays were performed in the churches for the instruction of the people; but the monks, finding that the exhibitions of the jugglers at the Easter revels drew the populace away from the churches, gave their plays a more attractive character, and performed them in the open air.

But these sacred representations soon became subject to abuse. Droll characters, comic scenes, and ridiculous speeches, were introduced in order to excite mirth; and a flippant and irreverent treatment of the most sublime themes became a prevailing vice.

The stago was divided into three parts, to represent heaven, earth, and hell; and very intricate and ingenious machinery was often employed to produce proper theatrical effect. These stages were frequently on wheels, so that they might be drawn about. The gross ideas of the age concerning the material torments of the damned were faithfully delineated.

The various parts originally performed by the monks, came, in course of time, to be enacted by companies of the citizens. The different crafts and guilds vied with each other in the representation of the plays allotted to them.

When we consider how humble were the talents employed, the majestic sweep and sublime compass of these plays is perfectly astounding. They comprehend the entire drama of time from the creation of the world to the day of doom.

In recording in his lofty numbers the story of the Fall of Man and Loss of Paradise, the sightless bard of English poesy, whose inner vision seemed more clear for that the outer ray was quenched forever how far soever he may have surprised his predecessors, could hardly be said to have pursued things unattempted, yet in prose or rhyme; for not only in the miracle plays and mysteries, but also in the still older legendary poem of Caedmon, the Saxon monk, is the same story related with wondrous vigor and sublimity.

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Common Things.

As a rule, the present generation is much given to turning up its dainty nose at common things. The shoddy upstart of to-day would ignore completely the old homestead where he was born, and the old-fashioned, homespun-dressed parents who live there.

Remember their Infirmity.

Deal gently with the peculiarities of old people; they have their own troubles to bear, and not least among them is a sense of their own uselessness and inability to keep pace with the times.

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