The Wellington Enterprise.

A Family Newspaper, Devoted to Home Interests, Politics, Agriculture, Science, Art, Poetry, Etc.

VOLUME XIII. WELLINGTON, O., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1879. NUMBER 13.

The Enterprise.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY,

—BY—

J. W. HOUGHTON.

Office, West Side of Public Square.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:

One copy, one year	$1 50
One copy, six months	75
One copy, three months	50
If not paid within the year	2 00

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LIGHT literature—A bank book with no balance.—*N. Y. Telegram.*

ABRAM MORRISON.

'Midst the men and things which will
Haunt an old man's memory still,
Drollest, quaintest of them all,
With a boy's laugh I recall
Good old Abram Morrison.

* * * * * * *

Irish of the Irishes,
Pope nor priest nor church were his;
Sober with his Quaker folks,
Merry with his quiet jokes
On week days was Morrison.

* * * * * * *

Back and forth to daily meals,
Rode his cherished pig on wheels,
And to all who came to see:
"Aisier for the pig an' me,
Sure it is," said Morrison.

* * * * * * *

Well we loved the tales he told
Of a country strange and old,
Where the fairies danced till dawn;
And the goblin Lepreacaun
Looked, we thought, like Morrison.

* * * * * * *

All his words have perished. Shame
On the saddle-bags of Fame,
That they bring not to our time
One poor couplet of the rhyme
Made by Abram Morrison!

When, on calm and fair First Days,
Rattled down our one-horse chaise
Through the blossomed apple-boughs
To the Quaker meeting-house,
There was Abram Morrison.

Underneath his hat's broad brim
Peered the queer old face of him;
And with Irish jaunticess
Swung the coat-tails of the dress
Worn by Abram Morrison.

Still, in memory, on his feet,
Leaning o'er the old, high seat,
Mingling with a solemn drone,
Celtic accents all his own,
Rises Abram Morrison.

On his well-worn theme intent,
Simple, child-like, innocent,
Heaven forgive the half-checked smile
Of our careless boyhood, while
Listening to Friend Morrison!

After half a century's lapse,
We are wiser now, perhaps,
But we miss our streets amid
Something which the past has hid,
Lost with Abram Morrison.

Gone forever with the queer
Characters of that old year!
Now the many are as one;
Broken is the mold that run
Men like Abram Morrison.

—*John G. Whittier, in St. Nicholas for December.*

THE CURATE'S SWEETHEART.

"A young woman with a pleasing face, who rarely smiles, and seems to shun observation, and an old lady, who comes out very little and always veiled."

That was the description given to the Rev. Charles Grosvenor of the new occupants of the little cottage which lay so close to his vicarage that he could see the smoke from the chimney over the tops of the trees that skirted his lawn.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor had been away from the scene of his labors at Chumleigh for a month. Chumleigh was countrified enough and healthy enough, but he had been ordered sea air, and had taken the trip, leaving his by no means extensive flock to the care of a temporary shepherd.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor was a young man, and Chumleigh was his first living. He was quite new enough to his work to take interest in it, and he was on intimate terms with all his parishioners.

Directly he heard of the new arrivals in the village, he of course determined to call upon them, but he thought he would just inquire what sort of people they were.

The result was the above description—a description vague enough in all conscience, and yet sufficient at once to invest the heroines of it with a slight halo of romance.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor had not so long left college life to bury himself among the pumpkins but that he could duly appreciate the piquancy which a little mystery lends to our ordinary humdrum existence.

Knowing that the young lady shunned observation, his curiosity was at once aroused, and he looked forward to his first meeting with her with more than ordinary eagerness. As to the old lady—well, he was a young bachelor, remember; and however deeply old ladies may veil themselves, or however mysterious they may be, they cannot expect to command much attention when there is a younger lady in the case.

The curate called at Laburnam cottage the day after his return from the seaside. He found the Smiths very quiet and unassuming people. Mrs. Smith said very little and sighed a good deal, and Miss Smith, though a fluent and agreeable speaker, as he could judge from the little she said, spoke only in answer to his questions, and kept her eyes fixed on the ground the whole time that he was talking to her.

"Something queer about these people," said the Rev. Charles Grosvenor to himself. "I wonder what it is. I must draw them out."

His notion of drawing them out was to engage their services in his parish work. The old lady sighed and consented. The young one colored, cast down her eyes, and said that she was not fit for such work. Not religious enough, she meant.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor was much distressed to hear that Miss Smith was not religious. Here, at last, was a task congenial to his soul. He was quite willing to convert farm laborers and to reform market gardeners, but when a demure looking young lady, with an agreeable manner, offered herself, he could not refrain from looking forward to the prospect of higher and nobler work.

He talked seriously to Miss Smith, and Miss Smith listened seriously—so seriously that the curate was taken by surprise. He was almost alarmed at the terrible earnestness with which the girl spoke of religious questions, asked for spiritual consolation and argued with him on the dread subject of the sinner's fate hereafter. The earnestness and the vehemence of his parishioner, however, only increased his interest in her.

Now, when Miss Smith called herself a miserable sinner, the Rev. Charles Grosvenor thoroughly believed that she was one. He accepted her confession in the same sense that he would have accepted it from the patron of his living, or his mother, or any of his lady parishioners. We are all miserable sinners, and being enjoined to say so, a clergyman cannot, for the sake of being complimentary, refuse to believe a young lady when she affirms that she is no exception to the rule.

But as to attaching any really serious import to the confession of Miss Smith, that never occurred to him for a moment. He soothed her, offered her such consolation as he could, thought she was a most pious and interesting girl, and fell madly in love with her.

From the moment he made the discovery his conduct to her altered. He tempted her to talk less about herself and to be cheerful. He didn't want the girl he was in love with to be too persistently a miserable sinner. She was so charming and so nice that he felt she might very well keep that in the background a little.

A white tie and a clerical coat do not alter a man's nature; and when a man falls madly in love with a woman, he likes to imagine her as near perfection as possible.

Miss Smith's manner changed also. She discovered the parson's secret before it was many days old. She was still pleased to see him, but she avoided all reference to her sins.

Once he questioned her about her past life. For a moment she went deadly pale, then the color rushed to her cheeks, and she stammered out a remark which turned the conversation.

Miss Smith saw that the Rev. Charles Grosvenor was at her mercy. It was only a question of time when he would make the avowal. Should she encourage him, or discourage his secret, and stop it while there was yet time?

In her difficulty she laid the case before her mother, and asked her advice.

The old lady was frightened out of her wits. She dare not think about such a thing, she said. Of course it would be the making of her if she could marry a clergyman; but how could it be done? He would have to know the history of her life first, and then:

"And then he wouldn't have me," answered the girl, passionately.

"Of course not, my dear, said Mrs. Smith, "at least I should think not."

"Shall I tell him? Shall I confess all the next time he comes?"

Again Mrs. Smith was frightened. She does not like to think what the result of that confession will be. They've managed at last to find a spot where they can live quietly and unknown, why must all the miserable story be brought up again?

Miss Smith failing to get any practical advice from her mother, thinks the matter over quietly by herself, and by the time she sees her admirer again she settled on her course of action.

She meets him in the field that leads to the church.

It is a bright summer morning, and they pause by a stile to look at the yellow and red of the far stretching fields.

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor commences by talking about nature, and gradually comes down talking about himself—his aims and prospects in life. Little by little the conversation slides into the groove he wished, and in five minutes his hand and fortune have been laid at the feet of the lady listener.

He hadn't meant to be so abrupt, he had meant to keep his secret a little longer, but it had slipped out accidentally among the poetry and domestic details, and he was very glad it was over.

Miss Smith was of course very much surprised. The curate had caught her hand as his accents grew more impassioned. She allowed him to retain it till he had finished, then drew it gently away.

"Mr. Grosvenor," she said, quietly, "I will answer you fairly and frankly. Before you made me such an offer you should have ascertained to whom you were speaking."

"What do you mean?"

"You do not know who or what I am."

"I know that you are an angel."

Miss Smith's lip curled slightly, but her voice trembled as she answered:

"As you have gone so far it is only right you should know something about me. My name is not Smith. That is a false name."

"A false name!" the parson gasped. "Dear me! why do you want a false name?"

"Listen, and I will tell you. Did you ever hear of a terrible crime for which two men and two women were condemned to death? It was called a 'mystery' at first. But when the facts came to light it was called a 'murder.' One man starved his wife to death, and the other people helped him. He wanted to marry a younger woman, and this younger woman was one of the accused."

"I remember the case," stammered the curate. "It was very awful; but I don't see what you've got to do with it."

The perspiration stood on his brow, and he began to mop it with his pocket-handkerchief. He half expected to hear that Miss Smith was a relative of one of the criminals.

"You remember," continued the girl, speaking rapidly now and without emotion, "that all four were condemned to death, but the young girl was at the last moment granted a free pardon and allowed to return to the world and her friends."

"Yes," gasped the clergyman, "I remember; but what has all this business to do with you?"

"This," answered the lady whom he had just made an offer of marriage; "I was the girl that allowed the murdered woman's husband to love me—I was the girl for whose sake the murder was committed—I was the girl who was condemned to be hanged by the neck and then granted a free pardon! I am——"

She stopped. The Rev. Charles Grosvenor had reeled back against the stile and closed his eyes.

"Excuse me," he muttered; "a little faintness that's all."

He pulled himself together, stammered a little, coughed, and for a minute seemed at a loss what to say.

She broke the silence first.

"I have told you now the secret of my life. I am here with my mother, and here wish to remain—unknown, forgotten by the world. We are bound to live under an assumed name. We should be hooted and stoned if it were known who we really are. Will you keep my secret?"

"Certainly stammered the curate; "and I trust——"

"That I shall keep yours. Rest assured of that, Mr. Grosvenor. I will forget that anything has happened this morning beyond the ordinary interchange of courtesies between clergyman and parishioner."

She smiled and bowed, and passed on.

He walked back slowly to the church muttering to himself, "What an escape—who'd have thought it?"

* * * * * * *

The Rev. Charles Grosvenor is still the curate of Chumleigh, and Miss Smith and her mother still live at Laburnum cottage. The parishioners, however, notice that the visits of the clergyman to the cottage are few and far between, and that when he calls he is generally accompanied by one or other of his lady visitors.

And old Dame Turvey, who knows everything about everybody, and is a great authority on village matters, assures everyone that she can't make it out at all, for at one time she was quite sure the parson was sweet in that quarter, and she quite expected that Miss Smith would have presided at the parsonage tea table.

"Something must have happened very unexpected to break it all off," concludes the worthy dame, "for it was all altered like in a minute."

Dame Turvey is right for once. What happened was very unexpected, and it made such an impression on the Rev. Charles Grosvenor that he will remember it to the end of his life.

Vanderbilt's Great Rival.

Mr. Gould's millions now crowd close to those of Vanderbilt. He is a man of finer texture than the old Commodore's son. He doesn't run to fine houses, costly stables, and blooded steeds. At night when he dismisses his operators from the telegraph offices in his own house in Fifth avenue, and enters up in a little book the telegraphic receipts of the various railroads which he owns, he does not go to a club to carouse, to a banquet to steam up with champagne, or to a theater; he retires to the recesses of a peaceful library, and with his young sons about him, reads the Latin classics, the world forgetting, but not only by the world forgot—by a large majority. The next morning early he has the telegraph doing lightning service and he is sending an electric shock through Wall street as soon as the bulls and bears come into that field for pasture. Mr. Gould is a liberal man, although when he makes a bequest he does not have the information written in manifold and sent to all the newspapers. The first news New York had of his gift to the Memphis sufferers of $5,000 came from Memphis, as did the news of the second gift of $5,000.

Mr. Gould, being a small man of little physical prowess, is naturally not disposed to put himself recklessly in the way of the horns of the bulls and the claws of the bears. There are some men in Wall street, as Mr. Gould has reason to know, who wish to resent their losses with their fists, and are disposed to follow Major Selover's example and to pitch him bodily down into a convenient area. Accordingly Mr. Gould keeps his office guarded by a stout Irishman, who prevents the intrusion of visitors, and he has usually a private way to get out into the street. He has, too, it is said, a big Italian bookkeeper who accompanies him on many of his business trips about town, and stands ready to protect his millionaire employer.—*N. Y. Cor. St. Louis Republican.*

Men's Fashions.

To plunge headlong into the delicate mysteries of the toilet: Colored underclothing and lisle thread stockings of every hue, worked with silk embroidery in various devices, are dictated by the present fashion. Collars are of every shape and size, but most of them are standing collars open at the throat. Quite a number of men wear the military collar, that meets, in fact almost laps over, in front. There is a wide range for individual taste in cravats as far as colors are concerned, though the universal shape is the flat scarf that covers the whole shirt front. Upon the varied background of these variously beautiful contrivances can be displayed all sorts of pins, according as good taste dictates—that is from none at all, or scarcely any, to horseshoes studded with the diamonds, whips, spurs, frogs on ladders, plain gold or silver balls and horses made of three horseshoe nails. The fashion of men's outer garments has undergone a decided change for the better—so the delighted young men say. No longer does one see the huge check and tremendous plaid. Plain dress and subdued colors rule. As women vie with and dress at each other, so they say do men, but the women have the advantage of being able in many cases to alter their own clothes, and by adding a piece of velvet here and a bit of fur there produce new lamps for old. Men, it is said, cannot do this. As his clothes are made so must he wear them or not at all, and whatever may be the truth as to buttons, men, it is believed, do not venture to take in tucks in the slack of their trousers, or alter the cut of their coat lapels. There are said to be brilliant exceptions to this rule. It is reported that a certain man recently made a bet that he would not only make himself a suit of clothes, but would wear it at his club, and that it would not attract attention by any peculiarity of cut or mistake in sewing, or lead to researches in his family history. This bet was taken, and the suit was made and passed the ordeal. Upon close examination afterward, however, it was discovered that the pockets had been left out.

The run on some of the tailors up town this year is almost unprecedented. One man is happy over orders received this fall for sixty odd dress suits, not to speak of the innumerable sack and cutaway suits for morning wear and the dignified frock coat for taking the afternoon airing. Men seem to be laying in a stock of clothes of all kinds, as if they thought that the present prosperous times would not last forever. Nearly all the orders received by tailors have been for sack suits of one color or material, or a dark mixed cloth, or of some quiet pattern. In afternoon suits, such as frock coats and three buttoned cutaways, the trousers are of different material and color from the coat. At afternoon weddings, "gris" pearl gloves are worn by the groom and ushers, and by whosoever takes a prominent place in the ceremony, but ordinarly the yellow or red dogskin glove is worn in the street. The dress that men have for a long time been wearing in the evening—namely, a black "clawhammer," "swallowtail" or "spiketail," and the rest of the suit of the sombre hue, with the inevitable white lawn cravat or black satin tie (the latter not considered quite such full dress)—is still in fashion. A few years ago there was some talk of a "strike" against this dress, and it was proposed to retain the same pattern for the coat, but substitute for broadcloth velvet or dark blue cloth, and in place of trousers kneebreeches and silk stockings. These lacked a hero to face a ballroom full of ladies in this guise, and so the plan went a-gly. Canes are more in demand this year than ever, and a bamboo stick with either a silver cross handle with a match box on it or an agate or tortoise shell is popular.—*N. Y. World.*

FORTY-FOUR and four-tenths per cent. of the white people who took the yellow fever during the late epidemic in Memphis are said to have died; of the black people 16 6-10 per cent. died. There were altogether 1,537 cases of fever and 487 deaths, a total death percentage of 31 6-10.

—Guinea fowls will keep all bugs and insects of every description off garden vines. They will not scratch like other fowls or harm the most delicate plant. Their eggs are valuable, and they lay oftener than the common hen.

"WHAT are the best stories?" "That depends. When you are telling them, the long ones are; when you are listening, the short ones."—*Puritan.*

RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL.

—Virginia has now 2,491 schools, instructing 108,074 pupils.

—There are now at Yale 1,003 students, 581 of whom are in the Academical Department, and 175 in the Sheffield Scientific School.

—In Georgia there is a minister of the primitive Baptist denomination who has five churches under his care, making it necessary for him to preach all day long on Sundays. During six days of the week he goes into the forest and chops wood to earn a living. And he is seventy-one years of age at that.

—Calculations have been made to show the number of years it would require at present rates to convert the entire population of India, and a most formidable showing was the result. But in spite of these figures, however discouraging, great progress has been made since missionary work in that country began. In 1830 the native Christians in India, Burmah and North and South Ceylon numbered 27,000. Last October there were 460,000.

—Sir Garnet Wolseley's letter to Bishop Schroeder in regard to excluding missionaries from Zululand does not at all dispel the fears of the missionaries. The letter makes it quite plain that the various chiefs have the power to exclude the missionaries altogether from their respective districts if they choose. Formerly it was only necessary to get permission from the King to settle in any part of Zululand. Now there are thirteen independent chiefs having jurisdiction. Sir Garnet does not speak in very complimentary terms of the missionaries.

—Whatever may have been the case in past times, it is evident now that Brooklyn has no legitimate right to the distinctive name of "The City of Churches." Figures derived from the census of 1870 show that she is far behind other cities of this country in proportion of churches to population. Of prominent cities there are at least ten that go ahead of her. She has only one church for every 1,721 of population, while Washington, which deserves the name which Brooklyn wears, has one for every 932. Cleveland has one for every 1,044; New Orleans one for every 1,345; Cincinnati one for every 1,350; Baltimore one for every 1,412, and Boston one for every 1,666. St. Louis is nearly as well off for churches as Brooklyn, having one for every 1,852 of population. As for this city, she is nearly as far behind Brooklyn as Brooklyn is behind Washington. The proportion stands one to 2,613. In New York State a better showing is made than by Washington herself. The figures are one to 805.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

—Bishop Wiley, of Cincinnati, has just returned from an inspection of the mission work of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Europe He first went to Germany, where he met the German and Swiss Conference, composed of seventy-five members, who occupy 250 preaching places in Switzerland and Germany, and who are doing a prosperous work. He next went to Copenhagen, where he met the Danish mission, composed of thirteen members. This mission labors under considerable difficulty, in consequence of the antagonism of the State Church, which is Lutheran. In spite of this, however, its progress is satisfactory. At Stockholm Bishop Wiley met the Swedish Conference, consisting of sixty members, with 200 preaching-places. The mission has had remarkable success, and is aided rather than opposed by the Government. The Norwegian Conference, consisting of forty members, he met at Stavanger, on the western coast of Norway. He reports that the work of the mission is quite successful.

A Monster Whale.

"When we started from Pier No. 1 this morning," said Capt. Al Foster last night, after he had returned from his Thanksgiving cod-fish expedition, "we had on board 128 passengers. The William Fletcher is not a large boat, but she could carry this number very comfortably. Some of them wanted to run to the south'ard; but the weather was so fine and the water so smooth that I made up my mind to go to east'ard, thinking we should get better fishing there. We hove off to Hog Inlet, and fished for an hour; but though nearly every one had a line over the side, nobody even got a bite. This was rather discouraging. For three years no such thing had occurred with me before, and I didn't know what to make of it. At last I hauled up the anchor and run further to the south. I was at the wheel myself, and we were between the shores of Sandy Hook and Rockaway; and about eight miles southeast of the Highlands, when I saw a jet of water rise into the air about half a mile ahead. It was followed by another and another of the same kind. I knew at once that it was caused by a whale, but as the spout was not more than twelve feet high, I thought it a very small one, as a full-grown whale usually throws up the water about forty feet. However, large or small, I knew it would be a curiosity to my passengers. Nobody on board had noticed it but myself; so, after I had pointed it out to my brother, I told him to send the boys forward to have a look at it. It was almost dead ahead, and with very little alternation of the steamer's course I bore directly down upon it.

The whale continued to spout at intervals, and though he did not send the water higher than at first, I began to think, as I got closer, that he was not quite so small as I had supposed. He frequently threw his body half way out of the water, and I could see that he was black. When we were within a quarter of a mile of him I judged that he was about fifty feet, but the nearer I approached the larger I supposed him to be. At last I slackened speed and ran very slow toward him. He made no effort to get out of our way, and seemed to be indifferent as to whether he came in collision with us or not. The passengers were greatly excited, and wanted to see him still closer; so to satisfy them I ran on until there was not more than fifteen feet between our bow and the whale. Suddenly he whirled around and swam across our bows. Up to that point I had been keeping a little to one side of him, so as to pass without touching him, but now I saw there was great danger of a collision, and as the creature rose high in the water I was able for the first time to see nearly his entire length. At the very lowest estimate he must have measured eighty feet, and some of the passengers, good judges of such matters, were satisfied that it was not less than 150 feet long. It was clear that it would never do for us to strike such a monster as that, so I threw the wheel hard-a starboard, and just shaved by his tail. I tell you there were not many inches to spare.

"I have seen a good many whales in my time," added the Captain, "but never one so large as that before. Nor have I ever seen one, until this morning, nearer than half a mile from where I was. The water, just where we saw this fellow, was deep, but had he run in toward the shore on either side he would soon have been aground. I may say that after this experience we found other fishing grounds and very successful, catching a great many cod, and more blackfish than I have seen taken on any excursion I have made this season. My brother caught one weighing eight pounds."

Several of the passengers who were in the William Fletcher corroborate Captain Foster's story of the whale.—*N. Y. Sun.*

Misnamed Articles.

An exchange says: Why should trade not have a Johnson or a Webster to classify and correct the mass of inconsistencies that go to make up its nomenclature? We not only tax our brains to invent "fantastic" names to every new fabric varied perhaps only by a thread or a shade from what our grandparents wore a century ago, but there are in use positive misnomers for many staple articles of merchandise. The following imperfect list, culled from sources ready at hand, will give a faint idea of them:

Acid (sour) applied in chemistry to a class of bodies to which sourness is only accidental, and by no means a universal characteristic. Thus rock, crystal, quartz, flint, etc., are chemical acids, through no particle of acidity belongs to them.

Black lead does not contain a single particle of lead, being composed of carbon and iron.

Brazilian grass does not come from Brazil, or even grow there; nor is it grass at all. It consists of strips of palm leaf *(chamærops argentea)* and is imported chiefly from Cuba.

Burgundy pitch is not pitch, nor is it manufactured in or exported from Burgundy. The best is a resinous substance prepared from common frankincense and brought from Hamburg; but by far the greater quantity is a mixture of resin and palm oil.

China, as a name for porcelain, gives rise to the contradictory expressions, British china, Dutch china, Chelsea china, etc., like wooden milestones, iron milestones, brass shoehorns, iron pens, steel pens.

Cuttle bone is not bone at all, but a structure of pure chalk, once embodied loosely in the substance of certain extinct species of cuttlefish. It is inclosed in a membraneous sac, within the body of the fish, and drops out when the sac is opened, but it has no connection whatever with the sac or the cuttlefish.

Galvanized iron is not galvanized. It is simply iron coated with zinc; and this is done by dipping it in a zinc bath containing muriatic acid.

German silver is not silver at all, nor was the metallic alloy called by that name invented by a German, but has been in use in China time out of mind.

Honey soap contains no honey, nor is honey any way employed in its manufacture. It is a mixture of palm-oil soap and olive-oil soap, each one part, with three parts of curd soap or yellow soap, scented.

Japan lacquer contains no lac at all, but is made from a kind of nut tree called anacardiaceæ.

Kid gloves are not made from kid skin, but of lamb or sheep skins. At present many of them are made of rat skins.

Meerschaum is not petrified "sea-foam," as its name implies, but is a composition of silica, magnesia and water.

Mosaic gold has no connection with Moses or the metal gold. It is an alloy of copper and zinc, used in the ancient museum or tessalated work.

Mother of pearl is the inner layer of several sorts of shells. It is not the mother of pearl, as its name indicates, but in some cases the matrix of pearl.

Pen means a feather (Latin *penna*, a wing). A steel pen is not a very choice expression.

Salad oil is not oil for salad, but oil for cleaning sallades, *i. e.*, helmets.

Whalebone is not bone at all, nor does it possess any of the properties of bone. It is a substance attached to the upper jaw of the whale, and serves to strain the water which the creature takes up in large mouthfuls.

Standing Armies of Europe.

THERE can be little question that the present prostrate condition of continental trade is in great measure due to the enormous burdens laid on the people by the military policy of their rulers. How heavy these burdens are some details taken from a report lately issued by the Hungarian ministry will show. According to this report (the object of which is to exhibit the relative weakness of the Austro-Hungarian forces and advocate an addition to them), the military strength of Russia consists of 3,046,800 men, of whom 600,000 belong to the reserve and 2,446,800 to the standing army. The regular army of France comprises 1,689,000 soldiers of all arms, the territorial army 1,208,000; total, 2,289,000, to be increased in 1892 by the addition of 300,000 reserve men to 2,723,000. The German power of all classes is represented by 2,004,300 men, of whom 1,076,200 belong to the standing army, 307,200 to the landwehr, and 620,900 to the reserve. Italy has an army of 698,000, and a militia of 310,000. In 1892, when the reserve will number 1,016,200, her total strength will reach 2,024,200. Austro-Hungary possesses a standing army of 800,000, a landwehr of 299,318, and a reserve of 95,000 men; total, 1,194,318. The grand total of all these forces amounts to 16,471,918, the standing armies alone numbering 7,925,000. But it must not be understood that all the latter are now under arms; at least half of them are on furlough. They form the first line, and all would, of course, be at once called out in the event of a general war. It is nevertheless true that the great military powers have at their disposal 16,000,000 men who have learned, or are now learning, the soldier's art, and are bound to re-enter the ranks when required. The mind refuses to grasp the full significance of these portentious figures; but it may safely be affirmed that, so long as these bloated armaments are suffered to exist, Europe can count neither on lasting commercial prosperity nor on a long continuance of peace.—*Geneva Cor. of Manchester Examiner.*

POROUS plasters were marked down to fifteen cents by a Danbury druggist, yesterday. This is much cheaper than an undershirt, to say nothing about the saving in washing. Besides, you always know where it is.—*Danbury News.*

FALSE HIPS are openly sold in San Francisco dry goods stores.

Our Young Folks.

THE FUNNY MANDARIN.

There was a funny mandarin
Who had a funny way,
Of sliding down the balustrade
A dozen times a day.

With arms in air and streaming hair,
At risk of bone and brain,
Around and round the winding stair
He slid the rail amain.

The "surest" aim may miss the game,
The "safest" ship go down,
And one mistake will bring to blame
The wisest man in town.

And thus it ran, that daring man,
Who never thought to fail,
At last, in spite of every plan,
Went gliding off the rail.

The servants then, unlucky men,
Began to laugh and grin,
Which, like a lion in its den,
Aroused that mandarin.

"Ho, ho!" said he, "you laugh at me?
Now, slaves, you each shall slide!"
And when they all had met a fall,
He laughed until he cried.

—*Palmer Cox, in St. Nicholas for December.*

ABOUT THE STARS.

Harry Newman is a bright little boy about twelve years old, who lives with his father and mother in a fine old New England town, where the trees are so tall and grand their foliage forms beautiful arches over every street. Harry's father teaches astronomy in a large college near by, and there is nothing Harry likes better than to listen to stories about the stars from his papa. The way he came to like them so much was this:

One pleasant afternoon last August, Mr. Newman and Harry set out for a walk into the country. When they had walked on for a long while, Mr. Newman said: "It is time for us to turn back Harry; the sun will go down now before we reach home."

As they turned their faces homeward Harry said: "Papa, does the sun really go down, or didn't you tell me once that the earth moves and the sun stands still?"

"You are right, my boy," said Mr. Newman; "the sun stands still, and the earth and the other planets move around it. A long time ago people thought the earth was a great flat plain and that the sun and all the stars moved around it once in twenty-four hours."

"O, papa!" cried Harry, "how could they think the earth was flat when they could see how the lower part of a ship go es out of sight before the top does, as you showed me last week at Old Orchard Beach?"

"It does seem strange," said Mr. Newman, "but it was true, and the man who first declared that he believed it round was laughed at by everybody for holding such an absurd idea. The earth turns round on her axis, and this makes day and night, you know. Then it goes around the sun once a year, and, by changing its position at different times, gives what we call our seasons. But before we talk more about the earth, I will tell you something about the sun, if you want to hear it."

"I do," said Harry, "very much."

"Well," continued his father, "you will hardly believe me when I tell you that the sun is so far off that if you could take passage in a car going from here there at the rate of thirty miles an hour, and should start next New Year's day, 1880, you would not reach the sun till the middle of the year 2218—430 years from the time you start—in other words, the sun is about 92,000,000 of miles away."

"Whew!" said Harry, "I should have to be as old as Methuselah."

"And the sun is so large," continued Mr. Newman, "that in this same car you would be ten years in going around it, while you would travel around the earth at that rate in about a month. It takes 1,200,000 earths to make one sun, or, if you call a good-sized orange the sun, the earth would be no larger in proportion than the point of a pin."

"What is the sun made of?" asked Harry.

"The best astronomers," answered Mr. Newman, "say that the whole inside is a kind of hot gas, and that the surface is a great ocean of fire which is all the time boiling and seething and sending up huge jets of flame thousands of miles high—the most glorious fireworks one could dream of. If a portion of this mass should be blown over the United States at the rate at which it moves on the sun, it would only be thirty seconds in rushing from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, leaving the whole country not only a mass of ruin, but of glowing vapor, while the ashes of New York, Boston and Chicago would only be one small cloud. You will get a little idea of how hot it is up on the sun when I tell you that if the earth were made of ice, and the whole heat of the sun put upon it, it would take but two minutes to melt it; two minutes longer to boil the water which it would then consist of, and thirteen minutes more to convert it all into steam."

"O!" said Harry, "I never would have believed that yellow ball over there in the sky could be so big, or so far off, or so hot as you say; but I don't see how you find out all these things."

"By-and-by," continued his father, "when you grow older, you will understand some of the wonderful ways in which astronomers make these discoveries."

"I wish I were old enough now," said Harry. "But, papa, if the sun is so large, how big is the moon? That looks about the same size."

"Why, my dear boy, it would take sixty millions of our moons to make the sun! It looks so much larger because it is so much nearer us. It is about 240,000 miles from us, and revolves around us once in a month, as we do around the sun once a year. A curious thing about the moon is that no one ever has seen the other side of it, and many astronomers have conjectured that the other side is like the earth and that people live there; but it is clearly known now that there is neither air nor water there; so, of course, no one could live on the moon. I will show you a little how the surface of the moon looks as seen through a telescope."

As Mr. Newman spoke, he picked up a handful of pebbles from the ground and threw them into a soft bed of mud which they had just reached. "These pebbles sunk in the mud," said he, "look very much like the flat craters in the middle of the mountains of the moon, these little mounds of mud around them represent the curious shapes of the mountains themselves. One of these days I will show them to you through my telescope, and some of the planets too."

"How many did you say there were, papa?" asked Harry.

"Seven besides the earth," replied his father. "The one nearest the sun is called Mercury. It is about one-third the size of the earth and is forty millions of miles from the sun. Next comes Venus, that beautiful bright star you have so often seen near sunset time. The Greeks a long time ago, called it 'Hesperus,' or the evening star, and also 'Phosphorus,' or the morning star; for part of the year it is seen in the morning. It is about as large as the earth and sixty-seven millions of miles from the sun."

"When does the earth come in, papa?" said Harry.

"Next to Venus, my boy," replied his father, "and then comes Mars, which is only half the size of the earth, and yet is one hundred and forty-one millions of miles from the sun, and takes two of our years to go around it; so if you were born on Mars you would only be six years old, instead of twelve of ours. You can tell Mars from the other stars by its shining with such a red light. About two years ago an astronomer in Washington, Prof. Hall, was looking at Mars with his telescope, and he found it had a little bit of a moon, only about fifteen or twenty miles in diameter, and pretty soon he discovered another a little larger, so that Mars has the two smallest moons ever known."

"Have the other planets any moons, papa?" said Harry.

"Yes; Jupiter, the next planet, has four. Two of them were discovered by Galileo, who lived a long time ago. No one would believe he had seen any moons, and one old astronomer wouldn't look into a telescope for fear he should see them and be convinced. He died not long after, and Galileo, who was as sharp with his tongue as with his eyes, said: 'I hope he saw them on his way to heaven.' Jupiter is much greater than all the rest of the planets put together, and is thirteen hundred times as large as our earth. It would take a rod 85,000 miles long to run through it from opposite sides. I can show you with the telescope great belts across it which are supposed to be made of clouds."

"What comes after Jupiter?" said Harry.

"Saturn," said his father, "which, though only one-third as big as Jupiter, is three times as large as the other six planets put together. It has eight moons and two rings around it. So, if you could make a flying trip to Saturn some fine night,