

From the Day's Mail

A BRIEF NOTE ON HISTORICAL READING

To the Dear Young Advised Person:

In the courses of historical reading prescribed for you (*e. g.*, the admirable one outlined by "L. E. K." some time ago in *The Outlook*), I hope you will always remember that the wider the ocean on which you sail, the more need there is for a good chart and a sure compass. If the mere handbooks of history give little but the skeleton of events, they have the one merit of not carrying you out upon the sea of disputed questions, and when you decide to sail there you must lay aside the habit of implicit faith in any one text-book.

Reading widely, and using the novel for side-light, do not fail to keep in mind that the historical romance is not history, and was not meant to be—not even that of Walter Scott. He, and Bulwer, and Dickens had other objects in view (very different indeed, the poor laird of Abbotsford, when he wrote against time to get money) than exact narratives or accurately drawn social pictures. History is not too sure, even when the historian comes painfully and tediously particular in his details; how must it be when the writer is not under bond to be particular at all, and desires beyond everything not to be tedious?

Above all, in your wide reading beware of the positive and dogmatic and unqualifying historian. Do you know that Carlyle's work (including his "Cromwell") has been found imperfect? And do you know that the Jupiter of the historical essay, even Macaulay, has been proved wrong so often that he is now scarcely regarded as an authority at all, unless it be in style, while even there it has been said (and by many indorsed) that one writing in that emphatic manner could not possibly tell the truth? Besides his History, his essays on many subjects, including those on India, with that on Warren Hastings (recommended by "L. E. K."), have been riddled through and through by later writers and critics.

May we speak, by the way, of Anne of England as "the childless Queen," considering that she was the mother of seventeen children?

H. M. J.

The following game cannot be played in Northern climates, but it will doubtless afford amusement to our Southern readers, and it may be remembered for next summer mirth:

Dear Outlook:

A very pleasant game was gotten up at a little impromptu gathering in a mountain cottage, and it may give a suggestion to those who are seeking for easily arranged entertainments during the summer months.

A bunch of various leaves, gathered in a few moments, some sheets of paper, and a few pins, composed the materials. A leaf or cluster of leaves was pinned on each sheet, which was numbered. The company, provided with tally-cards, were requested to write, as they were passed, the name of the tree or plant to which the leaf belonged, opposite the corresponding number on the card. When the round had been completed, a correct list was read. If desired, prizes can be arranged for.

In the game, as played, there were twenty-five specimens of common plants and trees, and it was voted a great success from every point of view.

J. M. C.

Dear Outlook:

Will you kindly help me through your "Notes and Queries," or some other way? I have taken your paper for a very long time, and remember seeing a plan of study for a club which had to do with cities—for instance, Florence, taking up its history, architecture, noted men and women, etc., etc., suggesting books to read whose scenes were laid there, etc. We have decided on some such plan of work for the coming winter. Can you tell me in what number this was printed? I am very anxious to find it.

F. A. Y.

The paper for which you ask is out of print. Perhaps some of our readers will suggest a list of books on this subject which they have found valuable in a reading-class.

In answer to "H. H. R.," I make entire wheat bread the same as with white flour, only add a little sugar—a tablespoon to each loaf. Stir a thin sponge at night with one cake of yeast; scalded milk is best for wetting. Mold twice in the morning, the same as with white bread: One hour's baking if the loaves are of medium size.

HOUSEKEEPER.

Our Young Folks

The School-Girls' Fund

The lending of money to members of a working-girls' club is not easy. The reason is that the girls who never have a margin, whose wages only meet their necessities from day to day, dare not assume an obligation that can only be met where there is at least the possibility of a surplus. Recently it was discovered that a family were living on less than a dollar a week; one dollar a week was the margin, over the car-fare and the payment of the weekly insurance which is the poor family's protection against the Potter's Field, of the one wage-earner, a brother. When work was found for the working-girl of this family, she could not do it; she had no strength left. It was accident that revealed the circumstances of the family. The girls who join the working-girls' clubs, as a rule, are the more intelligent and self-respecting of the working-girls; those who want to pay their own way; who wish to stand in neither fear nor favor of any man. To these girls the grace of receiving is not an easily acquired grace; they will learn this lesson this winter, if ever. The "friendship account" of *The Outlook* will be used for those girls whose bravery sometimes involves unnecessary suffering, which cannot fail to arouse sympathy and respect. To teach a working girl of independent spirit to accept an expression of friendship in the form of money in her hour of need is to broaden her sympathies, to enlarge her views of life, to teach her sympathy with those of her class whose weakness too often she despises. The following letter came with an inclosure of five dollars:

Dear Outlook:

Inclosed is a small contribution; I wish it could be more.

A WORKING-GIRL.

Another letter inclosing seven dollars said: "From a lady of more than fourscore years; a friend of *The Outlook*." Other contributions are:

H. B., Vt.....	\$5 00
In His Name.....	2 00
A. B., New Jersey.....	2 00
	\$21 00
Previously acknowledged.....	159 25
Total.....	\$180 25

The Memorable Trip of the Flying Scud

By William Murray Graydon

In Two Parts—I.

There had been a spell of bitter and freezing weather for nearly five days. Such a cold snap was unprecedented in the memory of the village boys. Indeed, even the oldest inhabitant of Mount Airy could not recall the like in mid-December. People stayed indoors as much as possible, and so did cattle. The wheels of the farmers' teams screeched like a litter of hungry young pigs. But the weather moderated during Wednesday night, and the next morning snow began to fall. It came down steadily and in fine flakes. The hard, frosted ground was in prime condition to receive it. By noon the village street, and the fields, and the country roads were covered to a depth of four inches. The green pine-woods looked as though they were decked in white bunting.

The boys did not know whether to be glad or sorry. They had been having great sport all week skating on Squire Hyde's mill-pond. After the morning session of school they went down with brooms and shovels and cleared the ice of snow. But when they returned in the evening the work was all to be done over again. They did not even put on their skates. They saw that it was useless to struggle against the Winter King.

"Come to think of it, I ain't sorry," said fifteen-year-old Bob Nixon, as he trudged homeward with half a dozen

had gone over into the creek, and horse and man were drowned. On coasting nights the Rocktown boys always pulled their sleds home. Not for worlds would they have risked a spin around the bend. Even Mop Hazlitt had declared that the feat was impossible; and it took a good deal to daunt Mop. He was a chunky, undersized lad of sixteen, and was a sort of leading spirit among the Rocktown boys. His disposition was pugnacious. He was always ready for a fight. The development of this trait had been assisted by his companions, who never lost an opportunity of egging him on. Some of these lads were really vicious, though the fact never came out until the affair that I am going to relate. Heretofore the boys of both villages had always fraternized in perfect accord. Together they coasted down Bald Hill in winter, and fished and swam in the creek in summer. The leaders of the respective crowds, Bob and Mop, had been close chums. The rupture and subsequent feud dated from the previous October. The basis of dispute was a grove of chestnut-trees which lay across the creek, and were therefore on neutral ground. So, at least, the Mount Airy boys maintained. But Mop and his friends shared a contrary view, and claimed the trees on the ground of past "scutchings." The result was a fight between the two leaders, in which Mop came off second best. But Bob's party, being short in number, were worsted in the general scuffle that ensued, and had to retreat ignominiously over the iron bridge and up the hill. Since then hostilities had not been renewed. Each side believed that the other was only waiting an opportunity to fight, and each side prudently refrained from taking the initiative. Vague threats of what Bob or Mop intended to do traveled from one to the other.

Such was the situation when the first snow came, and it added an unusual zest to the commencement of the coasting season. The Mount Airy boys turned out ten strong that Thursday night. This made just a proper load for the Flying Scud, which was a long bob-sled of the ordinary pattern. It consisted of two small sleds fastened to a thirteen-foot plank. The fore sled was movable, and was controlled by a tiller.

The boys made three trips as far as the iron bridge, and thus broke in the road. Only two or three teams had traveled it during the day. The Rocktown crowd did not appear, nor were there any other sleds on the hill that night. The girls of Mount Airy, and some of the younger lads, prudently confined their coasting exploits to the gentle slope that led to the mill-pond. At nine o'clock the boys trudged homeward.

"I knew how it would be," said Tip Harman. "The Rocktown fellows are afraid to come up here."

"It looks that way," admitted Jim Stokes. "But then you can't tell; mebbe they don't know the coasting is good."

"Wait till next time," chimed in Bob. "That will tell. Good-night, boys. Here's my gate."

In the morning a slight drizzle of rain was falling, and the boys went to school with heavy hearts. But at noon it cleared off and blew up cold. By evening the air was bitter and stinging. Of course this made the coasting finer than ever. Promptly at six o'clock the Flying Scud and her crew reached Bald Hill. The road was shod with ice, and they whizzed down to the iron bridge like a streak. As they drew near the forking-place on the return tramp, chatting loudly and merrily, they were startled to see the Rocktown boys turn into the main road a few yards ahead of them. The enemy were seven in number. They had with them Mop Hazlitt's much-vaunted bob-sled, the King Coaster. They paid no attention to the Mount Airy boys, but as they trudged up the hill they made the night ring with derisive hoots and laughter.

"They're talking about us," muttered Carl Backus, wrathfully.

"Let 'em talk," said Bob; "as long as they don't say it to our faces. We needn't be afraid of them. We're ten to their seven."

"I saw Pug Davis in the crowd," declared Tip, "and Mart Eby, too. Each of them is nearly a match for two of us."