

of him—his horse fell atop of him. I only wish our Mary had never lit on him. It's like to go hard with' poor lass.'

"Oh, she'll get over it, never fear,' was Leah's reply, as I crept back to my own room, where I was found a few minutes later in a dead faint, with my head in an overturned straw bee-hive, one of a pile stowed away there.

"I scarce know which looked the worse when we did see him. His leg had been crushed and his arm broken, and some damage done to his ribs. But, ill as he looked, I could not repress an exclamation of delight when he walked into our parlour, and took me by surprise; and then I went off into one of my old fits of crying, and there was no stopping me.

"I hardly know what had transpired; my first recollection was of his sitting on our old-fashioned sofa by my side, with his arm round my waist, and my head on his shoulder, and of him whispering—

"Then you would have been sorry to lose me, Mary, dear?"

"Sorry! I would have given my life to save his in those days, and I think I almost told him so.

"He held me in a very close embrace, and was kiss-

ing my willing lips when Leah's sharp, abrupt 'Mary! I'm surprised at you!' startled us both. As if Amos had never kissed her for the first time!

"She professed to be very much disconcerted when Oliver proposed to make me his wife, and take me away to Knutsford, but I happened to overhear Amos and her decide that I 'should be best out of the way, there would be more for them; and if I got married, they had best get married too.'

"Father, however, seemed most reluctant to part with me. Something which he had heard in Knutsford made him loth to give his consent; and as I was under age, I could not well marry without it. Then, when *he* held back, Leah, professing to be moved by pity for me, 'poor young thing,' added her petitions to ours, and accordingly we were married, and my father generously gave me a thousand pounds on my wedding-day."

Customers coming in called Mrs. Chappell away. They appeared likely to detain her a long time, and I wanted to catch a 'bus, so I nodded and left the shop, saying as I went out—

"I will tell the rest when I come again."

MARY MARBURY.

## HOW WE GOT UP OUR SPELLING-BEE.



HEY must be very useful," said I. "Unless people are constantly writing, it is difficult to spell every word always quite correctly."

"They must be great fun," said Bertha.

"They must be rather childish," said Frank.

Frank thought himself quite a man, and looked down on everything which was not very superior.

"I think with mamma," said papa, "that they must be very useful; and I think with Bertha that they must be great fun, so I propose we hold one."

"That's a dear, good papa, always practical," said Bertha. "We are going to have a few friends next Thursday—suppose we hold it then?"

"Agreed. Now, how must we set about it? Every one is to compete, I suppose?"

"Yes, every one—from Dr. Thompson and old Miss Jones to Ada and Bertie. They say one of the best things about these spelling-bees is that people of all ages can join in."

"Perhaps," said Frank, "it would be better to tell your friends that you intend to test their orthographical powers, and then they can devote the time which will elapse between now and the eventful evening to studying Webster."

"We will certainly tell them that we intend to hold a spelling-bee," said papa, "but we will not recommend them to study Webster. I by no means wish to do anything to confirm the custom, which is already

too general, of spelling English words in an American fashion. We must have a dictionary as a standard, of course, but we will have an English dictionary."

"Whichever you like," said Bertha. "I don't care which dictionary is used so long as we hold the bee. Then we must have two referees."

"What are they for?" said Frank.

"They are to decide any disputed point that may arise, and see that everything is carried on quite fairly.—Papa, you shall be a referee."

"I beg your pardon, my dear," said papa, "I mean to win the first prize. I have always had a very great respect for my own spelling powers, and I firmly believe that none of the young ones will be able to compete with the old folks in spelling. People were properly taught when I was young," he continued, complacently stroking his chin.

"I don't mind being a referee," said Frank.

"No, Master Frank, that won't do. I intend you to enter the lists as well as myself. You and I will be the opposing knights in this tournament. I will be the champion of the old people, and you of the young, and we will see which does best. Your aunt and uncle Wentworth shall be the referees."

"Very well, sir," said Frank, "I will do my best. But if I am to compete, I hope that the prizes will be worth having.—What are they to consist of, mother?"

"They can be whatever we like," I answered. "We might have two or three books or little keepsakes, or different-coloured ribbons might be given, which could be worn during the evening as badges of honour. Leave the prizes to me; I will look after them. There

shall be four—first, second, third, and fourth—and a consolation prize for the one who makes the first failure.”

“I suppose we must leave the ranks of the competitors if we make one mistake?” said Bertha.

“Most decidedly,” said papa. “Let us be particular, whatever we are, and then we shall discover who really can spell. We must give no quarter to those who fail.”

“I quite agree with father,” said Frank. “Whoever makes a single mistake loses his chance of the prize.”

“Then,” said papa, “we have the prizes, and the referees, and the competitors, and the standard. All we want now is an interrogator and a list of words. Mamma shall be the interrogator—and if you like, my dear, I will draw up a list of words that will be suitable for you to put to the company.”

“Oh, no, sir, that will never do,” said Frank. “The idea of your knowing beforehand what the words are to be, and then competing for the prize! Those who try must know nothing of what the words are to be! Mamma must draw up a list herself.”

“Quite right,” said papa. “I suppose I am at liberty to indulge in a little light reading in the way of a dictionary?”

“Certainly. You can sleep with one under your pillow, if you like, and endeavour to imbibe its spirit.”

The eventful evening arrived. We found that our friends were all delighted with the idea, though it was evident that each one thought he or she was sure of the first prize. When all had arrived, it was found that our number was twenty-three. There were twenty competitors, two referees, and the interrogator. The competitors were placed on one side of the room, with papa at their head. We began with comparatively easy words, and there were no failures. At last it was found that the very desire to be clear and correct was rendering two or three of our friends a little confused, and a few puzzling words judiciously administered speedily thinned the ranks. The first one to succumb was Bertha. She made *e* instead of *a* the final vowel in scimitar. The last to give in were papa and Frank. They, I thought, would never be conquered. I got through all the list I had prepared, and tried all the words I could think of besides; then the whole of the company came over to my aid, and we constituted an army of interrogators, but it was of no use.

“Mamma, do let us puzzle them; there will be no living with either of them if they are left masters of the field,” whispered Bertha plaintively, and again we tried.

At last Bertha, who had lately been studying botany, asked them “endophyllous,” and it was found, to the great delight of all, that papa substituted *i* for *y*, and that Frank omitted one of the *l*'s, so they were both defeated. They declared, however, that it was not a fair word, and that scientific words were not admissible. This was acknowledged, and I pleaded that in the list I had drawn out I had kept most carefully to words which, though puzzling, were constantly used in English society on ordinary or extraordinary occasions. At the same time, when such orthographical giants

were met with as these two gentlemen had proved themselves to be, it was necessary that for their defeat we should bring out our great guns. The first prize was therefore awarded to father and son conjointly, and as it proved to be a large cake, prettily ornamented, they decided to hand it over to the little ones, for their future delectation.

Altogether, our spelling-*bee* was a great success, and we certainly intend to repeat it. For the benefit of those who feel inclined to follow our example, I give the list of words which I at first drew up. Of course this list was added to considerably during the evening:—Sponsor, confessor, peninsula, excommunicate, harassed, quiescent, façade, stroll, symmetry, cemetery, mackerel, mannikin, ichneumon, receive, perceive, believe, cleave, ramification, colonel, kernel, rhododendron, biscuit, pedlar, meddler, medlar, lollipops, myrrh, frankincense, gauging, aggravate, separate, Teutonic, magnanimity, Canaanite, goitre, parallelogram, woful, pneumatics, apocryphal, separate, profuseness, shriek, freak, peak, meek, oblique, indissoluble, parallelopedon, grandiloquent, dissembler, pleurisy, aneurism, higgledy-piggledy, hawser, lodgment, sinuosity, pumice-stone, transcendentalism, spindle-shanks, camelopard, obsolete, phthisic, laudanum, transubstantiation, stereoscope, hosanna, encyclopædia, pentagrammaton, mezzo, anonymous, tussle, ichthyosaurus, hebdomadary, promontory, epaulette, acquiescence, struggle, picturesque, obsequiousness, termagant, refrangibility, incontestable, sacristry, whooping-cough, idiosyncrasy, pedagogue, ornithology, irrefragable, accoutred, superciliousness, stalactite, tetrarch, negociation, quaternion, millenarianism, characteristics, mahogany, statistics.

Papa and Frank were so pleased with their success, that they determined to turn the idea to good account, and try, as Christmas was approaching, to raise by means of it a little money to give our poorer neighbours materials for a Christmas dinner, and coals and blankets. They therefore engaged our village school-room. The vicar promised to take the chair, the referees were appointed from leading men of the district, and suitable prizes were provided, varying in value from thirty shillings to two and sixpence. The charges for admission were—front seats, sixpence; back seats, threepence. Competitors had to pay a fee for the privilege of distinguishing themselves—gentlemen, one and sixpence; ladies, one shilling. About forty names were sent in, and their owners duly made their appearance at the appointed time, and the room was crowded. The vicar, in opening the proceedings, explained that the spelling-*bee* had come originally from America, where it had been as popular as it promised to become in this country; that it had been proved to be an agreeable way of spending the evening in private, and doubtless would be quite as much so in public, when it would in this case answer the double purpose of amusing the spectators and providing for the wants of the poor and needy. He said also that even those who prided themselves, and with cause, on the correctness of their orthography, often became puzzled when they heard pronounced a number of words which were similar in sound, yet differently spelt.

As a proof he quoted the following sentence, which he said he had rarely found could be accurately spelt right off, even by a well-educated person :—"It is interesting to witness the unparalleled embarrassment of a harassed pedlar gauging the symmetry of a peeled potato on the banks of the Mississippi." My husband, who was the interrogator, then stepped forward with the sheet of paper in his hand, upon which was written

the list of words that he had prepared, and he put a word in turn to each competitor. As soon as any one failed, he or she was politely handed down until those only were left who were entitled to prizes, and then the examination was continued till the order of the prizes was decided. Altogether, a most agreeable evening was spent, and our charity fund amounted to a sum which far exceeded our most sanguine expectations.

PHILLIS BROWNE.

## THE GATHERER.

### A Warning Blast.

When the sea beats on an angry shore, and a dense fog conceals the rocks and breakers, Heaven help the poor mariner! To warn him of his danger, many fog-signals have been tried and suggested; but the objection to most of them is that when the wind is blowing towards the land—the peril then, of course, being greatest—the sound they produce is heard but a little way out at sea. Something had to be invented powerful enough to defy the wind.

Professor Tyndall has long interested himself in this subject, and, aided by Mr. Douglas, of Trinity House, has invented a trumpet whose performance is warranted to be heard six miles over the sea, in spite of fog and hurricane. The blast of this instrument is sufficiently strong to take off the head of any one venturing too near its mouth; and its tone, as may readily be believed, is, beyond description, horrible. Inside the trumpet is a revolving cylinder, perforated with slits, and intended to make 24,000 revolutions in a minute. These slits divide the sound into pulsations, and thus add to its power. In a fog, a low note will be blown from dangerous rocks, and a high note from on board ship. So the mermaids, who have long been accused in these Northern seas of luring mariners to destruction by their songs, may expect soon to have their musical taste outraged by an unearthly trumpeting all round our coasts.

### Health Sacrificed for Bread.

We may boast of our high civilisation, but of some features of it we have no reason to be proud. In far too many of the occupations of the present day men earn their bread, not only by the sweat of their brow, but by the sacrifice of their health. Dr. B. W. Richardson has recently shown that there are no fewer than seven active causes producing disease among the working classes. They are the following :—Noxious inhalation of dust and gases; exposure to soluble chemical substances; mechanical impact of foreign bodies; unnatural postures; exposure to damp and impure air; contact with organic parasitic forms; and excess of muscular work. The inhalation of dust alone affects the workers in from twenty to twenty-five distinct callings, such as file and saw-making, knife-grinding, stone-cutting, paper-making, and tobacco-manufacturing. The last-named, which contributes to the enjoyment of so many, produces serious depression

and disturbance of the nervous system to those engaged in it. Amongst those who suffer from the inhalation of vapours are house-painters, in whom the vapour of turpentine produces a specific form of disease. Workers in lead are also severely affected—indeed, the deaths amongst those exposed to the vapours of this metal are thirty-eight per cent. in excess of the ordinary mortality. One cannot help thinking that many of these laborious artisans are in a much worse plight than the often-sympathised-with agricultural labourer. He, with poor pay and a wretched cottage, can at least breathe the fresh air, and gain some pleasure from the beauties of nature; but the other works away day after day at the same monotonous labour like a mere machine, and then, killed by his calling, drops into the grave.

### Hidden Lines.

In the following verses two lines from "Othello" may be found—one word in each line of the verses :—

#### RESIGNATION.

Ah! once I loved, and I had loved e'en now,  
But Janet bade me think of her no more,  
Sent me away, and cancelled every vow;  
The which I scarce yet know if I deplore.

For I but acted after her decree;  
Had I done otherwise she would have raged;  
I found a reason for her cruelty,  
For soon to friend of mine was she engaged.

'Twas mortifying that I loved a maid  
Who loved another, it must be confessed;  
Yet now her fickleness is all outplayed,  
I see that everything was for the best.

I mourn it not—should others doubt my speech,  
Let them but come and see me day by day;  
They'll learn a lesson that I'll willing teach  
To him by faithless mistress turned away.

For how to bear it manfully and well,  
How to console myself I did discover,  
And I am willing at all times to tell  
My secret to each hapless jilted lover  
Who my sad story may have pondered over.

J. G.