

addition of son, or some other word expressive of a similar relation to the paternal name. The Normans thus superadded *fitz* (the old French for *filis*), as Fitz-Allen, Fitz-Gerald, Fitz-Walter; the Irish *O*, as O'Donnell; the Scotch *Mac*, as MacDougall; and the Welsh *Ap*, as Aphomas. It was once remarked to the writer as curious that Ben should be such a common name among the Hebrews, and considerable surprise was manifested when it was pointed out that it was originally a prefix, Ben-Hadad meaning simply the son of Hadad.

It is difficult to believe that any nation of men absolutely nameless has ever existed, although re-

port says that the ancient Scythians used no names at all. Travellers in Africa have also asserted that in some African tribes names are unknown, except as regards the oldest man, who is known (we should say disrespectfully) as the Old Boy. We are with those who ask, with Campbell, "Who hath not owned the magic of a name?" The magic is assuredly owned by everybody, and were we to be without some distinguishing epithet of a permanent character, whether that epithet be Jinx or Vavasour, we should probably find ourselves spoken of in such terms as that applied to the old African, or perhaps worse.

EDWARD OXENFORD.

MY SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY: A CITY CLERK'S IDYL.



AN the sea-man—after tossing for weeks between sea and sky—look forward to the approach of land, can the prisoner anticipate his release, with greater delight than the City clerk welcomes the return of the summer holiday-time? After

the foggy and dismal London winter, after the weary mill-horse round from chambers to desk, desk to chambers, the poring over big ledgers dimly lit up by the mid-day gas, to break away into the open sunshine, away from City smoke and dust, into the green country among its pure air and flowers—this is like a new leasing of life to him, a new expanding and enlightening of his existence. During these dark monotonous months, "he has grown to the desk as it were, and the wood has entered into his soul;" he has become like one of the familiar City squares, dingy and narrow, with grimy trees which appear to have lost all remembrance of the green leaves, the singing birds, and blue sky. But the April sunshine, that swells their buds again, stirs up his young blood; and the early primrose and violet, which the flower-women now bring into the City's heart, quicken his sense of spring and coming summer.

London is blest with a charming rural site. A hundred delightful places are open to spend a half-holiday in. I can go up the river to Kew Gardens,

Hampton Court, Richmond Park, even Windsor; or down the river to Greenwich, Gravesend, Harwich, and Margate. I can take a row-boat for a spin among the reaches, or a steamer for longer trips. I can dally in a canoe on the Serpentine, or the quiet ponds of Battersea Park. I can ramble among the pasture meadows and green hedgerows of Herefordshire, or the corn-fields and copse-woods of Kent and Surrey. For the longer trips it is best to make one of a party, and to choose a whole Bank Holiday; for my half-holiday I prefer a quiet country stroll, with a single companion, or oftener still, alone.

It is not necessary to go far from town to enjoy a solitary afternoon ramble. There are rural spots of great beauty to be found not ten miles from town. My favourite haunts lie in the first ridge of the Surrey Hills. I go by train to some suburban station near there. I hurry through the pleasant streets, admiring as I go the pretty villas with their choice gardens, in which the City merchant regales his evening leisure with the flowers and greenery denied him by day in the dingy wilderness of brick. Soon I am clear of the last new cottage and in the dusty lanes under the leafy elms, with the woods and fields all around. The hedgerows on either side break into sheets of blossom. The crumbling chalky banks are hung with a tangle of wild flowers and brambles. A turn in the road gives me a glimpse of an old manor-house. It stands in an undulating park, shaded with massy clumps of elm and beech. I see the red brick walls with their white window-frames, and the tall chimney-tops, peeping between the black flakes of guardian cedars and the dense shrubberies which flank the lawn. The lawn itself is smooth-shaven, and brilliant with geraniums; but the park is one great flowery threshold to this English mansion. The lush grass, dewy and tender, is ablaze with buttercups and sheets of white daisies. The cattle are standing knee-deep amongst them. I can scarcely believe my eyes at sight of this gorgeous show of summer fertility. I envy the young colts that are able to roll over and over in it at will. Further on the road, a wooden field-gate beside an old pollard gives me a view of the open country—the fruitful Surrey plain hid in um-

brageous trees, with here and there a tall flint spire, or a brick chimney-top, appearing through the sea of foliage which rolls in rugged billows to the horizon, dull green near at hand and swathed with dull blue mist in the distance. Further on the road still—I am now fairly among the hills—I pass an old Surrey homestead, a place to have spent one's youth in, and to have memories of among the City's smoke or in distant lands. It sleeps in the hollow, under a copse-topped hill. The long black barns, with roofs of red tile or dun and mossy thatch, about which the swallows twitter; the farmer's house, overgrown with fruit trees and ivy, the casements open to the sunshine; the greive's cottage, smothered in jasmine and roses; the lazy calves about the gates, the white geese nestling in the grass under the full-blown orchard trees, the drowsy sunshine—all swell the picture of peaceful content. Behind all, the naked brow of the hill and the clouds behind it hint somehow of the sea, from which the broad south wind is blowing.

I now strike off through the quiet homestead, which might well be a hundred miles from London, and enter the hazel copse. There are one or

two holiday-makers here. So much the better; for I know a woodland nook where I can lie and dream unmolested, and it is pleasant even in solitude to feel that some one is near. Holidaying is all the sweeter when others are holidaying too. I know a nook among gay green birch-trees and dark blue pines, whose musky fragrance scents the warm air. Here I can fling myself down on a couch of heather and moss, and yield myself up to the influences of the place. All the world is shut out. I might be in a British Columbian forest. I see nothing but the bright trees shimmering in the sunshine, and the bold blue and white of the infinite overhead. I feel only the

delicious breeze playing in my face. I hear only the hum of the honey-bee searching the waxen cells of the wild hyacinth or the cowslip, the notes of a cuckoo in some distant glen, or the delirious song of a lark high in the blue. Yet it takes some time before I can drift away from the City's influence, before I can cast the desk out of my soul. By-and-by, however, the sweet spell of the place prevails. The lark's song wings me away on memories of my youth—when I was wont to

spend my City holidays at my aunt's farm near Canterbury. What times those were! It was a great day for the girls—my cousins—when I came down. What fun Cousin Dick and I used to have amongst them!—rambling with them in the copse-wood after flowers, and fishing in the mill-stream—playing at hide-and-seek round the farmyard at night, and acting the ghost to frighten them as they slept together in the old crooked attics. Then my uncle, honest man, was wont to introduce me to his friends with evident pride as “just come from London.” What arguments he and I used to have on the old Whig and Tory interests! My uncle was a staunch Tory, and I was, of course, a vile Radical. On Sundays I would go

to the village church with the lasses, and sit through the drawing sermon in the old strait-backed pew; then march home with them through the wheat-fields and over the stiles. Where are they all now? Three of them are in their graves, for that was ten years ago.

From these times that will never return I drift to other themes: scenes of fancy, perhaps, which real life denies. I can make long-cherished visits to distant countries; I can scale the glaciers of the Alps, or watch the sun rise over the desert. I can cruise among the coral islets of the South Pacific, or camp out in some American forest. I can re-people Arcadia



“A WOODLAND NOOK.”

with idyllic beings, or read "the fairy tales of Science and the long results of time."

In this way the drowsy afternoon passes by, and it is time to go homeward. I return to the train by a different road from that by which I came. My path skirts a clear mill-stream, flowing through meadows, past mills and villages. I pass an old flint church, with its ancient tombs and grave-yard under the elms. The golden effulgence of sunset is gilding the still mounds without, and the organist is busy rehearsing to-morrow's anthem within. It is difficult to keep from feeling that the graves have ears for the solemn music, and eyes for the glorious light. Further on, near the outskirts of the suburb, there is a pretty spot, where a wooden bridge spans the stream, which here broadens to a pool, then vanishes into a brake of alders and wych-hazels. A pair of swans are afloat on

the pool, and a flock of swallows are curvetting over its glassy surface. The sun is down, but there is an after-glow of pallid gold. Close by the bridge stands a pretty sequestered cottage, which takes my fancy. It has its cosy garden, its paddock, and its elder-tree in blossom. A nightingale is singing somewhere in the brake. A regret comes over me at the thought of going back to the City. This cottage is one of my "Castles in Spain." I am not ambitious of the manor-house, nor the farm. I should not desire more than the independence and healthful quiet of this cottage. Then good-bye to fusty ledgers, to monotonous drudgery, to City smoke and din. Poor fool! Happiness does not depend on circumstances, but on one's being in harmony with them. Do well thy weekly share of the turmoil and the strife, and then enjoy all the more the sweets of the Saturday half-holiday.

J. M.

STONE STEPS AND WOODEN STAIRS.

By BEATRICE LEIGH HUNT, Author of "Two Points of View," &c.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

MR. HOLMAN suggested to Aunt Valentine a trip to the sea-side, a visit to the Lakes, or any other change of scene that she thought would be beneficial to Edith. Aunt Valentine said that no change of scene would do her good; and though Mr. Holman pooh-poohed this assertion, he carried none of his proposals into effect. Her brother Roger, in unsympathetic contemplation of a suffering which he had never experienced, remarked that Edith did not let "*concealment*, like a worm in the bud, feed on her damask cheek."

"Roger," said Aunt Valentine, to whom he had spoken, "to quote aptly is an art, and shows a perception of resemblances and parallels; but simply to lug in quotations where there is no application, degrades a man to the level of a parrot."

"You mean to say that I am a parrot, I suppose," said Roger, throwing his newspaper on to the table. He had spoken lazily from behind it at first, but now sat up energetically in his chair.

"I mean to say nothing more than I have said already," returned Aunt Valentine.

At Shepherd's Bush the Yorke's little garden was looking sadly parched, for the weather had been dry and sunny, and it was six weeks since Hester or Gerrie had had a thought to spare for it. Besides the fact that their thoughts had been engrossed, every moment of their time had been filled; and now that keenly present anxiety had retreated from them, as day by day Athelstan gained a little more strength, the reaction of fatigue and sleep asserted its power in every leisure moment. This was more especially the case with Gerrie, who could not, when Hester sent her for change away from Athelstan's room, begin to read or work, or attempt any quiet employment, without dropping asleep almost immediately. But her sleep brought real rest, that now began to restore her; for quickly as

their trouble had told upon Gerrie, both mentally and physically, her warmth of feeling partook of a buoyancy that recognised every struggling sunbeam which peeped through the clouds. With Hester, now that the one dread of how Athelstan's illness might end had been at last removed, many anxieties pressed upon her, whose collected force served to keep all but a comparative brightness from her. Athelstan's hard work, as yet, had been unable to accomplish little more than to bring himself and his sisters to a fair starting-point. His father's debts were paid; but then, again, he was hardly in advance of his present needs, as so soon he had hoped to be.

Hester and Gerrie felt that fate was indeed cruel to Athelstan, that just at a time when it seemed as if his prospects were brightening, when the day for his appearance at the concert had been fixed, and when waiting for the eventful evening had been their greatest trial, this illness should have come upon him. Hester had written to Victor, some time before the date of the concert, telling him all that had occurred, and saying also that she should let him know again as soon as Athelstan was better. She was a little surprised at receiving no reply to this letter, considering how friendly Victor had appeared; but arguing that, as there was nothing for him to do at present, he might feel it useless to write until he had heard from her again, she did not worry needlessly. And, indeed, she had so many immediate anxieties, that they left little room in her mind for such speculations.

Six weeks of heavy expense, with no income, had nearly emptied Hester's purse. What could she do?

One evening, later than he generally came since Athelstan's illness, Maynard ran up the steps and knocked at the door, which was opened by Hester.

"How is he this evening?" he asked, hanging up his hat.

"Much the same, thank you—at least, better, I hope,