

## July.

AND now comes JULY, bringing scorching rays and waves of heat. In her presence Nature seems to grow weary. A quivering vapor rises from the earth, the dusty hedges droop, the thirsty flowers hang their heads, the trees have an humble look and show crisps in their leaves, the birds hide themselves while they sing, lizards sleep in the sun, the cattle dream in the shade, the shallow streams murmur as they crawl along one side of their stony bed. Nor can men withstand her. The laborers sneak into some shady nook to steal a quiet hour of rest. City folks, less privileged, mop their brows or fan themselves as they go panting over the heated pavements. Some who have indulged all winter in lager and whisky fall down from so-called sunstroke. The streets are like parts of a great oven. People seem to wish with the Irishman that they could "give this hot month a cool reception." Nor is this all. JULY tarnishes the beauties left by June. To the leaves and the flowers she gives a duller look. She even commences the process of decay. With her the perfect noon of the year begins to wane.

Can no good word, then, be spoken for JULY? Is she alone of all the months to be proscribed from our favor? True lovers of nature will not say so. They have observed that though June may have brighter days, and at the same time less scorching, she cannot compare to JULY for the splendor of her early mornings, and the soft brilliance of the evenings. Reader, have you lived in the country? Have you been awake and out from four in the morning until eight? I tried this daily for several weeks during a tour through two New England States. A gray light showed the outlines of the hills; with the gray was soon intermingled a pale green, then blue, then red; soon the lower edges of the clouds were tinged with gold; presently streaks of sunshine shot down into the valleys among the mist; in a little while the sun showed itself, and the mist, as if frightened at the sight, vanished in all directions; then the

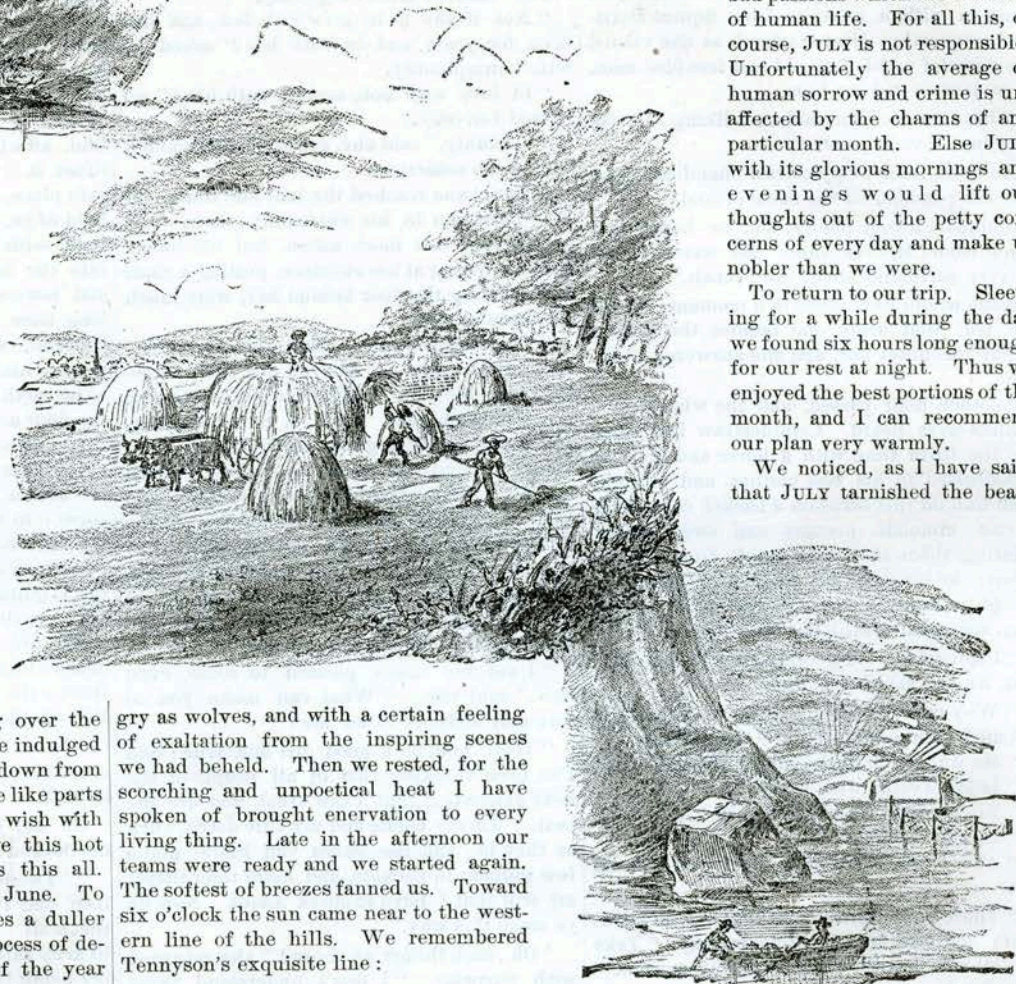
dewy leaves and grass blades glistened in the light, the faintly shining stars disappeared, and the remaining pink and blue of the sky melted into the full glory of the morning. These changes took several hours. Day after day we witnessed them, and pitied the lazy people who had burnt their candles too long the nights before. As they gaped and yawned, coming to the table without appetite, we sat down hun-

times we stopped to listen to the croaking of the frogs, the chirping of the locusts, the song of a nightingale, the solemn and rare hooting of an owl, and the music of a brook singing its quiet tune to the sleeping woods. These were the only sounds we heard. The night was still. The air was fragrant. The earth and the sky were so suggestive of tranquillity and peace that it was difficult to believe in the existence of the turmoil and rev-

elries, the selfish anxieties and bad passions which are the bane of human life. For all this, of course, JULY is not responsible. Unfortunately the average of human sorrow and crime is unaffected by the charms of any particular month. Else JULY with its glorious mornings and evenings would lift our thoughts out of the petty concerns of every day and make us nobler than we were.

To return to our trip. Sleeping for a while during the day we found six hours long enough for our rest at night. Thus we enjoyed the best portions of the month, and I can recommend our plan very warmly.

We noticed, as I have said, that JULY tarnished the beau-



gry as wolves, and with a certain feeling of exaltation from the inspiring scenes we had beheld. Then we rested, for the scorching and unpoetical heat I have spoken of brought enervation to every living thing. Late in the afternoon our teams were ready and we started again. The softest of breezes fanned us. Toward six o'clock the sun came near to the western line of the hills. We remembered Tennyson's exquisite line:

"The low sun makes the color."

The clouds gathered about it like a car, a couch or drapery, according to the imagination of the beholder. But whatever shape they took they were edged as if with gold. The farm-house windows shone like polished shields; the eastern hills were bathed in soft purple; here and there trees standing against the light brought to mind that sweet verse of Phœbe Cary's:

"Where lit by God, the fires of sunset burned,  
The treetops unconsumed to flame were turned,  
And I, in this great hush,  
Talked with His angels in each burning bush."

Soon the sun sank below the clouds and behind the mountains, flooding the whole sky with gold, slowly changing into crimson, pink, green, gray and indigo. Then the stars stole out from their hiding-places and shone brightly with no cloud to obscure them. Some-

ties left by June. Yet we noticed, also, that she ripened the cherries, strawberries, and raspberries. Everywhere, too, we smelt the new-mown hay. We saw the laborers among the hillocks of the loaded wagons at the barn doors. In other words, we noticed that JULY advances from the beautiful to the useful. She shows us what compensations are sometimes granted for decaying charms. Most good people experience the very transition we notice in JULY. We see examples all around us. Ladies who but yesterday were belles, and whose fresh and faultless beauties were sung by admirers; men, too, whose handsome and perfect physiques were freely remarked, have passed the apogee of physical charm and are now rapidly waning. Lines are coming upon the forehead, crowsfeet are gathering about the eyes, the countenance is losing its bloom, and the skin is getting dry, corpulence or shrinkage is spoiling the fair propor-



tions of form, gray is stealing into the hair. The admiration they once won for cunning ways, innocent coquetry and dash are transferred to young folks. And yet they are none the less attractive to us. For recognizing, as the lawyers say, that in this world we have only a short lease of youthful beauty, but may have a freehold upon wisdom, they row turn their thoughts toward more substantial things. From all their past observations they begin to draw sensible inferences, from ephemeral literature they now turn to solid books; they appreciate ability more than mere smartness; they care little for flippant company, but welcome to their circles people who think; they tire of mere acquaintances and desire faithful friends. The result of all this is seen in their conversation, which is wiser than before; in their tempers, which are more serene, and in their characters, which grow mellow.

To speak after the style of the Elizabethans, they are less flavory, but more fruity. And just as JULY helps us to provide for December, so they are laying up stores of wisdom for their old age. Thus we see that the mere decline of beauty is only a comparative loss, since God and Nature may offer us large compensations. With this thought in our minds let us appreciate JULY and welcome her.

F. G.

"Now the mantle of Aurora  
Streams along the morning skies;  
But the bridal wreath of Flora  
Loses half its sweets and dyes.  
Freer the noontide glory gushes  
From the fountains of the sun;  
And a thousand stains and flushes  
Show the heavens when day is done.

Then the heavy dew-pearls glisten  
In the twilight, pure and pale,  
And the drooping roses listen  
To the love-lorn nightingale;  
While the stars come out in cluster  
With a dim and dreamy light,  
And the moon's pervading luster  
Takes all sternness from the night."

## Stories from the Classics.

BY JAMES GRANT.

### A WONDERFUL VOYAGE.

WHEN, in 1846, the Portuguese navigator, Bartholomew de Diaz, re-discovered the southern promontory of the African continent, and named it "*Cabo Tormentoso*, the Cape of Storms," he did but revive the old appellation by which, entirely unknown to him, of course, the Cape of Good Hope had been known to the maritime adventurers of nearly two thousand years before.

*Re-discovered* we say advisedly and with ample authority. There is every reason to believe that, long ago before our records of modern discovery commence, the circumnavigation of Africa was accomplished, and to an account of this truly wonderful achievement this paper will be devoted.

About 600 years before Christ, there reigned on the throne of Egypt Necho, the king who commenced the famous canal between the

Nile and the Adrian Gulf, which enterprise, by the way, was abandoned after costing the lives of 120,000 men. At this time, and, in fact, throughout the ancient world, Africa was believed to be surrounded by water on all sides, except at the narrow neck now traversed by the Suez Canal. But the precise conformation of the southern part was an unsolved problem, and was deemed to be "an undiscovered country from which no traveler returned." In that age of superstition and idolatry the most fabulous stories were current about what was to man unknown or strange. So that it is not strange that exaggerated representations of the dangers to be encountered, of the frightful coasts, and of the stormy and boundless ocean supposed to stretch to the confines of earth's surface, were rife, and were recounted again, and yet again in the hearing of the credulous mariners whose only experience of Neptune's fury was within the narrow limits of the "*Magna Mere*" of the Romans.

The Phœnicians were at that date the mariners *par excellence* of the whole known world; their enterprise and adventurous spirits led them far past the Pillars of Hercules, those grim guardians on the threshold of the Atlantic, even to the shores of Britain, and perhaps even to the rugged coasts of our own New England. Their high-sterned, single-masted craft were to be seen in the waters of every then known sea; they enrolled themselves under the banner of any monarch or kingdom who would make it sufficiently to their interest, and among those whom they served was the before-mentioned Necho, King of Egypt. Herodotus, whose writings cover such an important era in the world's history—viz., the centuries preceding the Nativity at Bethlehem—gives a most interesting account of what was undoubtedly a great feat, and from it and other sources we learn that when Necho at last desisted from opening a canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, he cast about him for some other kingly enterprise. Accordingly "he sent certain Phœnicians in ships with orders to pass by the Columns of Hercules into the sea that lies to the north of Africa, and then to return to Egypt. These Phœnicians thereupon set sail from the Red Sea and entered into the Southern Ocean. On the approach of autumn they landed in Africa, and planted some grain in the quarter to which they had come; when this was ripe and they had cut it down they put to sea again. Having spent two years in this way, they in the third passed the Columns of Hercules and returned to Egypt." Now comes what is to us the strange part of the narrative of Herodotus, but at the same time the best confirmation we could wish that he was *not* relating a mere "sailor's yarn," as he himself evidently believes. He goes on to say: "Their relations may obtain credit with some, but to me it seems impossible of belief; for they affirmed that, as they sailed around the coast of Africa *they had the sun on their right hand!*" But to us, who bask in the revelations of modern science, the report which Herodotus thought so fabulous as to throw discredit upon the entire narrative, namely, that in passing round Africa they found the sun on their right, af-

fords to us the strongest presumption in favor of its truth. Such a statement as this could never have been imagined in an age when the science of astronomy was in its infancy—when the earth was believed to be a flat plane and the center of the universe. Of course, after having passed the equator the Phœnicians must have found the sun on their right hand. In addition they brought back the most fabulous stories of what they saw—for all of which we are undoubtedly indebted to their imaginations.

It is true that many writers have labored to prove that the voyage in all probability never took place, urging as their chief objections that the time occupied was too short in that age of slow and cautious sailing, when it was customary to sail only by day, and to anchor at night; and also that the undertaking was one for which the Phœnician galleys of the time were entirely unfitted. On the other hand, some of the best authorities are agreed that such a feat was not only possible, but that it actually took place, else how could the voyagers have returned to their starting-point from an opposite direction to that in which they set out, and how did they come to observe the sun on their right hand? It is sufficient to say that these questions have never been answered, and until they are we may continue to believe that the Phœnicians really added the doubling of the "*Cabo Tormentoso*" to their other intrepid achievements.

## Talks With Girls.

### THE MORALITY OF HOME LIFE.

BY JENNIE JUNE.



THAT the home life of a nation is the root of its morality has been accepted as a truism; but is it true? And if not, in what does it fall short of its possibilities, and its accredited mission?

That the same kind of home life is not possible to all will be conceded at once; and it will also be admitted that as true homes have been found in cottages as were ever seen in palaces. Therefore, it is not size, nor luxury that makes a true and happy home. In fact, and this no bit of stereotyped commonplace, but a serious, eternal truth—high station and great luxury are as opposed to the genuine growth and cultivation of the best home influences as the opposite extreme;—the lowest depths of poverty and the wretched conditions of vice. Still, there have been palaces, and narrow attics, and dismal cellars that were actual homes in the sense which conveys the deepest, though not the broadest meaning of the word. So that mere exterior conditions, though they may affect detrimentally and otherwise, do not absolutely prevent the existence of home life,