

"THE GARDEN OF THE GODS."

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THE GARDEN OF THE GODS.

BY ELIZA GREATOREX.

THE world has so long been in the habit of peopling mountains, streams, forests and oceans with imaginary deities, that it is not surprising that even in America we have some of these old ideas. Mr. William Cullen Bryant, in one of his charming poems, speaks of these as "faded fancies of an elder world." But they are not so faded, after all, and come very naturally to those who have read stories of Greek and Roman gods and heroes.

The delightful ancients, who seem as shadowy to us as their own legends, used to fancy that some of their deities lived in the streams; others—called "hamadryads"—were snugly shut up in the trunks of trees. In the musical gurgle of the waterfall they thought they heard the laughter and prattle of the naiads; and when the west wind rustled the leaves of the groves, they fancied they heard the dryads and hamadryads whispering to each other. The voice of the surf on the rocky shores and reefs was the roar and bellowings of tritons, who lived in the waves and played beneath the keels of ships. The shriek of the storm and the howl of the mountain blast were supposed to be the voices of other gods, who were often heard but never seen.

It is hard for us, who live in these days of railroads, steamboats, telegraphs, hard work and practical life, to see how it was ever possible for any people to hold such simple and childish beliefs. But, though we have learned of the true and only God who made heaven and earth and all that is therein, we like to keep alive the curious old traditions of the ancients. They are like the charming fairy tales that have come down to us from generation to generation. Nobody pretends that

they are true; but they are very good "make-believe."

If ever there was a place on earth where the gods of the Greeks and Romans may be supposed to have lived and had a good time, that place must have been in Colorado. Near the foot of the famous mountain known as Pike's Peak lies the "Garden of the Gods," a glimpse of which is given you in our frontispiece. It is a small valley, just on the edge of the Rocky Mountains, and is completely surrounded by a high perpendicular wall of white sandstone. There are two entrances through this wonderful wall; one of them—the larger—is called "The Beautiful Gate." It is a narrow gap in a mass of rock more than one hundred feet high. As you enter, you look over a valley fenced in on all sides with white sandstone; and, nearly opposite, at the top of a hill, is another smaller gateway, half-concealed by a huge rock about the size of an ordinary cottage. This mass of rock is so balanced on the edge of the slope that it looks as if it might jump off and go thundering down the hill while you look at it. But it has hung there many centuries, and, if you should feel inclined to wait to see it go, you might have to stay a great many more centuries before the fun would begin.

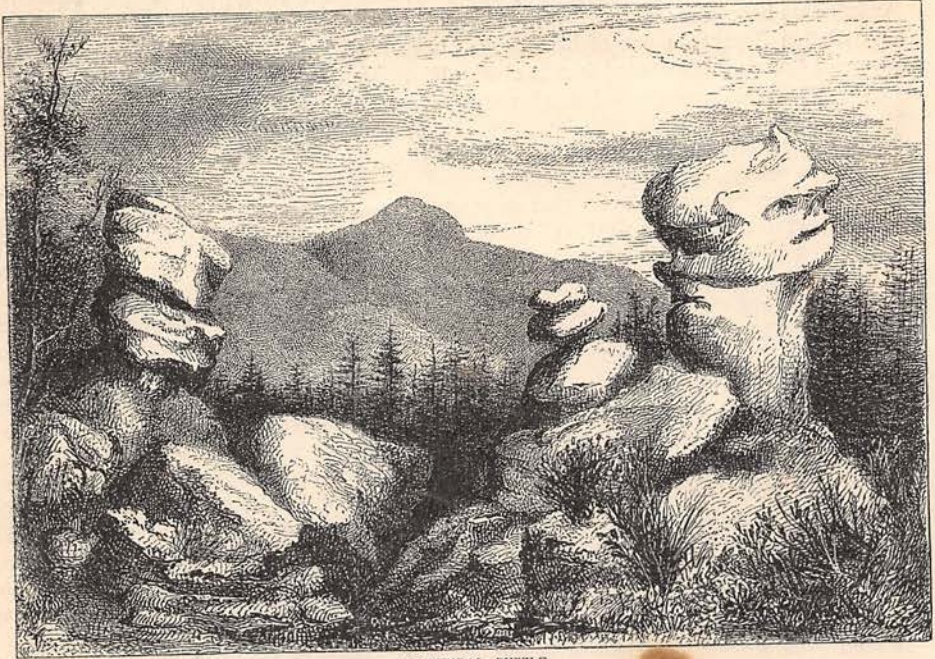
The Garden of the Gods abounds with beautiful trees and foliage, and, towering amidst this loveliness, are some of the most extraordinary, queer and fantastic shapes ever made out of rock. Ages ago, when this part of the world was in a state of terrible commotion, vast layers of rock were forced up out of the earth in all sorts of positions. Some

were vertical, some slanting, and some were criss-cross and mixed up generally. Learned men say that was the way these layers of sandstone, which once were flat, got up edgewise and in all other ways. We must take their word for it. There was nobody there to see.

Trees and shrubs, after a time, grew up around, and the disturbed earth had peace. Then came the mountain winds and the long autumn rains. The wind blew the sand against the rocks, which are so soft that you could dig holes in them with a strong jack-knife. The wearing of the sand and wind and water against these stony surfaces carved them into all sorts of wild and funny shapes. Ages and ages passed away, probably, before these grotesque sculptures looked as they do now. We can imagine how patiently the fingers of the wind must have chiseled at the stone, flinging on the water and the sand before it gave us such a picture-puzzle as this which we show you. One of the figures shown below looks like one of the queer pictures you sometimes find in odd advertisements, where a man's cap makes a face on the back of his head. Then, on the left of the same rock is another face, the bottom of the cap forming the nose. This

a truthful sketch of a real scene. These rocks are twenty-five or thirty feet high. Others in the garden are yet higher; and all are of a soft red, very like the color of old bricks. The contrast between their rich tints and the green of the foliage is most charming. Here and there among the trees rise up fantastic shapes like spires, towers and steeples. Some of the fanciful names given these are "Montezuma's Cathedral," "Cleopatra's Needle," "Washington Monument," "The Cathedral Spires," and "Needle Rock."

But, of course, the half-human-looking objects that gave a name to this curious garden are most likely to attract attention. The names by which they are known are as fantastic as the shapes themselves. One, a figure of a woman, draped and standing mournfully alone, has many names. It is called "The Mourning Bride," "The Widow," "The Old Maid," and by other titles, any one of which may happen to stick to the pathetic figure, that might be called "Lot's Wife," only that it is a pillar of stone instead of a pillar of salt. Then there is a huge water-worn boulder, that looks for all the world like a gigantic frog in the act of getting ready to jump. You get tired looking at this



A NATURAL PUZZLE.

figure might be called Mr. Facing-both-ways, after a celebrated character in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress."

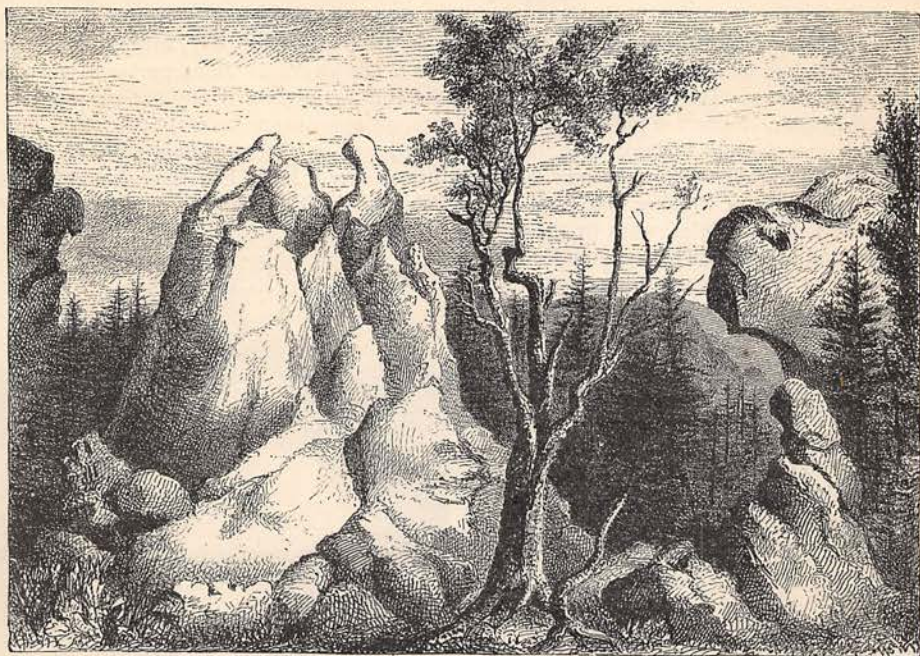
But, though this really looks like a picture-puzzle, such as you sometimes see in ST. NICHOLAS, it is

stony frog. He seems just about to leap, but he never does. He has been in that position for I don't know how many hundred years, and he has not jumped yet.

On one part of the wall, where the white sand-

stone is mixed with red, is a gigantic head of a buffalo. There it rests,—horns, ears, nostrils and all,—glowering down at you, just as if it were a

In fact, almost all of these wonders must be looked at from certain points or their particular likeness is not seen at all. Some of them are like the famous



THE NUN AND THE SEAL.

petrified mammoth buffalo's head stuck up there as a trophy, as the head and antlers of deer are sometimes hung up—trophies of the chase. Another singular group is "The Nun and the Seal." You will have no difficulty in making out this picture; and, as the seal is peering over the rock at the nun, who seems to have been at prayer, this group is sometimes called "Interrupted Meditation." If I may be allowed, I should say it might be called "The Height of Impudence." It is about fifty feet high.

This picture, however, shows you something of the general character of the wonderful place. The ground is thickly dotted with rocks, some of which take the most fantastic shapes as they peer up through the grass and bushes. One chunk of sandstone, from a little way off, looks precisely like a giant's face. The giant's arms are crossed on his tremendous stomach; a tree is growing out of his chest, and his enormous legs are stowed away in a ledge of rocks near by. You can fancy the squirrels having great larks darting in and out of his trousers-legs, if he has any. But, as you approach, the giant's nose turns into an Egyptian pyramid. What was his chin becomes a toadstool; his arms are only knobs without meaning, and his whole figure becomes a confused heap of nothingness.

"White Horse Ledge," near the White Mountains, New Hampshire. People stare and stare at the ledge across Conway Valley, utterly unable to make out the picture of the white horse. But, some day, when carelessly glancing at the rocky face, they see the figure of the horse "as plain as day," and wonder very much that they never found it before. Nevertheless, in the Garden of the Gods all of the shapes are curious and fantastic. Even if they bore no likeness to any living thing in the earth or in the waters under the earth, we should think them very wonderful.

Not far from the Garden of the Gods is Monument Park, an oval-shaped valley, fashioned like a basin. The formations are like those of the Garden in most respects, and the two groups are often included in the general title of "The Garden of the Gods." It would seem as if this name were particularly appropriate to the park. Many of the rocky shapes look precisely like immense beets, turnips or radishes, growing half out of the ground. The body of these queer vegetables is of yellowish-white sandstone, bulging out in the middle and tapering off above, where a reddish-brown layer spreads out just like the flat, leafy top of a "rutabaga" turnip. Nothing funnier than these rows of mammoth roots can be imagined. We can

easily fancy that they are growing in the vegetable garden of some Brobdignagian gentleman. And we almost look about us for the tremendous caldron that would be necessary to boil such gigantic things.

When we look very closely into the formation of these shapes, we shall see that they are composed of two kinds of stone. They have frail, slender bodies and flat heads. Some are pillars supporting a slab; others are gigantic umbrellas, or they resemble nothing but prodigious mushrooms. Here and there are pinnacles wearing flat caps, with faces underneath them. Holes, worn by the action of sand, wind and water, answer very well for eyes; and gaping seams look so much like mouths that one almost shudders to see how human and how awful they look, sitting or standing there and solemnly gazing off into space.

The explanation of this curious freak of nature is that the top layer of stone is hard and ferruginous; that is to say, it has some iron in it. This enables it to withstand the wearing of the rain and wind, which gradually carve away the softer cream-colored rock below. So, as the slow ages pass, the lower stratum wastes and wastes, leaving the flat crown high up in the air on top of the frail support beneath. Here and there you will see pillars, not quite detached from each other, holding up a table of stone. Some of them lean over against each other; they have arms and elbows quite human in appearance, and, as they are jumbled together, they seem like a party of drunken men trying to hold up a flat roof or the top of a table. Some of these needle-spires are so frail that one is afraid to go very near them, lest their top-heavy roofs shall come rattling down while one is underneath. But they seem to be perfectly balanced, and, like the rocks in the Garden of the Gods, though they look as if they were just ready to fall, they somehow manage to stay. There they have stuck for we don't know how many centuries; and there they will be found, no doubt, long after this generation of boys and girls has passed away.

The artist drew these interesting pictures of the Garden of the Gods for the readers of ST. NICHOLAS while on a visit lately to that valley of wonders; therefore they may be relied on as exactly correct. Not many of our readers may be able to go to Colorado and see these sights for themselves; but, next to the pleasure of seeing them with one's own eyes, is that of looking at portraits of the curious stone images drawn on the spot.

The Indians have many traditions about these singular rock shapes; and it is not at all surprising that they were afraid to go into the enchanted garden. We can imagine that an ignorant and superstitious people would fancy that these huge images,

which look so much like heathen gods, were terrible creatures. Even white people, looking into the garden in a half-cloudy night, might feel rather shaky about the knees. The strange figures, seen by the misty light, are ghostly and uncanny. If they look human by day, much more must they when the darkness hides part and reveals part. You all know how a familiar object puts on a strange appearance by night; a pump becomes a giant, and a pile of barrels with an old carpet thrown over it looks like some kind of a monster. What would it be, do you suppose, to play hide-



A FAMILY GROUP.

and-seek by moonlight in the Garden of the Gods? It is not surprising, therefore, that people have a tradition that this valley was once filled with goblins who were left here to guard a precious treasure; how a certain magician came at last, with a powerful spell, and turned all the watchers into stone, and then carried off the treasure in triumph. And the legend goes on to say that, when the lucky magician got off with his plunder, he locked it in a cavern high up among the mountains, and that the genius of the place, missing his treasure, traced it to the hiding-place and thundered away in vain at the door of the cavern. It is even said that the gods, whose garden, filled with stone goblins, has

thus been robbed, come up into the mountains every once in awhile and bang away savagely at the magician's storehouse.

But, as we said before, these are what may be called "faded fancies of an elder world," and we need not believe in them. What people might think the hammering of the gods up in the mountains is probably only the thunder booming among the peaks. And it must be confessed that the powers of the air do get into the mountain storehouse; for, after the hammering and booming have been kept up some time, the caverns in the

clouds are unlocked and down come the floods of water that have been stored there for use.

So, as the years roll on, the rains come in sheets and jets. Whirled by the winds, they leap from the clouds and mountains. They strike the rocks in the valleys below, and, like tools, they cut and carve, century after century, shaping strange forms and fantastic faces. Thus, while men live and die, they sculpture the statues in the Garden of the Gods, very much as our characters are formed by circumstances and influences of which the rest of the world takes little heed.

PRUE'S DOLLS.

BY MARY N. PRESCOTT.

THERE was once a little girl who did not own a doll—who never had owned one. Just think, what a condition for a modern child! At the same time, there were six or eight dolls that she called her own, that were hers to all intents and purposes, except that she had never held them in her arms, nor undressed them and tucked them into bed—the tasks so precious to little girls. Some of the dolls which Prue called her own were magnificent creatures, with cheeks as rosy as the dawn, with long curling wigs, and eyelids that fell bewitchingly over bright eyes; dolls with trained dresses and overskirts, with necklaces and earrings and fans—perfect dolls of the period; and there were others, little tots of things in china, which Prue longed to put into swaddling clothes and rock in the hollow of her hand.

You will laugh, perhaps, to know that she really played dolls with these, and had a name and history for each, though her only acquaintance with them was through the windows of the various toy-shops in the place where she lived.

Prue was a little chore-girl in a boarding-house; her business was to scour knives, wash dishes, answer the bell, and run of errands in hot or sloppy weather. She slept in a little dark closet, where she never saw the sun rise, though she was up early enough, indeed. She had her bread and butter and clothes for her services, and probably that was quite as much as she earned; naturally, there was nothing about dolls, and the things in which little folks delight, in the agreement. Nevertheless, Prue's real life was passed with her treas-

ures, though the window-panes between herself and them sometimes distorted their lovely features. She never dreamed of complaining, however. Every spare moment was devoted to them, no matter what the weather. Sometimes she was on the spot before the shopkeeper had taken down his blinds, and I regret to say that she often met with a rebuke for lingering on her errands.

Sometimes she would speak about her dolls to her few companions.

"And who gave *you* a doll?" they would ask.

"Nobody. I got them my own self. I found them; nobody else has ever played with them before."

"Let 's see 'em!" demanded her listeners.

And then she would lead her playmates to the toy-shops and point out her favorites, and generously offer them the rest, and tell them that her Curlylocks was always looking out the window, because she had a husband at sea. One little girl got angry at what she believed to be a trick of Prue's to impose upon her.

"They are n't yours one bit," she cried out; "they all belong to the man inside, and it's just like stealing to play with other folks' dolls. So now!"

"No, it can't be stealing," Prue answered, thoughtfully. "I never touched one of them; I never took one away."

"But you would if you could!" said the other. "You covet 'em, and that 's wicked,—the commandment says so."

"No," persisted Prue, "I would n't take one if