

## THE FOWLER AND THE SNIPE.—A FABLE.

JOHN G. SAXE.

A Fowler once, whose cruel sport  
Was killing birds of every sort,  
While entering the wood, one day,  
Saw an old Snipe, beside the way,  
Who cried, "O Fowler! prithee spare  
My children!—hear a mother's prayer!  
So may the gods attend your own!"  
Moved by her supplicating tone,  
The Fowler answered, "Be it so;  
But, tell me, how am I to know  
Which ones are yours?—pray, name a test,  
That I may know them from the rest."  
"Ah," said the mother, in her pride,  
"You'd find it easy to decide  
By this—a never-failing sign—  
There's none so beautiful as mine!"  
Alas the day! Ere set of sun  
The Fowler, with his deadly gun,  
Had proved her warning all in vain;  
A score of Snipes the man had slain,  
Which, when she saw, the parent-bird  
Bewailed with many a woful word:  
"Poor little darlings! how they bleed!  
How could you do the dreadful deed?"  
"What! are they yours?" the Fowler cried;  
"Despite the test which I applied!  
They are—as I can truly say—  
The ugliest birds I've seen to-day!"  
"Ah!" sighed the Snipe, "be mine the blame;  
Our eyes are clearly not the same;  
And you and I alike forgot  
That to a mother's partial thought,  
Her progeny are ever fair  
And beautiful beyond compare!"

(For Baldwin's Monthly.)

## A VISIT TO THE "POOL" SACO, MAINE.

ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

People are apt to think that all the spirit of adventure, all enterprise of interest pertaining to New England, is concentrated around the colony of Plymouth Rock. August as are the associations connected therewith, they scarcely exceed, in historic grandeur, those that grace the annals of the State of Maine, which well merits the motto by which she is designated—Dirigo (I lead.)

So early as 1605 Sir Ferdinand Gorges sent a colony hither, which wintered at the mouth of the Kennebec River, then, and earlier than this, known to the Gilbert and Raleigh brothers as Sagadahoc. Along this iron-bound magnificent coast, landing also, and doubtless communicating with the aborigines, sailed the unfortunate Hendrick Hudson, thereafter to be abandoned with his son in that great northern bay still bearing his name. Here also the undaunted Captain John Smith coasted along, and that pious and chivalric gentleman, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, explored these waters, till worn out by the cowardice of his mutinous crew he turned the prow of the little frigate homeward, only to perish beneath the waves. Brave, beautiful was the heart that throbb'd its last beat that 9th of September, 1583, uttering the memorable words of cheer, "We are as near heaven by sea as by land," and at that moment the lights went out on board the little Squirrel, of no more than ten tons burden, which had done such good service to gallant hearts, for she went down with all her noble freightage, chief of whom was the noble Sir Humphrey Gilbert.

Here also Sir Richard Vines, the friend of the gallant Raleigh, came in 1616, and planted him a garden, the remains of which has given the name to "Old Orchard Beech," because of some plum and cherry trees, twisted and moss-grown with age, which still are to be found at the head of the Pool of which I am to speak. All these inlets along the coast of Maine were examined by these brave old navigators of Elizabeth's Court, who sought in vain for that northwest passage which was to open to them the wealth of the Indies. Actuated, as undoubtedly they were, by the lust of power and the hope of gain, still we do not recoil from their adventures as we do from those of the Spaniard of the same period, whose rapacity was only exceeded by his thirst for blood.

The fine, capacious thinkers of the Elizabethan age threw a glamour of romance over the humblest adventure, by their loyalty to queen and country, and by the mingling of the graces of the Court with the hardihood of the sailor. Elizabeth had a queenly love for show

and magnificence, which affected the manners of those around her, but true queen and true mother to her people, she never oppressed them by taxation, that she might indulge her taste for luxury, on the contrary she encouraged those who sought for empire and wealth in foreign lands, by exploring them and enlarging the fields of commerce, and thus replenishing naturally her exchequer; hence the fisheries of New Foundland and the tobacco of Virginia, homely as they might seem compared with the pearls of Panama and the gold of Mexico, became in time sources of national wealth inexhaustible. Her merchants were "princes" in the splendor of their conceptions, no less than in their enterprise and forecast.

Mr. Combe, the phrenologist, called Maine the "Scotland of America;" and in no other State in the Union can be found scenery so grand and picturesque, or a coast so wildly magnificent. The country at the mouth of Saco River (pronounced *Sawco*) is peculiarly rich in all the elements of vastness as well as beauty; the long stretch of ocean view, studded here and there with solitary islands; the high bluffs, stepping seaward; the white, bald heads of granite peaks, lifting themselves above the green pines that line the coast, attract the eye of even the casual observer, while the gorges of the verdant valleys give place to lovely grottoes and sparkling cascades, fit abodes for classical nymph or German Undine. The air is wonderfully clear and salubrious, as it is apt to be in granite regions, amid the movements of river cataracts and ocean breezes. I give a sonnet suggested by all this:

Afar in this deep dell, by breezy shore,  
So resteth all things from the Summer heat,  
That I the Naiads hear, with limber feet,  
Let fall the crystal as in days of yore.  
Old sea-gods lean upon the rocks, and pour  
The waves adown; the light-winged zephyrs greet  
The tittering Nymphs, that from their green retreat,  
With pearl-shells play and listen to their roar;  
Eudymion, pale, on yonder headland sleeps,  
Where Dian's veil floats out in silver sheen,  
And large-eyed Pan through the shadow peeps,  
Where gleams an ivory arm the leaves between,  
Nor stirs a restless hoof, lest his big heart,  
O'erfilled with love, should slumbering echo start.

The Pool, as it is called, is a beautiful inland sheet of water, cut off from the ocean by a long reef of sand. It has but one entrance, a sort of Pillars of Hercules, from whence the Pool spreads itself out a Mediterranean in miniature. The sea outside may be turbulent with wind and wave, but the Pool is peaceful as an inland lake. Sea-birds innumerable disport amid its waves, or stalk in stilted majesty, solemn and apart, upon the reefs of sand. The weirdness of solitude comes over us, standing at the head of the Pool; looking seaward is the ever heaving, ever changing aspect of the ocean; looking landward is a tangled mass of forest beauty and sparkling cascade. Though Nature has here long since asserted her supremacy, yet faint vestiges of culture may yet be detected. Here at the head of the Pool once lived Sir Richard Vines, a gentleman with chivalric associations, most probably emigrating from the west coast of England, from whence came the Grenvilles, the Raleighs, Gilberts, and Hawkins, and other splendid navigators who made the times of Elizabeth so famous. Hard by the Pool is the town of Biddeford, twin sister with Saco, the latter being an Indian name, the former English, brought over by the followers of Sir Richard Vines.

I find in Charles Kingsley's prose epic of "Amyas Leigh," that he calls the upper harbor of Biddeford, Devonshire, England, the Pool, and without any doubt this is the origin of the name attached to this beautiful harbor near the mouth of Saco River, as it was most natural that persons would name their new homes in affectionate remembrance of that which they should see no more.

There is some beautiful superstition connected with the Pool, and I had thought the name was borrowed from the Pool of Bethesda—angel-troubled. I have never been able to ascertain the kind of legend associated with the Pool, but the fact that for more than two hundred years it has been a matter of faith with the people, attaches to it some interest better than mere curiosity. There is a dim association, it may be, with the ancient Pool of Bethesda, for the belief is that on a certain day of the year there is healing in its waters.

I regret that I am not positive as to the day of the month, but my impression is that it is the 21st of June, the longest day in the year. On that day hundreds through the thoroughfares leading to the Pool: they come in immense covered wagons, in carriages, on horseback and afoot, bringing with them the sickly, the infirm, any attached to their household suffering from any ill that flesh is heir to. Tenderly they are brought to the verge of the Pool and plunged into its healing waters. Miraculous cures are attested, and the faith that works miracles and removes mountains has taken strong hold upon the minds of the people. Long may it be before skepticism shall blot out a belief so wholesome in kind.

I am told that the throng of visitors to Old Orchard Beech has greatly diminished the yearly number of pilgrims who once came in crowds to avail themselves of the hidden balm concealed in the waves of the Pool, and that simple country folk shrink from the irony or ridicule of pretentious strangers, who, having little faith themselves, condemn its exercise in others. That the name of Pool was brought over from Devonshire, and may be traced back to its old once opulent maritime town of Biddeford, seems to be without a doubt.

THE grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for.

LIFE FAIRLY ESTIMATED.—Sometime during the last years of his life, the late John Quincy Adams wrote beneath a portrait of himself, some lines, of which the following is one: "An age of sorrow, and a life of storm." These words were not written by a wretched outcast, dying in the poor-house, but by one of the favorites of external fortune. The late Harrison Gray Otis, in a public speech of his later days, said: "As I look back over my existence I see a pathway of mingled roses and thorns; but the roses have long since disappeared, and the thorns only remain." This was the confession of a man who had everything that almost every human being of our generation thinks worth having, and is striving distractedly to get: health, strength, beauty, grace, eloquence, culture, popularity, eight hundred thousand dollars, a palace on the most exquisite spot in Boston, a United States Senatorship.

THE UNION-JACK.—The term "union-jack" is one which is partly of obvious signification, and in part somewhat perplexing. The "union" between England and Scotland, to which the flag owed its origin, evidently supplied the first half of the compound title borne by the flag itself. But the expression "jack" involves some difficulty. Several solutions of this difficulty have been submitted, but with a single exception only, they are by far too subtle to be considered satisfactory. A learned and judicious antiquary has recorded it as his opinion, that the flag of the union received the title of "union-jack" from the circumstances of the union between England and Scotland, having taken place in the reign of King James, by whose command the new flag was introduced. The name of the king in French, "Jaques," would have been certainly used in heraldic documents; the union flag of King "Jaques" would very naturally be called after the name of its royal author, *Jaques, union, or Union Jaques*, and so by a simple process, we arrive at *union-jack*.

LACK OF SOCIABILITY.—American home life is too gloomy. We take no time to entertain and amuse each other. Not seldom does it happen in some houses that a meal progresses in dead silence, except when it is necessary to speak about the dishes, or to help some one to potatoes or pie. This is almost as bad as rudeness or quarreling. There ought to be bright, genial, sparkling talk, in which the children should be allowed to join. There is no sense whatever in compelling an intelligent child to sit like a deaf mute at the table; though, on the other hand children should not monopolize the conversation, nor be allowed to ask strings of irrelevant questions. When the family meet at table, there should be free and unrestrained intercourse between its members. Every one should prepare for the table by some simple process of dressing. The hair should be smooth, the hands washed, the general appearance of each individual inviting, and each should try to be as agreeable as possible to every other. It is quite wonderful how a little freshening of the toilet freshens up the soul as well as the face. So far, we ought all to be luxurious. If the mother sees to it that her school-boy sons always come to dinner with clean hands and nails, and that her daughters never dawdle into the room in tawdry finery or soiled wrappers, she will do more than she dreams of in the work of making them grow into real gentlemen and ladies. The table itself ought to have a festive look. Flowers have a special grace on the breakfast board. A dish of fruit, nicely arranged, pleases the eye as well as the palate at dinner. Clean linen, even though coarse, and whole plates and cups, with bright glass and silver, help appetite along. A few well-cooked dishes, however plain, nicely served, will promote health and happiness better than a great variety ruined in the preparation.