

## WHEN BABY PRAYS.

When baby by her crib at night  
Enfolds her little hands to pray—  
Dear little hands so soft and white—  
I listen while the sweet lips say:  
"Now, I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep."  
And, listening, years are backward rolled—  
And the past is as a tale untold.

And, standing by my mother mild—  
Dear mother, with your hair of white—  
Again I am a little child.  
And say again, as yesternight:  
"If I should die before I wake,  
I pray the Lord my soul to take."  
And half it seems in baby's plea  
The olden faith comes back to me.

Ah, me! I know my faith is but  
A phantom of the long ago;  
Yet, when my babe, with eyelids shut,  
Repeats the words I used to know;  
"Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,"  
Some way, some way, the world-doubts  
Flee;  
The old, sweet faith comes back to me.

It comes again, the old, sweet faith;  
It is my own, it is my own.  
And doubt has fled, the gloomy wraith,  
Before a baby's words alone:  
"If I should die before I wake,  
I pray the Lord my soul to take."  
So, for baby's lisping plea,  
My thanks, dear Lord, my thanks to Thee.  
—A. J. Waterhouse.

## LAST LINKS WITH SCOTT.

Some of the Reminiscences of Veteran George Croal.

There still lives in what Lord Rosebery, speaking in the Scottish capital, called "this Edinburgh so sacred and beautiful to us," one who saw Sir Walter Scott on the evening he declared himself to be the author of the Waverley Novels, no longer the Great Unknown. This veteran, George Croal, "distinctly remembers the storm of enthusiasm aroused on that occasion. He was also at Abbotsford two years later on professional duty, and had the pleasure of playing several Scotch airs on the piano forte, to the evident gratification of his august patron. Both of these events are recalled with pride by Mr. Croal, whose recollections might be thought unique among those now living in the year of grace 1901."

However, they are not unique, for another writer, after referring to the Edinburgh citizen who was present at the Theatrical Fund Banquet in 1827, states: "In Bowden, in Devonshire, during the summer months, I conversed with four individuals who had seen Sir Walter. One of them, Miss Janet Roxburgh, had attained the great age of 100 years, and was still able to speak intelligently about the past. Another woman living at the village remembered as a girl seeing Sir Walter 'hurrying across the village green to visit a namesake, Janet Scott, with whom he delighted to have a chat, as she had a great wealth of folklore stories, and from her Sir Walter gleaned much of the local Scotch dialect. Charles Newlands remembered being at the laying of the foundation stone of the bridge over the Tweed just at the junction where the Ettrick joins it, when Sir Walter performed the ceremony. Another correspondent, alive in 1900, Aaron Forrester, gunsmith, and his sister, Miss Forrester, talked with Sir Walter, and Thomas Small, inspector of poor, saw him marching in the Circuit Court procession at the county town."

The Berwickshire News, in the autumn of 1900, reported that "there lives at Hawick one James Rutherford, an octogenarian, who still pursues his trade of tailor, and while sitting cross-legged at work, speaks graphically of the people and Old World customs he saw in days of yore. He is an Earlston man by birth, and served his apprenticeship with the clothier who supplied the undertaker with the sable suit he wore at Sir Walter's funeral that dark September day in 1832, when the kindest of Scots was laid to rest in hushful Dryburgh. Rutherford, one Hogmanay, went 'guisarding.' The youthful 'guisers' called at Abbotsford, and there sang 'Scots wha hae' so enthusiastically that Sir Walter rewarded them with a crown. Rutherford oftentimes watched the well-beloved Shirra, axe in hand, trimming the glades in his new plantations, and chronicles 'he was aye kindly in his manner, and fond of children and animals.' — Eve Blantyre Simpson, in Chambers' Journal.

## LIGHTNING FLASHES.

HOW THEY ARE EVOLVED AND THE ENERGY THEY POSSESS.

Inhabitants of Compactly Built Cities Have Little Cause to Fear These Mysterious and Destructive Balls From the Clouds.

Without doubt lightning was the first electrical phenomenon that was observed by human beings. To this day it remains the least known and least understood of natural electrical manifestations except, perhaps, the aurora.

There is a vast deal of popular misconception concerning the danger of lightning and the nature of it. The lightning flash is a discharge from a cloud at a high potential with reference to the earth. When the atmosphere is charged with water vapor and some eddy or current in its colder upper strata is deflected downward, causing condensation, exceedingly minute drops of water are formed, each bearing an electrical charge. The consoli-

dation of these into larger drops results in a very great increment of the potential of the charge since the capacity of the drop varies with its diameter and the volume of the drop with the cube of the diameter.

The consequence of this is that it takes, for example, eight drops consolidated to make one of twice the diameter of the constituent drops, and the charge on the surface of the consolidated drop will be four times as great as that upon the surfaces of its elements. In this way, as the small water particles unite to form drops which fall as rain, the potential of the charge they carry increases until it attains enormous values, and the lightning flash leaps to the earth, which may be regarded simply as a body of very great electrostatic capacity. The discharge, which is called lightning, is apt to be more or less destructive, although the energy of an individual flash is perhaps not very great. Often the conditions are such that the discharge takes on an oscillating character, producing violent surges of current. No very accurate measurements have been made upon the current involved, but it is taken to be of the order of 1,000 to 5,000 amperes. The electro motive force necessary to cause a flash a mile long is probably several million volts, and of course the power of the flash measured in watts is very great, but its duration is correspondingly short.

Protection of property and life from lightning flashes has been a subject that has entrained the attention of natural philosophers since Franklin sent up his historic kite. The net result of more than a century of attempt to secure protection has been the lightning rod in its more or less inefficient forms and the discovery that buildings of modern construction, having metallic roofs and often metallic frames as well, are practically immune from attack by lightning.

The total number of deaths due to lightning in any given summer is comparatively very small—in the ratio of about one to each 200,000 population in the United States. In cities the destructive influence of lightning is exceedingly small, although occasional fires are caused by it, especially where gas pipes abound.

Protection of electric circuits from lightning has been an interesting subject for research for a number of years, and several highly efficient devices have been constructed for this purpose. Today lightning is little feared by the station superintendent and should be very little feared by any one. The time honored rule that it is wisest to keep in the open and not seek the shelter of trees is one which common prudence dictates. Recourse to the feather bed of our ancestors, however, is no longer necessary except to quiet the nerves of timorous persons, while the ancient superstitions regarding handling steel instruments and sitting in drafts may be utterly disregarded. A modern building in a city is as nearly absolutely lightning proof and those in it are as nearly absolutely protected from lightning as is possible.

## Their Bread Bills.

France eats bread to the value of 77 millions a year. Great Britain content themselves with 48 millions. Russia's wheat bill is 97 millions.

## British Newspapers.

All British newspapers combined had a circulation of 60,000 in 1801. The present circulation is estimated at 34 millions a day.

## New Children's Infirmary.

A new Children's Infirmary is proposed for Liverpool which will cost over £50,000. The present institution is condemned.

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