## Junior Theme.

The warm gleam of an April sun shone bright from a vivid blue sky. Now and then, little, white, fleecy clouds floated over the sun and cast a shadow for a moment.

John Upham was plowing a ten acre field with two old mules and his neighbor's plow. One of the mules was a dirty white and held his ears down over his eyes. The fresh smelling earth clung to John's heavy boots as he stumbled along the rough ground after the plow, and the warm sun shone on his back. He stopped at the end of the furrow, and, straightening himself, took off his big straw hat and drew his shirt sleeves across his forehead and brushed back his damp gray hair. His faded blue coat was torn at the neck and hung down on one side. He leaned against the plow handle and looked about him, breathing the fresh air in deeply. Far away on each hand stretched rich pastures and patches of dark earth made ready for planting. Directly below was a more advanced line of hanging woods divided by fields of furrowed crops. Beyond this was the valley where the woods grew thicker as if they had rolled down and hurried together from the patches left smooth on the slope. Through the valley, John could see the brook running, full almost to over-flowing with late rains, and overhung by low stooping willows before it reached the woods.

John looked uneasily at two small boys who trudged across the field to the woods with fishing rods over their shoulders. Then he turned around and looked up at the house, a quarter of a mile away. The door was open and he could see his wife standing on the back porch with a broom in her hand. He knew that she was cleaning house that day, and had his sister Belinda Ann there to help her. From where he was he could see the red and white checked apron she wore and the buff neckerchief over her broad chest. He could not see but he knew perfectly well just how firmly her thin lips were set and how very smooth her gray hair was brushed back into a tight little knot behind, and the two deep lines between her eyebrows which were always so plain when she was working hard. He wondered longingly to himself if the two boys who had just passed would catch many fish. He wouldn't mind a little fishing himself. When he was a boy he had had the best luck of any one in the village. He believed he'd like to try his hand at it again some day. Today, for instance, was a perfect day for fishing. It would be clouded over beautifully by afternoon and would rain tomorrow. Yes, and the field not seeded; not even half plowed. He cast a scared took toward the house and started his mules forward quickly. Back and forth he went across the field with the sun on his back and then on his face and the damp earth clogging his boots. He gave a wistful thought to the brooks running through the young shadows of the spring woods, and to the still trout pools and glanced timidly at the sun which was covered more and more by the thickly collecting clouds. Through the pale green of the willows, he could see the silver gleam of the water and he turned his mule's heads toward the barn.

"I'll water 'em," he said softly. "They need waterin," and he unhitched them from the plow. As he went he saw Abel Jones in a field away to the right, busily planting grain. John turned his head resolutely away and went on to the red barn.

He tied the mules securely in the shed by some hay, and unhooked from its cob-webby corner in the hay-loft, an old, much worn, fishing pole. He examined it anxiously and then, carrying it straight in front of him, walked rigidly back to the field. Once he glanced furtively back toward the house but saw no one and went on a little faster, even breaking into a short run. As he passed over the freshly-plowed earth, he gathered long fishing worms and put them into an old tobacco pouch which he found in his pocket. He leaped fences like a boy and hurried over the rough ploughed fields and pastures, on to the woods. He knew exactly where to go and he thought to himself that it was very unlikely that any of the boys in the neighborhood had ever come across the place he knew of.

Inside the wood everything was quiet and full of Spring. Many little grass flowers, violets and lilies were in bloom and the lichens clung thick to the tree trunks.

John Upham flung himself on the mossy bank between two great gnarled oaks and dropped his line quietly out into the dark pool in front of him. He sat up very straight, watching it for a moment. Then he fastened the handle securely to a low limb and clasping his hands beneath his head, he lay at full length on the bank with the fitful gleam of sunlight falling through the leaves; he pulled his great hat over his forehead, and drowsily watched the quick-darting water-flies and the slowly moving bait with half-closed eyes.

* * * * * * *

"I'm glad John's takin' hold so and gettin' his plowin' done so good and early this spring," Mrs. Upham said to Belinda Ann. "Joneses and Prescotts ain't more'n got their's done and I just made John pitch right in. He's workin' real hard at it. He's behind the ridge now, I guess for I ain't seen him fur an hour. Might be such a thing that he got it half planted this afternoon though I wouldn't be surprised if it rained before night," and she scrubbed vigorously at the kitchen floor.

HARRIET COOKE.

### THE FATHERLAND.

Where is the true man's fatherland?
Is it where he by chance is born?
Doth not the yearning spirit scorn
In such scant borders to be spanned?
Oh, yes! his fatherland must be
As the blue heaven wide and free!

Is it alone where freedom is,
Where God is God and man is man?
Doth he not claim a brother span
For the soul's love of home than this?
O, yes! his fatherland must be
As the blue heaven wide and free!

Where'er a human heart doth wear
Joy's myrtle-wreath or sorrow's gyves,
Where'er a human spirit strives
After a life more true and fair,
There is the true man's birth-place grand,
His is a world-wide fatherland.

Where'er a single slave doth pine,
Wher'er one man may help another—
Thank God for such a birthright, brother—
That spot of earth is thine and mine!
There is the true man's birth-place grand,
His is a world wide fatherland.

—Lowell.

"Oh, its all very well for you girls to talk," said Archie. "We fellows are the ones who will have to suffer in war. You won't run any risks."

"Oh, won't we," said Polly. "How about when we go in bathing next summer with the harbors full of torpedoes and mines? What do you suppose would happen if we stepped on one?"—Harper's Bazar.

Republican—How long do you think that this war will last?

Leader—Well, about half a century, I suppose.

Republican—Fifty years! Why, that's absurd!

Leader—O, I don't know! The civil war lasted us for thirty-seven years, didn't it?

The secret of success in nearly everything lies in the material and workmanship. Fine marble, chiseled by a poor sculptor would be a failure, poor material used by a fine workman would not live. It is the excellent material which goes into the SHAW PIANO which makes it so durable. It is the fine and most scientific workmanship that gives it its rich, refined appearance, most beautiful tone and responsive touch. No apprentice can get a position in the Shaw Piano Co.'s factory.

MATTHEWS PIANO CO.

Western Representatives, 130 So 13th st.


### PAREPA ROSA.

Many years ago a poor widowed woman, leading a hard life of unending labor, was called on to part with the one thing dear to her—her only child. Mother and daughter had toiled together for fifteen years, and the only bit of sunshine falling into their dark lives was that shed by their loving companionship. But the girl had always been weakly. Under the heart-broken mother's eyes she faded and wasted away with consumption, and at last the day came when the wan face failed to answer with a smile the anxious, tear-blinded eyes of the mother. The poor young creature was dead.

For many months the pair had been supported by the elderly woman's sewing, and it was in the character of employer I had become acquainted with Mrs. C. and her story. By an occasional visit to the awful heights of an East Side tenement, where they lived, by a few books and some comforting words I had won the love of the dying girl. Her grateful thoughts turned in her last hours to the small number of friends she possessed, and she besought her mother to notify me of the day of the funeral and ask me to attend.

That summons reached me upon one of the wildest days preceeding Christmas. A sleet that was not rain, and a rain that was not a snow, came pelting from all points of the compass. I piled the glowing grates; I drew closer the curtains and shut out the gloom of the December afternoon; I turned on the gas and sat down, devoutly thankful that I had cut all connection with the wicked weather, when an instalment of it burst in upon me in the shape of Parepa Rosa. She was Euphrosyne Parepa at that time, and the operatic idol of the city.

And even as we congratulated ourselves on the prospect of a delightful day together, here came the summons for me to go to the humble funeral of the poor sewing woman's daughter. I turned the little tear blotted note over and groaned.

"This is terrible," said I. "It's just the one errand that could take me out today, but I must go."

And then I told Parepa the circumstances; and speculated on the length of time I should be gone, and suggested means of amusement in my absence.

*"But I shall go with you,"* said the great-hearted creature.

So she re wound her throat with the long white comforter, pulled on her worsted gloves, and off in the storm we went together. We climbed flight after flight of narrow, dark stairs to the top floor, where the widow dwelt in a miserable little room not more than a dozen feet square. The canvas back hearse, peculiar to the twenty five dollar funeral, stood in the street below, and the awful cherry stained box, with its ruffle of glazed white muslin, stood on uncovered trestles in the centre of the room above.

There was a mother, speechless in her grief, beside that box, a group of hard-working, kindly-hearted neighbors sitting about. It was useless to say the poor woman was prepared for the inevitable end; it was cold comfort to speak to her of the daughter's release from pain and suffering. The bereft creature, in utter loneliness, was thinking of herself and the awful future, of the approaching moment when that box and its precious burden would be taken away and leave her wholly alone. So, therefore, with a sympathizing grasp of the poor, worn, bony hand, we sat silently down to "attend the funeral."

Then the minister came in—a dry man, with nothing of the tenderness of his holy calling. Icier than the day, colder than the storm, he rattled through some selected sentences from the Bible, and offered a set form of condolence to the broken-hearted mother. Then he hurriedly departed, while a hush fell on everybody gathered in the little room. Not one word had been uttered of consolation, of solemn import, or befitting the occasion. It was the emptiest, hollowest, most unsatisfactory moment I ever remember. Then Parepa arose, her cloak falling about her noble figure like mourning drapery. She stood beside that miserable cherry-stained box. She looked a moment on the wasted, ashy face, upturned toward her from within it. She laid her soft, white hand on the forehead of the dead girl, and lifted up her matchless voice in the beautiful melody—

"Angels ever bright and fair,
Take, oh take her to thy care."

The noble voice swelled toward heaven, and if ever the choirs of paradise paused to listen to earth's music, it was when Parepa sang so gloriously beside that poor dead girl. No words can describe its effects on those gathered there. The sad mourner sank on her knees, and with clasped hands and streaming eyes the little band stood reverently about her.

No queen ever went to her grave accompanied by a grander ceremony. To this day Parepa's glorious tribute of song rings with solemn melody in my memory as the most impressive service I ever heard.