

St. Nicholas, Vol. 5, No. 4, February 1878 eBook

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[Illustration: *After the snow-Storm.*]

ST. NICHOLAS.

*Vol. V.
February, 1878.
No. 4.*

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THE SHEPHERD-BOY.

By Emily S. Oakey.

Little Roy led his sheep down to pasture,
And his cows, by the side of the brook;
But his cows never drank any water,
And his sheep never needed a crook.

For the pasture was gay as a garden,
And it glowed with a flowery red;
But the meadows had never a grass-blade,
And the brooklet—it slept in its bed;

And it lay without sparkle or murmur,
Nor reflected the blue of the skies.
But the music was made by the shepherd,
And the sparkle was all in his eyes.



Oh, he sang like a bird in the summer!
And, if sometimes you fancied a bleat,
That, too, was the voice of the shepherd,
And not of the lambs at his feet.

And the glossy brown cows were so gentle
That they moved at the touch of his hand
O'er the wonderful rosy-red meadow,
And they stood at his word of command.

So he led all his sheep to the pasture,
And his cows, by the side of the brook;
Though it rained, yet the rain never patter'd
O'er the beautiful way that they took.

And it wasn't in Fairy-land either,
But a house in a commonplace town,
Where Roy as he looked from the window
Saw the silvery drops trickle down.

For his pasture was only a table,
With its cover so flowery fair,
And his brooklet was just a green ribbon
That his sister had lost from her hair.

And his cows they were glossy horse-chestnuts,
That had grown on his grandfather's tree;
And his sheep they were snowy-white pebbles
He had brought from the shore by the sea.

And at length, when the shepherd was weary,
And had taken his milk and his bread,
And his mother had kissed him and tucked him,
And had bid him "good-night" in his bed,

Then there enter'd his big brother Walter,
While the shepherd was soundly asleep,
And he cut up the cows into baskets,
And to jack-stones turned all of the sheep.



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THE RAVENS AND THE ANGELS.

(A Story of the Middle Ages.)

By the author of "Chronicles of the SCHOENBERG-Cotta family."

CHAPTER III.

The next day, Gottlieb began his training among the other choristers.

It was not easy.

The choir-master showed his appreciation of his raw treasure by straining every nerve to make it as perfect as possible; and therefore he found more fault with Gottlieb than with any one else.

The other boys might, he could not but observe, sing carelessly enough, so that the general harmony was pretty good; but every note of his seemed as if it were a solo which the master's ear never missed, and not the slightest mistake was allowed to pass.

The other choristers understood very well what this meant, and some of them were not a little jealous of the new favorite, as they called him. But to little Gottlieb it seemed hard and strange. He was always straining to do his very best, and yet he never seemed to satisfy. The better he did, the better the master wanted him to do, until he grew almost hopeless.

He would not, for the world, complain to his mother; but on the third evening she observed that he looked very sad and weary, and seemed scarcely to have spirits to play with Lenichen.

She knew it is of little use to ask little children what ails them, because so often their trouble is that they do not know. Some little delicate string within is jarred, and they know nothing of it, and think the whole world is out of tune. So she quietly put Lenichen to bed, and after the boy had said his prayers as usual at her knee, she laid her hand on his head, and caressingly stroked his fair curls, and then she lifted up his face to hers and kissed the little troubled brow and quivering lips.

"Dear little golden mouth!" she said, fondly, "that earns bread, and sleep, for the little sister and for me! I heard the sweet notes to-day, and I thanked God. And I felt as if the dear father was hearing them too, even through the songs in heaven."

The child's heart was opened, the quivering lips broke into a sob, and the face was hidden on her knee.



“It will not be for long, mother!” he said. “The master has found fault with me more than ever to-day. He made me sing passage after passage over and over, until some of the boys were quite angry, and said, afterward, they wished I and my voice were with the old hermit who houses us. Yet he never seemed pleased. He did not even say it was any better.”

“But he never gave you up, darling!” she said.

“No; he only told me to come early, alone, to-morrow, and he would give me a lesson by myself, and perhaps I should learn better.”

A twinkle of joy danced in her eyes, dimmed with so many tears.



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“Silly child!” she said, fondly, “as silly as thy poor mother herself! The master only takes trouble, and chastens and rebukes, because he thinks it is worth while, because thou art trying and learning, and art doing a little better day by day. He knows what thy best can be, and will never be content with anything but thy very best.”

“Is it that, mother? Is it indeed that?” said the boy, looking up with a sudden dawning of hope.

And a sweet dawn of promise met him in his mother’s eyes as she answered:

“It is even that, my own, for thee and for me!”

CHAPTER IV.

With a glad heart, Gottlieb dressed the next morning before Lenichen was awake, and was off to the choir-master for his lesson alone.

The new hope had inspired him, and he sang that morning to the content even of the master, as he knew, not by his praise, but by his summoning Ursula from the kitchen to listen, unable to resist his desire for the sympathy of a larger audience.

Ursula was not exactly musical, nor was she demonstrative, but she showed her satisfaction by appropriating her share of the success.

“I knew what was wanting!” she said, significantly. “The birds and the blessed angels may sing on crumbs or on the waters of Paradise; but goose and pudding are a great help to the alleluias here below.”

“The archduchess will be enraptured, and the Cistercians will be furious!” said the choir-master, equally pleased at both prospects.

But this Gottlieb did not hear, for he had availed himself of the first free moment to run home and tell his mother how things had improved.

After that, Gottlieb had no more trouble about the master. The old man’s severity became comprehensible and dear to him, and a loving liberty and confidence came into his bearing toward him, which went to the heart of the childless old man, so that dearer than the praise of the archduchess, or even the discomfiture of the Cistercians, became to him the success and welfare of the child.

But then, unknown to himself, the poor boy entered on a new chapter of temptations.



The other boys, observing the choir-master's love for him, grew jealous, and called him sometimes "the master's little angel," and sometimes "the little beggar of the hermitage" or "Dwarf Hans' darling."

He was too brave and manly a little fellow to tell his mother all these little annoyances. He would not for the world have spoiled her joy in her little "Chrysostom," her golden-mouthed laddie. But once they followed him to her door, and she heard them herself. The rude words smote her to the heart, but she only said:

"Thou art not ashamed of the hermit's house, nor of being old Hans' darling?"

"I hope, never!" said the child, with a little hesitation. "God sent him to us, and I love him. But it would be nice if dear Hans sometimes washed his face!"



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Magdalis smiled, and hit on a plan for bringing this about. With some difficulty she persuaded the old man to take his dinner every Sunday and holiday with them, and she always set an ewer of water—and a towel, relic of her old burgher life—by him, before the meal.

“We were a kind of Pharisees in our home,” she said, “and except we washed our hands, never ate bread.”

Hans growled a little, but he took the hint, for her sake and the boy’s, and gradually found the practice so pleasant on its own account, that the washing of his hands and face became a daily process.

On his patron saint’s day (St. John, February 8), Mother Magdalis went a step further, and presented him with a clean suit of clothes, very humble but neat and sound, of her own making out of old hoards. Not for holidays only, she said, but that he might change his clothes every day, after work, as her Berthold used.

“Dainty, burgher ways,” Hans called them, but he submitted, and Gottlieb was greatly comforted, and thought his old friend a long way advanced in his transformation into an angel.

So, between the sweetness of the boy’s temper and of his dear mother’s love which folded him close, the bitter was turned into sweet within him.

But Ursula, who heard the mocking of the boys with indignation, was not so wise in her consolations.

“Wicked, envious little devils!” said she. “Never thou heed them, my lamb! They would be glad enough, any of them, to be the master’s angel, or Dwarf Hans’ darling, for that matter, if they could. It is nothing but mean envy and spite, my little prince, my little wonder; never thou heed them!”

And then the enemy crept unperceived into the child’s heart.

Was he indeed a little prince and a wonder, on his platform of gifts and goodness? And were all those naughty boys far below him, in another sphere, hating him as the little devils in the mystery-plays seemed to hate and torment the saints?

Had the “raven” been sent to him, after all, as to the prophet of old, not only because he was hungry and pitied by God, but because he was good and a favorite of God?

It seemed clear he was something quite out of the common. He seemed the favorite of every one, except those few envious, wicked boys.



The great ladies of the city entreated for him to come and sing at their feasts; and all their guests stopped in the midst of their eager talk to listen to him, and they gave him sweetmeats and praised him to the skies, and they offered him wine from their silver flagons, and when he refused it, as his mother bade him, they praised him more than ever, and once the host himself, the burgomaster, emptied the silver flagon of the wine he had refused, and told him to take it home to his mother and tell her she had a child whose dutifulness was worth more than all the silver in the city.

But when he told his mother this, instead of looking delighted, as he expected, she looked grave, and almost severe, and said:



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“You only did your duty, my boy. It would have been a sin and a shame to do otherwise. And, of course, you would not for the world.”

“Certainly I would not, mother,” he said.

But he felt a little chilled. Did his mother think it was always so easy for boys to do their duty? and that every one did it?

Other people seemed to think it a very uncommon and noble thing to do one’s duty. And what, indeed, could the blessed saints do more?

So the slow poison of praise crept into the boy’s heart. And while he thought his life was being filled with light, unknown to him the shadows were deepening,—the one shadow which eclipses the sun, the terrible shadow of self.

For he could not but be conscious how, even in the cathedral, a kind of hush and silence fell around when he began to sing.

And instead of the blessed presence of God filling the holy place, and his singing in it, as of old, like a happy little bird in the sunshine, his own sweet voice seemed to fill the place, rising and falling like a tide up and down the aisles, leaping to the vaulted roof like a fountain of joy, and dropping into the hearts of the multitude like dew from heaven.

And as he went out, in his little white robe, with the choir, he felt the eyes of the people on him, and he heard a murmur of praise, and now and then words such as “That is little Gottlieb, the son of the widow Magdalis. She may well be proud of him. He has the voice and the face of an angel.”

And then, in contrast, outside in the street, from the other boys: “See how puffed up the little prince is! He cannot look at any one lower than the bishop or the burgomaster!”

So, between the chorus of praise and the other chorus of mockery, it was no wonder that poor Gottlieb felt like a being far removed from the common herd. And, necessarily, any one of the flock of Christ who feels that, cannot be happy, because if we are far away from the common flock, we cannot be near the Good Shepherd, who always keeps close to the feeblest, and seeks those that go astray.

CHAPTER V.

It was not long before the watchful eye of the mother observed a little change creeping over the boy—a little more impatience with Lenichen, a little more variableness of temper, sometimes dancing exultingly home as if he were scarcely treading the common earth, sometimes returning with a depression which made the simple work and pleasures of the home seem dull and wearisome.



So it went on until the joyful Easter-tide was drawing near. On Palm Sunday there was to be a procession of the children.

As the mother was smoothing out the golden locks which fell like sunbeams on the white vestments, she said: "It is a bright day for thee and me, my son. I shall feel as if we were all in the dear old Jerusalem itself, and my darling had gathered his palms on Olivet itself, and the very eyes of the blessed Lord himself were on thee, and His ears listening to thee crying out thy hosannas, and His dear voice speaking of thee and through thee, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me.'"



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But Gottlieb looked grave and rather troubled.

“So few seem thinking just of His listening,” he said, doubtfully. “There are the choir-master and the dean and chapter, and the other choristers, and the Cistercians, and the mothers of the other choristers, who wish them to sing best.”

She took his hand. “So there were in that old Jerusalem,” she said. “The Pharisees, who wanted to stop the children’s singing, and even the dear Disciples, who often thought they might be troublesome to the Master. But the little ones sang for Him, and He knew, and was pleased. And that is all we have to think of now.”

He kissed her, and went away with a lightened brow.

Many of the neighbors came in that afternoon to congratulate Magdalis on her boy—his face, his voice, his gentle ways.

“And then he sings with such feeling,” said one. “One sees it is in his heart.”

But in the evening Gottlieb came home very sad and desponding. For some time he said nothing, and then, with a brave effort to restrain his tears, he murmured:

“Oh, mother! I am afraid it will soon be over. I heard one of the priests say he thought they had a new chorister at the Cistercians whose voice is as good as mine. So that the archduchess may not like our choir best, after all.”

The mother said nothing for a moment, and then she said:

“Whose praise and love will the boy at the Cistercian convent sing, Gottlieb, if he has such a lovely voice?”

“God’s!—the dear Heavenly Father and the Savior!” he said, reverently.

“And you, my own? Will another little voice on earth prevent His hearing you? Do the thousands of thousands always singing to Him above prevent His hearing you? And what would the world do if the only voice worth listening to were thine? It cannot be heard beyond one church, or one street. And the good Lord has ten thousand churches, and cities full of people who want to hear.”

“But thou, mother! Thou and Lenichen, and the bread!”

“It was the raven that brought the bread,” she said, smiling; “and thou art not even a raven,—only a little child to pick up the bread the raven brought.”

He sat silent a few minutes, and then the terrible cloud of self and pride dropped off from his heart like a death-shroud, and he threw himself into her arms.



“Oh, mother, I see it all!” he said. “I am free again. I have only to sing to the blessed Lord of all, quite sure He listens, to Him alone, and to all else as just a little one of the all He loves.”

And after the evening meal, and a game with Lenichen, the boy crept out to the cathedral to say his prayers in one of the little chapels, and to thank God.

He knelt in the Lady chapel before the image of the infant Christ on the mother’s knees.

And as he knelt there, it came into his heart that all the next Week was Passion week, “the still week,” and would be silent; and the tears filled his eyes to remember how little he had enjoyed singing that day.



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“How glad the little children of Jerusalem must have been,” he thought, “that they sang to Jesus when they could. I suppose they never could again; for the next Friday He was dead. Oh, suppose He never let me sing to Him again!”

[Illustration: “*Look at me,’ the old man said.*”]

And tears and repressed sobs came fast at the thought, and he murmured aloud, thinking no one was near:

“Dear Savior, only let me sing once more here in church to you, and I will think of no one but you; not of the boys who laugh at me, nor the people who praise me, nor the Cistercians, nor the archduchess, nor even the dear choir-master, but only of you, of you, and perhaps of mother and Lenichen. I could not help that, and you would not mind it. You and they love me so much more than any one, and I love you really so much more than all besides. Only believe it, and try me once more.”

As he finished, in his earnestness, the child spoke quite loud, and from a dark corner in the shadow of a pillar suddenly arose a very old man in a black monk’s robe, with snow-white hair, and drew close to him, and laid his hand on his shoulder and said:

“Fear not, my son. I have a message for thee.”

At first, Gottlieb was much frightened, and then, when he heard the kind, tremulous old voice, and saw the lovely, tender smile on the wrinkled, pallid old face, he thought God must really have sent him an angel at last, though certainly not because he was good.

“Look around on these lofty arches, and clustered columns, and the long aisles, and the shrines of saints, and the carved wreaths of flowers and fruits, and the glorious altar! Are these wonderful to thee? Couldst thou have thought of them, or built them?”

“I could as easily have made the stars, or the forests!” said the child.

“Then look at me,” the old man said, with a gentle smile on his venerable face, “a poor worn-out old man, whom no one knows. This beautiful house was in my heart before a stone of it was reared. God put it in my heart. I planned it all. I remember this place a heap of poor cottages as small as thine, and now it is a glorious house of God. And I was what they called the master-builder. Yet no man knows me, or says, ‘Look at him!’ They look at the cathedral, God’s house; and that makes me glad in my inmost soul. I prayed that I might be nothing, and all the glory be His; and He has granted my prayer. And I am as little and as free in this house which I built as in His own forests, or under His own stars; for it is His only, as they are His. And I am nothing but His own little child, as thou art. And He has my hand and thine in His, and will not let us go.”

The child looked up, nearly certain now that it must be an angel. To have lived longer than the cathedral seemed like living when the morning stars were made, and all the angels shouted for joy.



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“Then God will let me sing here next Easter!” he said, looking confidently in the old man’s face.

“Thou shalt sing, and I shall see, and I shall hear thee, but thou wilt not hear or see me!” said the old man, taking both the dimpled hands in one of his. “And the blessed Lord will listen, as to the little children in Jerusalem of old. And we shall be His dear, happy children for evermore.”

Gottlieb went home and told his mother. And they both agreed, that if not an angel, the old man was as good as an angel, and was certainly a messenger of God.

To have been the master-builder of the cathedral of which it was Magdalis’s glory and pride that her husband had carved a few of the stones!

The master-builder of the cathedral, yet finding his joy and glory in being a little child of God!

CHAPTER VI.

The “silent week” that followed was a solemn time to the mother and the boy.

Every day, whatever time could be spared from the practice with the choir, and from helping in the little house and with his mother’s wood-carving, or from playing with Lenichen in the fields, Gottlieb spent in the silent cathedral, draped as it was in funereal black for the sacred life given up to God for man.

“How glad,” he thought again and again, “the little children of Jerusalem must have been that they sang when they could to the blessed Jesus! They little knew how soon the kind hands that blessed them would be stretched on the cross, and the kind voice that would not let their singing be stopped would be moaning ‘I thirst.’”

But he felt that he, Gottlieb, ought to have known; and if ever he was allowed to sing his hosannas in the choir again, it would feel like the face of the blessed Lord himself smiling on him, and His voice saying, “Suffer this little one to come unto me. I have forgiven him.”

He hoped also to see the master-builder again; but nevermore did the slight, aged form appear in the sunshine of the stained windows, or in the shadows of the arches he had planned.

And so the still Passion week wore on.

Until once more, the joy-bells pealed out on the blessed Easter morning.



The city was full of festivals. The rich were in their richest holiday raiment, and few of the poor were so poor as not to have some sign of festivity in their humble dress and on their frugal tables.

Mother Magdalis was surprised by finding at her bedside a new dress such as befitted a good burgher's daughter, sent secretly the night before from Ursula by Hans and Gottlieb, with a pair of enchanting new crimson shoes for little Lenichen, which all but over-balanced the little maiden with the new sense of possessing something which must be a wonder and a delight to all beholders.

The archduke and the beautiful Italian archduchess had arrived the night before, and were to go in stately procession to the cathedral. And Gottlieb was to sing in the choir, and afterward, on the Monday, to sing an Easter greeting for the archduchess at the banquet in the great town-hall.

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The mother's heart trembled with some anxiety for the child.

But the boy's was only trembling with the great longing to be allowed to sing once more his hosannas to the blessed Savior, among the children.

It was given him.

At first the eager voice trembled for joy, in the verse he had to sing alone, and the choir-master's brows were knitted with anxiety. But it cleared and steadied in a moment, and soared with a fullness and freedom none had ever heard in it before, filling the arches of the cathedral and the hearts of all.

And the beautiful archduchess bent over to see the child, and her soft, dark eyes were fixed on his face, as he sang, until they filled with tears; and, afterward, she asked who the mother of that little angel was.

But the child's eyes were fixed on nothing earthly, and his heart was listening for another voice—the voice all who listen for shall surely hear.

And it said in the heart of the child, that day: "Suffer the little one to come unto me. Go in peace. Thy sins are forgiven."

A happy, sacred evening they spent that Easter in the hermit's cell, the mother and the two children, the boy singing his best for the little nest, as before for the King of kings.

Still, a little anxiety lingered in the mother's heart about the pomp of the next day.

But she need not have feared.

When the archduchess had asked for the mother of the little chorister with the heavenly voice, the choir-master had told her what touched her much about the widowed Magdalis and her two children; and old Ursula and the master between them contrived that Mother Magdalis should be at the banquet, hidden behind the tapestry.

And when Gottlieb came close to the great lady, robed in white, with blue feathery wings, to represent a little angel, and sang her the Easter greeting, she bent down and folded him in her arms, and kissed him.

And then once more she asked for his mother, and, to Gottlieb's surprise and her own, the mother was led forward, and knelt before the archduchess.

Then the beautiful lady beamed on the mother and the child, and, taking a chain and jewel from her neck, she clasped it round the boy's neck, and said, in musical German with a foreign accent:



“Remember, this is not so much a gift as a token and sign that I will not forget thee and thy mother, and that I look to see thee and hear thee again, and to be thy friend.”

And as she smiled on him, the whole banqueting-hall—indeed, the whole world—seemed illuminated to the child.

And he said to his mother as they went home:

“Mother, surely God has sent us an angel at last. But, even for the angels, we will never forget His dear ravens. Wont old Hans be glad?”

And the mother was glad; for she knew that God who giveth grace to the lowly had indeed blessed the lad, because all his gifts and honors were transformed, as always in the lowly heart, not into pride, but into love.



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But when the boy ran eagerly to find old Hans, to show him the jewel and tell him of the princely promises, Hans was nowhere to be found; not in the hermit's house, where he was to have met them and shared their little festive meal, nor at his own stall, nor in the hut in which he slept.

Gottlieb's heart began to sink.

Never had his dear old friend failed to share in any joy of theirs before.

At length, as he was lingering about the old man's little hut, wondering, a sad, silent company came bearing slowly and tenderly a heavy burden, which at last they laid on Hans' poor straw pallet.

It was poor Hans himself, bruised and crushed and wounded in his struggles to press through the crowd to see his darling, his poor crooked limbs broken and unable to move any more.

But the face was untouched, and when they had laid him on the couch, and the languid eyes opened and rested on the beloved face of the child bending over him bathed in tears, a light came over the poor rugged features, and shone in the dark, hollow eyes, such as nothing on earth can give—a wonderful light of great, unutterable love, as they gazed into the eyes of the child, and then, looking upward, seemed to open on a vision none else could see.

“Jesus! Savior! I can do no more. Take care of him, thou thyself, Jesus, Lord!”

He said no more—no prayer for himself, only for the child.

Then the eyes grew dim, the head sank back, and with one sigh he breathed his soul away to God.

And such an awe came over the boy that he ceased to weep.

He could only follow the happy soul up to God, and say voicelessly in his heart:

“Dear Lord Jesus! I understand at last! The raven was the angel. And Thou hast let me see him for one moment as he is, as he is now with Thee, as he will be evermore!”

[Illustration]

A TRIP TO THE TEA COUNTRY.

By William M. TILESTON.



[Illustration:]

I was leaning over the tea-room table on one of the lovely spring mornings that we sometimes have in China. In front of me the large window, like that in an artist's studio, admitted the north light upon the long array of little porcelain teacups and saucers, and "musters," or square, flat boxes of tea-samples. The last new "chop" had been carefully tasted and the leaf inspected, and I was wondering whether the price asked by the tea-man would show a profit over the latest quotations from London and New York, when my speculations were disturbed by the entrance of my friend Charley, followed by Akong, well known as the most influential tea-broker in the Oopack province. Charley and Akong were fast friends, and I saw by the twinkle in the eyes of each that a premeditated plot of some kind was about being exploded upon my unsuspecting self.

But before going further, let me tell you who we all are, where we are, and what we are doing.



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Of course I am aware that it is exceedingly impolite to put oneself first, but in the present instance you must excuse it; for besides being the oldest, I occupy the position of guide, philosopher and friend to Charley, and my story would scarcely be intelligible or complete if I did not begin with myself. Well, to begin: I am one of those unfortunate individuals known in China as “cha-szes,” or tea-tasters; doomed for my sins, or the hope of one day getting rich, to pass the time in smelling, tasting and buying teas for the great mercantile house or “hong” of Young Hyson & Co. The place at which you find me is Hankow, on the great Yang Tsze Kiang, or river, some six hundred miles from its mouth. If you have a map of China, and will find on it the Yang Tsze, by tracing with your finger—if your map is at all correct—you will discover the cities of Chin Kiang, Nanking, Nganking, Kiu Kiang, and finally, at the junction of the river Han with the Yang Tsze, Wuchang. Hankow will probably not be on your map, but on the north bank of the Yang Tsze, just at the point of junction with the Han, is this important trading port, thrown open to foreigners in 1861, after the signing of the treaty of Tein-Tsin.

And now for Charley, whom I have kept talking pigeon-English to Akong all this time. Charley was the son of an old friend, chaplain to the British consulate at one of the coast ports; his mother dying, Charley was to have been sent home to relatives in England, but I had prevailed upon his father to let the boy, now between twelve and fourteen years old, make me a visit before his final departure.

And now for the conspiracy:

“Chin-chin (how do you do), Akong?” said I.

“What is it, Charley? Out with it, my boy; some mischief, I know.” Akong gave a chuckle and a muttered “hi-yah,” and Charley proceeded to explain.

“Well Cha,”—the Chinamen called me Cha-tsze and the boy had abbreviated it to Cha, —“Akong says that he has a boat going up to the tea country to-morrow or next day, and wants me to go with him; may I?”

[Illustration: *The barber.*]

Charley knew that I could refuse him nothing, but the trip of several hundred miles into a district rarely, if ever, visited by foreigners, involved more of a risk than I cared to assume. Charley seeing that I looked unusually solemn, turned to Akong for support.

“What for you no go too, Cha-tsze? Just now my thinker no got new chop come inside two week; get back plenty time.”

Akong’s pigeon-English perhaps requires explanation: You must know, then, that the Chinese with whom all foreigners transact business, instead of learning correct English have a lingo, or *patois*, of their own, ascribed, but I think erroneously, to the

carelessness of their first English visitors, who addressed them in this manner, thinking to make themselves more easily understood. The fact is, that pigeon-English,



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besides having many Portuguese words mixed up with it,—the Portuguese, you know, were established in China as early as the seventeenth century,—is in many instances a literal translation of Chinese into perverted English. In the present instance, Akong suggested that as there would be no more tea down for a fortnight, it would be well for me, too, to go. The proposition was quite agreeable to me, and Charley scampered off to tell Ahim, the cook, and Aho, my boy, to make the necessary preparations.

The next morning, at an early hour, Akong's great mandarin, or house-boat, was moored at the jetty, and the boys were packing away the provisions and the charcoal for cooking, and long strings of copper "cash" to be used in the purchase of eggs and chickens, and the mats of rice that would form the principal article of "chow-chow" for the crew. Everybody in China has a boy, and Charley had his; a regular young imp of a fellow of about his own age. Aling was his name; Charley used to call him Ting-a-ling, and would jabber horrible Chinese to him by the hour. Aling jumped down the steps, two at a time, with Charley's traveling bag; but Aho, more sedate and dignified, marched after him; Charley and I joined Akong in the front of the boat, and with a chorus of "chin-chins" from the coolies and house-servants left behind, and the explosion of a pack of fire-crackers to propitiate the river dragon, the boat was shoved from the jetty, the sail hoisted, and we were soon slowly stemming the broad current of the Yang Tsze. On our right was Hankow, with its million or more inhabitants, the hum of the great city following us for miles; and the mouth of the Han, its surface so covered with junks that their masts resembled a forest, and only a narrow lane of water was left for the passage of boats. Just beyond the Han was Han Yang, once a fine city, but now in ruins, one of the results of the Tae-ping rebellion. Across the Yang Tsze, here a mile wide, was Wuchang, the residence of the viceroy of the Hupeh province. This place was supposed to be closed to foreigners, but Charley and I had made many a secret visit, and had some rare sport among the curiosity shops, with occasionally an adventure of a less pleasing description, about which I should like to tell you if I had time.

Rapidly we passed the suburbs of these cities, and drawing over to the south bank, as the wind was light, the crew were ordered ashore, and stretching themselves along a tow-rope extending from the mast-head, the boat was soon moving quite rapidly. And that reminds me that I have not yet described our boat. These boats, used by the gentry in transporting themselves about the country, are almost like Noah's ark on a small scale—a boat with a house running almost the entire length of the deck, with little latticed windows on the outside, and the interior divided into rooms for eating and sleeping. The crew all lived aft on the great overhanging stern, where the cooking was done, and where the handle of the great "yuloe," or sculling oar, protruded. In front of the cabin was a little piece of deck-room where Charley and I had our camp-stools, and which gave us an excellent place from which to observe everything going on ahead.



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[Illustration: *The tea hong.*]

The boat coolies were straining on the tow-rope a hundred yards ahead. Frequently we passed some fisherman sitting in his little mat hut, with his feet on the windlass that raised his great square net; but never did we see them catch a fish, although on our return the same men were working as assiduously as ever. The country presented the same compact system of farming, the hills in many places being terraced to their very summits, and planted with waving crops of wheat and millet, beans, and vegetables of every description. Toward noon we passed the "Ta" and "Lao Kin Shan" (great and little golden mountain), and by the time Aling had announced "tiffin" (luncheon), we were abreast of Kin Kow, a picturesque village in the neighborhood of which I generally found some excellent shooting. After tiffin we again resumed our camp-stools. I lighted a cigar, and Akong smoked his hubble-bubble, a small copy of the nargileh of the Turks. The river was alive with junks, some going in the same direction as ourselves, and others loaded with tea, charcoal, vegetable tallow, oil of various kinds, and gypsum, brought, most of them, from the far western province of Sze Chuen.

There was but little variety in the journey until the following day, when we approached the great bend in the Yang Tsze, and Akong told us that, if so inclined, we could land from the boat, and by walking six or eight miles across the country join the boat again, the bend rendering it necessary for her to go around some thirty or forty miles. This we gladly assented to, and taking my gun, in hopes of meeting with some snipe in the paddy-fields, and with Aling and a coolie for interpreters, we landed.

Charley and I both experienced a rather queer sensation as we watched the boat sail off, and found ourselves with no other white man within a hundred or more miles. The country ahead was one immense rice-field, divided by dykes or banks paved with stones and forming paths for walking. At some distance we saw a large clump of bamboos with tall elms beyond, indicating a village, called, as a coolie at work in a ditch informed us, Fi-Loong. Soon we saw a broad creek with a handsome stone bridge over it, and on the other side an unusually large house of two stories, which turned out to belong to the Te-poy, or local magistrate of the place. The old gentleman himself was sitting outside of the house having his head shaved by the village barber. He politely invited us to wait, and after the shaving was over regaled us with a cup of tea,—rather weak, but refreshing,—and after chin-chin-ing we resumed our journey.

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Can you see our party trudging along? Beyond the village were more paddy-fields, from which occasionally a great white paddy-bird arose. I shot one of them, to the great delight of our coolie, who pronounced it No. 1 good chow-chow; but Charley and I were much more pleased at the sight of several English snipe. Reaching an old lotus-pond, a shot scared up these birds almost in myriads, and a good bunch of them promised a very welcome addition to our dinner. Meanwhile we had been following a creek, which we now needed to cross. But before long Aling espied a man in the distance at work with a huge buffalo, and exclaiming, "Hi-yah! belly good walkee now," rushed off in that direction. He soon returned with the buffalo and his owner, and indicated that we could cross on the back of the former. The huge, ungainly beast threw up his head and snorted when he caught sight of the "fanquis," or foreign devils, but a pull at the ring through his nose soon brought him to subjection.

"How much does he want, Aling, to carry us over?"

"He say ten cash can do."

As this sum (one cent) was not an unreasonable ferriage, we nodded; and the buffalo being led into the water near the bank, I mounted first, then came Charley with his arms around me, then Aling, who had climbed up behind. When we were half-way over, Charley laughed so heartily at the ridiculous figure we made that the buffalo gave another snort, and threatened to roll us off, into the muddy water, but we landed safely, and giving the man his ten cash, went on again. The rest of the walk was without adventure, and we finally arrived at the river-bank just as the boat was coming around the point below us.

That evening we left the main river and tracked up a tributary stream until we came to a broad canal, which Akong informed us led direct to our destination.

[Illustration: *Sorting the tea.*]

Turning out of our beds the next morning we found the boat moored to the bank of the canal, opposite a long, rambling, one-storied building, which proved to be the "hong" of the tea-merchant to whom the neighboring plantations belonged. We were really in the tea country at last. On every side of us, as far as the eye could reach, the dark-green tea-plants were growing in their beds of reddish sandy soil. Notwithstanding the cook's urgent appeals to wait until chow-chow was ready, we jumped ashore and into the midst of a crowd of noisy coolies moving in every direction, each with his load slung at the ends of a bamboo across his shoulders, and singing a monotonous "Aho, Aho, Aho!" which appears as necessary to the Chinese carrier as the "Yo heave ho!" to the sailor. Long, narrow junks were lying at the bank, and being rapidly loaded with the familiar tea-chests; crowds of men, women and children were coming from the plantation, each with bags of the freshly picked leaves, or with baskets on their heads in which the more delicate kinds were carefully carried. We stepped into the building, and there witnessed

the entire operation of assorting, firing the teas, and even the manufacturing of the chests. We would gladly have remained, but Aho came up and informed us “that breakfast hab got spoilem,” so we deferred further investigation until after the meal.

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Akong joined us at breakfast, and partook of our curry and rice with great gusto, for tea-brokers as a rule are by no means averse to foreign chow-chow, and handle a knife and fork with almost as much ease as they do the native chop-sticks. Charley plied us both with questions regarding tea in general, and probably the following summary will pretty well represent the result of his queries:

The cultivation of the tea-plant is by no means confined to any one district or spot, but is scattered about through the different provinces, each producing its peculiar description known to the trade by its distinctive name. We were now in the Hupeh or Oopack country, and the tea we saw being gathered and prepared was the heavy-liquored black-leafed description, known in England and to the trade as Congou. This Congou forms the staple of the mixture known in that country under the generic name of "black," and sometimes finds its way to us under the guise of "English breakfast tea." From Foo-chow-foo, on the coast, half-way between Shanghae and Hong Kong, is shipped another description known as red-leaf Congou, the bulk of which goes to England also, although we are gradually absorbing an increasing quantity. Kiu Kiang, on the Yang Tsze, some one hundred and forty miles below Hankow, shares with the latter port in the trade of the Hupeh country, and is, or was until recently, the point of shipment for the fine green teas grown and manufactured in the Moyune district, a very large proportion of which is shipped to this country. First in importance as a point of shipment is Foo-chow-foo, whence are exported, in addition to the red-leafed Congous, or Boheas, the bulk of the Oolongs. Still further down the coast is Amoy, from which point inferior descriptions of both kinds are shipped, together with some scented teas; but the bulk of the latter, known as Scented Capers, Orange Pekoe, *etc.*, are exported from Canton and Macao. These, together with a peculiar description of green, are manufactured at these ports from leaf grown in the neighborhood. Although no tea is grown near Shanghae, much of the Congou grown in the Hupeh province is sent there for sale, and thence shipped to England. The green teas from both the Moyune and Ping-Suey countries are also shipped from Shanghae.

[Illustration: *Hoeing and watering the plants.*]

Breakfast over, we jumped ashore again, and, desiring to conduct our sight-seeing systematically, started for the fields. First we walked to the foot of a hill a little distance off, where some men in short cotton trousers and jackets were laying out a new plantation. The ground was accurately marked off, and in one place the little plants, only an inch or two in height, were just showing above the ground. In another, the seeds—little round balls they looked like—were being planted in the rows. Passing another field, where some men were at work with their hoes in true Chinese style, stopping every



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few moments to smoke their pipes, we came at last to where the plants had attained some size and the actual picking was going on. The plants themselves were from two to six feet high, according to age, and from repeated cuttings down had grown into dense masses of small twigs. Many of them were covered with little white flowers, somewhat similar to the jasmine, and seeds inclosed in a casing not unlike that of the hazel-nut, but thinner and full of oil. Charley thought they looked like little laurel bushes; to me, those that had been well picked were not unlike huckleberry bushes, only the leaves were, of course, a much darker green. The first picking, usually in April, is when the leaves are very young and tender, commanding a much higher price than those subsequently plucked. The second is a month later, when they have attained maturity; and as unpropitious weather would be likely to ruin them, great expedition is used in getting in the crop, the entire population turning out to assist. A third, and even a fourth, follows; but the quality rapidly deteriorates, and but a small proportion of these last pickings is prepared for export.

[Illustration: *Drying the tea.*]

The plantations were filled with a merry crowd, composed principally of women and children, all engaged in stripping the bushes as rapidly as possible, yet with great care and dexterity, so as not to bruise the leaves. They looked up from their work and screamed to each other in their harsh guttural tones, casting glances of astonishment at the barbarians. Following some of the coolies, who with filled bags were trudging off to the curing-house, we saw the most interesting operation of all. Here, at least thirty young girls were engaged in assorting the leaves, picking out all the dead and yellow ones, and preparing them for the hands of the rollers and firers. Our entrance excited quite a commotion among the damsels, as we were probably the first barbarians they had seen, and we had the reputation of living entirely on fat babies. A word from Akong, who had joined us, reassured them, and in a few minutes Charley was airing his little stock of Chinese, more, I thought, to their amusement than their edification. Leaving this room we went into another where the curing was in progress. On one side extended a long furnace built of bricks, with large iron pans placed at equal distances, and heated by charcoal fires below. Into these pans leaves by the basketful were poured, stirred rapidly for a few minutes, and then removed to large bamboo frames, where they were rolled and kneaded until all the green juice was freed. They were then scattered loosely in large, flat baskets, and placed in the sun to dry. Subsequently, the leaves were again carried to the furnaces and exposed to a gentle heat, until they curled and twisted themselves into the shapes so familiar to you all. Some of the finer kinds often prepared for exportation are rolled over by hand before being fired. The great object appears to be to prevent the leaf from breaking; hence, in the commoner kinds and those intended for home consumption, which do not receive the same care, the leaves are found to be very much broken. In fact, the preparation of this latter sort

is very simple: a mere drying in the sun, after which it presents a dry, broken appearance, like autumn leaves.

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Green tea, although grown in particular districts, receives its peculiar color by being stirred with a mixture of gypsum and Prussian blue during the firing, but is prepared in a more laborious manner, the leaves being selected and divided to form the different kinds known as Imperial, Gunpowder, Young Hyson, Hyson, Hyson Skin and Twankay. An aggregation of these kinds, proportioned according to their value, forms what is known as a “chop,” whereas a chop of black tea comprises all of one grade or quality. Chinamen wonder at the taste of “outside barbarians” in preferring a tea colored green, but would provide them with a leaf of yellow or blue if there was a market for it.

[Illustration: *One of the sing-song girls.*]

The entire operation pertaining to the business appeared to be carried on in the cluster of little buildings with court-yards between, but almost under the same roof, and afforded occupation to an immense number of persons. And yet the payments could not have been very large; from six to ten cents per day being about the wages they received. In one room men were engaged in making boxes; in another, lining them with thin sheets of lead. Further on, the outsides of the boxes were being pasted over with paper, on which was stamped the name of the tea and the maker’s business-title. Finally, they were being filled, soldered up and carried off to the boats, not to be opened again until they reached the shop of some London grocer.

The principal object of our friend Akong’s visit was to convoy with his mandarin-boat a fleet of tea-junks to Hankow; so that but one day was given us for our visit. The boats being nearly ready, it was arranged that we should start on our return the following morning. The evening was devoted to a dinner and “sing-song” given for our entertainment by the tea-men. Aho asked if he should take our knives and forks, a proposition which we indignantly rejected. As it was to be a Chinese dinner, we determined to do it in Chinese style, chop-sticks and all. Such a dinner! We were seated at little square tables holding four persons each, the Chinamen all dressed in their official or state costumes. First came little dishes of sweetmeats and then bowls of bird’s-nest soup, with the jelly-like substance floating about in it in company with little pieces of chicken. This was very nice, although we *did* all eat out of the same bowl, using little porcelain spoons. Then came more sweetmeats, followed by dishes of *beche de mer*, or sea-slugs and fat pork; this we passed, but not until an over-polite Chinaman took up a gristly piece of *something* with his chop-sticks, and, after biting off a piece, passed the rest to Charley. The chop-sticks we could not manage; the meat would slip out of them, and had it not been for the soups, of which there were several, and the rice, which we could *shovel* into our mouths, we should have had no dinner. Tea was passed by the servants continually, as were little bowls of “samshu”—a liquor distilled from rice. During the dinner, the sing-song girls played on the native two-stringed fiddles, and sang in falsetto voices a selection of music, which was undoubtedly very fine if judged by the Chinese standard, but which we could not appreciate.



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The noise soon became almost intolerable, and we slipped off to the boat and sought our beds.

When we awoke in the morning the whole fleet of tea-boats was under way, and with a fair wind we ran rapidly down the creek and were once more on the broad Yang Tsze. On the third day we reached Hankow safely, and well pleased with our trip to the tea country.

TREASURE-TROVE.

By Olive A. Wadsworth.

A Diligent Biddy was scratching one day,
And pecking at morsels that came in her way,
When all of a sudden she widened her eyes,
And the feathers stood up on her head with surprise!

A strange-looking treasure Dame Biddy had found,
'Twixt a brick and a clam-shell it lay on the ground;
The hen with a peck turned it over and over,
But the longer she looked the less could discover.

"Cluck, cluck!" said the hen, "as sure as I stand,
This never was grown upon solid dry land;
I'll take it along to Dame Duck and her daughter,
They're wise about things that come out of the water."

So she carried the thing in her beak to the brook,
And called to Dame Duck to come quickly and look,
And the dame and her child relinquished their pleasure,
And waddled ashore to examine the treasure.

"Alack!" said the duck and "A-quack!" said the daughter,
"We've never seen objects like *this* in the water!
Suppose we submit it to old Mrs. Ewe?
She's wise about wool, and has seen the world, too!"

So the duck took it carefully up in her bill,
And the duckling and hen followed on to the mill,
Where the miller's fat sheep was placidly grazing,
And there they displayed this treasure amazing.

"Ah, bah!" said the sheep, "what a queer-looking piece!
This never was parcel or part of a fleece!"



Our flock would disown it!—but take it, I pray,
To Brindle, the cow, she's wise about hay!"

So the sheep and the duckling, the duck and the hen,
With the treasure set forth in procession again,
To where the cow stood,—in the shade, as she ought,—
A-chewing her cud and a-thinking her thought.

"Bless my horns!" said the cow, "I really must say,
I've ne'er seen the like in straw or in hay!
Why don't you ask Dobbin, the farmer's gray mare?
She's traveled so much, and she's wise about hair."

So the hen and the ducks, the sheep and the cow,
Went seeking for Dobbin, just loosed from the plow;
They all talked at once, to make things explicit,
And finally showed her the cause of their visit.

But Dobbin gave snorts of dislike and dismay;
"Why don't you," said she, "pass it on to old Tray?
He hunts for his food where the refuse is thrown,
And he's wise about cinders, and rubbish, and bone."



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So Dobbin and Brindle, and fat Mrs. Ewe,
And the duckling and duck, and the Biddy-hen too,
All eager for knowledge, went down the wide road
To the kennel where Tray had his pleasant abode.

Now Tray was a dog with a gift for detecting,
He never would bark without briefly reflecting;
He snuffed at the treasure and turned it about,
And soon would have uttered his sentence, no doubt,—

But just then our Tommy ran up to the crowd.
“Where did you get those, sir?” he cried out aloud.
“They’re my new Sunday gloves! They fell out of my hat!
I took them to school to show them to Matt!

“And, you see, Matt and I had some liquorice candy,
Our fingers were sticky, the gloves were just handy;
And then, when the teacher said, ‘Tom, wash your slate,’
My sponge was all lost, and the class couldn’t wait.

“And ’cause I was hurrying, what do you think?
That bothersome ink-bottle slopped out the ink!
You can’t expect gloves to look nobby and new
When they have to be used for a slate and ink too.

Now, that’s reasons enough!” said poor Tommy, “I guess!”
And the company bowed a unanimous “Yes,”
And the horse, cow and sheep, duck, duckling and hen,
Complacently turned themselves homeward again.

UNDER THE LILACS.

By Louisa M. Alcott.

CHAPTER VII.

New friends trot in.

Next day Ben ran off to his work with Quackenbos’s “Elementary History of the United States” in his pocket, and the Squire’s cows had ample time to breakfast on wayside grass before they were put into their pasture. Even then the pleasant lesson was not ended, for Ben had an errand to town, and all the way he read busily, tumbling over the



hard words, and leaving bits which he did not understand to be explained at night by Bab.

At "The First Settlements" he had to stop, for the school-house was reached and the book must be returned. The maple-tree closet was easily found, and a little surprise hidden under the flat stone; for Ben paid two sticks of red and white candy for the privilege of taking books from the new library.

When recess came great was the rejoicing of the children over their unexpected treat, for Mrs. Moss had few pennies to spare for sweets, and, somehow, this candy tasted particularly nice, bought out of grateful Ben's solitary dime. The little girls shared their goodies with their favorite mates, but said nothing about the new arrangement, fearing it would be spoilt if generally known. They told their mother, however, and she gave them leave to lend their books and encourage Ben to love learning all they could. She also proposed that they should drop patch-work and help her make some blue shirts for Ben. Mrs. Barton had given her the materials, and she thought it would be an excellent lesson in needle-work as well as a useful gift to Ben—who, boy-like, never troubled himself as to what he should wear when his one suit of clothes gave out.

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Wednesday afternoon was the sewing time, so the two little B's worked busily at a pair of shirt sleeves, sitting on their bench in the door-way, while the rusty needles creaked in and out, and the childish voices sung school-songs, with frequent stoppages for lively chatter.

For a week, Ben worked away bravely, and never shirked nor complained, although Pat put many a hard or disagreeable job upon him, and chores grew more and more distasteful. His only comfort was the knowledge that Mrs. Moss and the Squire were satisfied with him, his only pleasure the lessons he learned while driving the cows, and recited in the evening when the three children met under the lilacs to "play school."

He had no thought of studying when he began, and hardly knew that he was doing it as he pored over the different books he took from the library. But the little girls tried him with all they possessed, and he was mortified to find how ignorant he was. He never owned it in words, but gladly accepted all the bits of knowledge they offered from their small store; getting Betty to hear him spell "just for fun;" agreeing to draw Bab all the bears and tigers she wanted if she would show him how to do sums on the flags, and often beguiled his lonely labors by trying to chant the multiplication table as they did. When Tuesday night came round the Squire paid him a dollar, said he was "a likely boy," and might stay another week if he chose. Ben thanked him and thought he would, but the next morning, after he had put up the bars, he remained sitting on the top rail to consider his prospects, for he felt uncommonly reluctant to go back to the society of rough Pat. Like most boys he hated work, unless it was of a sort which just suited him; then he could toil like a beaver and never tire. His wandering life had given him no habits of steady industry, and while he was an unusually capable lad of his age, he dearly loved to loaf about and have a good deal of variety and excitement in his life.

Now he saw nothing before him but days of patient and very uninteresting labor. He was heartily sick of weeding; even riding Duke before the cultivator had lost its charms, and a great pile of wood lay in the Squire's yard which he knew he would be set to piling up in the shed. Strawberry-picking would soon follow the asparagus cultivation, then haying, and so on all the long, bright summer, without any fun, unless his father came for him.

On the other hand, he was not obliged to stay a minute longer unless he liked. With a comfortable suit of clothes, a dollar in his pocket, and a row of dinner-baskets hanging in the school-house entry to supply him with provisions if he didn't mind stealing them, what was easier than to run away again? Tramping has its charms in fair weather, and Ben had lived like a gypsy under canvas for years, so he feared nothing, and began to look down the leafy road with a restless, wistful expression, as the temptation grew stronger and stronger every minute.

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Sancho seemed to share the longing, for he kept running off a little way and stopping to frisk and bark, then rushed back to sit watching his master with those intelligent eyes of his, which seemed to say, "Come on, Ben, let us scamper down this pleasant road and never stop till we are tired." Swallows darted by, white clouds fled before the balmy west wind, a squirrel ran along the wall, and all things seemed to echo the boy's desire to leave toil behind and roam away as care-free as they. One thing restrained him,—the thought of his seeming ingratitude to good Mrs. Moss, and the disappointment of the little girls at the loss of their two new play-fellows. While he paused to think of this, something happened which kept him from doing what he would have been sure to regret afterward.

Horses had always been his best friends, and one came trotting up to help him now, though he did not know how much he owed it till long after. Just in the act of swinging himself over the bars to take a short cut across the fields, the sound of approaching hoofs, unaccompanied by the roll of wheels, caught his ear, and pausing, he watched eagerly to see who was coming at such a pace.

At the turn of the road, however, the quick trot stopped, and in a moment a lady on a bay mare came pacing slowly into sight,—a young and pretty lady, all in dark blue, with a bunch of dandelions like yellow stars in her button-hole, and a silver-handled whip hanging from the pommel of her saddle, evidently more for ornament than use. The handsome mare limped a little and shook her head as if something plagued her, while her mistress leaned down to see what was the matter, saying, as if she expected an answer of some sort:

"Now, Chevalita, if you have got a stone in your foot, I shall have to get off and take it out. Why don't you look where you step and save me all this trouble?"

"I'll look for you, ma'am; I'd like to!" said an eager voice so unexpectedly that both horse and rider started as a boy came down the bank with a jump.

"I wish you would. You need not be afraid; Lita is as gentle as a lamb," answered the young lady, smiling, as if amused by the boy's earnestness.

"She's a beauty, anyway," muttered Ben, lifting one foot after another till he found the stone, and with some trouble got it out.

"That was nicely done, and I'm much obliged. Can you tell me if that cross-road leads to the Elms?" asked the lady, as she went slowly on with Ben beside her.

"No, ma'am; I'm new in these parts, and I only know where Squire Allen and Mrs. Moss live."



“I want to see both of them, so suppose you show me the way. I was here long ago, and thought I should remember how to find the old house with the elm avenue and the big gate, but I don’t.”

“I know it; they call that place the Laylocks now, ’cause there’s a hedge of ’em all down the path and front wall. It’s a real pretty place; Bab and Betty play there, and so do I.”



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Ben could not restrain a chuckle at the recollection of his first appearance there, and as if his merriment or his words interested her, the lady said, pleasantly: "Tell me all about it. Are Bab and Betty your sisters?"

Quite forgetting his intended tramp, Ben plunged into a copious history of himself and new-made friends, led on by a kind look, an inquiring word, and sympathetic smile, till he had told everything. At the school-house corner he stopped and said, spreading his arms like a sign-post:

"That's the way to the Laylocks, and this is the way to the Squire's."

"As I'm in a hurry to see the old house, I'll go this way first, if you will be kind enough to give my love to Mrs. Allen, and tell the Squire Miss Celia is coming to dine with him. I won't say good-by, because I shall see you again."

With a nod and a smile the young lady cantered away, and Ben hurried up the hill to deliver his message, feeling as if something pleasant was going to happen, so it would be wise to defer running away, for the present at least.

[Illustration: *Ben takes the stone from Lita's foot.*]

At one o'clock Miss Celia arrived, and Ben had the delight of helping Pat stable pretty Chevalita; then, his own dinner hastily eaten, he fell to work at the detested wood-pile with sudden energy, for, as he worked, he could steal peeps into the dining-room, and see the curly brown head between the two gray ones as the three sat round the table. He could not help hearing a word now and then, as the windows were open, and these bits of conversation filled him with curiosity, for the names "Thorny," "Celia," and "George" were often repeated, and an occasional merry laugh from the young lady sounded like music in that usually quiet place.

When dinner was over, Ben's industrious fit left him, and he leisurely trundled his barrow to and fro till the guest departed. There was no chance for him to help now, since Pat, anxious to get whatever trifle might be offered for his services, was quite devoted in his attentions to the mare and her mistress till she was mounted and off. But Miss Celia did not forget her little guide, and spying a wistful face behind the wood-pile, paused at the gate and beckoned with that winning smile of hers. If ten Pats had stood scowling in the way Ben would have defied them all, and vaulting over the fence he ran up with a shining face, hoping she wanted some last favor of him. Leaning down, Miss Celia slipped a new quarter into his hand, saying:

"Lita wants me to give you this for taking the stone out of her foot."

"Thanky, ma'am; I liked to do it, for I hate to see 'em limp, 'specially such a pretty one as she is," answered Ben, stroking the glossy neck with a loving touch.



“The Squire says you know a good deal about horses, so I suppose you understand the Houyhnhnm language? I’m learning it, and it is very nice,” laughed Miss Celia, as Chevalita gave a little whinny and snuggled her nose into Ben’s pocket.



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“No, miss, I never went to school.”

“That is not taught there. I’ll bring you a book all about it when I come back. Mr. Gulliver went to the horse-country and heard the dear things speak their own tongue.”

“My father has been on the prairies where there’s lots of wild ones, but he didn’t hear ’em speak. I know what they want without talkin’,” answered Ben, suspecting a joke, but not exactly seeing what it was.

“I don’t doubt it, but I won’t forget the book. Good-by, my lad, we shall soon meet again,” and away went Miss Celia as if she was in a hurry to get back.

“If she only had a red habit and a streamin’ white feather, she’d look as fine as Melia used to. She *is* ’most as kind and rides ’most as well. Wonder where she’s goin’ to. Hope she *will* come soon,” thought Ben, watching till the last flutter of the blue habit vanished round the corner, and then he went back to his work with his head full of the promised book, pausing now and then to chink the two silver halves and the new quarter together in his pocket, wondering what he should buy with this vast sum.

Bab and Betty meantime had had a most exciting day, for when they went home at noon they found the pretty lady there, and she had talked to them like an old friend, given them a ride on the little horse, and kissed them both good-by when they went back to school. In the afternoon the lady was gone, the old house all open, and their mother sweeping, dusting, airing in great spirits. So they had a splendid frolic tumbling on feather beds, beating bits of carpet, opening closets, and racing from garret to cellar like a pair of distracted kittens.

Here Ben found them, and was at once overwhelmed with a burst of news which excited him as much as it did them. Miss Celia owned the house, was coming to live there, and things were to be made ready as soon as possible. All thought the prospect a charming one; Mrs. Moss because life had been dull for her during the year she had taken charge of the old house; the little girls had heard rumors of various pets who were coming, and Ben, learning that a boy and a donkey were among them, resolved that nothing but the arrival of his father should tear him from this now deeply interesting spot.

“I’m in *such* a hurry to see the peacocks and hear them scream. She said they did, and that we’d laugh when old Jack brayed,” cried Bab, hopping about on one foot to work off her impatience.

“Is a *faytun* a kind of a bird? I heard her say she could keep it in the coach-house,” asked Betty, inquiringly.

“It’s a little carriage,” and Ben rolled in the grass, much tickled at poor Betty’s ignorance.



“Of course it is. I looked it out in the dic., and you mustn’t call it a *payton* though it *is* spelt with a p,” added Bab, who liked to lay down the law on all occasions, and did not mention that she had looked vainly among the f’s till a school-mate set her right.



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"You can't tell *me* much about carriages. But what I want to know is where Lita will stay?" said Ben.

"Oh, she's to be up at the Squire's, till things are fixed, and you are to bring her down. Squire came and told Ma all about it, and said you were a boy to be trusted, for he had tried you."

Ben made no answer, but secretly thanked his stars that he had not proved himself untrustworthy by running away, and so missing all this fun.

"Wont it be fine to have the house open all the time? We can run over and see the pictures and books whenever we like. I know we can, Miss Celia is so kind," began Betty, who cared for these things more than for screaming peacocks and comical donkeys.

"Not unless you are invited," answered their mother, locking the front door behind her. "You'd better begin to pick up your duds right away, for she wont want them cluttering round her front yard. If you are not too tired, Ben, you might rake round a little while I shut the blinds. I want things to look nice and tidy."

Two little groans went up from two afflicted little girls as they looked about them at the shady bower, the dear porch, and the winding walks where they loved to run "till their hair whistled in the wind," as the fairy-books say.

"Whatever shall we do! Our attic is so hot and the shed so small, and the yard always full of hens or clothes. We shall have to pack all our things away and never play any more," said Bab, tragically.

"May be Ben could build us a little house in the orchard," proposed Betty, who firmly believed that Ben could do anything.

"He wont have any time. Boys don't care for baby-houses," returned Bab, collecting her homeless goods and chattels with a dismal face.

"We sha'n't want these much when all the new things come; see if we do," said cheerful little Betty, who always found out a silver lining to every cloud.

CHAPTER VIII.

MISS CELIA'S MAN.

Ben was not too tired, and the clearing-up began that very night. None too soon, for, in a day or two, things arrived, to the great delight of the children, who considered moving a most interesting play. First came the phaeton, which Ben spent all his leisure



moments in admiring, wondering with secret envy what happy boy would ride in the little seat up behind, and beguiling his tasks by planning how, when he got rich, he would pass his time driving about in just such an equipage, and inviting all the boys he met to have a ride.

Then a load of furniture came creaking in at the lodge gate, and the girls had raptures over a cottage piano, several small chairs, and a little low table, which they pronounced just the thing for them to play at. The live stock appeared next, creating a great stir in the neighborhood, for peacocks were rare birds there; the donkey's bray startled the cattle and convulsed the people with laughter; the rabbits were continually getting out to burrow in the newly made garden; and Chevalita scandalized old Duke by dancing about the stable which he had inhabited for years in stately solitude.



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Last, but by no means least, Miss Celia, her young brother and two maids, arrived one evening so late that only Mrs. Moss went over to help them settle. The children were much disappointed, but were appeased by a promise that they should all go to pay their respects in the morning.

They were up so early, and were so impatient to be off, that Mrs. Moss let them go with the warning that they would find only the servants astir. She was mistaken, however, for as the procession approached, a voice from the porch called out: "Good morning, little neighbors!" so unexpectedly, that Bab nearly spilt the new milk she carried, Betty gave such a start that the fresh-laid eggs quite skipped in the dish, and Ben's face broke into a broad grin over the armful of clover which he brought for the bunnies, as he bobbed his head, saying, briskly:

"She's all right, miss; Lita is, and I can bring her over any minute you say."

"I shall want her at four o'clock. Thorny will be too tired to drive, but I must hear from the post-office, rain or shine;" and Miss Celia's pretty color brightened as she spoke, either from some happy thought or because she was bashful, for the honest young faces before her plainly showed their admiration of the white-gowned lady under the honeysuckles.

The appearance of Miranda, the maid, reminded the children of their errand, and having delivered their offerings, they were about to retire in some confusion, when Miss Celia said pleasantly:

"I want to thank you for helping put things in such nice order. I see signs of busy hands and feet both inside the house and all about the grounds, and I am very much obliged."

"I raked the beds," said Ben, proudly eyeing the neat ovals and circles.

"I swept all the paths," added Bab, with a reproachful glance at several green sprigs fallen from the load of clover on the smooth walk.

"I cleared up the porch," and Betty's clean pinafore rose and fell with a long sigh, as she surveyed the late summer residence of her exiled family.

Miss Celia guessed the meaning of that sigh, and made haste to turn it into a smile by asking, anxiously:

"What *has* become of the playthings? I don't see them anywhere."

"Ma said you wouldn't want our duds round, so we took them all home," answered Betty, with a wistful face.



“But I do want them round. I like dolls and toys almost as much as ever, and quite miss the little “duds” from porch and path. Suppose you come to tea with me to-night and bring some of them back? I should be very sorry to rob you of your pleasant play-place.”

“Oh yes’m, we’d love to come! and we’ll bring our best things.”

“Ma always lets us have our shiny pitchers and the china poodle when we go visiting or have company at home,” said Bab and Betty, both speaking at once.

“Bring what you like and I’ll hunt up my toys too. Ben is to come also, and *his* poodle is especially invited,” added Miss Celia as Sancho came and begged before her, feeling that some agreeable project was under discussion.



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“Thank you, miss. I told them you’d be willing they should come sometimes. They like this place ever so much, and so do I,” said Ben, feeling that few spots combined so many advantages in the way of climbable trees, arched gates, half-a-dozen gables, and other charms suited to the taste of an aspiring youth who had been a flying Cupid at the age of seven.

“So do I,” echoed Miss Celia, heartily. “Ten years ago I came here a little girl, and made lilac chains under these very bushes, and picked chick-weed over there for my bird, and rode Thorny in his baby-wagon up and down these paths. Grandpa lived here then and we had fine times; but now they are all gone except us two.”

“We haven’t got any father either,” said Bab, for something in Miss Celia’s face made her feel as if a cloud had come over the sun.

[Illustration: MISS CELIA AND HER LITTLE FRIENDS.]

“I have a first-rate father, if I only knew where he’d gone to,” said Ben, looking down the path as eagerly as if some one waited for him behind the locked gate.

“You are a rich boy, and you are happy little girls to have so good a mother; I’ve found that out already,” and the sun shone again as the young lady nodded to the neat, rosy children before her.

“You may have a piece of her if you want to, ’cause you haven’t got any of your own,” said Betty, with a pitiful look which made her blue eyes as sweet as two wet violets.

“So I will! and you shall be my little sisters. I never had any, and I’d love to try how it seems,” and Miss Celia took both the chubby hands in hers, feeling ready to love every one this first bright morning in the new home which she hoped to make a very happy one.

Bab gave a satisfied nod, and fell to examining the rings upon the white hand that held her own. But Betty put her arms about the new friend’s neck, and kissed her so softly that the hungry feeling in Miss Celia’s heart felt better directly, for this was the food it wanted, and Thorny had not learned yet to return one half of the affection he received. Holding the child close, she played with the yellow braids while she told them about the little German girls in their funny black-silk caps, short-waisted gowns and wooden shoes, whom she used to see watering long webs of linen bleaching on the grass, watching great flocks of geese, or driving pigs to market, knitting or spinning as they went.

Presently, “Randa,” as she called her stout maid, came to tell her that “Master Thorny couldn’t wait another minute,” and she went in to breakfast with a good appetite, while



the children raced home to bounce in upon Mrs. Moss, talking all at once like little lunatics.

“The phaeton at four,—so sweet in a beautiful white gown,—going to tea, and Sancho and all the baby things invited. Can’t we wear our Sunday frocks? A splendid new net for Lita. And she likes dolls. Goody, goody, wont it be fun!”

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With much difficulty their mother got a clear account of the approaching festivity out of the eager mouths, and with still more difficulty got breakfast into them, for the children had few pleasures, and this brilliant prospect rather turned their heads.

Bab and Betty thought the day would never end, and cheered the long hours by expatiating on the pleasures in store for them, till their playmates were much afflicted because they were not going also. At noon their mother kept them from running over to the old house lest they should be in the way, so they consoled themselves by going to the syringa bush at the corner and sniffing the savory odors which came from the kitchen, where Katy, the cook, was evidently making nice things for tea.

Ben worked as if for a wager till four, then stood over Pat while he curried Lita till her coat shone like satin, then drove her gently down to the coach-house, where he had the satisfaction of harnessing her “all his own self.”

“Shall I go round to the great gate and wait for you there, miss?” he asked, when all was ready, looking up at the porch where the young lady stood watching him as she put on her gloves.

“No, Ben, the great gate is not to be opened till next October. I shall go in and out by the lodge, and leave the avenue to grass and dandelions, meantime,” answered Miss Celia, as she stepped in and took the reins, with a sudden smile.

But she did not start even when Ben had shaken out the new duster and laid it neatly over her knees.

“Isn’t it all right now?” asked the boy, anxiously.

“Not quite; I need one thing more. Can’t you guess what it is?”—and Miss Celia watched his anxious face as his eyes wandered from the tips of Lita’s ears to the hind-wheel of the phaeton, trying to discover what had been omitted.

“No, miss, I don’t see—” he began, much mortified to think he had forgotten anything.

“Wouldn’t a little groom up behind improve the appearance of my turnout?” she said, with a look which left no doubt in his mind that *he* was to be the happy boy to occupy that proud perch.

He grew red with pleasure, but stammered, as he hesitated, looking down at his bare feet and blue shirt:

“I aint fit, miss, and I haven’t got any other clothes.”

Miss Celia only smiled again more kindly than before, and answered, in a tone which he understood better than her words:



“A great man said his coat-of-arms was a pair of shirt sleeves, and a sweet poet sung about a barefooted boy, so I need not be too proud to ride with one. Up with you, Ben, my man, and let us be off, or we shall be late for our party.”

With one bound the new groom was in his place, sitting very erect, with his legs stiff, arms folded, and nose in the air, as he had seen real grooms sit behind their masters in fine dog-carts or carriages. Mrs. Moss nodded as they drove past the lodge, and Ben touched his torn hat-brim in the most dignified manner, though he could not suppress a broad grin of delight, which deepened into a chuckle when Lita went off at a brisk trot along the smooth road toward town.



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It takes so little to make a child happy, it is a pity grown people do not oftener remember it and scatter little bits of pleasure before the small people, as they throw crumbs to the hungry sparrows. Miss Celia knew the boy was pleased, but he had no words in which to express his gratitude for the great contentment she had given him. He could only beam at all he met, smile when the floating ends of the gray veil blew against his face, and long in his heart to give the new friend a boyish hug as he used to do his dear Melia when she was very good to him.

School was just out as they passed, and it was a spectacle, I assure you, to see the boys and girls stare at Ben up aloft in such state; also to see the superb indifference with which that young man regarded the vulgar herd who went afoot. He could not resist an affable nod to Bab and Betty, for they stood under the maple-tree, and the memory of their circulating library made him forget his dignity in his gratitude.

“We will take them next time, but now I want to talk to you,” began Miss Celia, as Lita climbed the hill. “My brother has been ill, and I have brought him here to get well. I want to do all sorts of things to amuse him, and I think you can help me in many ways. Would you like to work for me instead of the Squire?”

“I guess I would!” ejaculated Ben, so heartily that no further assurances were needed, and Miss Celia went on, well pleased:

“You see, poor Thorny is weak and fretful, and does not like to exert himself, though he ought to be out a great deal, and kept from thinking of his little troubles. He cannot walk much yet, so I have a wheeled chair to push him in, and the paths are so hard it will be easy to roll him around. That will be one thing you can do. Another is to take care of his pets till he is able to do it himself. Then you can tell him your adventures, and talk to him as only a boy can talk to a boy. That will amuse him when I want to write or go out; but I never leave him long, and hope he will soon be running about as well as the rest of us. How does that sort of work look to you?”

“First-rate! I’ll take real good care of the little fellow, and do everything I know to please him, and so will Sanch. He’s fond of children,” answered Ben, heartily, for the new place looked very inviting to him.

Miss Celia laughed, and rather damped his ardor by her next words:

“I don’t know what Thorny *would* say to hear you call him ‘little.’ He is fourteen, and appears to get taller and taller every day. He seems like a child to *me*, because I am nearly ten years older than he is; but you needn’t be afraid of his long legs and big eyes, —he is too feeble to do any harm,—only you mustn’t mind if he orders you about.”

“I’m used to that. I don’t mind it if he wont call me a ‘spalpeen,’ and fire things at me,” said Ben, thinking of his late trials with Pat.



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"I can promise that, and I am sure Thorny will like you, for I told him your story, and he is anxious to see 'the circus boy,' as he called you. Squire Allen says I may trust you, and I am glad to do so, for it saves me much trouble to find what I want all ready for me. You shall be well fed and clothed, kindly treated and honestly paid, if you like to stay with me."

"I *know* I shall like it—till father comes, anyway. Squire wrote to Smithers right off, but hasn't got any answer yet. I know they are on the go now, so may be we wont hear for ever so long," answered Ben, feeling less impatient to be off than before this fine proposal was made to him.

"I dare say; meantime we will see how we get on together, and perhaps your father will be willing to leave you for the summer if he is away. Now show me the baker's, the candy-shop, and the post-office," said Miss Celia, as they rattled down the main street of the village.

Ben made himself useful, and when all the other errands were done, received his reward in the shape of a new pair of shoes and a straw hat with a streaming blue ribbon, on the ends of which shone silvery anchors. He was also allowed to drive home, while his new mistress read her letters. One particularly long one, with a queer stamp on the envelope, she read twice, never speaking a word till they got back. Then Ben was sent off with Lita and the Squire's letters, promising to get his chores done in time for tea.

(To be continued.)

CRUMBS FROM OLDER READING.

BY JULIA E. SARGENT.

EMERSON.

"Who ever heard of Emerson?" I asked a room of third-reader pupils. Nearly every hand came up, and the bright faces were full of interest. What a delightful surprise! I did not expect to see more than two hands, and here all were as interested as if I had said, "Who ever heard of Hayes or Tilden?" All at once I remembered that, for more than a week, every fence about the school had been covered with circus-bills, bearing the name "Billy Emerson."

Sure enough he was the only Emerson those pupils knew about; for when I said Ralph Waldo Emerson, one by one the hands came down. No one had heard of him. Now I know no more of "Billy Emerson" than the children knew of Ralph Waldo Emerson, but I am not afraid to say that the one I know is better worth knowing.



For in papa's library, or on mamma's center-table, I have no doubt you can find more than one book which he has written. When in his sermon the minister tells what Emerson has said, you may be very sure he does not quote "Billy." Papers and magazines all have something to say concerning this man, whose books grown people read and talk about.

Who is he, then? His name is Ralph Waldo Emerson, and he writes books.

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Very good; and what are people who write books called? Then Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson is an author. He lives in a republican country which has Washington for its capital. He was born in the Bay State, in the largest city of New England. He dwells now in a little town where a battle was fought a hundred years ago, and the name of this town means “harmony.” You know where that is, do you not? He was born in 1803, and, as this is 1878, every one of you boys and girls who can subtract can tell just his age. One of the books he has written tells about England, another about such famous men as Shakspeare and Napoleon, and others talk about wealth and friendship, prudence and power.

That does not sound as if he meant them for you? Well, one thing he did mean for you, and that is a dear little poem—“The Squirrel and the Mountain.” Every one of you will want to read it, and when you have read it you will want to learn it, and when you have learned you will want to speak it. I need not have told you he meant that poem for you; you would know that the minute you saw it. But you could not tell so soon how many things he says for you in those famous essays so often quoted. What do you think I can find for you in this dry-looking book, “Conduct of Life,” with “Emerson” printed just under the title?

Did you ever see an old hen with her little walking bundles of feathers in the soft garden soil? How she does scratch and bustle for something to eat! Why, she is eating every bit herself! Perhaps she thinks that taking care of the chickens’ mother is very important work for her; but by-and-by she will call the little folks to share what she has found.

You may think of me as of an old hen who has long been scratching in the soft garden soil of Ralph Waldo Emerson’s writings. She has found much for herself, with now and then a bit for the chickens.

Here, the very first thing, is something about eggs. “There is always a best way of doing everything, if it be but to boil an egg.” I hope my little friends are never cross when Bridget has not boiled the nice breakfast egg in the best way. More than that; I hope they themselves know what is the best way of doing it; just how hot the water must be, how long the egg should boil to make it hard or soft, and, what is well worth knowing, how to get it in and out of the hot water without breaking the shell.

Here is another bit. It is like an egg, for the meaning is wrapt in words just as an egg hides in the shell. “The tell-tale body is all tongues.” What does the tongue help to do? Will no one know that you are cross unless you say, “I am cross this morning?” Can I find it out although you do not say a word? Yes, indeed; that puckered mouth and ugly little scowl tell, all too quickly, and even if I could not see your face, that little jerk and twist would tell the story. Do you not know when the dog is sick or tired, or full of fun? yet, his bright eyes, eager little nose, lively body and whisking tail, tell no more surely than your own face and body.



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“The tell-tale body is all tongues.” Mr. Emerson, we think that is true.

“How can I be beautiful?” Every boy and girl, man and woman, wants to know that. Here is Mr. Emerson’s beauty recipe: “There is no beautifier of complexion, or form, or behavior, like the wish to scatter joy and not pain around us.” Do you suppose that recipe will work? Think of the most beautiful people you know. Ah, I knew some one would say “mother.” Do you not think these people are those who try very hard to make others happy? I know very many beautiful people who would have remained very plain had they sought only to please themselves.

We want to try Emerson’s rule for becoming beautiful, so it will not do to forget that “There is no beautifier of complexion, or form, or behavior, like the wish to scatter joy and not pain around us.”

“Every man takes care that his neighbor shall not cheat him. But a day comes when he begins to care that he does not cheat his neighbor. Then all goes well.” Yes, Mr. Emerson, that is the only way to have things go well,—following the Golden Rule.

“You cannot hide any secret. ’Tis as hard to hide as fire.” Perhaps you think that it is not so; but you just try how long you can keep a secret that even your dearest friend does not know. I should not wonder if Emerson were right once more.

“There is much you may not do.” True again. We do not need Emerson to tell us that. “You must not do that, you must not do this,” the little folks hear so often, that sometimes they wonder what they may do.

But we would like to have him tell us what things last longest.

He is all ready to tell whoever wants to know, “Beauty is the quality which makes to endure. In a house that I know, I have noticed a block of spermaceti lying about closets and mantel-pieces for twenty years together, simply because the tallow-man gave it the form of a rabbit; and I suppose it may continue to be lugged about unchanged for a century. Let an artist draw a few lines or figures on the back of a letter, and that scrap of paper is rescued from danger, is put in a portfolio, or framed and glazed, and, in proportion to the beauty of the lines drawn, will be kept for centuries.” And there are beauties of heart, mind and character, that do not meet the eye, but are none the less powerful in “making to endure.”

THE OLD MAN AND THE NERVOUS COW.

BY R.E.

“There was an old man who said ‘How
Shall I ’scape from this horrible cow?”



I will sit on the stile,
And continue to smile,
Which may soften the heart of the cow.”

The old man was walking thoughtfully through the field, with his hands behind him, when the nervous cow saw him. She wasn't ordinarily a bad-natured cow, but she was mad just then. An aggravating fly had been biting her half the morning, and, just as she was drinking at the brook, a frog had jumped up with a cry and bitten her nose. These things had completely unsettled her nerves.



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She was ready to run at anything, and the old man being the only living thing in sight, she plunged toward him.

[Illustration: "I WILL SIT ON THE STILE, AND CONTINUE TO SMILE."]

What could he do? He was a short, stout old man, and could not run very fast, and, though he tried his best, he only just managed to reach the stile and plump down on it, all out of breath, as the cow neared him.

Then he suddenly remembered reading somewhere that if you looked right into an animal's eyes, it would run away from you.

"Ah!" thought he, "I'll look straight at her, and if I smile at the same time, she won't have the heart to hurt me."

So he put on a smile (of course it was not a very beautiful one, for he was in a hurry, but it was the best he could do), and stared straight into the cow's eyes. She saw that smile, and it so touched her that she stopped short. Then she sauntered back a little way, but the thought of that aggravating fly, and that awful frog, was too much for her poor nerves, and turning around, she dashed madly on again.

In another minute, the poor old man—cane, little legs, smile and all—was up in the air.

He alighted in the top of a hickory-tree. One branch grazed his eye, two ran into his legs, while another held his smile stiff and straight.

Thus he stayed until an eagle caught sight of him, pounced right down, and flew off with him to her nest, which was on a huge rock that rose straight up into the cold air and made the summit of a mountain.

When the old eagle plumped the little old man down into the nest, just imagine, if you can, how astonished the eaglets were! They opened their beaks as well as their eyes, and cried out:

"What's this, mother? What *is* this?"

"Oh! it's only a man," cried the old eagle. "I found him roosting in the top of a tree. Don't know how he got there. Suppose he was trying to fly, and couldn't. Tell us how it was, old man."

"Can he talk?"

"Talk!" said the eagle. "Of course he can talk. And he can tell stories, too, I warrant you. So, if you like, you may keep him to tell you stories."



“Oh, wont that be nice! Tell us a story, right off,” they all screamed, jerking the old man down into the nest.

“But it’s so dirty here,” said he, looking around, with his nose turned up a little. “Let me sit on the edge of the nest, wont you?—and I’ll tell you all the stories you want.”

“You’ll fall over.”.

“Oh no, I wont. I’ll hold on with my cane and my legs. Now just shut your beaks, so you wont look so savage, and listen.”

So the old man perched himself on the edge of the nest. The eaglets took hold of his coat with their beaks, to keep him from falling; and he told them the story of “Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves”; and when that was ended, another, and then another.

He didn’t eat much supper that night, for they hadn’t any convenience for cooking. And he didn’t sleep well, either, for whenever one of the eaglets woke up in the night, it always pinched him with its beak, to make sure he was there. So he resolved to get away as soon as he could.



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But he didn't seem to have any chance; so there he stayed and told stories till he longed to wring the necks of the gaping birds that kept asking him for more.

Now, all this time the cow had been getting more and more nervous. Every day she thought of the poor old man and his meek little legs and his sweet old smile, and just how his coat-tails looked as he went up; till at last she laid her head down on a tuft of grass by the brook, and cried—regularly boo-hooed.

Having thus relieved her feelings, she became calm, and, rising, said:

"I'll go to his house and find out how and where he is, if I can."

So off she started. But the house was shut up, and there was no one there except the cat.

Very much frightened the cat was, too, when the cow pushed up the pantry window with her horns, and bellowed:

"Where's your master?"

"I don't know," said the cat, retreating to a far corner, with his back up. "I haven't set eyes on him since last Sunday."

"Oh dear!" sighed the cow, dropping the window with a crash that broke out two of the panes of glass. "What shall I do?"

[Illustration: "THE POOR OLD MAN WAS UP IN THE AIR."]

"What's the matter with you?—and what do you want of the old man?" asked Tabby, bounding out through one of the broken panes.

The cow told him.

"Well," said Tab, stroking his whiskers reflectively, "I guess I'll go with you and help you look for the good-natured old creature."

So they journeyed on, asking everybody they met about the old man. But nobody knew, until finally they came across an old crow who knew everybody's business.

"An old man?" said he. "The eagle took an old man the other day. Did he have very slender legs?"

"Yes, yes!" said the cat and the cow together.

"And a sweet smile on his face?"



“Yes, yes!” cried the cow. “He went up with that smile, and it has been haunting me ever since,” and she burst into a flood of tears.

“Well,” said the crow, “he’s in the eagle’s nest telling stories to the eaglets, and if he isn’t tired of the business by this time, I’m mistaken.”

“Where is the nest?—and how can we get there?”

“Up at the very top of the mountain yonder. Go straight ahead, and you can’t miss it.”

[Illustration: THE OLD MAN TELLING STORIES TO THE EAGLETS.]

So straight ahead they went till they came to the rock where the eagle’s nest was. Then what should they do? They could hear the old man’s little, thin voice telling stories to the birds, but they knew he wouldn’t dare come where the cow was, even if he could clamber down that steep rock. At last, Tab suggested that the cow should hide herself, while he climbed up into the nest and persuaded the old man. So the cow hid, and puss scrambled up to the nest and carefully poked his head in.



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"Ah, master!" he whispered; "climb down the rock to-night, and I'll show you the way home." And he disappeared.

This visit braced up the old man's courage, and when the mother-bird came home he calmly told her he thought he'd sleep at the foot of the rock that night; and she unsuspectingly took him in her talons and dropped him gently on the ground.

As soon as she had gone, the old man looked all about him, and called "Tabby, Tabby," very softly. Tabby came out from under the roots of a tree and bounded on his shoulder, and told him how sorry the cow was, and how she was waiting in a thicket ready to carry him home, if he wanted to go.

Of course he wanted to go, and in less than a jiffy the cow had come out from her hiding-place, had cried a little, and had taken the old man on her back, and started full speed down the mountain, with the cat tearing after her.

It was a long way to the old man's house, and they reached it just tired out. Of course, they got something to eat, and then they went to bed and slept right through two days; but on the morning of the third day they got up as merry as crickets, and, after a hearty breakfast, they agreed to live together for the rest of their lives. And they have lived ever since in perfect harmony.

THE RAID OF THE CAMANCHES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WE BOYS."

Fred Hart, who was the eldest son of a country clergyman, and preparing for college at Whitford Boys' Academy, was known at that classical institution as a "dig," because he "dug" into his books and studied hard. His room-mate, Neal Howe, an orphan, dependent upon his own exertions, was styled a "digger;" and as both lads were rather dark, it was but a step for those wicked upper-story boys to stigmatize them, "Digger Indians!"

This term was gradually extended to include all the boys in the second story, for they were all hard students. The "Diggers" retaliated mildly by styling their upper-story neighbors, "Camanches."

The Camanches perpetrated all sorts of schoolboy atrocities on the Diggers, but, above all things else, they burned for a pillow-fight. In vain they challenged the Diggers to combat. Those law-abiding savages declined, though well aware of thereby falling into contempt on charge of cowardice.

Unmistakable indications were soon apparent that the Camanches meditated an attack.



The north wing was intended to be fire-proof, and each story was separated from the main building by iron doors which usually were fastened back by staples. The Camanches reasoned that these doors might be as effectual in shutting off teachers as fire; and the staples in both the second and third stories were one day withdrawn, so that these doors could be easily closed.

Scouting parties reported that the Camanches were getting ready the war-paint,—*i.e.*, the burnt cork,—and one ferocious savage had intimated that they should spare neither age nor sex.



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A council was immediately held in Fred Hart's room, and Fred unanimously chosen chief.

"If they're determined on a pillow-fight they shall have it," resolutely remarked that warrior.

The Diggers proposed using their own pillows as reserve arms only, and the next day any number of this tribe might have been seen scouring the village on mysterious errands, which the housewives would have explained as an effort to buy up old pillows.

"All's fair on the defensive," said Chief Fred, and each Digger ripped open one end of his pillow, poured in a little mucilage, and then basted it up, in accordance with the liberal views boys always entertain concerning "basting."

At a little after nine o'clock, when the lights had been extinguished, and a teacher made the nightly rounds, a Camanche scout quietly closed and bolted the iron doors and relighted the hall lamps. Then, with hair-starting war-whoops, the savages began dropping down through the trap-door, which opened from one hall to another in the capacity of fire-escapes.

The Diggers, peacefully studying in their rooms, were summarily ordered into the hall to battle. Every man protested, but the Camanches refused to parley. Then, seizing their weapons, the assailed marched forth to the field of carnage.

Thwack! went the blows of the Camanches.

Thwack! the Diggers.

Thwack! the Camanches.

Thwack! the Diggers.

A stir among the Camanches and then a wild affray.

Crack! crack! go the Diggers' bastings. Crack! feathers fly over the heads and into the eyes of the Camanches, and there many of them stick. The Camanches realize the disadvantages of unprovoked assault with no rules of warfare agreed upon beforehand.

Here and there a Camanche drops his arms and flies to the farther end of the hall, only to fumble unavailingly at the fastenings of the iron door, while a victorious Digger belabors him with the weapon he has just cast aside.

All at once there is descried in the dim light of the hall the boots and never-to-be-mistaken striped pantaloons of Captain Hale swinging through the trap-door!



Captain Hale is drill-sergeant and professor of gymnastics. He has seen years of army service, and is thoroughly imbued with the military spirit. The boys are more afraid of him than of the president and entire board of trustees,—as afraid as they would be of old Nick, himself, in boots and striped pantaloons.

In a flash every Digger had disappeared into his own room and locked the door after him, and the Camanches are left alone, gasping among their feathers, the captain in their midst.

There is a moment of bewilderment followed by a wild stampede toward the iron door, but the Captain has cut off the retreat.

“Young gentlemen, you will remain and clear up the hall. Williams, go to the coal-cellar and bring up the two-bushel basket.”



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Williams is “nobbiest” of third-story boys, bravest of Camanche warriors, but Williams doesn’t dare refuse to go for that basket. During his absence his fellow-savages express strong doubts as to his ever re-appearing upon the battle-field, but he does return, like Regulus to his barrel of spikes.

The Captain has borrowed a number of brooms and dust-pans from the Diggers who, to a man, had retired and been snoring sweetly.

“Now, gentlemen, clear up these feathers!” orders the Captain, as if he was crying, “Forward, march!”

Clearing up those feathers was a tedious and trying process. Any one who has ever chased a worn-out but still lively feather up and down a long hall can imagine the scene with hundreds of them flying about.

“They’re the meanest lot of feathers,—pretty much all fuzz,” said one exhausted brave.

When the last handful had been crowded into the basket, Williams attempted opening the door.

“No; you’re to make your exit the same way you made your ingress,” announced the Captain.

Williams stared blankly at the trap-hole in the ceiling.

Dropping down through a trap-door and going up through the same, with no visible means of support but the floor, are naturally different exercises.

“You’re fertile in expedients; can’t you devise some good way of getting out?” coolly asked the Captain.

“We might stand on each other’s shoulders,” suggested one small savage, whom the blood-thirsty Williams afterward confessed he longed to scalp at this juncture.

“Very well, do so,” ordered the Captain.

Then one of the noble savages stood under the trap-door while one by one the others sprang upon his shoulders, caught the edges of the opening above, wriggled, writhed, contorted his limbs, and finally succeeded in drawing himself up to his own story, while all down the hall, on either side, there appeared at the open ventilators over the doors the eyes of pairs of miserable Diggers, and for every Camanche that wriggled up there resounded a succession of groans.



The Camanches thought, with a thrill of exultation, that the Captain would be obliged to proffer his shoulders for the last man, and would then be left pondering alone, like the goat in the well. That would be something of a revenge, at any rate.

But when only one boy remained, who, to the exasperation of the entire tribe, was the identical small savage who had proposed going up in that ridiculous style, the Captain quietly opened the iron door, and he and the small savage retired with dignity.

The Captain, who had his "good streaks," never reported the Camanches, but they manifested a disposition thereafter to settle quietly upon their own reservation and cultivate the peaceful arts, and they always treated their neighbors, the Diggers, with respect, though unmingled with affection.

[Illustration: "LITTLE BO-PEEP, SHE WENT TO SLEEP."]



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SOLIMIN: A SHIP OF THE DESERT.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

I asked a party of children once the meaning of the word “desert,” and all but one shouted out, “rice pudding and oranges!” having in their minds the dinner which we had just eaten. That one, who was older than the rest, said, rather shyly, “A big piece of land, aunty, isn’t it?” but even he didn’t know how big,—or that there is a difference in spelling between the *dessert* which people eat and the *desert* which sometimes eats people, closing its jaws of sand, and swallowing them up as easily as a boy swallows a cherry.

The biggest desert in the world is in Africa, and is called the Sahara. It is almost as large as the Atlantic Ocean, but instead of water it is all sands and rocks. Like the ocean, it is visited with storms; dreadful gales, when the wind scoops up thousands of tons of sand and drives them forward, burying and crushing all they meet. And it has islands, too—small green patches, where springs bubble through the ground, and ferns and acacias and palm-trees grow. When a traveler sees one of these fertile spots afar off, he feels as a tempest-tossed sailor does at sight of land. It is delightful to quit the hot, baking sun, sit in shadow under the trees, and rest the eyes, long wearied with dazzling sands, on the sweet green and the clear spring. Oases, these islands are called. Long distances divide them. It is often a race for life to get across from one to the other. Sometimes people do not get across! In 1805, a caravan of 2,000 persons died miserably of heat and thirst in the great desert, and the sand covered them up. Do you wonder at my saying that the desert eats men?

Now, you will be puzzled to guess what sort of ship it is which swims this dry ocean. It is the camel—an animal made by God to endure these dreadful regions, in which no other beast of burden can live and travel. I dare say many of you have seen camels in menageries. They are ugly animals, but very strong, swift and untiring. With a load of 800 pounds on his back, a camel will travel for days at the rate of eight miles an hour, which is as fast as an ordinary ship can sail. More wonderful still, he will do this without stopping for food or water. Nature has provided him with an extra stomach, in which he keeps a store of drink, and with a hump on his back, made of jelly-like fat, which, in time of need, is absorbed into the system and appropriated as food. Is it not strange to think of a creature with a cistern and a meat-safe inside him? A horse would be useless in the desert, where no oats or grass can be had; but the brave, patient camel goes steadily on without complaint till the oasis is reached: then he champs his thorn bushes, fills himself from the spring, allows the heavy pack to be fastened on his back again, and is ready for further travel.



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Now you know what sort of a ship it is that I am going to tell you about. It was a camel, named Solimin. He was of a rare and valuable breed, known as “herie,” or coursers, because they are so much swifter than ordinary camels. Solimin’s master, Ahmed, was a poor man. He never could have afforded to buy a full-grown camel of this rare breed; and Solimin had become his through a piece of good fortune. When a little foal, Solimin was found in a lonely place in the desert, standing over the dead body of his mother, who had fallen and perished by the way. Led to the brown tent which was Ahmed’s home, the orphan baby grew up as a child of the family, lay among the little ones at night, and was their pet and plaything all the day. The boys taught him to kneel, to rise, to carry burdens, to turn this way and that at a signal. The girls hung a necklace of blessed shells around his neck, saved for him the best of the food, sang him songs (which he was supposed to enjoy), and daily kissed and stroked his gentle nose and eyes. As he grew big and strong, the pride of his owners grew with him. Not another family of the tribe possessed a herie. Once and again, Ahmed was offered a large price for him, but he rejected it with disdain.

“Would I sell my son—the son of my heart?” he said. “Neither will I part with Solimin. By the Prophet, I swear it.”

Of all the dwellers in the brown tent Solimin loved best Ahmed himself, and his eldest son, Mustapha. With them he was docile as a lamb; but if strangers drew near, or persons he did not like, he became restive and fierce, screamed, laid back his ears, and kicked with his strong hind legs. A kick from a camel is no joke, I can tell you. All the desert guides knew Solimin, and, for his sake, Ahmed was often hired to accompany caravans. Nay, once, at Cairo, Solimin was chosen to carry the sacred person of the Khedive on a day’s excursion up the Nile bank, which event served the tribe as a boast for months afterward.

It was the year after this journey to Cairo that Ahmed met with a terrible adventure. He and Mustapha, making their way home after a long journey, had lain down to sleep away the noontide hours, according to the custom of desert travelers. Their camels were tethered beside them, all seemed secure and peaceful, when, sudden as the lowering of a cloud, a party of Arabs, belonging to a wild tribe at enmity with all men, pounced upon them. Ahmed and his son defended themselves manfully, but what could two men, surprised in sleep, do against a dozen? In five minutes all was over. The assailants vanished in a cloud of dust, and Ahmed, who had been struck down in the rush, recovered his senses, to find camels, baggage, belt, money, everything gone, and Mustapha wounded and motionless on the earth beside him.

Ahmed thought him dead. They were alone in the desert, a hundred miles from home, without food or water, and with a groan of despair he sat down beside his son’s body, bowed his head, and waited until death should come to him also. An Arab believes in fate, and gives up once for all when misfortune occurs.



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But Mustapha stirred, and Ahmed at once sprang up. There was nothing he could do for the poor boy, except to chafe and rub his hands; but this was something, for presently Mustapha revived enough to speak.

“Are they gone?” he asked.

“Yes, the accursed ones, they are gone, with all our goods and with Solimin! The Prophet’s curse light upon them!” And passing from despair to fury, Ahmed threw sand upon his head, and flung himself on the ground in helpless rage. Mustapha joined in with groans and lamentations.

When the father and son grew calmer, they began to discuss their situation. Ahmed knew of a small unfrequented oasis, about twenty miles away. It was their only chance of safety, but could they reach it?

“I *think* I can walk,” declared Mustapha, tying up his wounded leg in a fold torn from his turban. But he limped sadly, and his tightly pressed lips showed pain as he moved. He was faint with hunger beside. Neither of the men had eaten since sunrise.

Suddenly Mustapha uttered a joyful cry, and lifted something from the earth.

“The Prophet be praised!” he cried. “My father, here is food. The robbers have dropped a bag of dates.”

Sure enough, there it lay, a heavy bag of dates, shaken off from some camel’s pack during the struggle. Heavy as it was, and hard to carry, Ahmed would fain have had it larger. It was their safety from starvation. A handful of its contents satisfied hunger, and gave them strength to begin their walk. What a walk it was! Poor Mustapha lay down every half-hour from pain and weakness; the sand was heavy, the darkness puzzled them. When morning broke, they had not accomplished more than half the distance. All through the hot day-time they lay panting on the ground, eating now and then a date, tormented with thirst and heat; and when evening came, they dragged themselves to their feet again, and recommenced their painful journey. Step by step, hour by hour, each harder and longer than the last, moment by moment they grew more feeble, less able to bear up, till it seemed as though they could no longer struggle on. At last, the morning broke. Ahmed raised his blood-shot eyes, seized Mustapha’s arm, and pointed. There, not a hundred yards away, was the oasis, its trees and bushes outlined against the sky.

Poor Mustapha was so spent that his father had to drag him across the short dividing space. It was a small oasis, and not very fertile; its well was shallow and scanty, but no ice-cooled sherbet ever seemed more delicious than did its brackish waters to the parched tongues of the exhausted men.



All day and all night they lay under the shadow of the cactuses and the acacia-trees, rousing only to drink, and falling asleep again immediately. Shade, and sleep, and water seemed the only things in the world worth having just then.

The second day they slept less, but it was nearly a week before they could be said to be wide-awake again. Such a pair of scare-crows as they looked! Ahmed was almost naked. The robbers had taken part of his clothes, and the desert thorns the rest. Haggard, wild, blackened by the sun, they gazed at each other with horror; each thought, "Do I look like that?" and each tried to hide from the other his own dismay.



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They could never tell afterward how long they remained at the oasis. It seemed years, but I suppose it could not have been more than weeks. All day long they looked wistfully toward the horizon, in hopes of a caravan, but the caravan never came. Slowly the dates dwindled in the bag; slowly the precious water diminished in the well; a little longer, and starvation would be upon them. They scarcely spoke to each other those last days, but sat each by himself in a sort of dull despair. At night, when they fell asleep, they dreamed of food, and woke in the morning to feel themselves still hungry. It was horrible!

Then came a morning when they rose to find the hard desert outline, which they knew so well, vanished and gone, and in its stead a smooth, shining lake, fringed with trees and dotted with feathery, fairy islands. So near it seemed, and so real, that it was as though they heard the ripple of the water and the rustling of the wind in the tree-boughs. Mustapha stared as though his eyes would burst from his head; then he gave a wild cry, and was rushing away; but his father held him fast.

“Stay, my son! Stay, Mustapha! It is no lake,—it is a device of Satan. What you behold is the mirage, spread by devils for men’s destruction.”

“Let me go!” shrieked Mustapha, writhing and struggling.

But even as he strove, the soft water-outlines shifted and trembled; the lake rose in air, melted, and sailed off into curling mists; the trees, the whole fair picture, dissolved, and the well-remembered sands and black rocks took its place. With a cry of horror, Mustapha slid through his father’s arms to the earth, hid his face, and cried like a child.

[Illustration: “THEY SAW THE FORM OF A GIGANTIC CAMEL.”]

Next morning, only one date was left in the bag. Ahmed put it in his son’s hand with a mournful look.

“Eat, my son,” he said; “eat, and then we will die. Allah il Allah!”

A long silence followed; there seemed nothing more to say. Suddenly, from afar off, came to their ears the tinkle of a bell.

Mustapha raised his head.

“Is it the mirage again, my father?” he asked. “For it seems to me that I hear the bell from the neck of Solimin, our camel.”

Eagerly they listened. Again the bell tinkled, and, looking through the bushes, they saw, floating toward them, as it seemed, the form of a gigantic camel. Soundless and still, it moved rapidly along. Behind, but much farther away, other forms could be seen, still dim and indistinct, veiled by the mist of driving sand.



Suddenly Mustapha gave a start.

“My father,” he cried, in an excited whisper, “it *is* Solimin! I do not mistake! What other camel ever resembled Solimin? Do you not see his lofty hump,—his arched neck? Does not the bell tinkle as with the voice of home?”

Then, half raising himself, he gave, with all the power of his voice, the well-known call.



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Solimin—for it was indeed he—paused as the sound caught his ears, and snuffed the wind. Again came the call; he wheeled, plunged, threw his rider, dashed forward, broke through the bushes, and in a second was on his knees before his old master.

“Up, up, my father! there is no time to lose!” cried Mustapha, grown stronger in a moment. “Up, up! for the robbers are close upon us!”

In fact, wild cries and clouds of dust showed that the foe had taken the alarm, and were hurrying on. But already Ahmed and Mustapha were mounted, and Solimin, like a ship at full sail, was speeding away with them. And where was the camel could overtake him, even when he was loaded double? Fast and swift his long, swinging trot bore them onward, and before two hours were gone, all traces of the pursuers had disappeared behind them, and they were free to turn their course toward the brown tents where rest, and food, and welcome had waited so long for their coming, and where, after a little time, their hardships and sufferings seemed to them only like a bad dream.

As for Solimin, he hardly could be more tenderly treated or beloved than before this adventure; but if the freshest water, the prickliest furze,—if bowls of sour milk;—if a triple necklace of shells,—if brushing and grooming,—if soft pats from childish fingers, and sweet names murmured in his ears by girlish voices can make a camel happy, then is Solimin the happiest of heries. Solimin no longer, however. His name is changed to “The Blessed,” in memory of the day when, like a stately ship, he came over the desert sea, and bore his starving masters to home, and life, and liberty.

BELINDA BLONDE

BY LAURA E. RICHARDS.

Belinda Blonde was a beautiful doll,
With rosy-red cheeks and a flaxen poll;
Her lips were red, and her eyes were blue,
But to say she was happy would not be true;
For she pined for love of the great big Jack
Who lived in the box so grim and black.
She never had looked on the Jack his face,
But she fancied him shining with beauty and grace;
And all the day long she would murmur and pout,
Because Jack-in-the-box would never come out.
“Oh, beautiful, beautiful Jack-in-the-box!
Undo your bolts and undo your locks!
The cupboard is shut, and there’s no one about;
Oh, Jack-in-the-box! jump out, jump out!”
But alas, alas for Belinda Blonde!



And alas, alas for her dreamings fond!
There soon was an end to all her doubt,
For Jack-in-the-box really *did* jump out!—
Out with a crash, and out with a spring,
Half black and half scarlet, a horrible thing;
Out with a yell and out with a shout,
His great goggle-eyes glaring wildly about.
“Alas! alas!” cried Belinda Blonde;
“Is this the end of my dreamings fond?
Is this my love, and is this my dear,
This hideous, glowering monster here?
Alas! alas!” cried Belinda fair.
She wrung her hands and she tore her hair,
Till at length, as the dolls who were witnesses say,
She fell on the ground and she fainted away.



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MORAL.

Now all you dolls, both little and big,
With china crown and with curling wig,
Before you give way to affection fond,
Remember the fate of Belinda Blonde;
And unless you wish to get terrible knocks,
Don't set your heart on a Jack-in-the-box.

THE LONDON DUST-MAN

BY ALEXANDER WAINWRIGHT.

There he goes! A dusky gloom hangs over the roofs of great London City; a similar gloom fills my room and seems to have touched all the furniture with smoky age, and as I look down from the window into the gloomy street, I see him coming along slowly, and crying in a voice like a plea for help in affliction: "Dust-oh!—dust-oh!—dust-oh!—dust-oh!"

Not one of the many citizens who are passing notices him, or finds anything strange in that plaintive cry. The people who live in the city see him day after day, and remember how, in their childhood, they had terrifying notions of his weakness for kidnapping and other mysterious wickednesses. They know better now, and hurry past him with scarcely a glance; but to the American visitor he is something of a curiosity.

[Illustration: "DUST-OH!"]

When the London fog is gray we cannot see him very far off, for he, too, is gray from head to foot with ash-dust, and as he approaches us he comes out of the mist like a phantom, though in reality he is a substantial, square-built, deep-chested fellow, shod with enormous Bluecher shoes (the soles of which are bright with nails), and clad in a loose blouse and trousers, that are tied up about the knees. The blouse is open at the chest, and is lifted to the waist by his big, brown hands, which are tucked in his trouser pockets, and his head is covered by the kind of hat that sailors call a sou'wester. His only ornament is a pair of ear-rings; and with his head thrown back he saunters along the street by the side of his cart, repeating in measured tones his cry, "Dust-oh-oh! dust-oh!"

Now and then he stops at a house, and his mate—he has a mate, who is as much like him as pea is like pea—descends into the cellar, bringing forth the ashes and refuse that have accumulated in twenty-four hours, and when the cart, which is a square, box-like affair, is filled he starts for home with his load.



What a queer home it is! It is on the outskirts of the city, far away from the finer streets and buildings. A large space of ground is as gray and dusty as an African or Western desert, and is broken by mounds of ashes, some of which are only a few feet high, while others are almost as high as houses,—quite as high, in fact, as the dismal little shanties on the edge of the reservation in which the dust-man and his fellows live. Other carts and other dust-men are constantly coming and going, dumping one load and then returning to the city for another, and as soon as a load is dumped it is attacked by a crowd of men, women and children, who with shovels, rakes and hooks, turn it over and over, and raise stifling clouds of dust.

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The reader may think that the collections made by the dust-man are valueless, but such is not the case.

There are more than 300,000 inhabited houses in London, consuming more than 3,500,000 tons of coal a year, and besides the ashes from this great quantity of fuel, the dust-man gathers the other refuse of the houses. He is employed by a contractor, who agrees with the corporation to remove the ashes, *etc.*, out of the city, and the contractor divides every load into six parts, as follows: Soil, or fine dust, which is sold to brick-makers for making bricks and to farmers for manure; brieze, or cinders, sold to brick-makers for burning brick; rags, bones and old metals, sold to marine-store dealers; old tin and iron vessels, sold to trunk-makers for clamps; bricks, oyster and other shells, sold for foundations and road-building; and old boots and shoes, sold to the manufacturers of Prussian blue.

Sometimes, much more valuable things than these are found, and the reader may remember the romance that Charles Dickens made out of a London dust-man—"Our Mutual Friend."

It is in sifting the different parts of a load that the men, women and children, are employed; they are as busy as ants; mere babies and wrinkled old dames take a part in the labor, and all of them are so covered with dust and ashes that they are anything but pleasant to contemplate, though, as a rule, they are useful, honest, and industrious members of society.

"Dustie" is what the Londoners familiarly call the dust-man, and only a few know in what ignorance and poverty he lives. One would think that he would work himself into a better occupation, but his family have been dust-men for generations, and the generations after him are not likely to change.

HUCKLEBERRY.

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON.

More than a hundred and sixty-eight years ago, there lived a curious personage called "Old Riddler." His real name was unknown to the people in that part of the country where he dwelt; but this made no difference, for the name given to him was probably just as good as his own. Indeed, I am quite sure that it was better, for it meant something, and very few people have names that mean anything.

He was called Old Riddler for two reasons. In the first place, he was an elderly man; secondly, he was the greatest fellow to ask riddles that you ever heard of. So, this name fitted him very well.



Old Riddler had some very peculiar characteristics,—among others, he was a gnome. Living underground for the greater part of his time, he had ample opportunities of working out curious and artful riddles, which he used to try on his fellow-gnomes; and if they liked them, he would go above-ground and propound his conundrums to the country people, who sometimes guessed them, but not often.

The fact is, that those persons who wished to be on good terms with the old gnome never guessed his riddles. They knew that they would please him better by giving them up.



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He took such a pleasure in telling the answers to his riddles, that no truly kind-hearted person would deprive him of it, by trying to solve them.

“You see,” as Old Riddler used to say, when talked to on the subject, “if I take all the trouble to make up these riddles, it’s no more than fair that I should be allowed to give the answers.”

So, the old gnome, who was not much higher than a two-year-old child, though he had quite a venerable head and face, was very much encouraged by the way the people treated him, and when a person happened to be very kind and appreciative, and gave a good deal of attention to one of his conundrums, that person would be pretty sure, before long, to feel glad that he had met Old Riddler.

[Illustration: “DON’T YOU SEE?’ ASKED THE OLD FELLOW.”]

There were thousands of ways in which the gnomes could benefit the country-folks, especially those who had little farms or gardens. Sometimes Old Riddler, who was a person of great influence in his tribe, would take a company of gnomes, under the garden of some one to whom he wished to do a favor, and they would put their little hands up through the earth and pull down all the weeds, root-foremost, so that when the owner went out in the morning, he would find his garden as clear of weeds as the bottom of a dinner-plate.

Of course, any one who has habits of this kind must eventually become a general favorite, and this was the case with Old Riddler.

One day, he made up a splendid riddle, and, after he had told it to all the gnomes, he hurried up to propound it to some human person.

He was in such haste that he actually forgot his hat, although it was late in the fall, and he wore his cloak. He had not gone far through the fields before he met a young goose-girl, named Lois. She was a poor girl, and was barefooted; and as Old Riddler saw her in her scanty dress, standing on the cold ground, watching her geese, he thought to himself: “Now I do hope that girl has wit enough to understand my riddle, for I feel that I would like to get interested in her.”

So, approaching Lois, he made a bow and politely asked her: “Can you tell me, my good little girl, why a ship full of sailors, at the bottom of the sea, is like the price of beef?”

The goose-girl began to scratch her head, through the old handkerchief she wore instead of a bonnet, and tried to think of the answer.

“Because it’s ‘low,’” said she, after a minute or two.



“Oh no!” said the gnome. “That’s not it. You can give it up, you know, if you can’t think of the answer.”

“I know!” said Lois. “Because it’s sunk.”

“Not at all,” said Old Riddler, a little impatiently. “Now come, my good girl, you’d much better give it up. You will just hack at the answer until you make it good for nothing.”

“Well, what is it?” said Lois.

“I will tell you,” said the gnome. “Now, pay attention to the answer: Because it has gone down. Don’t you see?” asked the old fellow, with a gracious smile.



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“Yes, I see,” said the goose-girl, scratching her head again; “but my answer was nearly as good as yours.”

“Oh, dear me!” said Old Riddler, “that wont do. It’s of no use at all to give an answer that is nearly good enough. It must be exactly right, or it’s worthless. I am afraid, young girl, that you don’t care much for riddles.”

“Yes I do,” said the goose-girl; “I make ’em.”

“Make them?” exclaimed Old Riddler, in great surprise.

“Yes,” replied Lois, “I’m out here all day with these geese, and I haven’t anything else to do, and so I make riddles. Do you want to hear one of them?”

“Yes, I would like it very much indeed,” said the gnome.

“Well, then, here’s one: If the roofs of houses were flat instead of slanting, why would the rain be like a chained dog?”

“Give it up,” said Old Riddler.

“Because it couldn’t run off,” answered Lois.

“Very good, very good,” said the gnome. “Why, that’s nearly as good as some of mine. And now, my young friend, didn’t you feel pleased to have me give up that riddle and let you tell me the answer, straight and true, just as you knew it ought to be?”

“Oh yes!” said the goose-girl.

“Well, then,” continued Old Riddler, “remember this: What pleases you will often please other people. And never guess another riddle.”

Lois, although a rough country girl, was touched by the old man’s earnestness and his gentle tones.

“I never will,” said she.

“That’s a very well-meaning girl,” said Old Riddler to himself as he walked away, “although she hasn’t much polish. I’ll come sometimes and help her a little with her conundrums.”

Old Riddler had a son named Huckleberry. He was a smart, bright young fellow, and resembled his father in many respects. When he went home, the old gnome told his son about Lois, and tried to impress on his mind the same lesson he had taught the young girl. Huckleberry was a very good little chap, but he was quick-witted and rather



forward, and often made his father very angry by guessing his riddles; and so he needed a good deal of parental counsel.

Nearly all that night, Huckleberry thought about what his father had told him. But not at all as Old Riddler intended he should.

“What a fine thing it must be,” said Huckleberry to himself, “to go out into the world and teach people things. I’m going to try it myself.”

So, the next day, he started off on his mission. The first person he saw was a very small girl playing under a big oak-tree.

When the small girl saw the young gnome, she was frightened and drew back, standing up as close against the tree as she could get.

But up stepped Master Huckleberry, with all the airs and graces he could command.

“Can you tell me, my little miss,” said he, “why an elephant with a glass globe of gold-fish tied to his tail is like a monkey with one pink eye and one of a mazarine blue?”



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“No,” said the small girl, “I don’t know. Go away!”

“Oh,” said Huckleberry, “perhaps that’s too hard for you. I know some nice little ones, in words of one syllable. Why is a red man with a green hat like a good boy who has a large duck in a small pond?”

“Go away!” said the small girl. “I came here to pick flowers. I don’t know riddles.”

“Perhaps that one was too easy,” said Huckleberry, kindly. “I have all sorts. Here is one with longer words, divided into syllables. I’ll say it slowly for you: What is the difference between a mag-nan-i-mous ship-mate and the top-most leaf-let on your grand-mother’s bar-ber-ry bush?”

“I haven’t got any grandmother,” said she.

“Oh, well! Any grandmother will do,” said Huckleberry.

“I can’t guess it,” said the small girl, who was now beginning to lose her fear of the funny little fellow. “I never guessed any riddles. I’m not old enough.”

“Very well, then,” said Huckleberry, “I’ll tell you what I’ll do. Let’s sit down here under the tree, and I’ll tell you one of father’s riddles, and give you the answer. His riddles are better than mine, because none of mine have any answers. I don’t put answers to them, for I can never think of any good ones. I met a boy once, and told him a lot of my riddles; and he learned them, and went about asking people to guess them, and when the people gave them up, he couldn’t tell them the answers, because there were none, and that made everybody mad. He told one of the riddles to his grandmother,—I think it was the one about the pink-eyed monkey and the wagon-load of beans—”

[Illustration: THE BOY AND HIS GRANDMOTHER.]

“No,” said the small girl; “the elephant and the gold-fish was the other part of the pink-eyed monkey one.”

“Oh, it don’t make any difference,” said Huckleberry, “I don’t join my riddles together the same way every time. Sometimes I use the gold-fish and elephant with the last part of one riddle, and sometimes with another. As there’s no answer, it don’t matter. I begin a good many of my best riddles with the elephant, for it makes a fine opening. But, as I was going to tell you, this boy told one of my riddles to his grandmother, and she liked it very much; but when she found out that there was no answer to it, she gave him a good box on the ear, and that boy has never liked me since. But now I’ll tell you a story. That is, it’s like a story, but it’s really a riddle. Father made it and everybody thinks it’s one of his best. There was once a fair lady of renown who was engaged to be married to a prince. And when the wedding-day came round—they were to be married in one of the prince’s palaces in the mountains—she was so long getting dressed—you see she



dressed in one of her father's palaces, down in the valley—that she was afraid she would be late, so as soon as her veil was pinned on, she ran down to the stables, threw a wolf-skin on the back



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of one of the fieriest of the chargers, and springing on him, she dashed away. She wasn't used to harnessing horses, and was in such a hurry that she forgot all about the bridle, and so, as she was dashing away, she found she couldn't steer the animal, and he didn't go anywhere near the prince's palace, but galloped on, and on, and on, every minute taking her farther and farther away from where she wanted to go. She couldn't turn the charger, and she couldn't stop him, though she tore off pieces of her veil, and tried to put them around his nose, but it was no good. So when the wedding-party had waited and waited and waited, the prince got angry and married another lady, and nobody knows where the fair lady of renown went to, although there are some people who say that she's a-galloping yet, and trying to get her veil around the charger's nose. Now, why was it that that fair lady of renown never married? Answer: Because she had no bridal. You can say either bri-d-a-l or bri-d-l-e, because they both sound alike, and if she had had either one of them, she would have been married. This is a pretty long riddle, but it's easier than mine, because it's all fixed up right, with the answer to it and everything. You like it better than mine, don't you?"

The small girl did not answer, and when Huckleberry looked around, he saw that she was asleep.

"Poor little thing!" said Huckleberry, softly, to himself. "I guess I gave her a little too much riddle to begin with. Her mind isn't formed enough yet. But it's pretty hard on me. I wanted to teach somebody something, and here she's gone to sleep. I wish I could find that goose-girl. If father could teach her something, I'm sure I could."

[Illustration: THE FAIR LADY OF RENOWN.]

So he went walking through the fields, and pretty soon he saw Lois, standing among her geese, who were feeding on the grass.

Huckleberry skipped up to her as lively as a cricket.

"Can you tell me," said he, "why an elephant with a glass globe of gold-fish tied to his tail is like the Lord High Admiral of the British Isles?"

"Was the globe of gold-fish all the elephant owned?" asked the goose-girl, thoughtfully.

"Yes," said Huckleberry. "But I don't see what that's got to do with it."

"Then the answer is," said Lois, without noticing this last remark, "because all his property is entailed."

"Well, I de-clare!" cried Huckleberry, opening his eyes as wide as they would go, "if you didn't guess it! Why, I didn't know it had an answer."



“I wish it hadn’t had an answer,” said the goose-girl, suddenly stamping her foot. “I wish there had never been any answer to it in the whole world. It was only yesterday that I promised Old Riddler that I would never guess another riddle, and here I’ve done it! It’s too bad!”

“I don’t think it is,” cried Huckleberry, waving his little cap around by the tassel. “It’s all very well for father not to want people to guess his riddles, because they’ve got answers and he knows what they are. But I would never have known that any of mine had an answer if you hadn’t guessed this one. If you had had a riddle like this one, wouldn’t you have been glad to have some one tell you the answer?”



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“Yes, I would,” said Lois.

“Well, then, my good girl, remember this: If a thing gives you pleasure, it’s very likely that it will give somebody else pleasure. So let somebody else have a chance, and the next time you hear a riddle that you think the owner has no answer for, guess it for him, if you can. Good-by!”

And away went Master Huckleberry, skipping and singing and snapping his fingers and twirling his cap, until he came to a wide crack in the ground, when he rolled himself up like a huckleberry dumpling, and went tumbling and bouncing down into the underground home of the gnomes.

“Get out of the way!” said he to the gnomes he passed, as he proudly strode to his father’s apartments. “I’m going to make a report. For the first time in my life I’ve taught somebody something.”

When Huckleberry left her, the goose-girl stood silently in the midst of her geese. Her brow was overcast.

“How’s anybody to do two things that can’t both be done?” she exclaimed at last. “I’ll have nothing more to do with riddles as long as I live.”

HOW SIR WILLIAM PHIPS FOUND THE TREASURE IN THE SEA.

BY S.G.W. BENJAMIN.

There is scarcely anything more exciting to the imagination than tales of hidden treasure, especially treasure lost at sea. The mystery, the wonder, the adventure, the tragedy, the seemingly boundless possibilities connected with riches lost by shipwreck or war, and yet not gone beyond the hope of recovery, have given rise to a multitude of romantic stories, some of them pure fictions, but many founded more or less on fact.

I have known several cases in which treasure lost by piracy or shipwreck has been recovered after a century or more. Some years ago a company of men from Boston made two cruises to the shoals of the Silver Key on the Bahama Banks, a spot noted for shipwrecks. They had some clue to a treasure-laden ship which had foundered there long ago. The first trip was unsuccessful, but on the second voyage the wreck was found. Divers, armed with modern apparatus, spent several days in the quest, but in vain, until, finally, just as the last diver was about to give the signal to be drawn up, he leaned against what seemed only the barnacle-encrusted end of a beam; but suddenly it gave way, and numbers of golden doubloons rolled out at his feet. Considerable sums rewarded further search in the sand-filled and decaying carcass of the old ship;

but exactly how much was realized is known only to the discoverers, who kept the matter secret, and thus evaded paying a great part of the share due to the British crown, in whose dominion the treasure was found.



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To Boston also belonged, some two centuries ago, the celebrated treasure-hunter, William Phips. He was one of twenty-one sons, and was born at Woolwich, Maine, in 1651. Of a bold, adventurous spirit, his first and last passion was to follow the sea, although until he was eighteen years of age he was forced to tend sheep. He then apprenticed himself to a ship-carpenter for four years, taking a trip down the coast now and then, and watching his chance for the next move. He is said to have been inspired by an idea that celebrity and fortune were to be his destiny; and when his apprenticeship was over, he went to Boston and worked at ship-building for a year, until he had the good luck to win the favor of a rich widow. Her he married, and, with the increase of means thus obtained, Phips launched into various enterprises, which did not always turn out well. But he never lost faith in his guiding star, and often told his good wife that "he should yet become commander of a king's ship, and owner of a fair brick house in the Green Lane of Boston"—at that time the Beacon Street of the plucky little town.

Ten years went by, and Phips seemed but little nearer the realization of his dreams than while tending sheep on the hill-sides of Maine, when the prospect suddenly brightened in an unexpected quarter. This was the time when Spanish and Portuguese galleons were crossing the ocean laden with silver from Potosi and diamonds from Brazil. Pirates and privateers scoured the seas to rob the treasure-ships, and great expeditions were sent out by England in war times for the same purpose. The imaginations of men ran riot during this feverish state of things, and people were ready to believe almost any yarn "spun" in the forecandle.

Phips was just the man to be moved by such tales, and, when he learned of a certain rich wreck on the Bahamas, he at once fitted out a small vessel and went in search of it. He found and recovered the treasure, but the amount was small, being only large enough to whet his appetite for more.

While at the Bahamas, he was told of another Spanish vessel, wrecked off Puerto Plata more than fifty years before, with a much larger treasure. His means not being sufficient for this expedition, Phips sailed for England and made direct application to the Admiralty to aid him in his search. So ably did this true son of the sea represent his cause, that he was given command of the "Rose Algier," a ship mounting eighteen guns and carrying a hundred men. Thus Phips's first dream came to pass; he was now captain of a king's ship, with a roving commission.

The exact position of the wreck was unknown, and the untrustworthy character of the crew added great difficulties to the undertaking. It should be remembered, also, that diving-bells, diving-armor, and the like, were then unknown. But the courage and indomitable perseverance of Phips now came into play, and he had a capital chance to show the stuff of which he was made.

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Soon after they had sailed, the crew came aft, armed, and determined to force Phips to yield to their wishes, which probably were that they should all turn pirates. Without giving them time to deliberate, Phips flew at their leader, hurled him to the deck and dispatched him on the spot—a deed so prompt and daring that it awed the mutineers into submission for the time. One who has never seen a mutiny at sea can form but little idea of its desperate character, and the rapidity of action and unflinching nerve required where men are shut up alone on the wide ocean with a quarrel so deadly in its nature that no compromise can be thought of for a moment, and no quarter can be allowed with safety to him who gives it.

But the next plot to seize the ship was even more dangerous. The “Rose Algier,” being in need of repairs, was taken to a cove in a small uninhabited island, and careened on one side in order to reach the damaged place. Most of the stores were moved on shore, the ship was hove down, and a bridge was laid between the deck and the land. Under the pretense of pastime, most of the crew now betook themselves to the woods, and there plotted to return at seven in the evening, seize the ship, force Phips and eight faithful men on shore, leave them there to perish, and themselves sail away on a piratical cruise. But the carpenter was one of the few who stood by the captain, and yet they could not risk putting to sea without him. They sent for him, therefore, on some pretext, and, having him in their power, offered him the choice of instant death or of joining his fortunes with theirs. He begged for half an hour to think about it, and said that at any rate he should have to return on board for his tool-chest. They granted his request, and sent two men with him to watch his movements. Soon afterward, he was suddenly taken with a pretended cramp or colic, and in great seeming agony rushed into the cabin for medicine; there he found Phips, and in a few rapid words revealed the plot. In less than two hours the mutineers would be marching on the ship. Not an instant was to be lost. Immediately the guns were loaded and trained to command the shore and all the approaches to the stores; the bridge was taken in, and when the mutineers appeared they found themselves caught. In tones of thunder, Phips bade them not to stir or he would mow them down with his batteries; nor did they dare to disobey. The bridge was again laid down, and the eight loyal men brought back the stores to the ship. When all was safely on board again, the mutineers were told that they were to be left to the fate they had intended for their commander. In despair at so terrible a prospect, the miserable men threw down their arms, and protested their willingness to submit if Phips would but relent and not sail away without them. After a long parley, he agreed to let them come on board, they having first given up their arms. But, with such a crew, further search after the treasure

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was useless. Phips, therefore, sailed for Jamaica, changed the crew, and again weighed anchor for Hispaniola. There he was lucky enough to find an old Spaniard who told him that the wreck was somewhere about a reef a few leagues north of Puerto de la Plata. Phips immediately went to the spot. But his search for the wreck was long and unavailing, the season was changing, and the "Rose Algier," now but half manned and in unseaworthy condition, was unfit to prowl around a dangerous reef in the hurricane season. So, without having accomplished the object of so much exertion and anxiety, Phips was obliged to return to England, a baffled but not a discouraged man.

Very naturally, it was impossible for our adventurer to obtain another English ship-of-war, although he received much credit for the courage and skill shown in controlling the mutineers, and one would conclude that the treasure of the old Spanish galleon would after this have remained at the bottom of the sea, the exclusive possession of the sharks, the turtles and the barracudas. But with rare pertinacity Phips returned to the charge, and at last persuaded the Duke of Albemarle and several other wealthy noblemen to his views. They formed a company and obtained a patent from King James II., giving them the sole right to all wrecked treasure they might find during a certain number of years. Then they fitted out a ship and tender, the latter to cruise in coves and shoal water, and Phips invented several rude contrivances, for dragging and diving, far inferior to the means now used for such purposes. Thus prepared, he sailed once more for Hispaniola. There a small, stout boat was built, and with it and a crew of Indian divers the tender was despatched to the reef where the wreck was said to be. The tender was anchored in good holding-ground at a safe distance from the reef, and the men then rowed slowly in the boat around it, carefully examining the depths below for signs of the wrecked galleon. The waters in the West Indies are very clear, and during a calm objects can be seen at a considerable depth. The rocks were of singular form, rising nearly to the surface, but with sides so steep that any vessel striking them would be liable to go down many fathoms below the reach of the most expert diver. The only hope was that the wreck might have lodged on some projecting ledge. But the closest observation, long continued, failed to reveal any sign of the object so eagerly sought, although the water was perfectly calm.

[Illustration: CAPTAIN PHIPS THREATENS TO SAIL AWAY FROM THE MUTINEERS.]

At length; a curious sea-plant cropping out of a crevice in the sides of the reef caught the eye of one of the crew, and he sent down an Indian to bring it up. When the diver returned to the surface he reported that he had seen a number of brass cannon lying tangled among the sea-weed on a ledge. That was enough. Inspired with the greatest enthusiasm, diver after diver plunged below to be the first to discover the treasure, and ere long one of them brought up an ingot of silver worth several hundred pounds. Transported with success they left a buoy to mark the spot, and made all sail to carry

the glad tidings to Phips. He would not credit the tale until he had seen the ingot, when he exclaimed, "Thanks be to God, we are all made!"

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Every man was at once enlisted in the service of fishing for the treasure. The bullion was discovered first; after that, in the bottom of the hold, the sea-miners found the coin in bags, which had been so long under water that they were encrusted with a stony shell, hard as rock. This was broken with crowbars, revealing gold, jewels, and “pieces of eight,” in glittering abundance. The last day’s work brought to light twenty massive silver ingots, and the whole amount recovered was somewhat over three hundred thousand pounds, a sum equal in the values of our time to five millions of dollars. Nor was this all the riches concealed in the wreck; but Phips was obliged to return to England before completing the business. Provisions had run low, and the presence of so vast a treasure on board had stimulated the cupidity of the crew to a dangerous degree, so that each day of delay in reaching port was full of hazard. Every precaution was taken to guard the treasure, but what probably prevented the crew from rising was the promise Phips gave them, when matters had become most suspicious, that they should each receive a share of the profits in addition to his wages, even if his own portion were thus swallowed up. Phips reached England without mishap, thus bringing to a successful termination one of the most daring exploits of its sort that were ever attempted.

When the profits were divided, Phips received as his share a sum that would now be equal to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The Duke of Albemarle presented Mrs. Phips with a magnificent gold cup worth fifteen thousand dollars, and King James expressed great pleasure at the honesty and ability of Phips in the conduct of such a difficult undertaking, and as a reward for bringing such a treasure into England granted him the honor of knighthood, and offered him important employment in the royal service. Fortune had indeed smiled on the shepherd-boy of Maine.

But Phips was never ashamed of his humble origin, nor in all his wanderings did he forget his native land. And now, instead of remaining to enjoy further honors near the throne, he returned to his family, bearing the important commission of High Sheriff of New England. He now built the brick house on Green Lane which he had promised his wife fifteen years before. The name of this Street was eventually changed to Charter Street, in memory of his efforts to have the charter of the Massachusetts colony restored.

Sir William Phips afterward engaged in the wars between the American colonies of France and England, and at the head of an expedition of eight ships captured Port Royal. A subsequent enterprise against Quebec failed from a combination of causes, some of them beyond the control of Phips. After this Sir William went again to England, where he was appointed Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the New England colonies; and his return home with these new honors and titles was made the occasion of a day of solemn thanksgiving.



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His governorship having ceased, Sir William Phips sailed for England, and was meditating a fresh expedition in search of shipwrecked treasure when he was taken suddenly ill, and died at the age of forty-five. While his adventurous career affords us little hope that any of us will ever, like him, discover shipwrecked wealth, it gives us a fine example of what perseverance combined with intelligence, courage and honesty can accomplish in the face of great difficulties; for it was a union of all these qualities which enabled Sir William Phips to wrest fortune and honors from the ocean depths.

[Illustration]

SOME FISHING-BIRDS OF FLORIDA.

BY MRS. MARY TREAT.

All along the St. John's River, during the winter, may be seen birds catching fish for a living. They are more numerous here in winter than in summer, because, upon the freezing of the waters at the North, they flock to Florida to carry on their fishing in the St. John's, which, never freezing, contains an abundance of fish.

The belted kingfisher comes close to the house, where I can watch him fishing as I sit at the window. The river is five miles across here, and for several yards from the shore it is quite shallow, so that a wharf two hundred and fifty feet long was necessary to make it easy to launch our small rowboats. A railing extends along the side of the wharf, and upon this railing the kingfisher perches, watching for his prey.

[Illustration: THE BELTED KINGFISHER.]

He understands fishing much better than most boys, for he seldom misses his game. He takes his position on the railing, and fixes his eyes upon the finny tribes below, and when a fish that suits him comes within his range, he dives into the water and brings it up with his stout beak, and then beats it upon the railing to make it limp and tender before swallowing.

It is not so very surprising that he is such an expert fisher, for during the winter it is his only occupation; he has no family to look after now, and he is so very selfish and quarrelsome that he will not allow any of his brothers to fish near him. He considers the whole length of the wharf his fishing-post, and his brothers must not trespass upon his grounds; if they do, he chases them away with a rattling, clanging noise, enough to frighten any fisher not stronger than himself.

In the spring he takes a partner in his business, for now it is time to raise a family, and he knows he can never do this alone. He is very good and kind to this partner, and helps her dig a hole in a clayey bank for the nest, and then takes his turn in sitting upon



the eggs. After the eggs are hatched, they both catch fish to feed the young until they are old enough to feed themselves.

The American flamingo, with his gorgeous scarlet feathers, is a superb fellow. He is very shy, and peculiarly afraid of man. On account of its fine apparel, it has been more closely pursued than almost any other bird. It does not go north like some of the herons, but Audubon says it has occasionally been seen in South Carolina. Its constant home, however, is in the southern part of Florida and along the Gulf coast.



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Like the herons, of which I told you in ST. NICHOLAS for May, 1877, the flamingoes are sociable, and live in flocks. They have webbed feet, which give them an advantage over the herons in enabling them to swim as well as to wade. I have never been able to get near enough to these birds to gain any personal knowledge of their habits.

The nest of the flamingo is a curious affair; usually built in a marshy, muddy place, in the form of a mound. It is made of sticks and grass and mud to the height of two or three feet, with a hollow in the middle to hold the eggs. The male is said to assist in the construction of the nest, but this is probably mere conjecture, for I think no one living at the present time has been able to get near enough to these birds to watch their habits, and their nests can be reached only with great difficulty.

The female lays two white eggs about the size of those of a goose. It is said that she sits astride the nest in an ungainly fashion, and that the young, as soon as they are hatched, take to the water like young ducks.

If a law only could be passed to protect these birds, what a grand sight the waters of Florida would soon present! These great, brilliant, scarlet birds, dallying and playing in the water, or wading near the shore in quest of game, would be a sight never to be forgotten. Can it be possible that Florida does not care for such glorious creatures, and will allow, year after year, these marauders from the North to kill them without a single protest? Unless something is done for the protection of these splendid creatures, they must soon become extinct; for their range is quite limited, and I fear the boy and girl readers of ST. NICHOLAS, by the time they grow to men and women, can only read of these as "gorgeous birds of the past."

Almost every morning, the osprey, or fish-hawk, comes in front of the window and fishes in the shallow water near the house. He does not seem to be as expert as the kingfisher. I have seen him dive a dozen times or more into the water before bringing up his prey. He sails around and around in the air; at last fixing his eyes upon a fish, he swoops down, making the water splash around him. His feet are large and powerful, and he arranges his long toes in the form of a scoop as he plunges into the river; this scoop is his fishing-tackle with which he brings up his finny food.

I think I should not like to be an osprey, for he seems to have such a hard time to get a living, and yet he is an honest, well-disposed laborer. After he has succeeded in catching a fish, a bald eagle often swoops down from some tall tree, where he has been watching him, and by main force compels this honest fisher to give up his hard-won prey. The eagle is considerably larger than his victim, being about three feet in length, while the osprey is only about two feet.

It is quite a grand sight to see these two large birds wheeling through the air—the osprey trying to elude the eagle, diving first one way and then another, until at last, when he sees the unencumbered eagle must overpower him, in a fit of desperation he

lets the fish drop, and the eagle catches it before it reaches the water, and carries it to some retired spot where he devours it.



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And now the poor defrauded osprey must go to work and catch another fish before he can have his dinner. Here you see the bald eagle with his ill-gotten prey.

[Illustration: THE BALD EAGLE.]

Great flocks of ducks often come to fish in the shallow water close to the shore. I suppose the reason that they come so near is that they find smaller fish here than in the deep water; and another reason, they are never shot at near the shore, for no fire-arms are allowed to be discharged within the town limits, except under the penalty of five dollars for each discharge.

This place, in winter, corresponds to a northern watering-place in summer. There is a warm sulphur-spring here, and people come from all quarters for health and for amusement. At first the great numbers of birds all about attracted many sportsmen, but I am very glad to tell you that the Florida people did not like this reckless shooting of birds in their midst, so they made this beautiful little place—Green Cove Spring—a city, and elected a mayor and a marshal, and other officers, to keep the men straight, and to protect the birds.

So this is why the birds that live about this little city are so tame, and why the ducks come so close to us; they have learned that they are quite safe from guns here.

Several species of ducks may sometimes be seen in one flock, fishing together in perfect harmony. It is quite astonishing how long they can stay under water, and when they come up their feathers are not wet at all.

The most beautiful of these fishing-ducks is the hooded merganser. Its plumage is most elegant, and it has a large thick tuft or crest of feathers covering the whole head, which gives it a sort of military look; and, indeed, it seems to be a commander, for it leads all of its relatives. It sometimes stays so long under the water that I begin to fear something has happened,—that an alligator, or some other huge beast, has got hold of it; but it always makes its appearance after a while, often at quite a long distance from where it went under.

NAN'S PEACE-OFFERING.

BY KATE W. HAMILTON.

“Just wish I was properer, and everything—so there!” said Nannie, sitting discontentedly down upon the green grass by the road-side, and surveying herself with a pair of very serious brown eyes.

It was a forlorn little self, surely, with wet dress, muddy shoes, inky apron, and crumpled sun-bonnet.



“Aunt S’mantha’ll think I’m dreadful. She says I never have any forethought; but I have lots of after-thoughts, and I s’pose folks can’t have both kinds. It don’t do any good, either. Oh dear!”

There was a whistled tune coming up the road. Tommy Grey was attached to it, but the whistle seemed much the older and more important of the two, and was first to reach the tree where Nannie was sitting. When Tommy caught up with it, he stopped in surprise.

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“Hello, Nan Verling! Is that you?”

“I suppose so, but I wish it wasn’t,” answered Nannie, dolefully.

“What for?” questioned Tommy, in still further astonishment.

“Cause I wish I was somebody else that wasn’t all wrinkled and mussed up. I don’t see how folks can keep nice and have good times, anyway,” declared Nan, in a burst of confidence. “You see, I just helped sail boats in the brook, and I didn’t know my dress was wet a bit till I came away; and then Lizzie Sykes tagged me, and course I had to tag her back again. I don’t know what made her run right through the mud, where I couldn’t catch her without getting my shoes all muddy. Should think she might have known better! My old ink-stand at school is always upsetting itself, and it had to spill on my clean white apron this afternoon. Then my sun-bonnet—”

“Looks as if you’d hung it up in your pocket,” suggested Tommy.

“Well, I didn’t; I only rolled it up for a rag-baby when we played keep house at recess. I s’pose it’s bad for bonnets, but it made the beautifulest kind of a baby,” said Nannie, a little ray of enthusiasm gleaming through her despondency. “But Aunt S’mantha doesn’t ’preciate such things,” she added, mournfully.

“No,” answered Tommy, sympathetically. “She’ll scold, may be?”

“P’r’aps so. May be she’ll send me to bed without any supper.”

“Whew! That a’nt any fun, I tell you!” declared Tommy. “Why, a fellow just tumbles and tumbles, and gets hungrier and hungrier, and wonders what the folks have got for supper, and looks at the stars, and tries to say ‘Hickory-dickory-dock’ backward, and wishes it was morning. It just feels awful!”

“I didn’t ever try it, and I don’t s’pose I could stand it,” said Nannie, shaking dejectedly the curly head in the flopping sun-bonnet. “I’ve a good mind not to go home at all, but just run away off somewhere, and be a foundling. Foundlings have pretty good times, ’cause I’ve read about ’em in books. They get adopted by some great lady in a big house, and grow up rich, and get to be real handsome.”

“I don’t believe you would,” declared Tommy, more honestly than politely.

Nan meditated a minute, and then said, with a sigh:

“Well, I guess I’ll have to go home, then.”

“Scoldings don’t last very long, anyway,” urged Tommy, consolingly.



“But if you sort o’ think you oughtn’t to have done things, and did ought to be more careful—and everything—it makes it seem more worse, you know,” remarked Nannie, in a hesitating, half-penitent way. “‘Cause I *do* like Aunt S’mantha.”

“Yes,” admitted Tommy, knitting his brow over the complications of the case, and searching his own experience for a suggestion of relief. “If you only had something nice to carry home to her—something she wants. Once I got wet as a rat playing round the pond, but I’d caught two fish—reg’lar tip-top trout—and I took ’em home to mother; held ’em up where they’d be seen first thing, you know. And she said, ‘What nice fish!’ and didn’t scold a wink.”



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"I couldn't catch anything if I tried a week, and Aunt S'mantha wouldn't care, anyway. Why, she's a real grown-up woman, and could have tea-parties and make molasses candy every day if she wanted to! I don't believe she wants anything, unless it's ban—bananas—whatever that is. I heard her say she'd like some, this morning."

"Bandanas?" questioned Tommy, with brightening eyes.

"Y-e-s, I guess so," answered Nannie, rather doubtfully.

"Ho! I know what they are as well as anything. Why, they're silk handkerchiefs—red and yellow, with spots on 'em."

Nannie's hand dived into her small pocket, and re-appeared with two nickels and a copper.

"Do you guess I could buy one at Carney's store for 'leven cents? 'Cause I haven't got any more."

"I s'pose so. Why, yes; handkerchiefs a'nt much 'count, you know. I always lose mine—only they a'nt bandanas. I guess women-folks think more about 'em, though," said Tommy, with the air of one superior to such trifles.

Nannie was convinced, and started from her seat with a little sigh of relief.

"I'll go and buy her one, then. And I think you're a pretty good boy, Tommy Grey," she added, gratefully, as she trudged down the road, leaving Tommy to take up his whistling and his homeward route again.

It was quite a long walk to the store—the store, because the village only boasted one. That did not matter much to the inhabitants generally, as the town was so near. Bentleyville and Bentley were connected by a straggling line of houses that made it hard to tell where the village ended and the town began. Ambitious young villagers took advantage of this to talk about "we city people," while the older ones contentedly spoke of themselves as "plain country-folks."

Nannie did not care in the least which she was, neither did she greatly mind the walk, though the feet that had done so much running began to grow tired. If only she could carry a peace-offering to Aunt Samantha! That would make all right, and her small world bright again, she was sure.

"I can't have any candy or slate-pencils for ever so long; but I don't care, 'cause I do like her, and she'll know it—course she will if I buy her a handkerchief; and she wont think I got all mussed up on purpose," she soliloquized.



It required some heroism to pass by the fresh pop-corn balls at the store door, and to turn away from the boxes of figs without a second glance; but Nannie did both, and, walking straight to the counter, made known her errand.

“Bandanas? Yes, a prime lot of ’em,” said bustling little Mr. Carney, bringing out his whole stock.

His small customer, standing on tiptoe to reach the counter, gravely examined them. Would Aunt Samantha like a red one or a yellow one best, she wondered. It was a perplexing question to decide. If only she could take her one of each! And that reminded her to ask the price.



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“Seventy-five cents apiece,” said the old gentleman briskly.

“Seventy—five—cents!” repeated Nan, faintly.

“Yes, sissy; cheap at that, too.”

“I—thought—I didn’t know,” stammered Nannie, in a sore disappointment. Then rallying her faltering courage, she asked: “Don’t you ever sell any for ’leven cents?”

“Eleven cents? Bless me, child! Why, they cost—Oh! may be you mean cotton ones? Look a little like these.”

Nan nodded, glad to think it even probable that she had meant anything.

“Well, I don’t keep that kind, you see,” explained Mr. Carney, condescendingly.

Discouraged and forlorn, the little woman turned away. She walked until she was quite out of sight of the store, and then paused to meditate. What should she do? It seemed dreadfully hard to give up her plan now when she had thought it all nicely settled. There were plenty of stores in Bentley; some of them might sell handkerchiefs for eleven cents. She glanced dubiously along the road leading to the town, and noticed that the sun was nearly out of sight behind the hills.

“But it stays light ever and ever so long after the sun sets,” she murmured, “and it didn’t seem a bit far when I rode to town with Aunt S’mantha. I guess this store is most part way. Anyhow, I just must have a bandana!” she added, as she once more caught sight of her soiled apron and muddy shoes.

She straightened her sun-bonnet, and started resolutely forward again. She had grown to feel that the proposed purchase was in some way a reparation due to Aunt Samantha, and she could not give it up. On and on trudged the tired little feet, aching wearily at last, but never hesitating nor turning back. It seemed a long way, though.

“Wonder if I wont ever and ever come to where the houses get thicker,” she murmured. “When I keep a store I’ll build it on the edge somewhere, so folks wont have to walk so far to get to it.”

After a time, the buildings did nestle more closely together, and, somewhat comforted, she stopped a moment to rest. But she started suddenly to her feet as a light flashed upon her from an opposite window. People were really beginning to light their lamps, and the daylight was almost gone.

Weariness was forgotten in the thought that night might fall before she could return, and she ran as fast as her light feet would carry her—so swiftly and so far that she had nearly passed a small store without seeing it.



She checked her steps at this discovery, and entering, asked, breathlessly:

“Oh,—please,—have you any ban-banners?”

“What? any what?” demanded a severe-looking lady, coming forward and eying Nan suspiciously through her spectacles.

“Bandaners,—handkerchiefs,” explained Nannie, less confidently.

“Bandanas? No; I don’t keep them,” responded the lady, very stiffly.

“Should think she might have been more p’lite, if I didn’t call it right,” commented the young traveler as she hurried along the street once more. “Here’s another.” This time there was only a boy in attendance. He was head of the establishment when the proprietor went to supper, and he enjoyed his important position.



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“Do you keep ban-ban-banners?” asked Nannie, growing confused again.

“Which? I hope you don’t mean any disrespect to the flag of your country, ma’am?”

“No sir; I mean handkerchiefs,” said Nannie, innocently.

“Ah! yes, I understand. I think we have the article in question.”

A number of the red and yellow silks were produced, and while the brown eyes scanned them in some perplexity, the mischievous young clerk surveyed the comical little figure before him, and gravely asked:

“Is that quantity sufficient for the exercise of your predilections? or would you like an additional supply?”

“I would like ’leven cents worth,” stammered Nannie.

“Eleven cents worth of silk handkerchiefs? That’s a novelty now!” laughed the boy.

“Why, you see that wouldn’t be a seventh part of one of these bits of magnificence,—not a scrap large enough for a respectable doll. We really couldn’t do it, ma’am. The owner of this establishment has a nonsensical way of always selling his handkerchiefs whole.”

[Illustration: “SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS APIECE,’ SAID THE OLD GENTLEMAN.”]

Then, at sight of the disappointed little face, his fun yielded to an impulse of kindness, and from a far-away corner he produced an old box with the dust of disuse lying thickly upon it. It contained some small cotton handkerchiefs, gayly printed, with border, pictures and verses, in bright colors. Nannie’s eyes brightened. They were much prettier than the others, she thought, and they were only ten cents! She wavered uncertainly between a pink and a blue one, and finally appealed to the clerk for advice.

“Which is the nicest? Couldn’t really say, ma’am. If you want it for winter use, the blue would probably match best with your nose; but if you keep it specially for fits of weeping, the red might be nearest the proper tint.”

Nannie looked at him solemnly, but not understanding him in the least: she decided upon the blue one, and turned away with the precious package in her hand. It was certainly growing late. The rosy glow had all vanished from the west, and one star was peeping out dimly.

“A good deal after supper-time,” murmured Nannie, anxiously. Then, glancing down a side street, she caught sight of a baker’s sign. It was but a few steps, and she was very hungry, so she determined to invest her remaining cent in a piece of gingerbread. Eager to be on her homeward way she walked rapidly, and this did not suit the fancy of a large dog in a neighboring yard. He bounded toward the fence, barking furiously, and



in a moment Nannie discovered that he had pushed open the gate and was upon the street. She fled at full speed away beyond the shop and down another street. At last a corner hid him from view, and he did not follow her. She dared not retrace her steps for fear of meeting him, and she abandoned all hope of a visit to the bakery. There must be other ways

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back to the road, though, she thought, and she wandered up one street and down another without coming to any building that looked familiar. She had lost her way entirely, and grew more and more bewildered as she wandered. The stars came out thickly in the sky, and it seemed to her that she had been traveling for hours. Finally she found herself in a quiet, unfrequented part of the town, and then the brave little heart failed utterly, and frightened, homesick, and terribly weary, she sank down by the road-side, sobbing bitterly. She did not hear the sound of wheels, nor notice the horses drawn up beside her, until some one called:

“Hello, little one! what’s the matter?”

She had heard that neighborly voice too often not to recognize it now, and she sprang up in wild delight. “Oh, Captain Hoyt! Take me home! Oh, please sir, wont you take me home?”

“Home, chick-a-biddy? Why, who—little Nan Verling, I declare! Well, if it isn’t lucky that I didn’t sell my apples till late to-day, and am just going out! How in the world did you get there?”

“I lost my way,” faltered Nannie, trying hard to conquer her tears when she was safely in the wagon. “I came to buy a bandana handkerchief for Aunt S’mantha.”

“Bandana? Well, she’ll need it, and a few cambric ones thrown in, if she don’t know where you are at this time of night,” declared the captain, whipping up his horses.

He was quite right; Miss Samantha was nearly frantic. She had sent to every house in the village, and had learned from Tommy how her love of neatness and carelessly expressed desire for bananas had together worked mischief. But as a visit to the store revealed the fact that Nannie had been there and had gone, Miss Samantha could think of nothing but that most improbable resort,—the pond; and she had gathered a party with ropes and lanterns, when Captain Hoyt drove up and deposited the small maiden in their midst.

“I’ve got the handkerchief, Aunt S’mantha! and I’m so glad; but my clothes are all spoiled, and I’m so sorry,” began Nannie.

“Clothes, child! Do you think I care so much more for your clothes than for you that I want to hear about them first?” exclaimed Miss Samantha, with an embrace so long and close that Nannie was quite astonished.

“I didn’t know,” she answered.



And Miss Samantha said not a word, for she thought if the child really did not know, there must have been something wrong somewhere. She smiled a little grimly when she saw the wonderful handkerchief, but she laid it away as if it were a treasure. Nannie had a nice supper and a good night's sleep, and felt quite bright when Tommy looked in upon her the next morning.

"I had an awful time; but your way is a real good one, Tommy, 'cause she didn't scold a bit," she informed him, confidentially.

"But I guess,—I s'pose,—anyhow, mother says that the best way to please folks is to do as they want you to, instead of buying 'em things," said Tommy, feeling that, as he had led her into trouble, he was in honor bound to give her the benefit of the moral that had been impressed upon him.



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"Y-e-s," answered Nannie, rather vaguely.

But, as the weeks went on, and Aunt Samantha grew so much more gentle that she couldn't help being more careful not to trouble her, she thought that handkerchief must be a very precious article.

THE TOWER-MOUNTAIN.

BY GUSTAVUS FRANKENSTEIN.

III.

I wandered about for what seemed to me days and days, but always cautiously, and never without some hope of escape. At length, becoming weak, I suppose, I missed my footing from a ledge of rock and fell to a great distance. I was stunned and bruised, but soon recovered; and considering the course I must have come, and this last terrible descent, I felt almost sure that I was far below the surface of the earth, and that I must try to go up, and must search and search until I should find some way of ascending. I accordingly moved on, with greater care than ever, and soon found that I was in a sort of rocky passage which rose at a slight inclination. I need not say how this discovery revived my spirits, nor how I was cheered yet more when, after a time, I came to a level surface again, and discovered that beyond it the passage continued as before, but much widened.

Keeping close to the wall of rock on my right, I slowly ascended in what seemed to me a spiral curve. Sometimes I would take a step to the left, to ascertain if I still had a barrier on that side; by which I found that there were many openings in the wall on that side, probably similar to the one through which I had reached this apparently continuous passage.

Up, up I went, gaining courage though feeling weaker and weaker. Having the wall on my right for so long a time, and seeming to be always ascending, I began to think that I was in a sort of circular honey-combed cavern.

It must be borne in mind that my progress was exceedingly slow, consequent upon the necessity of feeling my way, step by step, apprehensive of going over the brink of a precipice in some moment of undue confidence. How many times I lay down to sleep, how many times I rose to continue the task, I cannot tell; but, having been immured so long, without food and without light, I began to feel stealing over me a weariness of exhaustion which required the utmost power of the will to battle.

All this time I kept ascending. Suddenly the passage seemed to open wide, and, all at once, a bright light shot into the cavern. For the moment I was blinded; a painful

sensation struck me across the brows; but I determined to behold the light at whatever cost. I opened my eyes; and now, the shock of the dazzling brightness having passed away, I saw the most beautiful effect I had ever beheld in my whole life.



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A ray of sunlight fell in a round spot, bright and warm, on the wall at the left. It entered by a small aperture higher up—in the wall at the right. For a moment I looked around. I stood in a vast, rock-bound chamber—an immense hall—faintly illuminated by reflection from the direct sun-ray which fell upon a vein of quartz, and sparkled, lively with flitting rainbow-colors. I could see the openings in the inner wall, many of them a hundred feet high, nearly all very narrow, and for the most part vertical. On the right, the wall was unbroken, with the exception of the little hole, through which the blessed sunlight streamed, in the pit of a broad, deep, conical sort of depression. Far behind me, I could just make out the mouth of the passage from which I had emerged into this spacious chamber, and before me the opening into another also adjacent to the wall on my right.

I felt now more assured than ever, for I was certainly above-ground. For a moment, I forgot my forlorn condition, and paused to admire the splendor of the scene. A few minutes only, and it was gone. I lingered. Should I wait to see this lovely sight renewed? Twenty-four hours must elapse before the sun's return to the same position. But *would* it come to the same point again on the morrow? I knew it could not, and that the least deflection from its course that day would allow no ray to fall into the darkness of that mysterious dungeon. I knew, further, that it was either morning or evening, about nine or three o'clock, by the direction of the beam of light. This fact was immensely encouraging; my heart throbbed rapidly; the blood came tingling to the finger-ends; I felt a warmth, an energy, a hope, an animation of spirits I had not known for a long time. It had all along been but one unending night, when often I would wonder whether, outside, under the broad blue sky, it was then night or day; but now I knew that it was day.

I soon reached the passage which I had seen ahead of me, and found it in some places not more than two or three feet wide. The ascent became steeper, though not at all difficult, except at one place, where for about ten yards I was obliged to use both hands and feet to make sure of not slipping back.

About two hours after passing this point the air seemed to change; there was a warmth and fragrance to it which was very grateful; I fancied also that I could see somewhat indistinctly.

“Surely,” I thought, “this seems like coming to daylight.”

Warmer and sweeter grew the air; I could see the wall of rock on my right; and then I suddenly encountered a volume of air blown toward me, as if the sweetest perfumes of the earth were mingled in that breath of air. I knew I was coming to the light! Another turn, and there before me were the grand snow-capped mountains suffused with the last rosy flush of the setting sun!

[Illustration: “WE SAW HIM CLIMBING THROUGH A SQUARE OPENING OF LIGHT.”
[SEE PAGE 292.]]



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Oh, indescribable glory!

For a moment, my eyes swept over the horizon,—I was far above the earth,—then back to the beautiful snow in its sunset splendor. The rosy tinges lifted and vanished, and a cool twilight glow rested on the mountain summits. I looked upon the plain below. Far beneath, it lay in the evening shadow with its thousand fading tints of tropic foliage, with one spot of blue, almost immediately below, in all that mass of verdure—the lake. I knew then that I was almost exactly above the cave I had so long inhabited. And Pippity—Grilly—were they there now?

I was about to call with all my might; but what ear could hear at that great distance?

Three thousand feet at least of space separated my friends from me. How could I get down that almost perpendicular rock, and how could they get up to me? How could they know that I was there?

And now the specter of starvation rose up before me in strongest force. Should I try to find my way back again?—once more attempt the darkness? No! no! Too precious was the daylight. It would not do. And what could be gained? I could not possibly live to reach the bottom!

The twilight rested serenely on the encircling range of mountain snow, then faded sweetly from the darkening sky.

The stars are beacons of hope and faith. Under them I lay down and slept.

It was a refreshing slumber that I had beneath an unclouded sky, and when I awoke it was early dawn. The cool air was grateful; and so charming seemed all nature that I forgot my hunger and the isolation of my position. I began, too, to examine the situation. I had emerged from the cavern into open day by reason of the sudden termination of the wall which I had had so long on my right. There was left the inner wall as before, now exposed and forming the exterior of the mountain. I stood on a platform of rock about four feet square. Beyond was an angle in the wall, and just then a step to a higher grade of flat rock also. Then a considerable steepness of the narrow floor, and a bending to the left, when it was lost to view behind the mass of perpendicular rock. As the sun rose, I looked down toward the lake, which seemed to lie almost directly beneath, so nearly perpendicular was the mountain on that side. About six or seven hundred feet below me, I observed a bird flying from point to point up the mountain. Soon it disappeared from view. It had flown to the other side. Presently it re-appeared, still circling and rising, now perching at one point, and now at another higher up, then passing out of view again. At length it seemed to come more directly upward; it rose more rapidly, and was continually in sight.

It was a parrot. I heard its cry. I could see it distinctly.

“Pippity, Pippity!” I cried, “is that you?”

He gave one joyful scream, alighted on my shoulder, and then on my hand, talking as fast as his tongue could run: “How d’ ye do? How d’ ye do? Frank, Frank!”



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“Food, food, Pippity!” I begged; and before I had finished the words he flew down the abyss, screaming as he went. I followed him with my eyes until the precipice below prevented my seeing him any longer.

It seemed to me a full hour before he re-appeared, and as he came nearer I saw something in his beak. It was a bunch of grapes. He flew toward me. I held out my hand to receive him, and with a heart full of thankfulness I took the precious fruit from his beak.

“Thank you, thank you, Pippity!” I said. But Pippity didn’t wait for such little expressions of civility. Immediately, he flew away again, and soon returned with other fruits, and nuts of various kinds; and, as he could bring but little at a time, of course I could eat but little at a time, which was a happy circumstance, for that is just the way a starving man should eat.

In about four or five hours I told Pippity I had had enough.

“And now, Pippity,” said I, “tell me,—how long have I been away?”

He promptly answered, “Three days!”

“Are you sure?”

“Three days—one, two, three.”

I was almost sure he was right. But how the bird had found me I could not make out. I questioned him in many ways, but could get no satisfactory answer. By my not returning the day I went down into the hole, and not the next, no doubt my friends began to be alarmed for my safety, and set to work to find me, if possible. What Grilly did in the matter I could not conjecture; but Pippity, being able to fly, probably made excursions round the mountain, thinking that I might possibly come out at some place, and hoping thus to be able to find me and come to my relief.

During the afternoon, Pippity made a number of trips down into the fertile plain, every time bringing back something good to eat, whilst I rested quietly, amusing myself with looking at the pleasant scenery that everywhere surrounded me, talking with Pippity whenever he was present, and sometimes sleeping pleasantly.

A short time before sunset, Pippity took his last flight down, and, not long after the sun had disappeared, I saw him returning in the beautiful twilight. Again he brought me fruit.

“Go down to Grilly now,” I said; “I will stay up here until morning, and then you come to me again.”



But Pippity didn't want to leave; and I told him that as he was so desirous of keeping me company, he might remain with me through the night.

The next morning, at the first glimmering of dawn, I awoke, feeling well, hearty and cheerful. Pippity was off immediately to bring me breakfast, and about ten o'clock we set out in high spirits to make further ascent of this singular peak. All went well for about an hour, when, Pippity being absent after food, I came to a place in the rock where the walk suddenly ended. A little further on and higher up it was as good as any part I had yet gone over; but the intervening space of scarcely more than a



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dozen feet was very steep, and, what was remarkable, loose stones lay upon its surface as though they had slid down from above. This slide seemed to have been occasioned by a softness of the rock in that part, causing it to scale off in thin pieces, which the slightest disturbance would send rattling down the mountain. Just beyond these loose stones was a smooth surface of very steep rock, over which it would be necessary to pass in order to reach the path beyond.

I paused here; and after Pippity had brought the fruit and I had finished my dinner, I began seriously to discuss the question whether or not I ought to attempt the passage of this dangerous interval. Pippity seemed to understand my intentions quite well, for he grew very uneasy, and in his queer ways, with snatches of singularly applicable speech, he remonstrated most strenuously. But we now were not very far from the top, and so fascinating seemed the prospect of reaching the very pinnacle, that I could not withstand the impulse of making the effort to get there. Over the loose stones I scrambled, clinging with hands and feet as best I could, whilst an avalanche of rocky fragments slid, tumbled, and rattled ominously down the declivity.

I got my hands upon the smooth rock, but at my feet the loose stones were slipping rapidly away; this, in a moment more, would leave me without support and mercilessly let me follow them. But Pippity, who had been flying around me in the greatest excitement, got just above me, and planting his toes firmly against the rock, seized me by the shoulder. Then, holding on with a most determined grip of his bill, he pulled like a Trojan; and I do verily believe the bird saved my life. By dint of his pulling and backing upward, seconded by my own frantic efforts to shuffle up the rock, I succeeded in gaining the foothold beyond. At least he inspired me with fresh resolution and confidence in helping myself.

After a little rest, we went on, winding around a succession of short spirals, and at last reached the highest point of this magnificent mountain!

* * * * *

What a sensation!

Perched here on the extreme point of a pinnacle more than four thousand feet above the vast plain of rich fertility embosomed among the snow-clad mountains. The lake was a spot of beautiful blue, a gem in the center of this lovely picture.

Suddenly, we heard a rattling of stones beneath, then a shriek.

“Stars! What’s that?—GRILLY!”



And up he came bounding, as lively as a cricket. He danced around us in the greatest delight, threw his arms around me, ran wildly here and there, and danced and danced again.

“Grilly, Grilly!” shrieked the parrot, “how in the world did you get up here?”—and his staid demeanor contrasted strangely with the monkey’s antics.

But Grilly danced and danced. The fact was that, even if he could have spoken, he was too much excited to make reply. Grilly was great in action; in words deficient.



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The afternoon was now far advanced; and Grilly at last becoming tranquil, and in keeping with the peaceful scene around us, I said to him:

“How you came up here I do not know; but of this I am certain, that you were not as long getting up as I was, for you arrived fresh and active, whilst I was almost dead. Now, that makes me think that although I cannot find the way back, you may. Therefore, you shall be guide. But it is too late to start to-day. Besides, I wish to behold another sunset from this glorious height.”

The night was very pleasant; and as I lay upon a flat rock, looking out upon the stars from my high and silent perch, the round earth looming like a shadow far below me, I thought it would be delightful to make a long stay on this interesting pinnacle, especially at this time, as the weather was very fine; but the getting of food presented itself as an obstacle. As Grilly was now with us, it would be too great a tax on Pippity to supply us both. Besides, we could not do without water. I resolved, therefore, to set out early in the morning, and that I would re-enter that dungeon, as there was clearly no other way of getting down.

Before the sun was up, we already were descending; and when we arrived at the dangerous slide, where the day before I had nearly slipped off the mountain, we halted. Pippity was dispatched for food, whilst Grilly and I sat down and contemplated the sunrise splendor. Four times Pippity descended to the plain, and brought thence something to eat. Noon was fast approaching, and it behooved us, if we would accomplish anything that day, to press forward without delay. As before, Pippity showed considerable anxiety, calmly remarking, however, as I translated his jargon, that he would, as on the previous day, hold fast to my shoulder with his bill. He made Grilly get down below at the same time and hold on to my feet; and when I began to crawl and wriggle along the best way I could, I was assisted very materially by the parrot above and the monkey below.

Notwithstanding the perilous situation, I could not but be amused at the ludicrous singularity of the performance.

Above stood the sure-footed bird, all gravity, pulling away at my shoulder; below was the monkey, holding me fast by the heels, jumping and capering as the treacherous stones rolled from under him. Of course, in less than a minute the whole thing was over, and I was safely landed on a good broad walk.

We arrived at the opening of the dungeon. Descend into it? Again be lost—perhaps perish? I hesitated. I shrank from entering; and yet, down into it I must go!

“Pippity,” said I, to my trusty parrot, “we will linger here another day. You must bring us all the food you can between this and night; and to-morrow morning, with the first peep of dawn, be ready to go down again, and make as many trips before noon as you can,

so that we shall be able to undertake that dark and uncertain journey with at least a small quantity of provisions.”



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Grilly ran in and out of the dark passage quite frequently, both that evening and the next morning, evidently evincing a desire that the descent should be made without delay, which convinced me that he had come through all the darkness which yet lay between us and deliverance.

The sun had reached the zenith when I at last bade farewell to the light and resolutely determined to proceed.

“Good-bye, Pippity! We shall meet you below. Fly down, get everything ready for our reception, and have the table well supplied with the choicest fruits that you can find.”

But Pippity clung to me, and would not leave. “I will go with you! I want to go!” implored the bird.

No expostulation could deter him from accompanying us.

Grilly led the way; and when we lost the light, he squealed and chattered, and frequently ran back to make sure that Pippity and I were following him. I kept close to the wall on my left. We passed over the steep place. Still I kept close to the wall. The wall was on my left—still on my left. We were going at a pretty pace, as the monkey was continually urging us forward. We could not go fast enough for him. All at once he squealed significantly. He ran back to me. He took hold of my hand, and leading me slowly forward a few paces, I found there were three diverging passages. He drew me into the middle one. Then we resumed our quick gait, and, for some little time, all appeared to be plain sailing again.

It may be asked, why did I allow myself to be guided by a thoughtless monkey? But here, in this darkness, was not reason entirely at sea? Might not instinct be superior to reason and avail something? I abandoned myself entirely to its mysterious power. I had faith in it. Grilly proceeded with such confidence that I could not but trust him.

We had been plodding our way through the darkness for about four hours, I thought, when Grilly gave a loud shriek, and, running back to us, led us hurriedly forward; light became faintly visible; we ascended a few steps through a very narrow passage; we came abruptly to a stop; the monkey grasped something that hung down from above, and sprang upward with the agility of his nature. We saw him high above our heads climbing through a square opening of light. Immediately, he was descending again.

“Why, Pippity,” I cried, “we are at the bottom! Up there is our palace!”

“Of course it is!” shrieked the parrot, in a tone which sounded more like a shout of joy than the voice of a bird; and, clinging to one of a number of long grass stems that could now be distinctly seen hanging from the top, he climbed up with bill and claws as handsomely as any parrot ever did the like, crying as he went:



“Come along, Frank! We’re all right!” Grilly was now down, too; and, reaching me his hand, he would fain have tried to pull me to the top. But I gave him to understand that I could very well take care of myself, and up I went by means of hands and feet—the monkey all capers, the parrot all talk, the man thankful—and when we stood in our grand old palace once more, three more thoroughly delighted creatures never were seen.



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“Now, Pippity and Grilly,” said I, “bring something to eat. Search our broad garden for the best. Let us eat and be merry. While the light yet glows, let us enjoy ourselves.”

Away went the faithful animals. When they were gone, I walked forth and stood under the beautiful trees, surrounded by all the adorning verdure. How glad was I to be once more on the ground, once more in the world!

Presently, I saw Pippity and Grilly returning. The latter had an immense load of luscious fruit strung over his back, besides what he dragged after him in a large basket. It may well be imagined that we had a most delightful meal.

After this, I made frequent visits to the top of the pinnacle, always taking Grilly with me, Pippity, as a general thing, being content to take the short cut and meet us at the aperture above.

But before taking these trips, I made Grilly stretch a line of the long silken cords (which we found in abundance) from one end of the dark passage to the other, so that I could find my way back, if the monkey should fail me. I also used strong ropes, made of these strands, to get over the dangerous slide.

These trips afforded us an agreeable diversion. We had now, it might be said, entire command of our mountain palace—our magnificent hall below and our splendid look-out above. Months passed away in this happy abode. Sometimes we visited the distant mountains, ever exploring, ever learning, ever rejoicing; but always returning to our happy home with a renewed relish of its rare comforts and matchless advantages.

During one of the excursions to the neighboring mountains,—Pippity alone accompanying me, Grilly having gone to assemble his tribe for a fresh supply of coconuts,—we were leisurely contemplating the great expanse of loveliness that lay before us, in the center of which our noble dwelling loomed up superbly.

“What a splendid domain is ours!” I said to Pippity. “We have everything that man need wish,—and, for that matter, parrot or monkey either. How bountiful, here, is nature, and withal so beautiful! And our palace! Was ever anything in the world like it?”

As the parrot made no answer, I looked toward him, for I was certain that he would join in praise of all our precious blessings.

There was a troubled look about him. His wings moved convulsively. The feathers stood ruffling from his body. He was in a state of the greatest agitation.

I was alarmed. “What’s the matter, Pippity?” I cried. But Pippity replied only with a succession of loud shrieks growing ever louder and louder.

The air had become as still as death.



My body appeared to move from side to side. No, no! The ground was rising, falling! It seemed no longer solid. Like a wave it rose and fell. The foot-hills below us separated, reft into awful chasms. I looked toward our home. Just then cried Pippity:



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“Oh, our palace! Our palace!”

“Ah, ah! It falls! It falls! See, see, how the huge rocks rive and crumble!”

What a fall was there! A crash that echoed terribly in that circle of mountain wildness!

A cloud of dust rolled in fearful mockery where one moment before had stood the proud pinnacle. An enormous mass of rocks fell into the lake below, and the vapors rose in a rival cloud. High in the firmament they curled and twisted, their wreathing forms together telling a woful tale of destruction.

We forgot our own danger in watching all our grandeur dashed to nothingness.

Destruction as it was, it was grand!

But Grilly! Where was he? “Ah, Grilly, Grilly!” cried I, “I fear he is lost!”

“Come, come!” said Pippity. “Where’s Grilly? Find Grilly! Quick, quick!”

But there was some rough country to get over. Gaps, masses of uprooted trees, rocks, earth and vegetation mingled in confusion.

At last we arrived at home—no, not home! Nothing but a heap of ruins!

And where was Grilly? We searched, but found him not. We called, and called again; but answer there came none.

Pippity, with a shrill and deafening cry uttered ceaselessly: “Grilly! Grilly! Grilly! Grilly!”

But answer there came none.

And all the next day we sought, and still poor Pippity cried, “Grilly! Grilly!”

But the dead, the lost, answer not.

* * * * *

A home we had no longer. Where once stood magnificence, ruin now stared us in the face.

“Pippity!” I said to poor Polly, “we will leave this once glorious spot. Our home is desolate. It is home no longer. Let us seek new scenes in other lands.”

“Where shall we go?” asked Pippity—and if a parrot could shed tears he would have shed them.



“We will go to the abodes of men. We will go among civilized people.”

“I, too, Frank. I, too! Call Gr——!”

“Say no more, Pippity! Strive to forget.”

For seventeen days we traversed the mountains, picking up a scanty subsistence by the way. Pippity was considerably frightened by the condors that really seemed to threaten us when we reached great elevations; and I was astonished at the remains of the once stupendous works of the ancient dwellers in this land. Bridges stretching from mountain to mountain, over immense, deep valleys, attested the knowledge and power of that singular race.

Later, we began to meet people; a hut here and another there, with miles between. Pippity was quite at a loss to know what to make of such persons as we met. When two or more happened to be conversing together, it was utterly incomprehensible to him how they could understand one another.

“What jargon is this?” he evidently tried to say, “that these people are all the time jabbering? It is nothing but an unmeaning chattering of monkeys. Can it be possible that they know what they are babbling? And you understand that gibberish, too?”



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I had taught Pippity no language but my own, and it was no wonder that he was surprised when he heard people so like me talking quite differently.

We soon reached the sea-coast; and if Pippity was surprised at what he saw in the towns and cities, the citizens, many of whom were familiar with the English tongue, were still more surprised at his wonderful gift of language.

My own appearance until I bought myself some decent clothes, created quite a sensation among the people I met. During my long stay in my mountain home, I had been obliged to mend and darn my garments with the fibers of plants until there was scarcely a vestige of the original fabric remaining; and I looked like a veritable scarecrow.

But I was not poor. In a little, home-made wallet, I carried a small handful of diamonds, which I had, from time to time, found in my wanderings about the Tower-Mountain. These now did me good service. I easily converted them into money, which gave me the means of living and traveling as I pleased.

We took ship, Pippity and I, and sailed away to my old home in the north. On the voyage, the gifted bird was the hero of the vessel. Ladies, gentlemen, children, and even the officers and crew of the ship, were glad to gather around him and talk to him. No such parrot had any of them seen before. I had magnificent offers made to me, if I would consent to sell him, but I refused them all, and, after awhile, Pippity himself relieved me of the duty of declining to sell him. When an offer of purchase was made, he would say, "I can't be bought!"—or, if the proposal came from a lady, "Madam, your offer is most respectfully declined!"

At last we reached my native city, and here a great misfortune happened to me.

In walking about the streets with my parrot, Pippity was constantly obliged to inhale the fumes of tobacco. He could not endure it, and frequently asked me in his own fashion why people persisted in puffing such sickening smoke from their mouths. I explained the matter to him, but he never could see any sense in it. It was known on board the ship that Pippity disliked the fumes of tobacco, and he was such a general favorite that no one smoked in his presence.

But in the city streets he met with no such consideration. He was incessantly compelled to breathe tobacco smoke, and it made him ill. In a very few days he was seized with a painful choking sensation, caused by the irritation of the smoke, and in a short time he died. His last words were:

"That detestable tobacco!"



And so I lost this good friend. I had his skin stuffed, and presented it to our society of natural history.

There were people to whom I told this story of my adventures who did not believe me, but I was always sure they would have credited my word if only I had had my monkey and my parrot with me to corroborate the truth of my strange history.



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THE END.

GIFTS FOR ST. NICHOLAS [A]

BY EMMA E. BREWSTER.

Grieve not, O Santa Claus, who fills
Each stocking, box and tree;
Nor think, most desolate of saints,
None bring good gifts to thee.

We place no candles in thy crypt,
No gold upon thy shrine,—
Thou bringest us the frankincense,
The tapers and the wine.

But rarer gifts, good Nicholas,
Than these, thy children bring,
When up and down an echoing world
The Christmas bells all ring.

We bring our brightest, truest love
To crown thy happy brows;
No monarch wears a coronet
So light as holly-boughs.

We bring our gayest, fairest hopes,
With smiling memories spun;
So rich a robe has never shone
Earth's proudest king upon.

We bring our trust, our childhood faith,
And place it in thy hand;
No jeweled scepter has such power
To rule on sea or land.

Then stay, O dear St. Nicholas!
Look on thy heaped-up shrine;
Our hearts, our hopes, our memories,
Our trusts, our faith are thine!

There's not in all the calendar
One saint whose altars shine



With such gay throngs of worshipers,
Such precious gifts, as thine!

[Footnote A: An answer to "Left Out," published in the December number.]

SOME IN-DOOR GAMES AT MARBLES.

BY L.D. SNOOK.

One or two of the following games of marbles may be known to the readers of ST. NICHOLAS, but we think they all will be new to a great many boys.

THE ARCHED-BOARD COUNT-GAME.

[Illustration]

A strip of board, half an inch thick, five inches wide, and twenty-two inches long, has notches cut in one side, two inches wide at the bottom, and tapering as shown. Short bits of board nailed upon each end keep the strip upright. Then it is placed upon the floor within two feet of the wall. Each player is provided with the same number of marbles (from three to five, or as many as the players wish), and from the opposite side of the room he rolls at the board, the object being to roll through the arches, which have numbers immediately above them in the manner shown. The one making the most counts after rolling all the marbles is entitled to one game. Or, if you have but five or six marbles, each party rolls the whole number by himself, and should there be a tie between those who make the highest aggregate number, they must roll again, the one then having the highest tally winning the game.

THREE-ARCH DISCOUNT-GAME.

[Illustration]



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This board is as wide and thick as the other, but is only eighteen inches in length. The center arch is four inches wide, the two small ones three inches each. In playing, each boy rolls from four to ten marbles each, every marble that passes under the center arch counting forty; if the marble goes through either small arch, twenty is deducted from the count, or, as the boys say, is "counted off" each time. So, if you are not a good shot, it is likely you will lose more than you will gain. In this, or the previous game, if you fail to pop your marble through any arch, it is lost.

THE TEN-BLOCK COUNT-GAME.

[Illustration]

You are to make ten blocks of wood, each about one inch square; upon one side of each you mark the figure 0; on the other sides the numbers 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50, the 50 being upon the side opposite the 0. The blocks are placed upon the floor or carpet in the form of a half diamond, as shown. The in each case being placed upward, each player rolls four marbles singly at the blocks, the object being to hit as many of them as possible. When done, count the numbers on the upper sides of all the blocks, and replace them for the next player. It is a lively game.

SWINGING-BLOCK COUNT-GAME.

[Illustration]

This is but a modification of the block-game just described. A common pin or tack is driven partly into one side of a block, which is connected by a string with a little strip of wood above. Instead of making side-pieces for supports, two chairs can be used, letting the strip rest upon the seat or lower rounds. Each block has the same number upon every side, and is hung so that the bottom is about one-quarter of an inch from the floor. When a marble strikes a block it swings a little and soon is quiet. This saves considerable work in replacing overturned blocks. For each block hit, tally the number upon it.

CIRCLE-GAME.

[Illustration]

Mark upon a piece of paper three rings, the largest from eight to fifteen inches in diameter, the other two considerably smaller. Within the rings mark the numbers 10, 20, and 50, as shown. Lay this paper upon the carpet or floor, and roll your marbles, the object; being to have them stop upon the paper and as near the center as possible,



each person to let his remain where they stop until all of his be rolled. Should a marble rest on a line, tally for it the number in the largest circle adjoining.

TOMMY'S THREE HORSES.

[Illustration]

The first is a pony without any head;
'Tis a wonder, indeed, how the creature is fed.

[Illustration]

The second, you see, is a steady old chair;
Very gentle is he, and he needs little care.



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[Illustration]

And here is another—the third one, of course;
But the driver's Tom's brother, and Tom's his own horse.

THE CHICKENS THAT WOULD NOT BE TAME.

In a small village there lived an old woman who kept poultry. One day this old woman went to see a little girl, who had some chickens which were so tame that they would eat corn and crumbs out of her hand.

"That's nice," said the old woman; "I shall teach my chickens to do that."

So she went home, and got some corn and some crumbs, and went out into the yard and called the chickens; but they would not come to her. They were afraid of her, because she used to shout at them, and throw sticks at them, every time they came into the garden, or near the house.

[Illustration]

When she saw that her chickens would not eat out of her hand, this old woman was very angry, indeed.

"You bad chickens!" she said, "I'll catch you and make you eat out of my hand." So she ran after them and tried to catch them, but some ran one way and some another, and she could not lay hold of any of them.

The next day she went again to the house where the tame chickens were, and this time she saw the little girl's mother, and told her about the trouble she had, and how her chickens would not let her come near them.

"I don't see why they are not nice, gentle chickens like those your little girl has," said the old woman.

"Well," said the little girl's mother, "perhaps they would be tame if you had always treated them as well as my little girl treats her chickens. She has been kind and gentle with them ever since they came out of their shells, and they have learned not to be at all afraid of her. But I think I have seen you throwing sticks at your chickens and chasing them about the yard. If you do that, they cannot help being afraid of you, and they will never come to you and eat out of your hand."

What the little girl's mother said was very true, and if any of you have birds or animals which you wish to tame, you must always treat them so kindly that they will never have any reason to be afraid to come to you.



[Illustration]

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

“Thirty days has September, April, June and November; all the rest have forty-three, except February, which is leap-year every four months.” I may not repeat this correctly, but I heard a little boy saying something of the kind. Perhaps you all know the jingle better than I do, so I’ll say no more about it.

NATURE’S PADDLE-BOATS.

A little bird has told me such a strange thing! It’s about a kind of jelly-fish which he called a “Globe-Beroe,” I think; but you can find out for yourselves, if I caught the name aright or not.



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This jelly-fish looks like a tiny ball of the clearest ice. All around it, much after the fashion of the lines of longitude on a geographical globe, are eight bands a little less transparent than the rest of the body. On each of these are thirty or forty small paddles, in shape like the floats upon the paddle-wheels of a steamboat; and it is by means of these that the little creature pushes itself along in the water. The paddles are alive, and move either swiftly or slowly, one at a time or all together.

Not only can this natural paddle-boat send itself along, but it can also cast anchor. It puts forth very fine threads, which gradually lengthen, unfolding from their sides transparent tendrils like those of a vine. These catch hold of and twine around some fixed thing, and moor the craft; and when the Beroe is about to be roving again, they unwind themselves, and all slip quietly back into the little ice-ball out of sight.

There are countless millions of Beroes in the Arctic regions, where the sea is in some parts colored by them for miles and miles. If there were not such immense fleets of these tiny paddle-boats there would be little chance for us to wonder at them, because they choose for their moorings just the places where whales love best to feed and play their rough games, and where, too, their own presence in the sea makes it into a kind of soup of which whales are very fond.

TINY TREES.

Only think of trees, full-grown trees, so small that several of them,—roots, stems, branches and all,—piled one above another, would not be as tall as I am!

What kind of birds would stoop to roost in such little, little trees, I'd like to know?

They tell me that such tree-lings do really grow, away up, on high mountains, near where the snow stays all the year through, and also in very cold countries near the polar circles.

I do hope the words "polar circles" will bring clear ideas to you, my dears. They've quite tangled up my notions. Wont some of you explain the things to me?

BIRDS AND TELEGRAPH-WIRES.

The Little Schoolma'am has been talking about snow-birds, and she says there was a poem about them in ST. NICHOLAS for April, 1875, and also a picture of the dear little fellows comfortably perched on a telegraph-wire, out in Colorado, somewhere. I dare say you'll remember them, my chicks.

Well, she went on to say that telegraph-wires are not always such good friends to birds, for she had heard that, along the great railroads in the West, large numbers of prairie-



chickens are killed at certain seasons of the year by flying against the wires. Sometimes this may happen in the dark, but more often in the day-time when the wind is very strong.

Of course, this can't very well be helped; but it does seem dreadful, doesn't it, my dears? However, the section-men, who have charge of the railroad tracks, get some good from it, for they make a regular business of gathering the fallen birds, which are then cooked and eaten.



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WALTON'S KITTY AGAIN.

Dear Jack: A while ago I told in ST. NICHOLAS something about "Walton's Kitty," that loves music and climbs upon any one who sings to her, putting her head as close as can be to the lips of the singer. Now, here is another true story about this same cat: In the summer, Walton's aunt used to set the milk in a cool closet, in a pitcher with a long, narrow neck, but day after day, when teatime came, every drop of that milk was gone. Nobody drank it, nobody used it, nobody spilled it. "Walton's Kitty" and all her descendants were clear of suspicion, because of the long, narrow neck of that pitcher. So everybody watched and waited to find out how the milk went. And this is what they saw: There sat "Walton's Kitty," dipping her paw deep down into the pitcher, taking it out, and then lapping the milk from it! If she dropped the smallest drop, she stopped and cleaned that up, and then went on. As the milk dwindled to the bottom of the pitcher she shook her paw around; and she never left off until every drop of milk was gone! Since then, the milk for tea stands in a covered pitcher, but "Walton's Kitty" has hers in a tall, narrow goblet. It is a very affecting sight, and people laugh till they cry as they watch her.—Yours truly,

M.B.C.S.

FLINT ONCE WAS SPONGE.

You never would think it, would you, my dears? But the Little Schoolma'am says that it was; and she always is right.

She says that flint really is nothing more nor less than sponge turned to stone. Once the sponge grew at the bottom of the sea, as other sponges grow now; but that was ages and ages ago, and since then the sponge, turned to flint, has lain covered by rocks and earth of many kinds piled thick above it. Seen with a microscope, flint shows the make of sponge in its fibers; and sometimes you can see, bedded in it, the shells of the tiny creatures on which the sponge had fed. Now and then, inside a flint, will be found bits of the sponge not yet changed.

That last proof settles it; but I must say it's hard to believe;—hard as the flint, almost.

SOME OLD PUZZLES.

Here are two letters, with old puzzles in them, that may amuse you for a while on one of these shivery evenings, my chicks. I'll tell you the answers next month.

Michigan.



DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: The other night one of my brothers said he did not believe we could pronounce a certain word after he should have spelled it. I will tell you what it is, though you may have heard about it already:

A cross, a circle complete,
An upright where two semi-circles do meet,
A triangle standing upon two feet,
Two semi-circles, a circle complete.



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Yours truly, CORA.

Oswego, N.Y.

DEAR JACK: I send you a riddle which I found. I take ST. NICHOLAS and like it very much. I have all of the volumes from 1874.

I am a word of plural number,
A foe to peace and human slumber,
Yet, do but add the letter S,—
Lo! what a metamorphosis!
What plural was, is plural now no more,
And sweet's what bitter was before.

Yours truly, KITTIE.

Talking about riddles, reminds me of one that was made by Richard Whately, an archbishop of Dublin, as I've heard. This is it:

“When from the Ark's capacious round
The beasts came forth in pairs,
Who was the first to hear the sound
Of boots upon the stairs?”

I'm told that it never has been guessed right by anybody; yet the archbishop said there was an answer, although he did not say what it was. May be you can solve the riddle, my dears, if you brush up your wits a bit? Let me know as soon as you think you have the right answer.

THE NEWEST FASHION.

The girls of the Red School-house often talk about new fashions, especially when the Little Schoolma'am is about, for she is pretty sure to drop some useful hints. Well, one day she told them, among other things, about the “latest novelty” in ladies' ball-dresses at Upernavik, in Greenland.

As nearly as I can remember, she said that the costume consists of a little jacket, made of bright-colored calico or flannel; long pantaloons of sealskin, trimmed like the jacket and sitting close to the figure; and white, red or blue boots: the whole set off by gay ribbons and all the beads the wearer can get.

A jaunty suit enough, no doubt; but, if she wore only that, the wearer must have been obliged to dance, merely to keep herself warm.



By the way, I wonder what ever possessed them to call that frozen country Green-land?

TO SURPRISE A DOG.

This is the way a man among the Himalaya Mountains once astonished a stranger dog. He put on a pair of huge goggles and walked steadily and quietly toward the dog, without speaking a word. The dog bristled up and stared hard for a moment, and then, all at once, he seemed to wilt, and away he slunk as if ashamed of himself.

I heard about this only the other day, my dears, and I tell it to you merely to warn you not to try the little trick, unless you are sure your dog will not get angry and jump for you.

It would not look well for you to slink off as if you were ashamed of yourself.

THE KINDERGARTEN AT HOME.



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DEAR JACK: Will you please tell your older boys and girls that in good systems of Kindergarten teaching they will find a great many means of amusing invalid brothers or sisters without wearying them, and many games and much fun for the younger ones, who will learn at the same time things that they ought to know. To carry out these methods one wants sticks, blocks, slates, slats, colored balls, and other things easy to make and cheap to buy, the use of which is pleasant to teach as well as to learn and practice. I bought lately a full set of Kindergarten apparatus such as I have named, and sent it to a little niece of mine in California, and the dear little one writes to me that she has had much happiness and enjoyment out of it. I hope some of your young friends will try the experiment and let me know what success they have.—I am, dear Jack, yours affectionately, A LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM.

KAFFIR IRONING.

You all know how ironing is done here—with flat-irons, I think somebody said. Well, the birds tell me that the Kaffirs of South Africa don't use flat-irons, but have quite another way. They make the clothes into a neat flat package, which they lay on a big stone. Then they just dance on the package until they think the clothes are smooth enough! It must be good fun to them! Luckily, Kaffirs don't wear cuffs and frills.

SLIPPERS FOR HORSES.

Where do horses wear slippers?

Now, my chicks, this is not a conundrum. So you need not be chirping out, "On their feet, of course;" or some foolish answer of that kind. The real answer is, "Japan,"—at least, so I'm told, and there are such numbers of other queer things there, that I don't wonder it is so.

Well, Japanese horses wear straw slippers,—clumsy-looking things, I should say. But, besides that, they stand in their stables with their heads where American horses' tails would be! Perhaps Japanese horses like to see for themselves what is going on?

"Where is the food put?"

Why, in a bucket hung from the roof, of course. Where else, would you suppose?

[Illustration: ON THE ICE.]

THE LETTER-BOX.

Fair Haven, Vt. 1877.



DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Two of my sisters and myself have taken your magazine ever since it was published, and like it very much. I am glad Miss Louisa M. Alcott is writing a story for your magazine, as I am very fond of her stories. I have read, "Eight Cousins," "Rose in Bloom," "Little Men," "Hospital Sketches," "Aunt Jo's Scrap-Bag," and "Little Women," myself, have been called "Meg, Amy, Beth and Jo." My oldest sister Ada, who is sixteen years old, is the "Amy" of our family; My little sister Stella, who is eleven years old, is well skilled in music, and we think

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she is very much like “Beth”; and I am thirteen, and have been called “Jo.”

So, you see, I was greatly interested in “Little Women,” as I could appreciate it so well; and it seemed to me as if Miss Alcott must have seen us four girls before she wrote the story.

I have four first cousins, and they are all boys, and with my sisters and me we are “eight cousins.” One of my cousins is a little baby, a little over five weeks old. He makes the eighth cousin.

I liked the piece about Miss Alcott in the December number very much. We expect to take your magazine until we are young women. I think it the best published for young people.—Your friend,

ANNIE ADAMS.

* * * * *

By letters just received from England, we learn that the pretty Christmas and New-Year cards in our December and January issues were *not* drawn by Miss Greenaway, though a friend had mistakenly sent them to us last summer as specimens of that lady’s work, cut from a scrapbook. We, therefore, hasten to correct the error, wishing at the same time, that we knew to whose hand to credit the drawings. To our still greater regret, we now learn that Marcus Ward & Co., of London, having published these as Christmas cards, and counted upon having a large sale for them in America. Had we known this in time, we certainly should not have copied the pictures without previously referring to the publishers. The best reparation we can make at the present date is this acknowledgement and a bit of honest advice to our readers: Hunt the shops for the beautifully colored cards from which these pictures were copied, and buy them for next Christmas. They are far better than our printed ones.

* * * * *

Brooklyn, N.Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am twelve years old and very fond of reading, and as I never can find an interesting book of history, I read stories. But mamma and other people tell me I ought to read something instructive, but as I never can find anything I like, I would be much obliged if you would help me a little by giving me a list of pleasant books. I have taken you for three years and enjoy you very much indeed.—Your very affectionate reader,

ALICE CLINTON.



“Greene’s Shorter History of the English People,” a new work, is very interesting. H.M.D. in the “Letter-Box,” October, 1876, says that “The Life and Times of Sir Philip Sidney” is such a pleasant book that you cannot help having a good time when you are reading it, and will not think it is history unless you know beforehand. “Seven Historic Ages,” by Arthur Gilman, is another attractive book, and if you are like most smart girls of your age, you will find Prescott’s “Ferdinand and Isabella” as interesting as many story books. It is a history of Spain in its most prosperous times. It is long, but, once begun, few find it hard to finish.



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* * * * *

Geneva, N.Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Please tell "Jack" that apples that are part sour and part sweet grow in the beautiful State of New York. I have tasted of such fruit and am sure it is so. Who can tell me more about this wonderful fruit? And how many have ever eaten such apples?

Can any one tell me what causes them to grow one side sweet, and the other sour? Hoping to hear more on this subject, I remain,
yours truly,

ALMA AYLESWORTH.

* * * * *

Mobile, Ala.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I wish to tell you of Fanny, our little mule, who cannot be forced to work on Sunday. She is gentle, obedient and faithful on week days, but on Sunday Fanny will not be made to move. Don't think us heathen, dear ST. NICHOLAS, for the boys just tried to make her carry a load of hay as a test, and to tease her, also; but when papa saw what they were up to, he put a stop to it, and now Fanny enjoys her Sundays in peace. My little sister says, "she is a religious mule." Do you think that the mule really knows when Sunday has come?—Your well-wisher,

ERNESTINE HAMMOND.

* * * * *

KING ALFRED AND THE CAKES.

(Jack-in-the-Pulpit's Story in the December Number, Straightened Out.)

King Alfred the Great, having been driven by the Danes to seek safety in flight, disguised himself as a peasant, and took refuge in the hut of a cow-herd, where he was told to watch the baking of some cakes. But he forgot the cakes and let them burn; and when the herdsman's wife came in, she gave him a sound scolding for his carelessness.

Charles I. of England was defeated at Marston Moor; and his son, Charles II., after losing the battle of Worcester, barely escaped capture, by hiding in the leafy branches of an oak-tree.



Robert Bruce lost many battles, fighting for the Scottish throne. At length, he lay down disheartened on a heap of straw in an old hut. While he was thinking over his troubles, he saw a spider trying to get from one rafter to another. It failed many times, but at last succeeded, and Bruce, taking courage at the insect's example, went on fighting until he had secured his kingdom.

Sir Isaac Newton had on his table a pile of papers upon which were written calculations that had taken him twenty years to make. One evening, he left the room for a few minutes, and when he came back he found that his little dog "Diamond" had overturned a candle and set fire to the precious papers, of which nothing was left but a heap of ashes. It was then that he cried, "Oh, Diamond! Diamond! thou little knowest what mischief thou hast done!"

It is said that George Washington, when a boy, destroyed his father's favorite cherry-tree, and, being asked about it, replied: "I cannot tell a lie; I did it with my little hatchet."



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Oliver Cromwell, when dispersing Parliament, saw the Speaker's mace upon the table, and, pointing to it, said, "Take away that bauble!"

Just after Lord Nelson's great naval victory off Cape Trafalgar, as he was dying from a wound received in the battle, he kept repeating the words, "Thank Heaven, I have done my duty!"

Prince William, son of Henry II. of England, was drowned on his way home from France. The king was so affected by his loss that "he never smiled again."

[Fannie P. sends a complete and correct version. Willie H. Paul and Bertha Paul straightened out all of the story except the part about Lord Nelson. The versions sent by E.J. Smith, Charlie W. Jerome, Lulu Way, and John N.L. Pierson, were correct, as far as they went, but they explained only the parts that referred to King Alfred himself.]

* * * * *

Here is a little story sent to ST. NICHOLAS as a companion to "The Story that Wouldn't be Told," in the November number:

THE STORY NOBODY KNEW.

Once there was a little story that nobody knew, and nobody could tell it, because nobody knew it, and yet this little story wanted dearly to be told. It used to wait about where people were telling stories, and when a story was ended and the merry laugh went round, it would say to itself, "Now they will certainly tell me," but they never did. So at last this little story got quite low-spirited and wandered off by itself out of the house, and through the garden into the orchard, and there in the orchard, under an apple-tree, there was a little girl lying fast asleep among the buttercups and daisies. The little story looked all around to see that no one else was there, and then it cuddled down beside the sleeping child and whispered itself into her ear. It was so exciting, so charming, that the little girl awoke, and thought she had dreamed it all, and ran to tell her mother the beautiful dream. When she saw her mother, she cried out, "Mother! mother!" and was just about to tell the little story, when suddenly she forgot it all, and now the little story can never be told, but it still comes to good children in their dreams.

* * * * *

A little girl, eleven years old, sends these verses of her own composition to the "Letter-Box":



VALENTINE.

I am a little Cupid,
And I come to visit thee,
To tell you that I love you,
And to know if you love me.

And if you'll be my little wife,
And come along with me,
I'll take you to a lovely place,
And pretty flowers you'll see.

And when you have been there a day,
You'll be a little Cupid,
With no hard lesson-books to learn,
That are so dull and stupid.

But, if you will not come and be
My pretty little wife,
You'll go straight back to school again,
With lessons all your life.



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K. UNIACKE.

* * * * *

Two Rivers, Wis.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am not quite ten years old, but I am one of your oldest subscribers. We have every number from the very first. I have a brother Fred, two years older than I. We have always lived on the shores of Lake Michigan. During the summer months, the steamer comes in from Chicago every morning. Fred and I like to get up early in the morning, and go down to the beach, before breakfast, to see the steamer go out; and, afterward, the morning train, for the station is near the beach. It is lovely down there early in the morning; we dig wells, sail boats, and wade out after the waves that chase us back again. We love the lake, and spend many happy hours down there. But sometimes it's a very wicked lake. Three weeks ago it blew very hard all night, and in the morning the waves were rolling up like mountains, and near the harbor pier there lay a wreck. Although they were so close to the town, and several other vessels were lying at anchor near, no one had heard, or seen, or knew anything about how it happened. It proved to be the "Magellan," of St. Catherine's, Ont. Since then nine bodies have washed ashore, among them the captain and his brother, the mate, both of them fine-looking young men, and not like ordinary rough sailors. The captain was a Knight Templar, and the Masons took charge of the body and sent it home, and some ladies made a beautiful cross of natural flowers, which they laid on his breast. But I will leave this sad subject, and tell you how we appreciate ST. NICHOLAS. Last week we had a concert. There were several recitations from ST. NICHOLAS, besides the "Mother Goose Operetta" in the January number (1877). It was very pretty. There were fifteen children, all in handsome peasant costumes. I was Marie. Last summer, when we came from the Centennial, in our Pullman car were two boys just Fred's age; one was from San Francisco and one from Chicago. Of course, the three were soon well acquainted, and had lots of fun together. And what do you think? They soon found out that each was a subscriber to ST. NICHOLAS! And how they enjoyed talking over the stories together! "Fast Friends" seemed to be the favorite; but I like "Eight Cousins" better.—Respectfully yours,

NETTIE CONINE.

* * * * *

Paulsboro, N.J., 1877.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I had pigeons at the Woodbury Fair both this year and last, and took the first premiums for best display: another little fellow, about my age, had four when I had six, and had eight when I had nine; how many had I better take next year? You are interested in this question, for the two dollars premium helps pay for my ST.



NICHOLAS, and I don't want to be without *that*. I take the "Scattered Seeds," but like ST. NICHOLAS better. Please stop sending my magazine to Wm. E. *Grant*. I am no relation to General Grant, but am a Democrat, and for General McClellan. I am nine years of age.—Your constant reader,

WILLIE E. GAUNT.



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You have done so well already, Willie, that we think you can best answer your own question; but we should take *all* of our *best* pigeons.

* * * * *

New York.

Will ST. NICHOLAS please tell "Sidonie" if the "trade dollar" is made entirely of silver?

It is not. There are 900 parts of pure silver and 100 parts of copper in the "trade dollar." The copper alloy is added to make the coin hard, so that it will wear well, as silver by itself would be too soft.

* * * * *

Chicago, Ill.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I, for one, think it is all nonsense about those "that" sentences. Anybody can put more than eight "thats" in a sentence; but if he, she, or it, can parse them, I would like to have them do it. I don't believe it can be done. Let them parse the sentence in the August number, for instance; and, if they can put in twelve "thats" and then parse them, why, then, and not till then, will I believe it. Please put this in the Letter-Box, and oblige.

C.P.S.

* * * * *

Louisville, Ky.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I thank you very much for the many beautiful designs which you have given for Christmas presents, and for the pictures and silhouettes which you have published, from which we have copied in *tableaux vivants* and shadow pantomimes. We had "The Modern and Mediaeval Ballad of Mary Jane" (published in January, 1877) in our church entertainment, and it "took" immensely. "The Stalwart Benjamin" and "Lord Mortimer" were cut from pasteboard, and fastened up by wires, and, of course, no one knew that they were not people. The "Ballad" was read behind the scenes.—Truly yours,

KITTY B. WHIPPLE.

* * * * *

Boston.



DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Papa has bought me every number of the ST. NICHOLAS you have ever published, and as I have seen several letters asking you about different things, I thought I would ask you about something I do not understand. If it is not really known who wrote the plays "Titus Andronicus" and "Pericles, Prince of Tyre," what circumstances lead people to think Shakspeare wrote them?

I have enjoyed you extremely, and as the Little Schoolma'am seems always to answer such questions, I write to you hoping you will ask her.—I am your fond admirer,

ETHEL DAVIS.

The Little Schoolma'am says it is not absolutely certain who wrote the plays you name, but this is about the way the matter stands:

The play "Titus Andronicus" is not now believed to have been originally written by Shakspeare. It is considered too horrible and repulsive to be his work. However, it may have been brought to him to be retouched and made ready for the stage. Hence is it, perhaps, that some passages of his are found in it.



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“Pericles,” as well as “Timon of Athens,” is believed to have been the work of some other writer, afterward completed and partially altered by Shakspeare. It is thought that most of the last three acts of “Pericles” are Shakspeare’s, though some of their prose scenes and all the choruses are by another hand.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

ALL AROUND A PALETTE is a delightful book for boys and girls, especially for those who love good pictures and odd and sprightly stories with something in them besides the fun and sparkle. Mr. J. Wells Champney has put a picture or a sketch wherever there was a chance, and Mrs. Lizzie W. Champney has made the stories very bright, sweet and interesting. The book is published by Messrs. Lockwood, Brooks & Co., Boston, and is one of the “Children’s Art Series.”

Messrs. Porter & Coates, of Philadelphia, send us THE BOY TRADERS, by Harry Castlemon, a brisk story of adventure on the sea, in the Sandwich Islands and among the Boers. There are several striking pictures.

A YORK AND A LANCASTER ROSE, by Anne Kearney, author of “Castle Daly,” “Oldbury,” *etc.*; published by Macmillan & Co., New York. This book is by an English author, and is a charming picture of family life, which will interest girls of thirteen and fifteen years of age. The story is of two girls, each named Rose, the one rich and the other poor; and tells how they were brought together, and the influence they exercised upon each other, and relates, in a very pleasant way, the various adventures, sayings, and doings of their brothers and sisters.

THE CUCKOO CLOCK, by Ennis Graham, author of “Carrots” and “Tell me a Story”; published by Macmillan & Co. This volume is well illustrated by Walter Crane. The cuckoo in an old clock makes friends with a lonely little girl, and causes her to have a good time, and to see many wonderful things. One of the prettiest parts of the story is the account of the making of the clock in the German home of the little girl’s grandmother.

SLICES OF MOTHER GOOSE, SERVED WITH SAUCE BY “CHAMP,” is the title of a set of large cards, admirably printed in black and red, and giving new funny versions of Mother Goose rhymes, by Alice Parkman, illustrated with capital pictures and silhouettes by Mr. Champney. Messrs. Lockwood, Brooks & Co., of Boston, are the publishers.

SIX SINNERS, by Campbell Wheaton, has to do chiefly with one of the six dear little “sinners,” Dora Maynard, whom girl readers will love right off. It tells all about her school-days, her pranks and fun, her troubles and how they were overcome, and tells it



in a way so lively and absorbing that you will want to read all of it at one sitting. The book is clearly printed in large type, and is published by Messrs. Putnam, New York.

THE RIDDLE-BOX

EASY DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ACROSTIC.



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The initials and finals, read downward, form the names of two kinds of trees.

1. The width of a vessel. 2. A mountain of Crete. 3. A Tom-boy. 4. An inclosure. 5. To harbor.

WILLIE PETTINOS.

SQUARE-WORD.

1. A governor. 2. To join. 3. Flexible. 4. A girl's name. 5. Quick dances.

L.

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

I am a word of five letters, the sum of which is 512.

My 1 x my 3 = 1/20 of my 5;

My 2 x my 4 = 1/5 of my 3;

My 5 / my 1 = my 3 x 20.

SEDGWICK.

HIDDEN ACROSTIC.

At the top of a mountain,
Within a clear light;
In the midst of a fountain,
At edge of the night;
In field and in meadow,
In sunshine and shadow,
On land and on sea,
At the end of the earth,
Or in air, we may be.

Now put us together,
And, if you guess right,
You'll discover a water-fall
Sparkling and bright.

W.P.D.



EASY DECAPITATIONS.

1. Behead a kind of sword, and leave a fluid for burning. 2. Behead a sharp-pointed weapon, and leave a fruit. 3. Behead to touch, and leave a kind of fish. 4. Behead a vehicle used in winter, and leave a shelf. 5. Behead a kind of deer, and leave a game that boys play. 6. Behead an ancient war implement, and leave a unit. 7. Behead animals of a common kind, and leave a sort of grain. 8. Behead to pull, and leave sore. 9. Behead the name of a vessel, and leave a narrow passage.

WALTER A.

TRANSPOSITIONS.

1. Change artful into a confusion. 2. Change a Persian king into a mixture. 3. Change a cutter into listeners. 4. Change a cheat into musicians. 5. Change repaired into healed. 6. Change a drink into a class embracing many species.

CYRIL DEANE.

CHARADE.

In war, and in council, my first oft appears.
My second is that which my first often wears.
Very strong is my last; 'tis a bark, not a bite;
That from which it is taken is solid, not light.
Three joined in one, if my whole you should find,
An island well known it would bring to your mind.

M.D.

GEOGRAPHICAL PUZZLE.

(Composed by Mary V. and Willie K., each aged thirteen.)

An island west of British Columbia (1) went to the lightest city (2) in the world to attend a ball. She there met a peak in Oregon (3) named as follows: A city in Egypt (4), a city in Maine (5), and a city in Australia (6), in whom she was much interested.

Her dress was a valley among the Himalaya Mountains (7), and though elegantly trimmed with a city in Belgium (8), it was, unfortunately, two cities in France (9). As she felt a country in South America (10), she wore around her shoulders a city in Scotland (11) shawl. Her jewelry was exclusively a peak in Oregon (12). Her shoes were of a country in Africa (13), and her handkerchief was perfumed with a city in Prussia (14).



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Being a lake north of the United States (15) dancer, she had distinguished partners, whose names were the capital of the United States (16), the capital of Ohio (17), the capital of Wisconsin (18), the capital of Alabama (19), the capital of Mississippi (20), and the capital of North Carolina (21).

Having boldly said that she was a country in Europe (22), she was escorted by a city in Indiana (23) to a bay in South-west Africa (24), where she freely partook of a river in Oregon (25), some islands in the Pacific Ocean (26), a river in South Africa (27), a district in France (28), and some islands in the Atlantic (29). After passing a river of Maine evening (30), she bade a cape in Iceland (31) to her hostess, and was escorted home by an island in Nova Scotia (32).

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

My 1 2 3 4 is undoubtedly possessed by every one of the whole race of 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (my whole), while my 5 6 7 8 ends a prayer.

C.D.

ILLUSTRATED PUZZLE.

[Illustration]

Twelve things may be found in the picture above,
Not clearly perceived by the eye,
But with keen observation and witty conceit,
You will find them, I know, if you try.

First point out (1) an animal (other than bear),
(2) A spectator, (3) a portion of corn,
(4) One part of a sentence, and (5) parts of a bird,
And (6) what may your fair head adorn.

Now (7) part of a river, and (8) parts of a book,
And now, if you please, take the trouble
To pick out (9, 10) two letters, which, rightly combined,
In classical language mean "double."

The remaining two things in the picture above,
To which I would call your attention,
Are (11) part of a carriage or part of a boy,
And (12) a sort of a stop or suspension.



AUNT SUE.

CURTAILMENTS.

1. Curtail a bur, and leave to plague; curtail again, and leave plants. 2. Curtail a celestial body, and leave to make smooth; again, and leave a model. 3. Curtail a low, wet ground, and leave a planet; again, and leave to injure; again, and leave a parent. 4. Curtail a jury-roll, and leave a glass; again, and leave part of a gun-lock; again, and leave a parent.

CYRIL DEANE.

COMPLETE DIAGONAL.

Diagonals from left to right, downward: 1. Fifty. 2. A boy's nickname. 3. A title of respect. 4. To affirm. 5. Ardent. 6. A vale. 7. A rule of action. 8. A river in Italy. 9. Phonetically, a measure.

Horizontally: 1. Used by painters. 2. An Israelitish king. 3. A name for beer. 4. More dim. 5. To reduce.

N.T.M.

EASY NUMERICAL ENIGMA.



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I am composed of twelve letters. My 2 11 3 is a fish. My 1 4 3 2 5 is a girl's name. My 7 3 8 10 5 is an American politician. My 12 8 6 1 is pretty for a child's wear. My 9 8 12 10 5 is a necessary domestic utensil. My 4 8 6 2 is very pleasant. My whole is the title of a popular book.

D.C.R.

SQUARE-WORD.

1. An emperor's title. 2. Nothing. 3. Weapons. 4. A flower.

B.

ANAGRAM DOUBLE DIAMOND AND CONCEALED DOUBLE SQUARE.

From the sentence "Seer eats a pear" form a double diamond, the center of which will be a double word-square.

CYRIL DEANE.

PICTORIAL PROVERB PUZZLE.

The answer is a well-known couplet.

[Illustration]

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN JANUARY NUMBER.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—Initials, Russia; finals, Turkey; across,

R—a—Y
U—nit—E
S—ac—K
S—uga—R
I—O—U
A—n—T

HOUR-GLASS PUZZLE.—Diagonals, hones, sends; central, inner; horizontals,



HAILS
ONE
N
DEE
SORES

DECAPITATIONS.—Acorn, corn; brook, rook; drake, rake; flute, lute; pearl, earl; plane, lane; wheel, heel; spine, pine; trout, rout; prune, rune.

DIAGONAL PUZZLE.—Diagonal, January; horizontals, Jollity, sAdness, kiNdles, ensUing, compAny, appeaRs, holidAY.

DOUBLE PUZZLE.—Central Syncopations: Rabid, raid; stair, stir; haste, hate; steep, step; Tiber, tier; grain, grin; holes, hoes; tiles, ties. The syncopated letters, B, A, S, E, B, A, L, L, form the answer to the Cross-word Enigma.

GEOGRAPHICAL TRANSPOSITIONS.—I held, Delhi; panels, Naples; I turn, Turin; pains, Spain; pure, Peru; erect, Crete; more, Rome.

OMNIBUS WORD.—Crate:

I. Hour-Glass Puzzle.—Central, re-act: horizontals, caret, tea, a, act, cater.

II. Square-Word.—Ace, car, era.

III. Prefix Puzzle.—At, cat; are, tare; art, cart; ear, tear.

IV. Another Prefix Puzzle.—Ace, race, trace; ate, rate, crate.

ACCIDENTAL HIDINGS.—Esther, moLEST HER; Theresa, THERE SAT; Ada, A DAMsel; Nora, NO RAY; Ernesta, stERNEST Age.

PERSPECTIVE CROSS PUZZLE.—*Horizontals*: 1, Grand; 2, plate; 3, ditch; 4, event; 5, prism; 6, eel; 7, great; 8, court; 9, terse. *Perpendiculars*: 10, Glove; 11, dread; 12, yet; 13, prove; 14, harem; 15, plant; 16, telegmatic; 17, preferment; 18, governable. *Diagonals*: 19, dry; 20, hop; 21, met; 22, peg; 23, toe; 24, cot; 25, Eve.

EASY SQUARE-WORD.—Dial, inca, acid, lade.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.—Forest all, forestall.

FRAME PUZZLE.—Stock-dove, broom-corn, anonymous, inodorous.

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CHARADE.—Cat.

WORDS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.—Pot-a-toe, potato; Mo-lasses, molasses; whisky; guinea-pig; false-hood, falsehood; toe-martyrs, tomatoes; pike-rust, pie crust; captive-atin', captivating; barber-us, barbarous; turn-pike; butter; IV, ivy.

PICTORIAL CHRISTMAS PUZZLE.—At Christmas play and make good cheer.

ANSWERS TO THE CHESS PUZZLE in the December number were received, before December 18, from "Frederica," P. Hill, J.E.N. James T. White, Laura Randolph, S.J.B., "Bessie and her Cousin," Alice Mason, and M.W. Collet.

ANSWERS TO THE MAGIC DOMINO-SQUARE PUZZLE in the December number were received, before December 18, from Alice Louise, William Lewis Lockwood, James Buckelew, Howard G. Myers, Jas. Forsyth, E.C. Rowse, Bertie Pierson, Walter Sanger, Kenneth Hartley, Hattie Coons, Margaret B. Dodge, Alice Downing, Anna A. Hays, Emma A. Gill, "Georgie," D.C. Robertson, Willie T. Sheffield, Samuel Herbert Fisher, George D. Mitchell, Carrie Welles, G.L., Emma Elliott, K.C.R., A.H., John Hancock, Jr., Harry Hartshorn, Carrie Doane, Carrie Heller, Eddie F. Worcester, H.S., Fred B. Appleget, "Three of Them" (?), C. Kittinger, "Bessie and her Cousin," and P. Hill, whose criticism we find just.

Helen L. Gilbert sends the solution of a puzzle in which 18 (not 16) is the sum of the dots in each row of half-dominoes.

ANSWERS TO OTHER PUZZLES in the December number were received, before December 18, from Charles Lothrop, R.T. McKeever, Arthur C. Smith, Lulu Way, James J. Ormsbee, Fannie Runnels, G.L., "Jennie," Bancel La Farge, Nellie Kellogg, Allie Bertram, L. Giraud, Alice N. Bailey, Josephine Seibert, "Frederica," P. Hill, B.P. Emery, "Bessie and her Cousin," A.G. Cameron, "Lizzie and Anna," Fred S. Pickett, Gracie S. Cook, Leonice Barnes, John Edward Hill, Carrie Heller, Bessie L. Barnes, Helen E. Risteen, "Blotterer and Blunderer," T.W. Siddall, Alice Mason, Fred M. Pease, Nessie E. Stevens, P. Hill, Katie E. Earl, M.W. Collet, and A.H. White.

ANSWERS TO THE "BLIND-CLERK'S PUZZLE," in Jack-in-the-Pulpit for December, were received, before December 18, from K.C.R., H.B. Hastings, and "Nat"; and answers to the TREE PUZZLE from Mary V. Ridgway, "M.," Linda L. Bergen, H. Walton, H.B. Hastings, J.C. Hoadley, Lewis K. Stubbs.

Caroline I. Lockwood, of Tunbridge Wells, England, sends an answer to a puzzle in a former number.