

St. Nicholas Magazine for Boys and Girls, Vol. 5, September 1878, No. 11 eBook

St. Nicholas Magazine for Boys and Girls, Vol. 5, September 1878, No. 11

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

St. Nicholas Magazine for Boys and Girls, Vol. 5, September 1878, No. 11 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	6
Page 1.....	8
Page 2.....	10
Page 3.....	12
Page 4.....	13
Page 5.....	14
Page 6.....	16
Page 7.....	18
Page 8.....	20
Page 9.....	22
Page 10.....	24
Page 11.....	26
Page 12.....	28
Page 13.....	30
Page 14.....	32
Page 15.....	34
Page 16.....	36
Page 17.....	38
Page 18.....	39
Page 19.....	41
Page 20.....	43
Page 21.....	45
Page 22.....	47

Page 23.....	49
Page 24.....	51
Page 25.....	53
Page 26.....	55
Page 27.....	57
Page 28.....	59
Page 29.....	61
Page 30.....	62
Page 31.....	64
Page 32.....	66
Page 33.....	68
Page 34.....	69
Page 35.....	71
Page 36.....	73
Page 37.....	74
Page 38.....	75
Page 39.....	76
Page 40.....	77
Page 41.....	79
Page 42.....	81
Page 43.....	83
Page 44.....	85
Page 45.....	87
Page 46.....	89
Page 47.....	91
Page 48.....	93

Page 49.....	95
Page 50.....	97
Page 51.....	99
Page 52.....	101
Page 53.....	103
Page 54.....	105
Page 55.....	107
Page 56.....	109
Page 57.....	111
Page 58.....	113
Page 59.....	115
Page 60.....	117
Page 61.....	119
Page 62.....	121
Page 63.....	123
Page 64.....	125
Page 65.....	127
Page 66.....	128
Page 67.....	130
Page 68.....	131
Page 69.....	133
Page 70.....	135
Page 71.....	137
Page 72.....	139
Page 73.....	141
Page 74.....	143

Page 75.....	144
Page 76.....	146
Page 77.....	148
Page 78.....	150
Page 79.....	151
Page 80.....	153
Page 81.....	155
Page 82.....	157
Page 83.....	159
Page 84.....	161

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
FERN-SEED.		1
MACKEREL-FISHING.		1
SPRING AND SUMMER.		5
THE AX OF RANIER.		5
THE PAINTER'S SCARE-CROW.		13
UNDER THE LILACS.		14
CHAPTER XXI.		14
CHAPTER XXII.		20
LITTLE BEAR.		26
MY ST. GEORGE.		26
BORN IN PRISON.		31
HOW LILY-TOES WAS CAUGHT IN A SHOWER.		32
NANCY CHIME.		40
HOW HE CAUGHT HIM.		41
WHO PUT OUT THE TEA-PARTY?		41
THE FOX, THE MONKEY, AND THE PIG.		43
DAB KINZER: A STORY OF A GROWING BOY.		44
CHAPTER XIV.		44
CHAPTER XV.		46
CHAPTER XVI.		49
CHAPTER XVII.		52
CHAPTER XVIII.		55
CHAPTER XIX.		60
THE FOX AND THE TURKEYS; OR, CHARLEY AND THE OLD FOLKS.		63
HIDDY-DIDDY!		68
MOQUI PEEKEE.		69
POTATO BLOSSOMS AS ORNAMENTS.		69
SHARP-WITTED ROBINS.		70
A PLANT THAT WALKS UPSIDE DOWN.		70
THE SMALLEST INSECT KNOWN.		70
A WATER-SPOUT.		71
THE USES OF HAIR ON PLANTS.		71
DARK SUNS.		72

THE LETTER-BOX.	72
THE RIDDLE-BOX.	80
NAMES OF AUTHORS	80
ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.	
ENIGMA.	80
WHAT IS IT?	81
CHARADE.	81
INCOMPLETE SENTENCES.	81
PICTORIAL ANAGRAM PUZZLE.	81
THREE DIAMONDS.	82
RIDDLE.	82
POSITIVES AND COMPARATIVES.	82
HIDDEN NAMES.	82
EASY CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.	83
DOUBLE WORD-SQUARE.	83
REBUS.	83
CENTRAL SYNCOPATIONS.	83
DOUBLE ACROSTIC.	83
DYCLE	83



Page 1

FERN-SEED.

By Celia THAXTER.

She filled her shoes with fern-seed,
This foolish little Nell,
And in the summer sunshine
Went dancing down the dell.
For whoso treads on fern-seed,—
So fairy stories tell,—
Becomes invisible at once,
So potent is its spell.
A frog mused by the brook-side:
“Can you see me!” she cried;
He leaped across the water,
A flying leap and wide.
“Oh, that’s because I asked him!
I must not speak,” she thought,
And skipping o’er the meadow
The shady wood she sought.
The squirrel chattered on the bough,
Nor noticed her at all,
The birds sang high, the birds sang low,
With many a cry and call.
The rabbit nibbled in the grass,
The snake basked in the sun,
The butterflies, like floating flowers,
Wavered and gleamed and shone.
The spider in his hammock swung,
The gay grasshoppers danced;
And now and then a cricket sung,
And shining beetles glanced.
’Twas all because the pretty child
So softly, softly trod,—
You could not hear a foot-fall
Upon the yielding sod.
But she was filled with such delight—
This foolish little Nell!
And with her fern-seed laden shoes,
Danced back across the dell.
“I’ll find my mother now,” she thought,
“What fun ’t will be to call
‘Mamma! mamma!’ while she can see



No little girl at all!"
She peeped in through the window,
Mamma sat in a dream:
About the quiet, sun-steeped house
All things asleep did seem.
She stept across the threshold;
So lightly had she crept,
The dog upon the mat lay still,
And still the kitty slept.
Patient beside her mother's knee
To try her wondrous spell
Waiting she stood, till all at once,
Waking, mamma cried "Nell!
Where have you been? Why do you gaze
At me with such strange eyes?"
"But can you see me, mother dear?"
Poor Nelly faltering cries.
"See you? Why not, my little girl?
Why should mamma be blind?"
And little Nell unties her shoes,
With fairy fern-seed lined,
And tosses up into the air
A little powdery cloud,
And frowns upon it as it falls,
And murmurs half aloud,
"It wasn't true, a word of it,
About the magic spell!
I never will believe again
What fairy stories tell!"

MACKEREL-FISHING.

By Robert Arnold.

Page 2

When I was a boy, I lived on the rugged coast of New England. The sea abounded in cod, hake, mackerel, and many other kinds of fish. The mackerel came in “schools” in late summer, and sometimes were very plentiful. One day, my uncle James determined to go after some of these fish, with his son George, and invited me to go with them. We were to start before day-break the next morning. I went to bed that night with an impatient heart, and it was a long time before I could go to sleep. After I did get asleep, I dreamed of the whale that swallowed Jonah, and all kinds of fishes, big and little. I was awakened by somebody calling, in a very loud voice, “Robert! Robert!” I jumped out of bed, with my eyes not more than half opened, and fell over the chair on which I had put my clothes. This made me open my eyes, and I soon realized that the voice proceeded from my cousin George, who had come to arouse me for the fishing-voyage.

I dressed as quickly as possible, and went downstairs. All was quiet in the house except the old clock ticking in the kitchen. I went out-of-doors and found the stars still shining. It was half-past three o’clock in the morning. There was no sign of daylight, and even the cocks had not begun to crow. In the darkness I espied George, who said, “Come, it is time to start. Father is waiting for you.”

We walked across the fields to my uncle’s house. Taking each a basket and knife, we began our journey, and soon entered the pine-woods. As we walked along in the darkness, we could scarcely see each other or the path. The wind was sighing mournfully among the tree-tops, and, as we gazed upward, we could see the stars twinkling in the clear sky.

We soon emerged from the forest, and came to a sandy plain. Before us was the ocean, just discernible. There were two or three lights, belonging to vessels that were anchored near the shore. We could see the waves and hear their murmur, as they broke gently upon the shore. A soft breeze was blowing from the west, and the sea was almost as smooth as a pond.

When we reached the beach, we found that it was low water. The boat was at high-water mark. What should we do? We did as the fishermen in that region always do in the same circumstances—took two rollers, perhaps six inches in diameter, lifted the bow of the boat, put one of the rollers under it, and the other upon the sand about eight feet in front of it. We then pushed the boat until it reached the second roller, and rolled it upon that until the other was left behind. Then the first was put in front of the boat, and so we kept on until our craft reached the water. Uncle James and George took the oars, and I sat in the stern, with the tiller in my hand, to steer.

We got out over the breakers without difficulty, and rowed toward the fishing-ground. It is queer that fishermen call the place where they fish, “the ground,” but that is only one of the many queer things that they do. By this time, daylight had come. The eastern sky was gorgeous with purple and red, and hues that no mortal can describe. Soon a

red arc appeared, and then the whole glorious sun, looking more grand and beautiful than can be thought of by one who has never seen the sun rise over the sea.

Page 3

"How glorious!" I exclaimed, impulsively.

"Yes; it is a first-rate morning for fishing," said my uncle, whose mind was evidently upon business, and not upon the beauties of nature.

After rowing about three miles, we stopped, and prepared for fishing. Each of us had two lines, about twenty feet long. The hooks were about as big as large trout-hooks. Pewter had been run around the upper part of them, so that "sinkers" were not required. The pewter answered a double purpose; it did duty as a sinker, and, being bright, attracted the notice of the fish. Uncle James had brought with him some clams, which we cut from their shells and put on the hooks. We threw in our lines and waited for a bite. We did not wait long, for, in less than a minute, George cried out, in the most excited manner, "There's a fish on my hook!"

"Pull, then!" shouted his father.

He was too agitated to pull at first, but, at length, managed to haul in his line, and, behold, a slender fish, about eight inches long, showing all the colors of the rainbow, as he held it up in the morning sun! It was our first mackerel. While admiring George's prize, I suddenly became aware of a lively tug at one of my own lines. I pulled it in, and found that I had caught a fish just like the other, only a little larger. No sooner had I taken it from the hook than my other line was violently jerked. I hauled it in hurriedly, and on the end of it was—not a mackerel, but a small, brown fish, with a big head and an enormous mouth. I was about to take it from the hook when my uncle called, "Look out!" He seized it, and showed me the long, needle-like projections on its back, with which, but for his interference, my hand might have been badly wounded. This unwelcome visitor was a sculpin. Sculpins are very numerous in this region.

[Illustration: *Mackerel-boats.*]

Uncle James explained how I happened to catch one of them. They swim at a much greater depth than mackerel usually do, and, while I was busy with one line, the other had sunk some twelve or fifteen feet down where the sculpins dwelt.

When mackerel are inclined to take the bait, they are usually close to the surface of the water. They began now to bite with the greatest eagerness, and gave us all the work that we could do. As soon as I had taken a fish from one line, the other demanded my attention. I did not have to *wait* for a bite. Indeed, as soon as the hook was thrown into the water, several mackerel would dart for it. As George said, they were very anxious to be caught. This was very different from my previous experience in fishing for trout in the little brooks near my home. I used to fish all day and not get more than two or three trout, and often I would not get one. Those that I did catch were not more than four or five inches long. I guess some of my boy readers have had the same experience.

Page 4

The only drawback was baiting the hook whenever a fish was taken from it. Uncle James soon remedied this difficulty. He cut from the under side of a dead mackerel six thin pieces, about half an inch in diameter, and gave each of us two. We put them on our hooks, and they served for bait a long time. When they were gone, we put on more of the same kind. Mackerel will bite at any very small object, almost, that they can see, and sometimes fishermen fasten a small silver coin to their hooks, which will do duty as bait for days. They wish to catch as many fish as they possibly can, while they are biting, for mackerel are very notional. Sometimes they will bite so fast as to tire their captors, and, ten minutes after, not one can be felt or seen. Usually, they can be caught best in the morning and toward evening. I suppose they have but two meals a day, breakfast and supper, going without their dinner. In this respect, they resemble trout and many other kinds of fish.

They are caught in great numbers off the coast of Maine and Massachusetts in the months of August and September. Hundreds of schooners, large and small, and thousands of men and boys are employed in the business. Standing upon the shore, near Portland, and looking out upon the Atlantic, on a bright summer's day, you can sometimes see more white, glistening sails of "mackerel-catchers" than you can count. At the wharves of every little village on the sea-shore, or on a river near the shore, boats and fishermen abound. Of late years, immense nets or "seines" have been used, and often, by means of them, enormous quantities of fish have been secured in one haul. The season is short, but most of the fishermen, before the mackerel come and after they go, engage in fishing for cod and hake, which are plentiful also. Mackerel-catching has its joys, but it also has its sorrows and uncertainties. One vessel may have excellent luck while another may be very unfortunate. In short, those engaged in the pursuit of mackerel have to content themselves with "fishermen's luck."

While we were busily fishing, George called my attention to a dark fin, projecting a few inches above the water, and gradually approaching the boat with a peculiar wavy motion. Just before reaching us it sank out of sight. I cast an inquiring glance at my cousin, who said, in a low tone of voice, "A shark!" A feeling of wonder and dread came over me, and doubtless showed itself in my face, for my uncle said, in an assuring voice, "He will not harm us."

The mackerel stopped biting all at once. Our fishing was over. It was now about ten o'clock, and the sun had become warm. Half a mile from us was a small island, with a plenty of grass and a few trees, but no houses. Uncle James proposed that we should row to it, which we gladly did. Its shores were steep and rocky, and we found much difficulty in landing; but at last we got ashore and pulled the boat up after us. Among the rocks

Page 5

we found a quantity of drift-wood; we gathered some, and built a fire. Uncle James produced some bread and crackers from his basket, and, after roasting some of the nice, fat mackerel on sharp sticks before the fire, we sat down to what seemed to us a delicious breakfast. We were in excellent spirits, and George and I cracked jokes and laughed to our hearts' content. After our hunger had been satisfied, we wandered over the island, which we christened Mackerel Island, and, sitting upon a high cliff, watched the seals as they bobbed their heads out of the water, and turned their intelligent, dog-like faces, with visible curiosity, toward us. They did not seem to be at all afraid, for they swam close to the rock upon which we sat. We whistled, and they were evidently attracted by the sound. These seals are numerous in some of the bays on the New England coast. Most of them are small, but occasionally one is seen of considerable size. Their fur is coarse and of little value, but they are sought after by fishermen for the sake of their oil, which commands a ready sale for a good price. After we had got fully rested, we launched our boat, rowed homeward, and soon landed upon the beach.

SPRING AND SUMMER.

By Dora read Goodale.

In Spring we note the breaking
Of every baby bud;
In Spring we note the waking
Of wild flowers of the wood;
In Summer's fuller power,
In Summer's deeper soul,
We watch no single flower,—
We see, we breathe the whole.

THE AX OF RANIER.

By Thomas Dunn English.

Once upon a time, there lived on the borders of a forest an old woman named Jehanne, who had an only son, a youth of twenty-one years, who was called Ranier. Where the two had originally come from no one knew; but they had lived in their little hut for many years. Ranier was a wood-cutter, and depended on his daily labor for the support of himself and mother, while the latter eked out their scanty means by spinning. The son, although poor, was not without learning, for an old monk in a neighboring convent had taught him to read and write, and had given him instructions in arithmetic. Ranier was

handsome, active and strong, and very much attached to his mother, to whom he paid all the honor and obedience due from a son to a parent.

One morning in spring, Ranier went to his work in the forest with his ax on his shoulder, whistling one of the simple airs of the country as he pursued his way. Striding along beneath the branches of the great oaks and chestnuts, he began to reflect upon the hard fate which seemed to doom him to toil and wretchedness, and, thus thinking, whistled no longer. Presently he sat down upon a moss-covered rock, and laying his ax by his side, let his thoughts shape themselves into words.

Page 6

"This is a sad life of mine," said Ranier. "I might better it, perhaps, were I to enlist in the army of the king, where I should at least have food and clothing; but I cannot leave my mother, of whom I am the sole stay and support. Must I always live thus,—a poor wood-chopper, earning one day the bread I eat the next, and no more?"

Ranier suddenly felt that some one was near him, and, on looking up, sprang to his feet and removed his cap. Before him stood a beautiful lady, clad in a robe of green satin, with a mantle of crimson velvet on her shoulders, and bearing in her hand a white wand.

"Ranier!" said the unknown, "I am the fairy, Rougevert. I know your history, and have heard your complaint. What gift shall I bestow on you?"

"Beautiful fairy," replied the young man, "I scarcely know what to ask. But I bethink me that my ax is nearly worn out, and I have no money with which to buy another."

The fairy smiled, for she knew that the answer of Ranier came from his embarrassment; and, going to a tree hard by, she tapped on the bark with her wand. Thereupon the tree opened, and she took from a recess in its center, a keen-edged ax with an ashen handle.

"Here," said Rougevert, "is the most excellent ax in the world. With this you can achieve what no wood-chopper has ever done yet. You have only to whisper to yourself what you wish done, and then speak to it properly, and the ax will at once perform all you require, without taxing your strength, and with marvelous quickness."

The fairy then taught him the words he should use, and, promising to farther befriend him as he had need, vanished.

Ranier took the ax, and went at once to the place where he intended to labor for the day. He was not sure that the ax would do what the giver had promised, but thought it proper to try its powers. "For," he said to himself, "the ranger has given me a hundred trees to fell, for each of which I am to receive a silver groat. To cut these in the usual way would take many days. I will wish the ax to fell and trim them speedily, so,"—he continued aloud, as he had been taught by the fairy,—"Ax! ax! chop! chop! and work for my profit!"

Thereupon the ax suddenly leapt from his hands, and began to chop with great skill and swiftness. Having soon cut down, trimmed and rolled a hundred trees together, it returned, and placed itself in the hands of Ranier.

The wood-chopper was very much delighted with all this, and sat there pleasantly reflecting upon his good fortune in possessing so useful a servant, when the ranger of the forest came along. The latter, who was a great lord, was much surprised when he saw the trees lying there.

“How is this?” asked the ranger, whose name was Woodmount. “At this time yesterday these trees were standing. How did you contrive to fell them so soon?”

“I had assistance, my lord,” replied Ranier; but he said nothing about the magic ax.

Page 7

Lord Woodmount hereupon entered into conversation with Ranier, and finding him to be intelligent and prompt in his replies, was much pleased with him. At last he said:

“We have had much difficulty in getting ready the timber for the king’s new palace, in consequence of the scarcity of wood-cutters, and the slowness with which they work. There are over twenty thousand trees yet to be cut and hewn, and for every tree fully finished the king allows a noble of fifty groats, although he allows but a groat for the felling alone. It is necessary that they should be all ready within a month, though I fear that is impossible. As you seem to be able to get a number of laborers together, I will allot you a thousand trees, if you choose, should you undertake to have them all ready to be hauled away for the builders’ use, within a month’s time.”

“My lord,” answered Ranier, “I will undertake to have the whole twenty thousand ready before the time set.”

“Do you know what you say?” inquired the ranger, astonished at the bold proposal.

“Perfectly, my lord,” was the reply. “Let me undertake the work on condition that you will cause the forest to be guarded, and no one to enter save they have my written permission. Before the end of the month the trees will be ready.”

[Illustration: *Felling the trees.*]

“Well,” said Lord Woodmount, “it is a risk for me to run; but from what you have done already, it is possible you may obtain enough woodmen to complete your task. Yet, beware! If you succeed, I will not only give you twenty thousand nobles of gold, but also appoint you—if you can write, as you have told me—the deputy-ranger here; and for every day less than a month in which you finish your contract I will add a hundred nobles; but, if you fail, I will have you hanged on a tree. When will you begin?”

“To-morrow morning,” replied Ranier.

The next morning, before daylight, Ranier took his way to the forest, leaving all his money save three groats with his mother, and, after telling her that he might not return for a day or so, passed the guard that he found already set, and plunged into the wood. When he came to a place where the trees were thickest and loftiest, he whispered to himself what he had to do, and said to the ax: “Ax! ax! chop! chop! and work for my profit.” The ax at once went to work with great earnestness, and by night-fall over ten thousand trees were felled, hewn, and thrown into piles. Then Ranier, who had not ceased before to watch the work, ate some of the provisions which he had brought with him, and throwing himself under a great tree, whose spreading boughs shaded him from the moonlight, drew his scanty mantle around him, and slept soundly till sunrise.

The next morning Ranier arose, and looked with delight at the work already done; then, speaking again to the ax, it began chopping away as before.

Page 8

Now, it chanced that morning that the chief ranger had started to see how the work was being done, and, on reaching the forest, asked the guards if many wood-cutters had entered. They all replied that only one had made his appearance, but he must be working vigorously, since all that morning, and the whole day before, the wood had resounded with the blows of axes. The Lord Woodmount thereupon rode on in great anger, for he thought that Ranier had mocked him. But presently he came to great piles of hewn timber which astonished him much; and then he heard the axes' sound, which astonished him more, for it seemed as though twenty wood-choppers were engaged at once, so great was the din. When he came to where the ax was at work, he thought he saw—and this was through the magic power of the fairy—thousands of wood-cutters, all arrayed in green hose and red jerkins, some felling the trees, some hewing them into square timber, and others arranging the hewn logs into piles of a hundred each, while Ranier stood looking on. He was so angry at the guards for having misinformed him, that he at once rode back and rated them soundly on their supposed untruth. But as they persisted in the story that but one man had passed, he grew angrier than ever. While he was still rating them, Ranier came up.

“Well, my lord,” said the latter, “if you will go or send to examine, you will find that twenty thousand trees are already cut, squared, and made ready to be hauled to the king’s palace-ground.”

The ranger at once rode back into the forest, and, having counted the number of piles, was much pleased, and ordered Ranier to come that day week when the timber would be inspected, and if it were all properly done he would receive the twenty thousand nobles agreed upon.

“Excuse me, my lord,” suggested Ranier, “but the work has been done in two days instead of thirty; and twenty-eight days off at a hundred nobles per day makes twenty-two thousand eight hundred nobles as my due.”

“True,” replied the ranger; “and if you want money now—”

“Oh no!” interrupted Ranier, “I have three groats in my purse, and ten more at home, which will be quite sufficient for my needs.”

At this the ranger laughed outright, and then rode away.

At the end of a week, Ranier sought the ranger’s castle, and there received not only an order on the king’s treasurer for the money, but also the patent of deputy-ranger of the king’s forest, and the allotment of a handsome house in which to live. Thither Ranier brought his mother, and as he was now rich, he bought him fine clothing, and hired him servants, and lived in grand style, performing all the duties of his office as though he had been used to it all his life. People noticed, however, that the new deputy-ranger never went out without his ax, which occasioned some gossip at first; but some one

having suggested that he did so to show that he was not ashamed of his former condition, folk were satisfied,—though the truth was that he carried the ax for service only.

Page 9

Now it happened that Ranier was walking alone one evening in the forest to observe whether any one was trying to kill the king's deer, and while there, he heard the clash of swords. On going to the spot whence the noise came, he saw a cavalier richly clad, with his back to a tree, defending himself as he best might, from a half dozen men in armor, each with his visor down. Ranier had no sword, for, not being a knight, it was forbidden him to bear such a weapon; but he bethought him of his ax, and hoped it might serve the men as it had the trees. So he wished these cowardly assailants killed, and when he uttered the prescribed words, the ax fell upon the villains, and so hacked and hewed them that they were at once destroyed. But it seemed to the knight thus rescued that it was the arm of Ranier that guided the ax, for such was the magic of the fairy.

So soon as the assailants had been slain, the ax came back into Ranier's hand, and Ranier went to the knight, who was faint with his wounds, and offered to lead him to his house. And when he examined him fully, he bent on his knee, for he discovered that it was the king, Dagobert, whom he had seen once before when the latter was hunting in the forest.

The king said: "This is the deputy-ranger, Master Ranier. Is it not?"

"Yes, sire!" replied Ranier.

The king laid the blade of his sword on Ranier's shoulder, and said:

"I dub thee knight. Rise up, Sir Ranier! Be trusty, true and loyal."

Sir Ranier arose a knight, and with the king examined the faces of the would-be assassins, who were found to be great lords of the country, and among them was Lord Woodmount.

"Sir Ranier," said the king, "have these wretches removed and buried. The office of chief ranger is thine."

Sir Ranier, while the king was partaking of refreshments at Ranier's house, sent trusty servants to bury the slain. After this, King Dagobert returned to his palace, whence he sent the new knight his own sword, a baldric and spurs of gold, a collar studded with jewels, the patent of chief ranger of the forest, and a letter inviting him to visit the court.

Now, when Sir Ranier went to court, the ladies there, seeing that he was young and handsome, treated him with great favor; and even the king's daughter, the Princess Isaure, smiled sweetly on him, which, when divers great lords saw, they were very angry, and plotted to injure the new-comer; for they thought him of base blood, and were much chagrined that he should have been made a knight, and be thus welcomed by the princess and the ladies of the court; and they hated him more as the favorite of

the king. So they conferred together how to punish him for his good fortune, and at length formed a plan which they thought would serve their ends.

Page 10

It must be understood that King Dagobert was at that time engaged in a war with King Crimball, who reigned over an adjoining kingdom, and that the armies of the two kings now lay within thirty miles of the forest, and were about to give each other battle. As Sir Ranier, it was supposed, had never been bred to feats of arms, they thought if they could get him in the field, he would so disgrace himself as to lose the favor of the king and the court dames, or be certainly slain. For these lords knew nothing of the adventure of the king in the forest,—all those in the conspiracy having been slain,—and thought that Ranier had either rendered some trifling service to the king, or in some way had pleased the sovereign's fancy. So when the king and some of the great lords of the court were engaged in talking of the battle that was soon to be fought, one of the conspirators, named Dyvorer, approached them, and said:

"Why not send Sir Ranier there, sire; for he is, no doubt, a brave and accomplished knight, and would render great service?"

The king was angry at this, for he knew that Ranier had not been bred to arms, and readily penetrated the purpose that prompted the suggestion. Before he could answer, however, Sir Ranier, who had heard the words of Dyvorer, spoke up and said:

"I pray you, sire, to let me go; for, though I may not depend much upon my lance and sword, I have an ax that never fails me."

Then the king remembered of the marvelous feats which he had seen Ranier perform in his behalf, and he replied:

"You shall go, Sir Ranier; and as the Lord Dyvorer has made a suggestion of such profit, he shall have the high honor of attending as one of the knights in your train, where he will, doubtless, support you well."

At this, the rest laughed, and Dyvorer was much troubled, for he was a great coward. But he dared not refuse obedience.

The next morning, Sir Ranier departed along with the king for the field of battle, bearing his ax with him; and, when they arrived, they found both sides drawn up in battle order, and waiting the signal to begin. Before they fell to, a champion of the enemy, a knight of fortune from Bohemia, named Sir Paul, who was over seven feet in height, and a very formidable soldier, who fought as well with his left hand as with his right, rode forward between the two armies, and defied any knight in King Dagobert's train to single combat.

Then said Dyvorer: "No doubt, here is a good opportunity for Sir Ranier to show his prowess."

"Be sure that it is!" exclaimed Sir Ranier; and he rode forward to engage Sir Paul.

When the Bohemian knight saw only a stripling, armed with a woodman's ax, he laughed. "Is this girl their champion, then?" he asked. "Say thy prayers, young sir, for thou art not long for this world, I promise thee."

But Ranier whispered to himself, "I want me this braggart hewn to pieces, and then the rest beaten;" and added, aloud: "Ax! ax! chop! chop! and work for my profit!" Whereupon the ax leapt forward, and dealt such a blow upon Sir Paul that it pierced through his helmet, and clave him to the saddle. Then it went chopping among the enemy with such force that it cut them down by hundreds; and King Dagobert with his army falling upon them, won a great victory.

Page 11

Now the magic of the ax followed it here as before, and every looker-on believed he saw Sir Ranier slaying his hundreds. So it chanced when the battle was over, and those were recalled who pursued the enemy, that a group of knights, and the great lords of the court who were gathered around the king, and were discussing the events of the day, agreed as one man, that there never had been a warrior as potent as Sir Ranier since the days of Roland, and that he deserved to be made a great lord. And the king thought so, too. So he created him a baron on the field, and ordered his patent of nobility to be made out on their return, and gave him castles and land; and, furthermore, told him he would grant him any favor more he chose to ask, though it were half the kingdom.

When Dyvorer and others heard this, they were more envious than ever, and concerted together a plan for the ruin of Lord Treefell, for such was Sir Ranier's new title. After many things had been proposed and rejected, Dyvorer said: "The Princess Isaure loves this stripling, as I have been told by my sister, the Lady Zanthé, who attends on her highness. I think he has dared to raise his hopes to her. I will persuade him to demand her hand as the favor the king has promised. Ranier does not know our ancient law, and, while he will fail in his suit, the king will be so offended at his presumption that he will speedily dismiss him from the court."

This plan was greatly approved. Dyvorer sought out Ranier, to whom he professed great friendship, with many regrets for all he might have said or done in the past calculated to give annoyance. As Dyvorer was a great dissembler, and Ranier was frank and unsuspecting, they became very intimate. At length, one day when they were together, Dyvorer said:

"Have you ever solicited the king for the favor he promised?"

And Ranier answered, "No!"

"Then," said Dyvorer, "it is a pity that you do not love the Princess Isaure."

"Why?" inquired Ranier.

"Because," replied Dyvorer, "the princess not only favors you, but, I think, from what my sister Zanthé has said, that the king has taken this mode of giving her to you at her instance."

Ranier knew that the Lady Zanthé was the favorite maiden of the princess, and, as we are easily persuaded in the way our inclinations run, he took heart and determined to act upon Dyvorer's counsel.

About a week afterward, as the king was walking in the court-yard of his palace, as he did at times, he met with Ranier.



“You have never asked of me the favor I promised, good baron,” said King Dagobert.

“It is true, your majesty,” said Ranier; “but it was because I feared to ask what I most desired.”

[Illustration: *The combat with sir Paul.*]

“Speak,” said the king, “and fear not.”

Therefore Ranier preferred his request for the hand of the princess.

Page 12

"Baron," replied the king, frowning, "some crafty enemy has prompted you to this. The daughter of a king should only wed with the son of a king. Nevertheless, there is an ancient law, never fulfilled, since the conditions are impossible, which says that any one of noble birth, who has saved the king's life, vanquished the king's enemies in battle, and built a castle forty cubits high in a single night, may wed the king's daughter. Though you have saved my life and vanquished my enemies, yet you are not of noble birth, nor, were you so, could you build such a castle in such a space of time."

"I am of noble blood, nevertheless," said Ranier, proudly, "although I have been a wood-chopper. My father, who died in banishment, was the Duke of Manylands, falsely accused of having conspired against the late king, your august father; and I can produce the record of my birth. Our line is as noble as any in your realm, sire, and nobler than most."

"If that be true, and I doubt it not," answered King Dagobert, "the law holds good for you. But you must first build a palace where we stand, and that in a single night. So your suit is hopeless."

The king turned and entered the palace, leaving Ranier in deep sorrow, for he thought the condition impossible. As he stood thus, the fairy, Rougevert, appeared.

"Be not downcast," she said; "but build that castle to-night."

"Alas!" cried Ranier, "it cannot be done."

"Look at your ax," returned the fairy. "Do you not see that the back of the blade is shaped like a hammer?"

So she taught Ranier what words to use, and vanished.

When the sun was down, Ranier came to the court-yard, and raising his ax with the blade upward, he said aloud: "Ax! ax! hammer! hammer! and build for my profit!" The ax at once leapt forward with the hammer part downward, and began cracking the solid rock on which the court-yard lay, and shaping it into oblong blocks, and heaping them one on the other. So much noise was made thereby that the warders first, and then the whole court, came out to ascertain the cause. Even the king himself was drawn to the spot. And it seemed to them, all through the magic of the fairy, that there were hundreds on hundreds of workmen in green cloth hose and red leather jerkins, some engaged in quarrying and shaping, and others in laying the blocks, and others in keying arches, and adjusting doors and windows, and making oriels and towers and turrets. And still as they looked, the building arose foot by foot, and before dawn a great stone castle, with its towers and battlements, its portcullis, and its great gate, forty cubits high, stood in the court-yard.



When King Dagobert saw this, he embraced Ranier, continued to him the title of his father, whose ducal estates he restored to the son, and sending for the Princess Isaure, who appeared radiant with joy and beauty, he betrothed the young couple in the presence of the court.

Page 13

So Ranier and Isaure were married, and lived long and happily; and, on the death of Dagobert, Ranier reigned. As for the ax, that is lost, somehow, and although I have made diligent inquiry, I have never been able to find where it is. Some people think the fairy took it after King Ranier died, and hid it again in a tree; and I recommend all wood-choppers to look at the heart of every tree they fell, for this wonderful ax. They cannot mistake it, since the word "Boldness" is cut on the blade, and the word "Energy" is printed, in letters of gold, on the handle.

THE PAINTER'S SCARE-CROW.

By C.P. CRANCH.

Miss Arabella Vandyke Brown
Had a small studio in the town,
Where, all the winter, blithe and gay,
She drew and painted day by day.
She envied not the rich. Her art
And work made sunshine in her heart.
Upon her canvas, many a scene
Of summers past, in golden green
Was wrought again. The snow and rain
Pelted upon her window-pane;
But she within her cozy room
With joyous toil dispelled the gloom;
And, sometimes, in an undertone,
Sang to herself there, all alone.

But, when the spring and summer came,
Her studio grew so dull and tame
She sought the rural solitudes
Of winding streams and shady woods;
For painters' works contract a taint
Unless from Nature's self they paint.

So out Miss Arabella went,
To sketch from Nature fully bent.
It was a lovely summer's day;
A lovely scene before her lay;
Her folding-stool and box she took,
And, seated in a quiet nook,
Her white umbrella o'er her head
(Like a tall giant mushroom spread),
Began to paint; when, lo! a noise



She heard. A troop of idle boys
Came flocking round her, rough and rude.
Some o'er her shoulders leaned; some stood
In front of her, and cried: "Paint *me!*—
My picter I should like to see."
Some laughed, some shouted. "What a set!"
Said Arabella, in a pet:
"And no policeman within hail
To send these ruffian imps to jail."
In fine, she could not work, so went
Straight homeward in great discontent.
She had no brother to defend her,
Nor country cousin to attend her.

[Illustration]

A plan occurred to her next day
To keep these idle scamps away.
An easel by her side she placed,
And over it she threw in haste
A hat and cloak:—and there it stood
In bold and threatening attitude.
The rabble at a distance spied
The scare-crow standing by her side;
And, thinking 't was the town-police,
They left Miss A.V. Brown in peace.

Moral.

Sometimes, an innocent pretense
Is the best means of self-defense,
And if a scare-crow keeps the peace,
What need to summon the police?

Page 14

[Illustration: *By the sad sea waves.*]

UNDER THE LILACS.

By Louisa M. Alcott.

CHAPTER XXI.

CUPID'S last appearance.

A picnic supper on the grass followed the games, and then, as twilight began to fall, the young people were marshaled to the coach-house, now transformed into a rustic theater. One big door was open, and seats, arranged lengthwise, faced the red table-cloths which formed the curtain. A row of lamps made very good foot-lights, and an invisible band performed a Wagner-like overture on combs, tin trumpets, drums, and pipes, with an accompaniment of suppressed laughter.

Many of the children had never seen anything like it, and sat staring about them in mute admiration and expectancy; but the older ones criticised freely, and indulged in wild speculations as to the meaning of various convulsions of nature going on behind the curtain.

While Teacher was dressing the actresses for the tragedy, Miss Celia and Thorny, who were old hands at this sort of amusement, gave a "Potato" pantomime as a side show.

Across an empty stall a green cloth was fastened, so high that the heads of the operators were not seen. A little curtain flew up, disclosing the front of a Chinese pagoda painted on pasteboard, with a door and window which opened quite naturally. This stood on one side, several green trees with paper lanterns hanging from the boughs were on the other side, and the words "Tea Garden," printed over the top, showed the nature of this charming spot.

Few of the children had ever seen the immortal Punch and Judy, so this was a most agreeable novelty, and before they could make out what it meant, a voice began to sing, so distinctly that every word was heard:

"In China there lived a little man,
His name was Chingery Wangery Chan."

Here the hero "took the stage" with great dignity, clad in a loose yellow jacket over a blue skirt, which concealed the hand that made his body. A pointed hat adorned his head, and on removing this to bow he disclosed a bald pate with a black queue in the middle, and a Chinese face nicely painted on the potato, the lower part of which was

hollowed out to fit Thorny's first finger, while his thumb and second finger were in the sleeves of the yellow jacket, making a lively pair of arms. While he saluted, the song went on:

"His legs were short, his feet were small,
And this little man could not walk at all."

Which assertion was proved to be false by the agility with which the "little man" danced a jig in time to the rollicking chorus:

"Chingery changery ri co day,
Ekel tekel happy man;
Uron odesko canty oh, oh,
Gallop wallopy China go."

Page 15

At the close of the dance and chorus, Chan retired into the tea garden, and drank so many cups of the national beverage, with such comic gestures, that the spectators were almost sorry when the opening of the opposite window drew all eyes in that direction. At the lattice appeared a lovely being; for this potato had been pared, and on the white surface were painted pretty pink cheeks, red lips, black eyes, and oblique brows; through the tuft of dark silk on the head were stuck several glittering pins, and a pink jacket shrouded the plump figure of this capital little Chinese lady. After peeping coyly out, so that all could see and admire, she fell to counting the money from a purse, so large her small hands could hardly hold it on the window seat. While she did this, the song went on to explain:

“Miss Ki Hi was short and squat,
She had money and he had not;
So off to her he resolved to go,
And play her a tune on his little banjo.”

During the chorus to this verse Chan was seen tuning his instrument in the garden, and at the end sallied gallantly forth to sing the following tender strain:

“Whang fun li,
Tang hua ki,
Hong Kong do ra me!
Ah sin lo,
Pan to fo,
Tsing up chin leute!”

Carried away by his passion, Chan dropped his banjo, fell upon his knees, and, clasping his hands, bowed his forehead in the dust before his idol. But, alas!—

“Miss Ki Hi heard his notes of love,
And held her wash-bowl up above;
It fell upon the little man,
And this was the end of Chingery Chan.”

Indeed it was: for, as the doll’s basin of real water was cast forth by the cruel charmer, poor Chan expired in such strong convulsions that his head rolled down among the audience. Miss Ki Hi peeped to see what had become of her victim, and the shutter decapitated her likewise, to the great delight of the children, who passed around the heads, pronouncing a “Potato” pantomime “first-rate fun.”

Then they settled themselves for the show, having been assured by Manager Thorny that they were about to behold the most elegant and varied combination ever produced on any stage. And when one reads the following very inadequate description of the

somewhat mixed entertainment, it is impossible to deny that the promise made was nobly kept.

After some delay and several crashes behind the curtain, which mightily amused the audience, the performance began with the well-known tragedy of “Blue-beard”; for Bab had set her heart upon it, and the young folks had acted it so often in their plays that it was very easy to get up with a few extra touches to scenery and costumes. Thorny was superb as the tyrant with a beard of bright blue worsted, a slouched hat and long feather, fur cloak, red hose, rubber boots, and a real sword which clanked tragically as he walked. He spoke in such a deep voice, knit his corked eyebrows, and glared so frightfully, that it was no wonder poor Fatima quaked before him as he gave into her keeping an immense bunch of keys with one particularly big, bright one, among them.

Page 16

Bab was fine to see, with Miss Celia's blue dress sweeping behind her, a white plume in her flowing hair, and a real necklace with a pearl locket about her neck. She did her part capitally, especially the shriek she gave when she looked into the fatal closet, the energy with which she scrubbed the tell-tale key, and her distracted tone when she called out: "Sister Anne, O, sister Anne, *do* you see anybody coming?" while her enraged husband was roaring: "Will you come down, madam, or shall I come and fetch you?"

Betty made a captivating Anne,—all in white muslin, and a hat full of such lovely pink roses that she could not help putting up one hand to feel them as she stood on the steps looking out at the little window for the approaching brothers, who made such a din that it sounded like a dozen horsemen instead of two.

[Illustration: *The blue-beard group.*]

Ben and Billy were got up regardless of expense in the way of arms; for their belts were perfect arsenals, and their wooden swords were big enough to strike terror into any soul, though they struck no sparks out of Blue-beard's blade in the awful combat which preceded the villain's downfall and death.

The boys enjoyed this part intensely, and cries of "Go it, Ben!" "Hit him again, Billy!" "Two against one isn't fair!" "Thorny's a match for em." "Now he's down, hurray!" cheered on the combatants, till, after a terrific struggle, the tyrant fell, and with convulsive twitchings of the scarlet legs, slowly expired, while the ladies sociably fainted in each others arms, and the brothers waved their swords and shook hands over the corpse of their enemy.

This piece was rapturously applauded, and all the performers had to appear and bow their thanks, led by the defunct Blue-beard, who mildly warned the excited audience that if they "didn't look out the walls would break down, and then there'd be a nice mess." Calmed by this fear they composed themselves, and waited with ardor for the next play, which promised to be a lively one, judging from the shrieks of laughter which came from behind the curtain.

"Sanch's going to be in it, I know, for I heard Ben say, 'Hold him still; he wont bite,'" whispered Sam, longing to "jounce" up and down, so great was his satisfaction at the prospect, for the dog was considered the star of the company.

"I hope Bab will do something else, she is so funny. Wasn't her dress elegant?" said Sally Folsom, burning to wear a long silk gown and a feather in her hair.

"I like Betty best, she's so cunning, and she peaked out of the window just as if she *really* saw somebody coming," answered Liddy Peckham, privately resolving to tease mother for some pink roses before another Sunday came.

Up went the curtain at last, and a voice announced "A Tragedy in Three Tableaux." "There's Betty!" was the general exclamation, as the audience recognized a familiar face under the little red hood worn by the child who stood receiving a basket from Teacher, who made a nice mother with her finger up, as if telling the small messenger not to loiter by the way.

Page 17

"I know what that is!" cried Sally; "it's 'Mabel on Midsummer Day.' The piece Miss Celia spoke; don't you know?"

"There isn't any sick baby, and Mabel had a 'kerchief pinned about her head.' / say it's Red Riding Hood," answered Liddy, who had begun to learn Mary Howitt's pretty poem for her next piece, and knew all about it.

The question was settled by the appearance of the wolf in the second scene, and such a wolf! On few amateur stages do we find so natural an actor for that part, or so good a costume, for Sancho was irresistibly droll in the gray wolf-skin which usually lay beside Miss Celia's bed, now fitted over his back and fastened neatly down underneath, with his own face peeping out at one end, and the handsome tail bobbing gayly at the other. What a comfort that tail was to Sancho, none but a bereaved bow-wow could ever tell. It reconciled him to his distasteful part at once; it made rehearsals a joy, and even before the public he could not resist turning to catch a glimpse of the noble appendage, while his own brief member wagged with the proud consciousness that though the tail did not match the head, it was long enough to be seen of all men and dogs.

That was a pretty picture, for the little maid came walking in with the basket on her arm, and such an innocent face inside the bright hood that it was quite natural the gray wolf should trot up to her with deceitful friendliness, that she should pat and talk to him confidently about the butter for grandma, and then that they should walk away together, he politely carrying her basket, she with her hand on his head, little dreaming what evil plans were taking shape inside.

The children encored that, but there was no time to repeat it, so they listened to more stifled merriment behind the red table-cloths, and wondered whether the next scene would be the wolf popping his head out of the window as Red Riding Hood knocks, or the tragic end of that sweet child.

It was neither, for a nice bed had been made, and in it reposed the false grandmother, with a ruffled nightcap on, a white gown, and spectacles. Betty lay beside the wolf, staring at him as if just about to say, "Why, grandma, what great teeth you've got!" for Sancho's mouth was half open and a red tongue hung out, as he panted with the exertion of keeping still. This tableau was so very good, and yet so funny, that the children clapped and shouted frantically; this excited the dog, who gave a bounce and would have leaped off the bed to bark at the rioters, if Betty had not caught him by the legs, and Thorny dropped the curtain just at the moment when the wicked wolf was apparently in the act of devouring the poor little girl, with most effective growls.

They had to come out then, and did so, both much disheveled by the late tussle, for Sancho's cap was all over one eye, and Betty's hood was anywhere but on her head. She made her courtesy prettily, however; her fellow-actor bowed with as much dignity as a short night-gown permitted, and they retired to their well-earned repose.

Page 18

Then Thorny, looking much excited, appeared to make the following request: "As one of the actors in the next piece is new to the business, the company must all keep as still as mice, and not stir till I give the word. It's perfectly splendid! so don't you spoil it by making a row."

"What *do* you suppose it is?" asked every one, and listened with all their might to get a hint, if possible. But what they heard only whetted their curiosity and mystified them more and more. Bab's voice cried in a loud whisper, "Isn't Ben beautiful?" Then there was a thumping noise, and Miss Celia said, in an anxious tone, "Oh, do be careful," while Ben laughed out as if he was too happy to care who heard him, and Thorny bawled "Whoa!" in a way which would have attracted attention if Lita's head had not popped out of her box, more than once, to survey the invaders of her abode, with a much astonished expression.

"Sounds kind of circusy, don't it?" said Sam to Billy, who had come out to receive the compliments of the company and enjoy the tableau at a safe distance.

"You just wait till you see what's coming. It beats any circus I ever saw," answered Billy, rubbing his hands with the air of a man who had seen many instead of but one.

"Ready? Be quick and get out of the way when she goes off!" whispered Ben, but they heard him and prepared for pistols, rockets or combustibles of some sort, as ships were impossible under the circumstances, and no other "she" occurred to them.

A unanimous "O-o-o-o!" was heard when the curtain rose, but a stern "Hush!" from Thorny kept them mutely staring with all their eyes at the grand spectacle of the evening. There stood Lita with a wide flat saddle on her back, a white head-stall and reins, blue rosettes in her ears, and the look of a much-bewildered beast in her bright eyes. But who the gauzy, spangled, winged creature was, with a gilt crown on its head, a little bow in its hand, and one white slipper in the air, while the other seemed merely to touch the saddle, no one could tell for a minute, so strange and splendid did the apparition appear. No wonder Ben was not recognized in this brilliant disguise, which was more natural to him than Billy's blue flannel or Thorny's respectable garments. He had so begged to be allowed to show himself "just once," as he used to be in the days when "father" tossed him up on bare-backed old General, for hundreds to see and admire, that Miss Celia had consented, much against her will, and hastily arranged some bits of spangled tarlatan over the white cotton suit which was to simulate the regulation tights. Her old dancing slippers fitted, and gold paper did the rest, while Ben, sure of his power over Lita, promised not to break his bones, and lived for days on the thought of the moment when he could show the boys that he had not boasted vainly of past splendors.

Before the delighted children could get their breath, Lita gave signs of her dislike to the foot-lights, and, gathering up the reins that lay on her neck, Ben gave the old cry,

“Houp-la!” and let her go, as he had often done before, straight out of the coach-house for a gallop round the orchard.

Page 19

“Just turn about and you can see perfectly well, but stay where you are till he comes back,” commanded Thorny, as signs of commotion appeared in the excited audience.

Round went the twenty children as if turned by one crank, and sitting there they looked out into the moonlight where the shining figure flashed to and fro, now so near they could see the smiling face under the crown, now so far away that it glittered like a fire-fly among the dusky green. Lita enjoyed that race as heartily as she had done several others of late, and caracoled about as if anxious to make up for her lack of skill by speed and obedience. How much Ben liked it there is no need to tell, yet it was a proof of the good which three months of a quiet, useful life had done him, that even as he pranced gayly under the boughs thick with the red and yellow apples almost ready to be gathered, he found this riding in the fresh air with only his mates for an audience pleasanter than the crowded tent, the tired horses, profane men, and painted women, friendly as some of them had been to him.

After the first burst was over, he felt rather glad, on the whole, that he was going back to plain clothes, helpful school, and kindly people, who cared more to have him a good boy than the most famous Cupid that ever stood on one leg with a fast horse under him.

“You may make as much noise as you like, now; Lita’s had her run and will be as quiet as a lamb after it. Pull up, Ben, and come in; sister says you’ll get cold,” shouted Thorny, as the rider came cantering round after a leap over the lodge gate and back again.

So Ben pulled up, and the admiring boys and girls were allowed to gather about him, loud in their praises as they examined the pretty mare and the mythological character who lay easily upon her back. He looked very little like the god of love now; for he had lost one slipper and splashed his white legs with dew and dust, the crown had slipped down upon his neck, and the paper wings hung in an apple-tree where he had left them as he went by. No trouble in recognizing Ben, now; but somehow he didn’t want to be seen, and, instead of staying to be praised, he soon slipped away, making Lita his excuse to vanish behind the curtain while the rest went into the house to have a finishing-off game of blindman’s-buff in the big kitchen.

“Well, Ben, are you satisfied?” asked Miss Celia, as she stayed a moment to unpin the remains of his gauzy scarf and tunic.

“Yes’m, thank you, it was tip-top.”

“But you look rather sober. Are you tired, or is it because you don’t want to take these trappings off and be plain Ben again?” she said, looking down into his face as he lifted it for her to free him from his gilded collar.

"I *want* to take 'em off; for somehow I don't feel respectable," and he kicked away the crown he had help to make so carefully, adding with a glance that said more than his words: "I'd rather be 'plain Ben' than any one else, if you'd like to have me."

Page 20

“Indeed I do; and I’m so glad to hear you say that, because I was afraid you’d long to be off to the old ways, and all I’ve tried to do would be undone. *Would* you like to go back, Ben?” and Miss Celia held his chin an instant, to watch the brown face that looked so honestly back at her.

“No, I wouldn’t—unless—*he* was there and wanted me.”

The chin quivered just a bit, but the black eyes were as bright as ever, and the boy’s voice so earnest, she knew he spoke the truth, and laid her white hand softly on his head, as she answered in the tone he loved so much, because no one else had ever used it to him:

“Father is not there; but I know he wants you, dear, and I am sure he would rather see you in a home like this than in the place you came from. Now go and dress; but, tell me first, has it been a happy birthday?”

“Oh, Miss Celia! I didn’t know they *could* be so beautiful, and this is the beautifulest part of it; I don’t know how to thank you, but I’m going to try—” and, finding words wouldn’t come fast enough, Ben just put his two arms round her, quite speechless with gratitude; then, as if ashamed of his little outburst, he knelt down in a great hurry to untie his one shoe.

[Illustration: *Miss Celia and Ben.*]

But Miss Celia liked his answer better than the finest speech ever made her, and went away through the moonlight, saying to herself:

“If I can bring one lost lamb into the fold, I shall be the fitter for a shepherd’s wife, by and by.”

CHAPTER XXII.

A boy’s bargain.

It was some days before the children were tired of talking over Ben’s birthday party; for it was a great event in their small world; but, gradually, newer pleasures came to occupy their minds, and they began to plan the nutting frolics which always followed the early frosts. While waiting for Jack to open the chestnut burrs, they varied the monotony of school life by a lively scrimmage long known as “the wood-pile fight.”

The girls liked to play in the half-empty shed, and the boys, merely for the fun of teasing, declared that they should not, so blocked up the door-way as fast as the girls cleared it. Seeing that the squabble was a merry one, and the exercise better for all

than lounging in the sun or reading in school during recess, Teacher did not interfere, and the barrier rose and fell almost as regularly as the tide.

It would be difficult to say which side worked the harder; for the boys went before school began to build up the barricade, and the girls stayed after lessons were over to pull down the last one made in afternoon recess. They had their play-time first, and, while the boys waited inside, they heard the shouts of the girls, the banging of the wood, and the final crash as the well-packed pile went down. Then, as the lassies came in, rosy, breathless, and triumphant, the lads rushed out to man the breach, and labor gallantly till all was as tight as hard blows could make it.

Page 21

So the battle raged, and bruised knuckles, splinters in fingers, torn clothes, and rubbed shoes, were the only wounds received, while a great deal of fun was had out of the maltreated logs, and a lasting peace secured between two of the boys.

When the party was safely over, Sam began to fall into his old way of tormenting Ben by calling names, as it cost no exertion to invent trying speeches and slyly utter them when most likely to annoy; Ben bore it as well as he could, but fortune favored him at last, as it usually does the patient, and he was able to make his own terms with his tormentor.

When the girls demolished the wood-pile they performed a jubilee chorus on combs, and tin kettles played like tambourines; the boys celebrated their victories with shrill whistles, and a drum accompaniment with fists on the shed walls. Billy brought his drum, and this was such an addition that Sam hunted up an old one of his little brother's, in order that he might join the drum corps. He had no sticks, however, and, casting about in his mind for a good substitute for the genuine thing, bethought him of bulrushes.

"Those will do first-rate, and there are lots in the ma'sh, if I can only get 'em," he said to himself, and turned off from the road on his way home to get a supply.

Now, this marsh was a treacherous spot, and the tragic story was told of a cow who got in there and sank till nothing was visible but a pair of horns above the mud, which suffocated the unwary beast. For this reason it was called "Cowslip Marsh," the wags said, though it was generally believed to be so named for the yellow flowers which grew there in great profusion in the spring.

Sam had seen Ben hop nimbly from one tuft of grass to another when he went to gather cowslips for Betty, and the stout boy thought he could do the same. Two or three heavy jumps landed him, not among the bulrushes as he had hoped, but in a pool of muddy water where he sank up to his middle with alarming rapidity. Much scared, he tried to wade out, but could only flounder to a tussock of grass and cling there while he endeavored to kick his legs free. He got them out, but struggled in vain to coil them up or to hoist his heavy body upon the very small island in this sea of mud. Down they splashed again, and Sam gave a dismal groan as he thought of the leeches and water-snakes which might be lying in wait below. Visions of the lost cow also flashed across his agitated mind, and he gave a despairing shout very like a distracted "Moo!"

Few people passed along the lane, and the sun was setting, so the prospect of a night in the marsh nerved Sam to make a frantic plunge toward the bulrush island, which was nearer than the main-land, and looked firmer than any tussock around him. But he failed to reach this haven of rest, and was forced to stop at an old stump which stuck up, looking very like the moss-grown horns of the "dear departed." Roosting here, Sam began to shout for aid in every key possible to the human voice. Such hoots and howls,

whistles and roars, never woke the echoes of the lonely marsh before, or scared the portly frog who resided there in calm seclusion.

Page 22

He hardly expected any reply but the astonished “Caw!” of the crow, who sat upon a fence watching him with gloomy interest, and when a cheerful “Hullo, there!” sounded from the lane, he was so grateful that tears of joy rolled down his fat cheeks.

“Come on! I’m in the ma’sh. Lend a hand and get me out!” bawled Sam, anxiously waiting for his deliverer to appear, for he could only see a hat bobbing along behind the hazel-bushes that fringed the lane.

Steps crashed through the bushes, and then over the wall came an active figure, at the sight of which Sam was almost ready to dive out of sight, for, of all possible boys, who should it be but Ben, the last person in the world whom he would like to have see him in his present pitiful plight.

“Is it you, Sam? Well, you *are* in a nice fix!” and Ben’s eyes began to twinkle with mischievous merriment, as well they might, for Sam certainly was a spectacle to convulse the soberest person. Perched unsteadily on the gnarled stump, with his muddy legs drawn up, his dismal face splashed with mud, and the whole lower half of his body as black as if he had been dipped in an inkstand, he presented such a comically doleful object that Ben danced about, laughing like a naughty will-o’-the-wisp who, having led a traveler astray, then fell to jeering at him.

“Stop that or I’ll knock your head off,” roared Sam, in a rage.

“Come on and do it, I give you leave,” answered Ben, sparring away derisively as the other tottered on his perch and was forced to hold tight lest he should tumble off.

“Don’t laugh, there’s a good chap, but fish me out somehow or I shall get my death sitting here all wet and cold,” whined Sam, changing his tone, and feeling bitterly that Ben had the upper hand now.

Ben felt it also, and though a very good natured boy, could not resist the temptation to enjoy this advantage for a moment at least.

“I wont laugh if I can help it, only you do look so like a fat, speckled frog I may not be able to hold in. I’ll pull you out pretty soon, but first I’m going to talk to you, Sam,” said Ben, sobering down as he took a seat on the little point of land nearest the stranded Samuel.

“Hurry up, then; I’m as stiff as a board now, and it’s no fun sitting here on this knotty old thing,” growled Sam, with a discontented squirm.

“Dare say not, but ‘it is good for you,’ as you say when you rap me over the head. Look here, I’ve got you in a tight place, and I don’t mean to help you a bit till you promise to let me alone. Now then!” and Ben’s face grew stern with his remembered wrongs as he grimly eyed his discomfited foe.



"I'll promise fast enough if you wont tell any one about this," answered Sam, surveying himself and his surroundings with great disgust.

"I shall do as I like about that."

"Then I wont promise a thing! I'm not going to have the whole school laughing at me," protested Sam, who hated to be ridiculed even more than Ben did.

Page 23

"Very well; good-night!" and Ben walked off with his hands in his pockets as coolly as if the bog was Sam's favorite retreat.

"Hold on, don't be in such a hurry!" shouted Sam, seeing little hope of rescue if he let this chance go.

"All right!" and back came Ben ready for further negotiations.

"I'll promise not to plague you if you'll promise not to tell on me. Is that what you want?"

"Now I come to think of it, there is one thing more. I like to make a good bargain when I begin," said Ben, with a shrewd air. "You must promise to keep Mose quiet, too. He follows your lead, and if you tell him to stop it he will. If I was big enough I'd *make* you hold your tongues. I aint, so we'll try this way."

"Yes, yes, I'll see to Mose. Now, bring on a rail, there's a good fellow. I've got a horrid cramp in my legs," began Sam, thinking he had bought help dearly, yet admiring Ben's cleverness in making the most of his chance.

Ben brought the rail, but just as he was about to lay it from the main-land to the nearest tussock, he stopped, saying, with the naughty twinkle in his black eyes again: "One more little thing must be settled first, and then I'll get you ashore. Promise you wont plague the girls either, 'specially Bab and Betty. You pull their hair, and they don't like it."

[Illustration: THE BROOK ABOVE THE MARSH.]

"Don't neither. Wouldn't touch that Bab for a dollar; she scratches and bites like a mad cat," was Sam's sulky reply.

"Glad of it; she can take care of herself. Betty can't, and if you touch one of her pig-tails I'll up and tell right out how I found you sniveling in the ma'sh like a great baby. So now!" and Ben emphasized his threat with a blow of the suspended rail which splashed the water over poor Sam, quenching his last spark of resistance.

"Stop! I will!—I will!"

"True as you live and breathe!" demanded Ben, sternly binding him by the most solemn oath he knew.

"True as I live and breathe," echoed Sam, dolefully relinquishing his favorite pastime of pulling Betty's braids and asking if she was at home.

"I'll come over there and crook fingers on the bargain," said Ben, settling the rail and running over it to the tuft, then bridging another pool and crossing again till he came to the stump.

"I never thought of that way," said Sam, watching him with much inward chagrin at his own failure.

"I should think you'd written 'Look before you leap,' in your copy-book often enough to get the idea into your stupid head. Come, crook," commanded Ben, leaning forward with extended little finger.

Sam obediently performed the ceremony, and then Ben sat astride one of the horns of the stump while the muddy Crusoe went slowly across the rail from point to point till he landed safely on the shore, when he turned about and asked with an ungrateful jeer:

Page 24

"Now, what's going to become of you, old Look-before-you-leap?"

"Mud-turtles can only sit on a stump and bawl till they are taken off, but frogs have legs worth something, and are not afraid of a little water," answered Ben, hopping away in an opposite direction, since the pools between him and Sam were too wide for even his lively legs.

Sam waddled off to the brook above the marsh to rinse the mud from his nether man before facing his mother, and was just wringing himself out when Ben came up, breathless but good-natured, for he felt that he had made an excellent bargain for himself and friends.

"Better wash your face; it's as speckled as a tiger-lily. Here's my handkerchief if yours is wet," he said, pulling out a dingy article which had evidently already done service as a towel.

"Don't want it," muttered Sam, gruffly, as he poured the water out of his muddy shoes.

"I was taught to say 'Thanky' when folks got *me* out of scrapes. But *you* never had much bringing up, though you do 'live in a house with a gambrel roof,'" retorted Ben, sarcastically quoting Sam's frequent boast; then he walked off, much disgusted with the ingratitude of man.

Sam forgot his manners, but he remembered his promise, and kept it so well that all the school wondered. No one could guess the secret of Ben's power over him, though it was evident that he had gained it in some sudden way, for at the least sign of Sam's former tricks Ben would crook his little finger and wag it warningly, or call out "Bulrushes!" and Sam subsided with reluctant submission, to the great amazement of his mates. When asked what it meant, Sam turned sulky; but Ben had much fun out of it, assuring the other boys that those were the signs and pass-word of a secret society to which he and Sam belonged, and promised to tell them all about it if Sam would give him leave, which, of course, he would not.

This mystery, and the vain endeavors to find it out, caused a lull in the war of the wood-pile, and before any new game was invented something happened which gave the children plenty to talk about for a time.

A week after the secret alliance was formed, Ben ran in one evening with a letter for Miss Celia. He found her enjoying the cheery blaze of the pine-cones the little girls had picked up for her, and Bab and Betty sat in the small chairs rocking luxuriously as they took turns to throw on the pretty fuel. Miss Celia turned quickly to receive the expected letter, glanced at the writing, post-mark and stamp, with an air of delighted surprise, then clasped it close in both hands, saying, as she hurried out of the room:

“He has come! he has come! Now you may tell them, Thorny.”

“Tell us what?” asked Bab, pricking up her ears at once.

“Oh, it’s only that George has come, and I suppose we shall go and get married right away,” answered Thorny, rubbing his hands as if he enjoyed the prospect.

Page 25

"Are *you* going to be married?" asked Betty, so soberly that the boys shouted, and Thorny, with difficulty, composed himself sufficiently to explain.

"No, child, not just yet; but sister is, and I must go and see that is all done up ship-shape, and bring you home some wedding-cake. Ben will take care of you while I'm gone."

"When shall you go?" asked Bab, beginning to long for her share of cake.

"To-morrow, I guess. Celia has been packed and ready for a week. We agreed to meet George in New York, and be married as soon as he got his best clothes unpacked. We are men of our word, and off we go. Wont it be fun?"

"But when will you come back again?" questioned Betty, looking anxious.

"Don't know. Sister wants to come soon, but I'd rather have our honeymoon somewhere else,—Niagara, Newfoundland, West Point, or the Rocky Mountains," said Thorny, mentioning a few of the places he most desired to see.

"Do you like him?" asked Ben, very naturally wondering if the new master would approve of the young man-of-all-work.

"Don't I? George is regularly jolly; though now he's a minister, perhaps he'll stiffen up and turn sober. Wont it be a shame if he does?" and Thorny looked alarmed at the thought of losing his congenial friend.

"Tell about him; Miss Celia said you might," put in Bab, whose experience of "jolly" ministers had been small.

"Oh, there isn't much about it. We met in Switzerland going up Mount St. Bernard in a storm, and—"

"Where the good dogs live?" inquired Betty, hoping they would come into the story.

"Yes; we spent the night up there, and George gave us his room; the house was so full, and he wouldn't let me go down a steep place where I wanted to, and Celia thought he'd saved my life, and was very good to him. Then we kept meeting, and the first thing I knew she went and was engaged to him. I didn't care, only she would come home so he might go on studying hard and get through quick. That was a year ago, and last winter we were in New York at uncle's; and then, in the spring, I was sick, and we came here, and that's all."

"Shall you live here always when you come back?" asked Bab, as Thorny paused for breath.



"Celia wants to. I shall go to college, so I don't mind. George is going to help the old minister here and see how he likes it. I'm to study with him, and if he is as pleasant as he used to be we shall have capital times,—see if we don't."

"I wonder if he will want me round," said Ben, feeling no desire to be a tramp again.

"I do, so you needn't fret about that, my hearty," answered Thorny, with a resounding slap on the shoulder which re-assured Ben more than any promises.

"I'd like to see a live wedding, then we could play it with our dolls. I've got a nice piece of mosquito netting for a veil, and Belinda's white dress is clean. Do you s'pose Miss Celia will ask us to hers?" said Betty to Bab, as the boys began to discuss St. Bernard dogs with spirit.

Page 26

"I wish I could, dears," answered a voice behind them, and there was Miss Celia, looking so happy that the little girls wondered what the letter could have said to give her such bright eyes and smiling lips. "I shall not be gone long, or be a bit changed when I come back, to live among you years I hope, for I am fond of the old place now, and mean it shall be home," she added, caressing the yellow heads as if they were dear to her.

"Oh, goody!" cried Bab, while Betty whispered with both arms round Miss Celia:

"I don't think we *could* bear to have anybody else come here to live."

"It is very pleasant to hear you say that, and I mean to make others feel so, if I can. I have been trying a little this summer, but when I come back I shall go to work in earnest to be a good minister's wife, and you must help me."

"We will," promised both children, ready for anything except preaching in the high pulpit.

Then Miss Celia turned to Ben, saying, in the respectful way that always made him feel, at least, twenty-five:

"We shall be off to-morrow, and I leave you in charge. Go on just as if we were here, and be sure nothing will be changed as far as you are concerned when we come back."

Ben's face beamed at that; but the only way he could express his relief was by making such a blaze in honor of the occasion that he nearly roasted the company.

Next morning, the brother and sister slipped quietly away, and the children hurried to school, eager to tell the great news that "Miss Celia and Thorny had gone to be married, and were coming back to live here forever and ever."

(To be continued.)

[Illustration: SATURDAY AFTERNOON.]

LITTLE BEAR.

BY SAMUEL W. DUFFIELD.

[Illustration]

There lives with us an Indian—
A Paw-knee, I declare—
And he utters dreadful war-whoops,
And his name is Little Bear.



A braver foe in a battle,
When his hands are in your hair,
There is none in all my knowledge
Than this same Little Bear.

But when the firelight shining
Lights the room up with its glare,
I often camp on the hearth-rug,
Good friends with Little Bear.

And I'm very sure I should miss him
If ever he wasn't there—
This irrepressible Indian,
By the name of Little Bear!

MY ST. GEORGE.

BY ALICE MAUDE EDDY.

It is ten years ago to-day since Georgie May and I went to "Captain Kidd's Cave" after sea-urchins. Georgie was a neighbor's child with whom I had played all my short life, and whom I loved almost as dearly as my own brothers. Such a brave, bright face he had, framed by sunny hair where the summers had dropped gold dust as they passed him by. I can see him now as he stood that day on the firm sand of the beach, with his brown eyes glowing and his plump hand brandishing a wooden sword which he himself had made, and painted with gorgeous figures of red and yellow.

Page 27

"You see, Allie," he was saying, "his name was Saint George, and he was a knight. And so there was a great dragon with a fiery crest. And so he went at him, and killed him; and he married the princess, and they lived happy ever after. I'd have killed him, too, if I'd been there!"

"*Could* you kill a dragon?" I asked, rather timidly.

"Course I could!" replied the young champion. "I'd have a splendid white horse,—no, a black one,—and a sword like Jack the Giant Killer's, and—and—oh, and an invisible ring! I'd use him up pretty quick. Then I'd cut off his head and give it to the princess, and we'd have a feast of jelly-cake, and cream candy, and then I would marry her!"

I could only gasp admiringly at this splendid vision.

"But mamma said," went on Georgie, more thoughtfully, "that there are dragons now; and she said she would like me to be a Saint George. She's going to tell some more to-night, but there's getting angry, that's a dragon, and wanting to be head of everything, that's another, and she and me are going to fight 'em. We said so."

"But how?" I asked, with wide open eyes. "I don't see any dragon when I'm angry!"

"Oh, you're a girl," said Georgie, consolingly; and we ran on contentedly, wading across the shallow pools of salt water, clambering over the rocks, and now and then stopping to pick up a bright pebble or shell. The whole scene comes vividly before me as I think of it now:—the gray and brown cliffs, with their sharp crags and narrow clefts half choked up by the fine, sifting sand, the wet "snappers" clinging to the rocks along the water's edge; the sea itself clear and blue in the bright afternoon, and the dancing lights where the sunbeams struck its rippling surface. A light wind blew across the bay. It stirred in Georgie's curls, and swept about us both as if playing with us. We grew happier and happier, and when at last we saw "Captain Kidd's Cave" just before us, we were in the wildest spirits, and almost sorry that our walk was ended.

There was plenty to be seen in the cave, however, beside the excitement of searching for the pirate's treasures, which the country people said were buried there. The high rocks met, forming a wide, arched cavern with a little crevice in the roof, through which we could just see the clear sky. The firm floor was full of smaller stones, which we used for seats, and one high crag almost hid the entrance. It was delicious to creep through the low door-way, and to sit in the cool twilight that reigned there, listening to the song of the winds and waters outside, or to clamber up and down the steep sides of the cave, playing that we were cast-aways on a desert island. We played, also, that I was a captive princess, and Georgie killed a score of dragons in my defense. We were married, too, with the little knight's sword stuck in the sand for the clergyman. Quite tired out, at last, we went into the cave and sat on the sand-strewn floor, telling stories

and talking of dragons and fairies, until a drop of rain suddenly fell through the cleft in the roof. Georgie sprang up.

Page 28

"We must go home, Allie!" he cried. "What if we were to be caught in a shower!"

Just as he was speaking, a peal of thunder crashed and boomed right above us, and I clung to the boy, sobbing for very terror.

"O Georgie!" I cried, "don't go out. We'll be killed! Oh, what shall we do?"

But Georgie only laughed blithely, saying, "No, we won't go if you don't want to. Let's play it's a concert and the thunder's a drum. It will be over in a minute," and he began to whistle "Yankee Doodle," in which performance I vainly endeavored to join. But as time went on, and the storm became more violent, we were both frightened, and climbing to a ledge about half-way up the wall, sat silent, clinging to each other, and crying a little as the lightning flashed more and more vividly. Yet, even in his own terror, Georgie was careful for me, and tried to cheer me and raise my heart. Dear little friend, I am grateful for it now!

At last, leaning forward, I saw that the water was creeping into the cave and covering the floor with shallow, foaming waves. Then, indeed, we were frightened. What if the rising tide had covered the rocks outside? We should have to stay all night in that lonely place; for, though the tide went down before midnight, the way was long and difficult, and we could not return in the darkness.

"Hurry, Allie!" cried Georgie, scrambling down the side of the cave. "We can wade, may be."

I followed him, and we crept out upon the beach. The water had risen breast high already, and I was nearly thrown down by the force with which it met me.

"Lean on me, Allie," said Georgie, throwing his arm about me and struggling onward. "We must get to the rocks as soon as we can."

It was with great difficulty that we passed over the narrow strip of sand below the high cliffs. I clung wildly to Georgie, trying in vain to keep a firm footing on the treacherous sand, that seemed slipping from beneath my feet at every step.

The water had reached my neck. I cried out with terror as I felt myself borne from my feet. But Georgie kept hold of me, and bracing ourselves against the first low rock, we waited the coming of the great green wave that rolled surging toward us, raising its whitening crest high over our heads. It broke directly above us, and for a moment we stood dizzy with the shock, and half blinded by the dashing salt spray. Then we ran on as swiftly as was possible in the impeding water. Fortunately for us, the next wave broke before it reached us, for in the rapidly rising tide we could not have resisted it.

We were thoroughly exhausted when, after a few more struggles, we at last climbed the first cliff and sat on the top, resting and looking about us for a means of escape. It was

impossible for us to scale the precipice that stretched along the beach. We must keep to the lower crags at its foot for a mile before we could reach the firm land. This, in the gathering twilight, was a difficult and dangerous thing to attempt. Yet there was no other way of escape. We could not return to the cave. I shuddered as I looked at the foaming waves that rolled between us and it.

Page 29

"What shall we do, Georgie?" I cried. "I *can't* be drowned!"

"Hush, Allie!" answered Georgie, bravely; "we must go right on, of course. This place will be covered soon. Take off your shoes. You can climb easier. There now! take hold of my hand. I'll jump over to that rock and help you to come on, too!"

Well was it for me that Georgie was a strong, agile boy, head and shoulders taller than I. I needed all his help in the homeward journey. I tremble even yet as I think of the perils of the half mile that we traversed before darkness fell. The rough rocks tore our hands and feet as we clambered painfully over them. They were slippery with sea-weed and wet with the waves that from time to time rolled across them. More than once I slipped and would have fallen into the raging water below, but for Georgie's sustaining arm. Looking back now to that dark evening, Georgie's bravery and presence of mind seem wonderful to me. He spoke little, only now and then directing me where to place my feet, but his strong, boyish hand held mine in a firm grasp, and his clear eyes saw just when to seize the opportunity, given by a receding wave, to spring from one rock to another.

"Georgie, shall we ever reach home?" I sighed at last as we gained the end of a spur of rock over which we had been walking. Georgie made no answer, and I turned, in surprise, to look at him. His face was very white, and his great eyes were staring out into the twilight with such a frightened gaze that I looked about me with a sudden increase of terror. I had thought the worst of the way over, and in the gathering darkness had hardly noticed where we were going, following Georgie with perfect trust in his judgment. Now I suddenly saw that we could proceed no farther. We stood, as I have said, on a long ridge of rock. Before us, at our very feet, was the wildly surging water, tearing at the rocks as if to wrest them from their foundation. Beyond, we could see the strong cliffs again, but far out of reach. Behind were only the narrow rocks over which we had come; and on either side the cruel sea cut us off from all hope of gaining the land. I sank on the slippery sea-weed, in an agony of terror, sobbing out my mother's name. Georgie sat down beside me. "Don't cry, Allie!" he said, in a trembling voice. "Please don't! We may be saved yet. Perhaps they'll come after us in a boat. Or we can stay here till morning."

"But oh! I want to go home! I want mamma," I sobbed; "and I'm so cold and tired, and my feet ache so! O Georgie, *can't* we go on?"

Georgie was silent for a few moments. "No," he said, at last, "we must stay here, but don't be afraid. Here, I'm not cold, take my coat, and I'll tie our handkerchiefs round your feet. There, lean on me, now. We must hold on to the rock, you know, or we might tumble. Now, let's both scream 'help' as loud as we can. May be, some one will hear us and come."

Page 30

But though we shouted till we were hoarse, the only answering voices were those of the roaring wind and “the wild sea water.”

It was quite dark now. I could see nothing as I clung there, half sitting, half lying, with my face on Georgie’s shoulder. Strangely vivid were the pictures that passed before my closed eyes. I saw my pretty nursery, with the clear lamplight falling on the pictured walls and the little white beds; I saw my mother seated by the fire, with the baby in her arms, and heard her low, sweet voice singing:

“Sleep, baby, sleep,
Thy father watches the sheep!”

I saw my father, laughing and frolicking with my little brothers, as his wont was on a leisure evening. How I longed to be among them. Then my hair, blowing across my eyes, blotted out the pleasant picture, and the hoarse shouting of the sea drove the sweet cradle-song from my ears.

Georgie’s voice stopped my weary sobbing. “Allie,” he said, softly, “mamma told me that true knights prayed for help when they were fighting. So I shall ask God to help us now. I think He will.”

Then, clear and soft, amid the roaring of the storm, arose the childish voice repeating his evening prayer:

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep!
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.”

I felt a little quieter when he had finished. Georgie’s strong, sweet faith strengthened me unawares, and involuntarily I repeated the little prayer after him. Then we were silent for a long time. I was strangely weak and weary. The fear of death was gone now; I thought no more of even my mother. I think I was fast lapsing into unconsciousness when Georgie’s voice half aroused me. “Allie! Allie!” he cried. “Wake up! You are slipping down! O, Allie, dear, do try to get up! You’ll be drowned!” But even this failed to arouse me from the stupor into which I had fallen. I felt myself slipping from my seat. Already my feet were in the icy water, and the spray was dashing about my face. I heard Georgie call me once again, felt my hands firmly grasped in his, and then I knew nothing more.

* * * * *

“Alice, dear little Alice!” I opened my eyes at the words. Somebody’s arms were about me; warm tears were falling on my head, and the scent of roses was in the air. Where



was I? Was this my own little bed, with its snowy curtains and soft, fresh pillows? Was Baby Robin lying beside me, stroking my cheek with his tiny hand? I was not dead, then? Where were the water and the cold sea-weed? A kiss fell on my forehead, and a voice murmured soft love-words in my ear. "Allie! my little girl! Mamma's darling!"

[Illustration: ON THE ROCK.]

Then I raised my head and looked straight into my mother's sweet, tearful eyes. "Mamma," I said, throwing my arms around her neck, "O, mamma, I was so afraid! I wanted you so!"

Page 31

"But you are safe, Allie, now. Lie down again, dear. You are weak yet."

So I lay back on the soft pillow with a feeling of rest and content in my heart, such as had never been there before. I cared to ask no questions. It was enough that I was safe, with my mother beside my bed and the early sunbeams flickering on the wall opposite. It was a long time before I thought of even Georgie. When I asked for him, mamma's eyes filled with tears. "Dear Allie," she said, "Georgie saved your life. My little girl would have been taken away from me, but for him. He caught you when you slipped, and, tired as he was, held you up till help came. He fainted as soon as papa took him into the boat. We thought you were both dead!" Her voice broke in a sob, and she clasped me closer in her arms. "He is better now," she went on. "Allie, we must never forget his courage. Thank God, he was with you!"

"Mamma, O mamma!" I cried, "he said he was trying to be like Saint George. *Isn't* he like him? He saved me, and he prayed there in the dark—and, O mamma, I love him so for it!"

"Yes, Allie," answered my mother, "not one of the old knights was braver than ours, and not one of all the saints did better service in the sight of God than our little Saint George last night."

BORN IN PRISON.

BY JULIA P. BALLARD.

[Illustration: THE PRISONERS.]

I am only a day old! I wonder if every butterfly comes into the world to find such queer things about him? I was born in prison. I can see right through my walls; but I can't find any door. Right below me (for I have climbed up the wall) lies a queer-looking, empty box. It is clear, and a pale green. It is all in one piece, only a little slit in the top. I wonder what came out of it. Close by it there is another green box, long and narrow, but not empty, and no slit in the top. I wonder what is in it. Near it is a smooth, green caterpillar, crawling on the edge of a bit of cabbage-leaf. I'm afraid that bright light has hurt my eyes. It was just outside of my prison wall, and bright as the sun. The first thing I remember, even before my wings had opened wide, or I was half through stretching my feet to see if I could use them in climbing, there was a great eye looking at me. Something round was before it, with a handle. I suppose it was a quizzing-glass to see what I was about. I heard somebody say, "Oh! oh!" twice, just as if they wondered I was here. Then they held the great bright light close to the wall till my eyes were dazzled. I don't like this prison. It isn't worth while to fly about. It seems as if I ought to have more room. There must be something inside that green box. It moves! I saw it half tip over then, all of itself. I believe that caterpillar is afraid of it. He creeps off

slowly toward the wall. How smooth and green he is! How his rings move when he crawls!

Page 32

Now he is gone up the wall. He has stopped near the roof. How he throws his head from side to side! He is growing broader! He looks just as if he was turning into one of these green boxes! How that box shakes! There, I see it begin to open! There is a slit coming in the back! Something peeps out! A butterfly's head, I declare! Here it comes, —two long feelers, two short ones! Four wings, two round spots on each of the upper pair, and none on the other two. Dressed just like me. I wonder why it hid away in that box?

First Butterfly.—“What made you hide in that green box?”

Second Butterfly.—“What box? I haven't hid anywhere. I don't know what box you mean?”

First Butterfly.—“That one. You just crawled out of it. I saw you.”

Second Butterfly.—“That's the first I knew of it. There are *two* boxes just alike. *Both* empty. May be you were hid in the other!”

First Butterfly.—“Ho! There goes up our prison wall! That's the big hand that held the bright light. How good the air feels! Now for a chance to try our wings! Away we go!”

HOW LILY-TOES WAS CAUGHT IN A SHOWER.

BY EMILY H. LELAND.

Lily-toes, though quite a pet, was the fourth baby, and, consequently, was not so great a wonder in the eyes of her family as she might have been. She and her mamma were on a visit to her grandma's, in the country. As she had been there a week, the excitement attendant on her arrival had so far subsided that grandma was beginning to turn her attention to cheese-making, her two aunties to sew vigorously on their new cambric dresses, and grandpa and the big hired man to become so engaged in the “haying” that they scarcely saw Lily-toes except at supper-time.

Lily-toes, as if to make amends for being the fourth, was a lovely chubby baby of eight months, so full of sunshine and content and blessed good health, that although her two first teeth were just grumbling through, she would sit in her high chair by the window or roll and wriggle about on the floor, singing tuneless songs and telling herself wordless stories, an hour at a time, without making any demands on anybody, so that grandma and the aunties declared that half the time they would not know there was a baby in the house. Perhaps it is sometimes a fault to be too good-natured; for there came a certain afternoon when Lily-toes would have been pleased if somebody had remembered there was a baby in the house.

It happened in this way. There was company at grandma's. Not the kind of city company that comes to dine after babies are in bed for the night, but country company,—that comes early in the afternoon and stays and talks over whole life-times before tea. Grandma, mamma, and the aunties were enjoying it all very much; and Lily-toes, who was, if possible, more angelic than ever, had wakened from a blessed nap, lunched on bread and milk

Page 33

and strawberries, and was stationed in her high chair on the back piazza where she could admire the landscape and watch the cows and sheep feeding upon the hill-sides. A honeysuckle swung in the breeze above her head, and little chickens, not big enough to do harm to grandma's flower-beds, ran to and fro in the knot-grass, hunting for little shiny green bugs, and fluttering and peeping in a way that was very interesting to Lily-toes. No baby could be more comfortably situated on a hot summer day; at least, so her mamma thought, as she tied Lily-toes securely in her chair with a soft scarf, and went back to the sitting-room and the busy sewing and talking with her dear old girlhood friends. I presume if Lily-toes had been a first baby, her mamma would have hesitated about leaving her there. She would have feared—may be—that the chickens would eat her up or that she might swallow the paper-weight. As it was, she only kissed the little thing with a sort of mechanical smack and left her alone, as coolly as if lovely Lily-toe babies were an every-day affair.

Meanwhile, and for many days before, great distress was going on in the fields and gardens for lack of rain. The young corn was drooping, the vines fainting, the sweet red roses opening languidly, the grasses growing dry and brittle to the bite of the patient cows and nibbling sheep. Everything, except Lily-toes, was expressing a desire for rain. In fact, all through the night before this story of a wronged baby opens, the hills, woods, fields, and gardens, had been praying for rain according to their individual needs, the maples and elms desiring a "regular soaker," while the lowly pansies lifted their fevered little palms to the stars and begged but a few drops.

And the rain came. Slowly up the western skies rose a solid cloud. No attention was paid it for some time, it came on so quietly and serenely. But, by and by, the cows came sauntering down to the barn-yard bars as if they thought it was milking-time, and the sheep huddled together under the great elms. Grandpa and his big man commenced raking the hay together vigorously, and a sudden, cool, puffy breeze began to ruffle the little rings of hair on Lily-toes' head, and send the small chickens careening over the knot-grass in such fashion that the careful mother-hen put her head out of her little house and called them in. And still in the cool, pleasant sitting-room, with its cheerful talk and laughter, the approach of the storm was hardly noticed. Grandma, the most thoughtful body present, remarked that she believed it was "clouding up a little," and mamma said she hoped so. And then the talk went on about making dresses and the best way to put up strawberries and spiced currants. But when big drops came suddenly plashing against the windows and a lively peal of thunder rolled overhead, then there was a scattering in the sitting-room. The aunties scampered out through a side door to snatch some clothes from

Page 34

the grass-plot, and to gather up the bright tin pans and pails that had been sunning on the long benches. Grandma, throwing her apron over her head, ran to see that some precious young turkeys were under shelter. The visitors hurried to the door, bewailing the windows they had left open at home, and hoping their husbands *would* have sense enough to see to things. And the mamma ran upstairs to close the windows and potter over some collars and ruffles that had blown about, never thinking of baby on the uncovered piazza.

[Illustration: LILY-TOES IN THE SHOWER.]

Oh, how it poured! Grandpa and his man got as far as the wagon-shed just as the worst came, and they stayed there. Grandma was weather-bound along with her young turkeys in the granary. And Lily-toes!—no one will ever know what her reflections were for a few moments. I imagine she rather liked the first drops; for she was always fond of plashing about in her bath-tub, and had no fear of water in reasonable quantities. But when the wind began to dash the rain in her face, probably she first gasped in astonishment, and then kicked, and, eventually, as everybody knew, screamed! Yes; aunties, visitors, and mamma, as they met in the hall and shrieked to each other about the storm, heard, at last, in the lull of the gale, a sound of indignant squalling.

Then there was another scamper. Lily-toes was snatched in-doors and borne along amid a tempest of astonishment and pity, until one visitor burst out laughing; and then all laughed except the mamma, who kept a straight face until baby stopped crying and smiled around on them like wet sunlight.

Before grandma could reach the house, Lily-toes had been rubbed very dry and put into dry clothes; but her wrapper and petticoats and stockings and blue shoes, lying in a sopping heap on the floor, told the tale to grandma and grandpa and the hired man, who all agreed it was a burning shame to forget Lily-toes, even for five minutes; and the hired man went so far as to remark that, "If there had been a few more women-folks in the house, she'd most likely been drown-ded." And Lily-toes looked at him gratefully, as if he had spoken the very words she had longed to say.

"THANKS TO YOU."

BY MARY E. BRADLEY.

[Illustration]

Every day for a month of Sundays,
Saturdays, Tuesdays, Fridays, Mondays,
Jack had pondered the various means



And methods pertaining to grinding machines,
Until he was sure he could build a wheel
That, given the sort of dam that's proper,
Would only need some corn in the hopper
To turn out very respectable meal.

Jerry and Jane and Jo, and the others,
Jack's incredulous sisters and brothers,
Gave him credit for good intentions,
But took no stock in the boy's inventions.
In fact they laughed them quite to scorn;
Instead of wasting his time, they said,
He would be more likely to earn his bread
Planting potatoes or hoeing corn!

Page 35

Bessie alone, when all the rest
Crushed his spirit with gibe and jest,
Whispered softly, "Whatever they say,
I know you will build the wheel some day!"
Chirping crickets and singing birds
Were not so sweet as her heartsome words;
Straight he answered, "If ever I do,
I know it will only be thanks to you!"

Many a time sore heart and brain
Leap at a word, grown strong again.
Thanks to her, as the story goes,
Hope and courage in Jack arose;
Till one bright day in the meadow-brook
There was heard a sound as of water plashing,
And Bessie watched with her happy look
The little wheel in the sunlight flashing.

By and by as the years were fraught
With fruit of his earnest toil and thought,
Brothers and sisters changed their tune,—
"Our Jack," they cried, "will be famous soon!"
Which was nothing more than Bessie knew,
She said, and had known it all the while!
But Jack replied with a kiss and a smile,
"If ever I am, it is thanks to you!"

[Illustration]

HOW BIRDS FLY.

BY PROF. W.K. BROOKS.

In our last talk about birds (in ST. NICHOLAS for July), I told you about birds and their nests. Now I wish to say, first, a few words about the different kinds of birds, and then we will see how birds manage to fly. Naturalists have divided the class, birds, into several smaller groups which are called orders. One of these includes the birds of prey, such as the hawks, eagles, and owls. In the picture of a bird of prey you can see the strong, hooked bill and powerful claws, which are well fitted for seizing and tearing its prey.

The second order includes the climbing birds, such as the woodpeckers. The birds of this order can readily be recognized, since two of the toes of each foot point backward, to give support in climbing.

The next order, that of the perching birds, includes all our common song-birds, such as the robin, bluebird, and blackbird, as well as a few larger birds, like the crow.

The scratching birds form another order, including our domestic fowls and many wild game-birds.

The next order comprises the ostrich and a few other large birds, which have such small wings that they are unable to fly, but with very large and powerful legs, so that they are excellent runners. Although this order includes the largest bird at present living, there were formerly running birds very much larger than any which now exist; for, in Madagascar and New Zealand, the bones, and even the eggs, of gigantic birds have been found. One of these eggs was over a foot in length, and contained more than ten quarts or as much as six ostrich eggs or one hundred and fifty hen's eggs. A nearly complete skeleton of one of these birds has been found, and this must have belonged to a bird fifteen feet high, or taller than the largest elephant!

Page 36

The next order includes the wading birds such as the snipe, plover, woodcock, heron, and rail.

Another order is that of the gulls, ducks, geese, pelicans, penguins, and other swimming birds.

Besides these living birds, fossil birds have been found in the rocks. Some of these are very different from any species now living, and very much like reptiles, so that it is not easy to decide whether they are to be called birds or reptiles.

The chief peculiarity of birds is their power of flight, and, although there are a few birds which do not fly, most of them do, and the various organs of their bodies are all constructed in such a way as to fit them for a life in the air. Their bodies are very solid and compact, in order that most of their weight shall be near the place where the wings are attached. The feet, legs, head, and neck are light, and so arranged that they may be drawn up close to the body while the bird is flying. As the neck is long and very flexible, the body does not need to be pliant, as with most creatures having backbones; but it is important that the wings should have a firm support, so the bones of the back are united. The body of a bird must also be well protected from the cold; for, as it ascends and descends through the air, it passes through regions of very different temperatures, and it must be provided with a thick and warm covering in order to be able to endure these sudden changes, and one also which shall be very light and able to shed the water; for, otherwise, a bird would be unable to fly. The feathers of a bird answer to all these needs, and are so placed upon the body that they form a smooth surface which does not catch against the air when the bird is passing through it. In its rapid ascents and descents, the bird is exposed to another danger even greater than the sudden changes of temperature. You all know that air presses in every direction with great force, and that we do not feel it because there is air in all parts of our bodies as well as outside them, and the pressure of the air inside exactly balances that of the outside air. If we should suddenly take away the outside air in any way, such as covering a person up with an air-pump receiver, and quickly and completely exhausting the air, the consequences of the inside pressure would be very terrible, and if the experiment could be tried quickly enough the body would burst like an exploding gun, with a loud noise.

[Illustration: THE EAGLE (BIRD OF PREY).]

When people go up rapidly in a balloon or climb very high mountains, they are troubled by a ringing noise and a feeling of great pressure in the ears and head, and by palpitation of the heart, bleeding at the nose, and fainting. These unpleasant and often dangerous symptoms are caused by the expansion of the air inside their bodies. In ascending very high mountains it is necessary to go very slowly and to stop very often, to give time for some of the expanded air to

Page 37

escape, and equalize the pressure again. Now, many birds, the condor, for example, fly over the tops of the highest mountains, and nearly all birds, either occasionally or habitually, ascend to very great altitudes, and, unless there were some plan for regulating the pressure of the air inside their bodies, they would suffer great inconvenience and even pain and danger. But they are provided with an arrangement by which the air within them can escape easily as it expands and thus keep the pressure within just equal to that outside, so that they can ascend and descend as rapidly as they wish, without feeling the least inconvenience. In the body of the bird there are several large bags, like the lungs, called air-chambers; many of their bones are hollow, and others are pierced with long winding tubes called air-tubes. All these air-chambers and air-tubes are connected with the lungs so that air can pass into and out of them at each breath. The connection between these chambers and the lungs is so complete that a wounded hawk can breathe through a broken wing almost as well as through its mouth. When a bird mounts upward, the air inside its body gradually expands, but the bird does not feel any inconvenience; for, at each breath, part of the air passes from the air-chambers into the lungs, so that the pressure on the inside does not become greater than that on the outside.

[Illustrations: PENGUINS (SWIMMERS AND DIVERS).]

I could easily fill the whole of this chapter with an account of the different ways in which the body of a bird is fitted for life in the air, but we have room to examine only one of these,—the way in which the wing is adapted to its use.

Did you ever look at a bird's wing carefully, and try to find out from it the way in which it is used? People usually suppose, either that a bird flies because it is lighter than the air, like a balloon, or that it rows itself along as a boat is rowed through the water. Neither of these suppositions is true. A bird is not lighter than the air, and does not float; for when a bird is shot on the wing it falls to the ground just as quickly as a squirrel. On the contrary, a bird flies by its own weight, and could not fly at all if it were not heavier than the air.

You know that when you move a large, flat surface rapidly through the air, it meets with considerable resistance. A bird's wing is so large, and is moved so rapidly, that the resistance of the air is enough to raise the bird a short distance each time the wings are flapped downward; but after each down-flap there must be an up-flap, and the air resists this just as it does the down-flap; so, unless there were some arrangement to prevent it, the bird would drive itself down each time it raised its wings, just as far as it had raised itself by the down-stroke before, so that it would never get into the air at all. To meet this difficulty, the wing is so shaped that it is concave or hollow upon its lower

Page 38

surface, so that it gathers the air together and prevents it from escaping; while the upper surface is convex or bulging, so that the air slides off from it when the wing is moved upward. If you have ever been caught in a sudden squall of wind with an open umbrella, you will easily understand how great a difference in resisting power this difference in the shape of the two sides of the wing will make. As long as you can keep the bulging side of the umbrella pointed toward the wind, you find no difficulty in holding it; but if the wind strikes the hollow under-side of the umbrella, it pulls so violently that, unless you are able to turn around and face the wind, the chances are that the umbrella will either be pulled away from you or turned inside out. But in the latter case, the wind slides out over the edges again, so that there is no trouble in holding on to the umbrella.

The peculiar shape of the wing is only one of the ways by which the down-stroke is made to strike the air with more force than the up-stroke. If you will look at a quill-feather, you will see that, on each side of the central shaft or quill, there is a broad, thin portion, which is called the *vane*. The vane on one side of the shaft is quite broad and flexible, while that on the other side is narrow and stiff; and by looking at a wing with the feathers in their places, you will find that they are placed so that they overlap a little, like the slats on a window-blind. Each broad vane runs under the narrow vane of the feather beside it, so that, when the wing is moved downward, each feather is pressed up against the stiff narrow vane of the one beside it, and the whole wing forms a solid sheet like a blind with the slats closed. After the down-stroke is finished and the up-stroke begins, the pressure is taken off from the lower surface of the wing, and begins to act on the upper surface and to press the feathers downward instead of upward. The broad vanes now have nothing to support them, and they bend down and allow the air to pass through the wing, which is now like a blind with the slats open. By these two contrivances,—the shape of the wing, and the shape and arrangement of the feathers,—the wing resists the air on its down-stroke and raises the bird a little at each flap, but at each up-stroke allows the air to slide off at the sides, and to pass through between the feathers, so that nothing is lost.

[Illustration: QUAIL (SCRATCHERS).]

So much for the way in which the bird is raised into the air. Rising in the air is not flying, for a balloon and a kite rise but do not fly. Now, how is a bird able to move forward? This is not quite as easy to understand as the other, but I hope to be able to make it clear to you. I must first say, however, that it is not done by rowing with the wings, for they move up and down, not backward and forward, and no amount of rowing up and down would drive a bird forward, any more than rowing backward and forward would lift a boat up into the air.

Page 39

You will find, if you carefully examine a bird's wing, that all the bones and muscles are placed along the front edge, which is thus made very stiff and strong. The quill feathers are fastened in such a way that they point backward, so that the hind edge of the wing is not stiff like the front edge, but is flexible and bends at the least touch. As the air is not a solid, but a gas, it has a tendency to slide out from under the wing when this is driven downward, and of course it will do this at the point where it can escape most easily. Since the front edge of the wing is stiff and strong, it retains its hollow shape, and prevents the air from sliding out in this direction, but the pressure of the air is enough to bend up the thin, flexible ends of the feathers at the hinder border of the wing, so the air makes its escape there, and slides out backward and upward. The weight of the bird is all the time pulling it down toward the earth; so, at the same time that the air slides out upward and backward past the bent edge of the wing, the wing itself, and with it the bird, slides forward and downward off from the confined air. You will have a much better idea of this if you will cut out a little paper model of a bird's wing and watch the way in which it falls through the air.

[Illustration]

Take a sheet of stiff paper and cut it in the shape shown in the diagram above, but considerably larger. Be very careful to have the two sides alike, so that they shall balance each other. Now fold up the front margin of each wing, along the dotted lines *a, a, a, a*, to form a stiff rim to represent the rim of bone along the front edge of a bird's wing, and cut out a small strip of wood, about as thick as a match and twice as long, and run this through the two slits, *b, b*, to represent the body of the bird. If you hold this model about three feet from the ground, and allow it to fall gently, you will see that, instead of falling straight to the ground, it will slide forward, and strike the ground two or three feet ahead of you. It is really its weight which causes it to do this, so that the statement that a bird flies by its own weight is strictly true.

[Illustration: A SKILLFUL FLYER.]

This is true, also, of insects and bats. They all have wings with stiff front edges, and flexible hind edges which bend and allow the air to pass out, so that flying is nothing but sliding down a hill made of air. A bird rises, then, by flapping its wings, and it flies by falling back toward the earth and sliding forward at the same time. At the end of each stroke of its wings it has raised itself enough to make up for the distance it has fallen since the last stroke, and accordingly it stays at the same height and moves forward in a seemingly straight line. But if you watch the flight of those birds which flap their wings slowly, such as the woodpecker, you can see them rise and fall, and will have no trouble in

Page 40

seeing that their path is not really a straight line, but is made up of curves; although most birds flap their wings so rapidly that they have no time to fall through a space great enough to be seen. Birds also make use of the wind to aid them in flight, and by holding their wings inclined like a kite, so that the wind shall slide out under them, they can sail great distances without flapping their wings at all. They are supported, as a paper kite is, by the wind, which is continually pushing against their wings, and sliding out backward and downward, thus lifting or holding up the bird, and at the same time driving it forward.

The birds are not compelled to face the wind while they are sailing, but by changing the position of the wings a little they can go in whatever direction they wish, much as a boy changes his direction in skating by leaning a little to one side or the other. Some birds are very skillful at this kind of sailing, and can even remain stationary in the air for some minutes when there is a strong wind; and they do this without flapping their wings at all. It is a difficult thing to do, and no birds except the most skillful flyers can manage it. Some hawks can do it, and gulls and terns may often be seen practicing it when a gale of wind is blowing, and they seem to take great delight in their power of flight.

Of all birds the albatross is the most skillful in the art of sailing in the air. It is a large sea-bird, about the size of a swan, and has very long and powerful wings. It lives far out upon the open ocean, hundreds of miles from land, and spends nearly all of its life in the air, very seldom alighting upon the water. It flies almost entirely by the aid of the wind, and sometimes does not flap its wings for an hour at a time. Albatrosses often follow a ship clear across the ocean, or, rather, they keep company with the ship, for as they are able to fly one hundred miles an hour with ease, the rate at which a ship travels is much too slow for them; so they make long journeys ahead and behind, like a dog taking a walk with his master, returning occasionally to the ship to pick up any food which may have been thrown overboard.

NANCY CHIME.

BY S. SMITH.

[Illustration]

Untarnished by the breath of fame,
Untouched by prose or rhyme,
The world has never heard that name,—
The name of Nancy Chime.



Domestic, friend, and monitor,
She served us long and well;
Not many “helps” could equal her,
And none, perhaps, excel.

No evil lurked within her breast;
Her face was always bright;
Her trusty hands, scarce needing rest,
Were busy day and night.

Her voice was sweet as voice of birds
That to each other call;
And when she spoke, her striking words
Were listened to by all.

E’en Baby Bunting—darling boy,
The happiest of his race—
Would clap his little hands with joy,
And look up in her face.

Page 41

But none can reach perfection here;
Like all beneath the sun,
She, too, could err, and her career
Was not a faultless one.

She only did, here let me tell,
Each day the best she could;
Would young folks all but do as well,
The world might soon grow good.

But all is past! Ah! cold that face!
That bosom throbs no more!
Oh! must another take her place,
And we our loss deplore?

Nay, nay, we could not bear the pain
Of losing one so true;—
Old Nancy Chime shall tick again,
And be as good as new.

HOW HE CAUGHT HIM.

[Illustration: HANS GETS A FIRST-RATE BITE.]

[Illustration: THEN HE CATCHES A FISH AND PULLS HIM OUT.]

[Illustration: HANS FINDS IT HARDER TO HOLD THE FISH THAN TO CATCH HIM.]

[Illustration: THEN HANS BEGINS TO WONDER WHETHER HE OR THE FISH IS CAUGHT.]

[Illustration: THE FISH NOW CATCHES HANS AND PULLS HIM IN.]

[Illustration: HANS AND THE FISH AGREE TO STOP CATCHING EACH OTHER.]

WHO PUT OUT THE TEA-PARTY?

BY ELLEN FRANCES TERRY.

One day, when I was a small girl, my little sister Katy and I found in the yard a dry-goods box, in which the new carpets had been sent home. As usual, we ran to where grandma sat knitting and nodding:



"Oh, grandma, *mayn't* we have it?" cried I.

"Yet hab it, dranma?" echoed Katy.

"You know we never had a baby-house."

"No, nebber had no baby-'ouse."

"Oh, say yes!"

"Ay 'et!"

"Do, do!"

"Pede do!"

Then, before she knew what she was to do, or say, or what she never had done, or said, we coaxed her to the back door and pointed to our treasure. She couldn't refuse us, and the box was given to us.

John made us a card-board chimney, and cut a square window in either end, for, of course, we set it on its feet, turning its back to the lane against whose fence it stood, looking into the yard. Grandma gave us red curtains for the windows, and a big striped apron, which hung across the front and did for a door. We had to have a door, for, when we took tea, the chickens came, without invitation, peeping inside, looking for crumbs. And, seeing what looked like a party, down flew, with a whir and rustle, a flock of doves, saying, "Coo-oo! how do-oo-do!" and prinking themselves in our very faces. Yes, we really had too many of these surprise-parties; for, another time, it was a wasp that came to tea, and flew from me to Katy, and from Katy to me, till we flew, too, to hide our heads in grandma's lap. Then she gave us the apron, which was very grand, though the blue stripes were walking into the red ones, and there were a good many little holes which let small arrows of light fly out. That was when we lighted the chandelier, and they (the holes and the arrows) were the very things to let people know what grand doings there were inside.

Page 42

Then, when our crockery was arranged on the shelf at the back, a stool set in the middle for a table, our two small green chairs placed one at either end, and a good many nails driven into the “walls” to serve as hooks,—then we gave a party. The dolls were invited, of course, and their invitations Katy wrote on her slate. To be sure, the letters looked a good deal like Jack and Jill,—climbing up hill and tumbling down again,—still the dolls understood us. There were no little girls invited, because little girls couldn’t have squeezed in, unless they were willing to be hung up, like the extra dollies.

But oh! wouldn’t they have liked to go? We had ice-cream, just made of vanilla, cream-candy, and water,—delicious! Then there was a whole tea-potful of chocolate-tea, which was a chocolate-cream drop scraped fine and mixed with water. Do just try it sometime. Thimble-biscuits, too, and holes with cookies round them. I never expect to be as happy again as I was when I dropped the curtain at half-past four precisely, and lighted the chandelier, which I forgot to say was a candle cut in two, stuck in cologne-bottles of different shapes and colors.

We well knew—for didn’t we go out twice to look?—how splendidly the light streamed through the two windows and the eight holes. Why, the chickens knew it, too, on their perches, for they opened one sleepy eye after another, solemnly changed legs, and dozed off again. Those long rays of light, playing truant, ran down the lane and flashed into the very eyes of naughty Billy Quinn, who was going home from a visit, whistling, and with his hands in his pockets.

Of course the dolls arrived promptly, and took off their shawls in the best bedroom, which was that convenient shelf that was turned into anything on short notice. The baby-dolls had to go early to bed under the table, and you can imagine how much pleasanter it is to say, “Bed-time, children!” than to have it said to you. Mrs. Green was a perfect little Mrs. Herod in her treatment of her children. Indeed, their yells under punishment were heart-rending; but when she was only dear Katy she was tender as one of those cooing doves.

So we ate up the ice-cream, and turned the tea-pot upside down to squeeze out the last drop of chocolate-tea. Mrs. Green was just doing this very thing when the most dreadful event happened. Crash!—bang!—clatter!—the whole world had turned upside down. Out went the lights, and everything fell together in a dismal heap; but whether up or down nobody could tell. There was a splash of cold, cold water in my face as the wash-bowl and pitcher fell and crashed beside me. Katy lay with her small nose buried in the butter-plate. *The house had tumbled over!!*

For a few seconds not a sound was heard, but then there was a half-stifled burst of laughter, which quickly died away as some thickly shod feet scampered down the alley. Yes, the beautiful house was tipped over, and the tea-party put out, as an extinguisher is slipped over a candle, or a hat clapped upon a butterfly. Inside, there was a confused

heap, with legs uppermost,—table-legs, chair-legs, little legs clad in white stockings, and, mixed hopelessly up with these, the dolls, the dishes, the candles.

Page 43

[Illustration: THE TEA-PARTY.]

This heap, however, was silent only for a moment. Then a feeble cry struggled up through it,—a cry which, reaching the upper air, grew loud, doubled itself, became two cries, and rushed out through a window, which, having lost its way, was where the roof ought to be. Then growing fast and shrill, the cry ran toward the house, waking up the Brown baby, who at once joined in. The rooster waked suddenly, and feeling that something had happened, thought it could do no harm to crow, and that agitated his household to the last hen. Then to the cackling and crowing, Beppo added a bark of duty, and nearly turned inside out, tugging at his chain, and howling between times. The canary began his scales, and the scream grew and grew and rushed into the house through every door and window. Uncle John was reading the paper, but, hearing the fearful uproar, he dashed into the yard, turned back the house with one hand, with the other picked out from the heap of legs all the white ones, and dragged us from the wreck of our residence. It was quickly done, but not too soon, for a little flame, which was hiding under the close mass of ruins, now hopped merrily up on the tarletan skirts of Alice Isabella, the prettiest of the dolls.

While we were being taken to grandma to be cried over and comforted, and the poor old house lay on its side forgotten, that flame finished off poor dolly, ran up to the roof, ate up the red-striped curtain in the twinkling of an eye, and, in fact, made short work of the whole thing. We knew nothing of this that night, but were so honored and indulged as to make us think everything else had turned a new leaf as well as the house.

The next morning, grandma, coming into the breakfast-room, was called to the window by Uncle John, who was looking at something in the yard. There was a forlorn little figure sitting on a log among the charred embers of the burnt house. It was I, sobbing as if my heart would break, and beside me was Katy, who stood sadly by, trying with a corner of her apron to dry my tears. But her eyes were wet, too, and in the fat arms were squeezed a leg and shoe, which was all that was left of Alice Isabella.

What wicked eye had watched the festivities through the window, or what cruel heart had yielded to the temptation to turn over the house upon it all, we never knew. I heard that Billy Quinn was punished that night for coming home late to supper, and now, looking impartially at the matter over all these years, I am inclined to think it was that very Billy Quinn, and no other, who put out the tea-party.

THE FOX, THE MONKEY, AND THE PIG.

BY HOWARD PYLE.

[Illustration]

The fox, the monkey, and the pig were once inseparable companions. As they were nearly always together, the fox's thefts so far reflected upon his innocent associates, that they were all three held to be wicked animals.

Page 44

At length, the enemies of these three laid a snare, in a path they were known to use.

The first that came to the trap was the pig. He viewed it with contempt, and, to show his disdain of his enemies and his disregard for their snare, he tried to walk through it with a lofty tread. He found he had undervalued it, however, when, in spite of his struggles, he was caught and strangled.

The next that came was the monkey. He inspected the trap carefully; then, priding himself upon the skill and dexterity of his fingers, he tried to pick it to pieces. In a moment of carelessness, however, he became entangled, and soon met the fate of the unfortunate pig.

The last that came was the fox. He looked at the snare anxiously, from a distance, and, approaching cautiously, soon made himself thoroughly acquainted with its size and power. Then he cried, "Thus do I defeat the machinations of my enemies!"—and, avoiding the trap altogether, by leaping completely over it, he went on his way rejoicing.

DAB KINZER: A STORY OF A GROWING BOY.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XIV.

The next day's newspapers, from the city, brought full accounts of the stranding of the "Prudhomme," as well as of the safety of her passengers and cargo; but they had nothing whatever to say about the performances of the "Swallow." The yacht had been every bit as well handled as the great steamship, but then she had got home safely, and she was such a little thing, after all. Whatever excitement there had been in the village died out as soon as it was known that the boys were safe; and then, too, Mrs. Lee found time to "wonder wot Dab Kinzer means to do wid all de money he done got for dem blue-fish."

Dab himself had been talking with Ford Foster and Frank Harley, and an original idea of his own was beginning to take some sort of form in his mind. He did not, as yet, mention it to any one, as he wanted very much to consult with Ham Morris about it. As for Frank, Mr. Foster had readily volunteered to visit the steamship office, in the city, when he went over to business, next day, and do whatever might be needed with reference to the young gentleman's baggage. At the same time, Mrs. Foster wrote to her sister, Mrs. Hart, giving a full account of what had happened, and saying she meant to keep Frank as Ford's guest for a while.

The Hart boys hardly knew whether to submit or not, when that letter came, as they had planned for themselves all sorts of rare fun with “the young missionary” in their own home.

“Never mind, Fuz,” said Joe, “we’ll serve him out when we get to Grantley.”

“Yes,” replied Fuz; “I’d just as lief not see too much of him before that. He wont have any special claim on us if he doesn’t go there from our house.”

Other talk they had together, and the tone of it promised very lively times at Grantley Academy for the stranger from India. But while the Hart boys were laying their plans for the future, they were themselves the subjects of more than one discussion, for Ford Foster gave his two friends the benefit of all he knew of his cousins.

Page 45

"It's a good thing for you that the steamer didn't go ashore anywhere near their house," he said to Frank Harley. "They're a pair of born young wreckers. Just think of the tricks they played on my sister Annie."

After that conversation, it was remarkable what daily care and attention Dab Kinzer and Frank paid to their sparring lessons. It even exceeded the pluck and perseverance with which Dab went to work at his French.

Plenty of fishing, bathing, riding, boxing. Three boys together can find so much more to do than one can alone, and they made it four as often as they could, for Dick Lee had proved himself the best kind of company. Frank Harley's East Indian experience had made him very indifferent to the mere question of color, and Ford Foster had too much manhood to forget that long night of gale and fog and danger on board the "Swallow."

It was only a day or so after the perilous "cruise" that Dab Kinzer met his old playmate, Jenny Walters, just in the edge of the village.

"How well you look, Dabney!" remarked the sharp-tongued little lady. "Drowning must agree with you."

"Yes," said Dab; "I like it."

"Do you know what a fuss they made over you when you were gone? I s'pose they'd nothing else to do."

"Jenny!" suddenly exclaimed Dab, holding out his hand, "you mustn't quarrel with me any more. Bill Lee told me about your coming down to the landing. You may say anything you want to."

Jenny colored and bit her lip, and she would have given her bonnet to know if Bill Lee had told Dab how very red her eyes were as she looked down the inlet for some sign of the "Swallow." Something had to be said, however, and she said it almost spitefully.

"I don't care, Dabney Kinzer. It did seem dreadful to think of you three boys being drowned, and you, too, with your new clothes on. Good-morning, Dab!"

"She's a right good girl, if she'd only show it," muttered Dab, as Jenny tripped away; "but she isn't a bit like Annie Foster. How I do wish Ham would come back!"

Time enough for that; and as the days went by, the Morris homestead began to look less and less like its old self, and more and more like a house made for people to live and be happy in. Mrs. Kinzer and her daughters had now settled down into their new quarters as completely as if they had never known any others, and it seemed to Dab, now and then, as if they had taken almost too complete possession. His mother had her room, as a matter of course, and a big one. There could be no objection to that.



Then another big one, of the very best, had to be set apart and fitted up for Ham and Miranda on their return, and Dab delighted in doing all in his power to make that room all it could be made. But, then, Samantha had insisted on a separate domain, and Keziah and Pamela imitated their elder sister to a fraction. The “guest-chamber” had to be provided as well, or what would become of the good old Long Island customs of hospitality?

Page 46

[Illustration: THE FIRE (SEE PAGE 748.)]

Dab said nothing for a while, but one day, at dinner, just after the arrival of a letter from Miranda announcing the speedy return of herself and husband, he quietly remarked:

“Now I can’t sleep in Ham’s room any longer,—I suppose I’ll have to go out on the roof. I wont sleep in the garret or in the cellar.”

“That’ll be a good deal as Mrs. Morris says, when she comes,” calmly responded his mother.

“As Miranda says!” said Dab, with a long breath.

“Miranda?” gasped Samantha and her sisters.

“Yes, my dears, certainly,” said their mother. “This is Mrs. Morris’s house, or her husband’s,—not mine. All the arrangements I have made are only temporary. She and Ham both have ideas and wills of their own. I’ve only done the best I could for the time being.”

The girls looked at one another in blank amazement over the idea of Mrs. Kinzer being anything less than the mistress of any house she might happen to be in, but Dabney laid down his knife and fork with:

“It’s all right, then. If Ham and Miranda are to settle it, I think I’ll take the room Sam has now. You needn’t take away your books, Sam. I may want to read some of them or lend them to Annie. You and Kezi and Meli had better take that upper room back. The smell of the paint’s all gone now, and there’s three kinds of carpet on the floor.”

“Dabney!” exclaimed Samantha, reproachfully, and with an appealing look at her mother, who, however, said nothing on either side, and was a woman of too much good sense to take any other view of the matter than that she had announced.

Things were all running on smoothly and pleasantly before dinner was over, but Dab’s ideas of the way the house should be divided were likely to result in some changes. Perhaps not exactly the ones he indicated, but such as would give him a better choice than either the garret, the cellar, or the roof. At all events, only three days would now intervene before the arrival of the two travelers, and everything required for their reception was pushed forward with all the energy Mrs. Kinzer could bring to bear. She had promised Ham that his house should be ready for him, and it was likely to be a good deal more “ready” than either he or his wife had dreamed of.

CHAPTER XV.

One of the most troublesome of the annoyances which come to dwellers in the country, within easy reach of the great city, is the kind of patrolling beggar called the “tramp.” He is of all sorts and sizes, and he goes everywhere, asking for anything he wants, very much as if it belonged to him, so long as he can ask it of a woman or a sickly-looking man.

Page 47

There had been very few of these gentry seen in that vicinity that summer, for a wonder, and those who had made their appearance had been reasonably well behaved. Probably because there had been so many healthy-looking men around, as a general thing. But it came to pass, on the very day when Ham and Miranda were expected to arrive, by the last of the evening trains, as Dab Kinzer was coming back from the landing, where he had been for a look at the "Swallow," to be sure she was all right for her owner's eyes, that a very disreputable specimen of a worthless man stopped at Mrs. Kinzer's to beg something to eat, and then sauntered away down the road.

It was a little past the middle of the afternoon, and even so mean-looking, dirty a tramp as that had a perfect right to be walking along then and there. The sunshine and the fresh salt air from the bay were as much his as anybody's, and so was the water in the bay, and no one in all that region of country stood more in need of water than he.

The vagabond took his right to the road, as he had taken his other right to beg his dinner, until, half-way down to the landing, he was met by an opportunity to do more begging.

"Give a poor feller suthin," he impudently drawled, as he stared straight into the sweet, fresh face of Annie Foster. Annie had been out for only a short walk, but she happened to have her pocket-book with her, and she thoughtlessly drew it out, meaning to give the scamp a trifle, if only to get rid of him.

"Only a dime, Miss," whined the tramp, as he shut his dirty hand over Annie's gift. "Come, now, make it a dollar, my beauty. I'll call it all square for a dollar."

The whine grew louder as he spoke, and the wheedling grin upon his disgusting face changed into an expression so menacing that Annie drew back with a shudder, and was about to return her little portemonnaie to her pocket.

"No you don't, honey!"

The words were uttered in a hoarse and husky voice, and were accompanied by a sudden grip of poor Annie's arm with one hand, while with the other he snatched greedily at the morocco case.

Did she scream? How could she help it? Or what else could she have done under the circumstances? She screamed vigorously, whether she would or no, and at the same moment dropped her pocket-book in the grass beside the path, so that it momentarily escaped the vagabond's clutches.

"Shut up, will you!" and other angry and evil words, accompanied with more than one vicious threat, followed thick and fast, as Annie struggled to free herself, while her assailant peered hungrily around after the missing prize.

It is not at all likely he would have attempted anything so bold as that in broad daylight if he had not been drinking too freely, and the very evil "spirit" which had prompted him to his rascality unfitted him for its immediate consequences. These latter, in the shape of Dab Kinzer and the lower "joint" of a stout fishing-rod, had been bounding along up the road from the landing at a tremendous rate for nearly half a minute.

Page 48

A boy of fifteen assailing a full-grown ruffian?

Why not? Age hardly counts in such a matter, and then it is not every boy of even his "growth" that could have brought muscles like those of Dab Kinzer to the swing he gave that four feet length of seasoned ironwood.

Annie saw him coming, but her assailant did not until it was too late for anything but to turn and receive that first hit in front instead of behind. It would have knocked over almost anybody, and the tramp measured his length on the ground, while Dabney plied the rod on him with all the energy he was master of.

"Oh, don't, Dabney, don't; you'll kill him!" pleaded Annie.

"I wouldn't want to do that," said Dabney, but he added, to the tramp: "Now you'd better get up and run for it. If you are caught around here again it'll be the worse for you."

The vagabond staggered to his feet, looking savagely enough at Dab, but the latter seemed so very ready to put in another hit with that terrible cudgel, and the whole situation was so unpleasantly suggestive of further difficulty, that the youngster's advice was taken without a word.

"Here it is. I've found my pocket-book," said Annie, as her enemy made the best of his way off.

"He did not hurt you?"

"No, he only scared me, except that I s'pose my arm will be black and blue where he caught it. Thank you ever so much, Dabney! You're a brave boy. Why, he's almost twice your size."

"Yes, but the butt end of my rod is twice as hard as his head," replied Dabney. "I was almost afraid to strike him with it, because I might have broken his skull."

"You didn't even break your rod."

"No, and now I must run back for the other pieces and the tip. I dropped them in the road."

"Please, Dabney, see me home first," said Annie. "I know it's foolish and there isn't a bit of danger, but I must confess to being rather frightened."

Dab Kinzer was a little the proudest boy on Long Island, as he marched along in compliance with her request. He went no further than the gate, to be sure, and then returned for the rest of his rod, but, before he got home, Keziah hurried back from a call

on Mrs. Foster, bringing a tremendous account of Dab's heroism, and then his own pride was a mere drop in the bucket compared to that of his mother.

"Dabney is growing wonderfully," she remarked to Samantha. "He'll be a man before any of us know it."

If Dabney had been a man, however, or if Ham Morris or Mr. Foster had been at home, the matter would not have been permitted to drop there. That tramp ought to have been followed, arrested and shut up where his vicious propensities could have been restrained for a while. As it was, after hurrying on for a short distance and making sure that he was not pursued, he sprang over the fence and sneaked into the nearest clump of bushes. From this safe covert he watched Dab Kinzer's return after the lighter joints of his rod, and then even dared to crouch along the fence until he saw which house his young conqueror went into.

Page 49

"That's where he lives, is it?" exclaimed the tramp, with a scowl of the most ferocious vengeance. "Well, they'll have fun before bed-time, or I'll know the reason why."

The bushes were a good enough hiding-place for the time, and he went back to them with the air and manner of a man whose mind is made up to something.

Ford Foster and Frank Harley were absent in the city that day, with Mr. Foster, attending to some affairs of Frank's, and when the three came home and learned what had happened, they were all on the point of rushing over to the Morris house to thank Dab, but Mrs. Foster interposed.

"I don't think I would. To-morrow will do as well, and you know they're expecting Mr. and Mrs. Morris this evening."

It was harder for the boys than for Mr. Foster, that waiting, and they lingered near the north fence two hours later, even though they knew that the whole Kinzer family were down at the railway station waiting for Ham and Miranda.

There was a good deal of patience to be exercised, for that train was behind time, and the darkness of a moonless and somewhat cloudy night had settled over the village and the outlying farms long before the engine puffed its way in front of the station platform. Just at that moment, Ford Foster exclaimed, "What's that smell?"

"It's like burning hay," replied Frank.

"Where can it come from, I'd like to know? We haven't had a light out at our barn."

"Light?" exclaimed Frank. "Just look yonder!"

"Why, it's that old barn away beyond the Morris and Kinzer house. Somebody must have set it on fire. Hullo! I thought I saw a man running. Come on, Frank."

There was indeed a man running just then, but they did not see him, for he was already very nearly across the field, hidden by the darkness. He had known how to light a fire that would smolder long enough for him to get away. There had been no sort of lingering at the railway station, for Ham and Miranda were as anxious to get at the "surprise" they were told was waiting for them as their friends were to have them come to it. Before they were half-way home, however, the growing light ahead of them attracted their attention, and then they began to hear the vigorous shouts of "Fire" from the throats of the two boys, now re-enforced by Mr. Foster himself. Dabney was driving the ponies, and they had to go pretty fast for the rest of that short run.

"Surprise!" exclaimed Ham. "I should say it was. Did you light it before you started, Dabney?"

“Don’t joke, Hamilton,” remarked Mrs. Kinzer. “It may be a very serious affair for all of us. But I can’t understand how that barn could have caught fire.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Page 50

The Morris farm, as has been said, was a pretty large one, and the same tendency on the part of the owners which had made them set up so very extensive and barn-like a house, had led them, from time to time, to provide the most liberal sort of storage for their crops. The first barn they had ever built, which was now the oldest and the furthest from the stables and the residence, was a pretty large one. It was now in a somewhat dilapidated condition, to be sure, and bowed a little northerly by the weight of years which rested on it, but it had still some hope of future usefulness, if it had not been for that tramp and his box of matches.

"There isn't a bit of use in trying to save it," exclaimed Ham, as they were whirled in through the wide gate. "It's gone."

"But," said Mrs. Kinzer, "we can save the other barns, perhaps. Look at the cinders on the long stable. If we could only keep them off somehow."

"We can do it, Ham!" exclaimed Dab, very earnestly. "Mother, will you send me out a broom and a rope, while Ham and I set up the ladder?"

"You're the boy for me," said Ham. "I guess I know what you're up to."

The ladder was one the house painters had been using, and was a pretty heavy one, but it was quickly set up against the largest and most valuable of the barns, and the one, too, which was nearest and most exposed to the burning building and its flying cinders. The rope was on hand, and the broom, by the time the ladder was in position.

"Ford," said Dab, "you and Frank help the girls bring water till the men from the village get here. There's plenty of pails. Now, Ham, I'm ready."

Up they went, and were quickly astride the ridge of the roof. It would have been perilous work for any man to have ventured further unassisted, but Dab tied one end of the rope firmly around his waist, Ham Morris tied himself to the other, and then Dab could slip down the steep roof in any direction without fear of falling.

But the broom? As useful as a small engine. The flying cinders, burning hay or wood, as they alighted on the sun-dried shingles of the roof, needed to be swept off as rapidly as they fell. Here and there the flames had so good a start that the broom alone would have been insufficient, and there the fast-arriving pails of water came into capital play. They had to be used economically, of course, but they did the work as effectually as if they had been the streams of a steam fire-engine. Hard work for Ham and Dab, and now and then the strength and weight and agility of the former were put to pretty severe tests, as Dab danced around under the scorching heat or slipped flat upon the sloping roof.

There were scores and scores of people from the village, now, arriving every moment, and Mrs. Kinzer had all she could do to keep them from “rescuing” every atom of her furniture from the house and piling it up in the road.

“Wait,” she said, quietly. “If Ham and Dab save the long barn, the fire wont spread any further. The old barn wont be any loss to speak of, anyhow.”

Page 51

Fiercely as the dry old barn burned, it used itself up all the quicker on that account, and it was less than thirty minutes from the time Ham and Dabney got at work before roof and rafters fell in and the worst of the danger was over. The men and boys from the village were eager enough to do any thing that now remained to be done, but a large share of this was confined to standing around and watching the “bonfire” burn down to a harmless heap of badly smelling ashes. As soon, however, as they were no more wanted on the roof, the two volunteer “firemen” came down, and Ham Morris’s first word on reaching the ground was:

“Dab, my boy, how you’ve grown!”

Not a tenth of an inch, in mere stature, and yet Ham was correct about it. There was plenty of light, just then, moon or no moon, and Ham’s eyes were very busy for a minute. He noted the improvements in the fences, sheds, barns, the blinds on the house, the paint, a host of small things that had changed for the better, and then he simply said: “Come on, Dab,” and led the way into the house. Her mother and sisters had already given Miranda a hurried look at what they had done, but Ham was not the man to do anything in haste. Deliberately and silently he walked from room to room and from cellar to garret, hardly seeming to hear the frequent comments of his enthusiastic young wife. That he did hear, however, was manifest, for at last he asked:

“Dab, I’ve seen all the other rooms, where’s yours?”

“I’m going to let you and Miranda have my room,” said Dab. “I don’t think I shall board here long.”

“I don’t think you will, either,” said Ham, emphatically. “You’re going away to boarding-school. Miranda, is there any reason why Dabney can’t have the south-west room, upstairs, with the bay-window?”

That room had been Samantha’s choice, and she looked at Dab reproachfully, but Miranda replied:

“No, indeed; not if you wish him to have it.”

“Now, Ham,” said Dabney, “I’m not big enough to fit that room. Give me one nearer my size. That’s a little loose for even Sam, and she can’t take any tucks in it!”

Samantha’s look changed to one of gratitude, and she did not notice the detested nickname.

“Well, then,” said Ham, “we’ll see about it. You can sleep in the spare chamber to-night. Mother Kinzer, I couldn’t say enough about this house business if I talked all night. It must have cost you a deal of money. I couldn’t have dared to ask it. I guess you’d better kiss me again.”

Curious thing it was that came next. One that nobody could have reckoned on. Mrs. Kinzer—good soul—had set her heart on having Ham’s house and Miranda’s “ready for them” on their return, and now Ham seemed to be so pleased about it she actually began to cry. She said, too: “I’m so sorry about the barn!” But Ham only laughed in his quiet way as he kissed his portly mother-in-law, and said:

Page 52

“Come, mother Kinzer, you didn’t set it afire. Can’t Miranda and I have some supper? Dab must be hungry, after all that roof-sweeping.”

There had been a sharp strain on the nerves of all of them that day and evening, and they were glad enough to gather around the tea-table, while what was left of the old barn smoldered away, with the village boys on guard. Once or twice Ham or Dab went out to make sure all was right, but there was no danger, unless a high wind should come.

By this time the whole village was aware of Dabney’s adventure with the tramp, and it was well for that individual that he had walked fast and far before suspicion settled on him, for men went out to seek for him on foot and on horseback.

“He’s a splendid fellow, anyway.”

Odd, was it not, but Annie Foster and Jenny Walters were half a mile apart when they both said that very thing, just before the clock in the village church hammered out the news that it was ten and bed-time. They were not speaking of the tramp.

It was long after that, however, before the lights were out in all the rooms of the Morris mansion.

CHAPTER XVII.

Sleep?

One of the most excellent things in all the world, and very few people get too much of it nowadays.

As for Dabney Kinzer, he had done his sleeping as regularly and faithfully as even his eating, up to that very night after Ham Morris came home to find the big barn afire. There had been a few, a very few exceptions. There were the nights when he was expecting to go duck-shooting before daylight, and waked up at midnight with a strong conviction that he was already too late about starting. There were perhaps a dozen or so of “eeling” expeditions which had kept him out late enough for a full basket and a proper scolding. There, too, was the night when he had stood so steadily by the tiller of the “Swallow,” while she danced through the dark across the rough waves of the Atlantic.

But on the whole, Dab Kinzer had been a good sleeper all his life till then. Once in bed, and there had been an end of all wakefulness.

On that particular night, for the first time, sleep refused to come, late as was the hour when the family circle broke up. It could not have been the excitement of Ham’s and

Miranda's return. He'd have gotten over that by this time. No more could it have been the fire, though the smell of the smoldering hay came in pretty strongly, at times, through the wide-open windows. If any one patch of that great roomy bed was better made up for sleeping than the rest of it, Dab would surely have found the spot, for he tumbled and rolled all over it in his restlessness. Some fields on a farm will "grow" better wheat than others, but no part of the bed seemed to grow any sleep. At last Dab got wearily up and took a chair by the window. The night was dark, but the stars were shining, and every now and then the wind would make a shovel of itself and toss up the hot ashes the fire had left, sending a dull red glare around on the house and barns for a moment, and flooding all the neighborhood with a stronger smell of burnt hay.

Page 53

"If you're going to burn hay," soliloquized Dab, "it wont do to take a barn for a stove. Not that kind of a barn. But what did Ham Morris mean by saying I was to go to boarding-school? That's what I'd like to know."

The secret was out.

He had kept remarkably still, for him, all the evening, and had not asked a question; but if his brains were ever to work over his books as they had over Ham's remark, his future chances for sound sleep were all gone. It had come upon him so suddenly, the very thing he had been wishing for during all those walks and talks and lessons of all sorts with Ford Foster and Frank Harley ever since the cruise of the "Swallow."

It was a wonderful idea, and Dab had his doubts as to the way his mother would take to it when it should be brought seriously before her. Little he guessed the truth. Ham's remark had found other ears as well as Dabney's, and there were reasons, therefore, why good Mrs. Kinzer was sitting by the window of her own room, at that very moment, as little inclined to sleep as was the boy she was thinking of. So proud of him, too, she was, and so full of bright, motherly thoughts of the man he would make "one of these days, when he gets his growth."

There must have been a good deal of sympathy between Dab and his mother, for, by and by, just as she began to feel drowsy and muttered, "Well, well, we'll have a talk about it to-morrow," Dab found himself nodding against the window-frame, and slowly rose from his chair, remarking:

"Guess I might as well finish that dream in bed. If I'd tumbled out o' the window I'd have lit among Mirandy's rose-bushes. They've got their thorns all on at this time o' night."

It was necessary for them both to sleep hard after that, for more than half the night was gone and they were to be up early. So indeed they were; but what surprised Mrs. Kinzer when she went into the kitchen was to find Miranda there before her.

"You here, my dear? That's right. I'll take a look at the milk-room. Where's Ham?"

"Out among the stock. Dab's just gone to him."

Curious things people will do at times. Miranda had put down the coffee-pot on the range. There was not a single one of the farm "help" around, male or female, and there stood the blooming young bride, with her back toward her mother, and staring out through the open door. And then Mrs. Kinzer slipped forward and put her arms around her daughter's neck.

Well, it was very early in the morning for those two women to stand there and cry; but it seemed to do them good, and Miranda remarked, at last, as she kissed Mrs. Kinzer: "O mother, it is all so good and beautiful, and I'm so happy."

And then they both laughed in a subdued and quiet way, and Miranda picked up the coffee-pot while her mother walked away into the milk-room.

Such cream as there seemed to be on all the pans that morning!

Page 54

As for Ham Morris, his first visit, on leaving the house, had been to the ashes of the old barn, as a matter of course.

"Not much of a loss," he said to himself; "but it might have been but for Dab. There's the making of a man in him. Wonder if he'd get enough to eat if we sent him up yonder. On the whole, I think he would. If he didn't, I don't believe it would be his fault. He's got to go, and his mother'll agree, I know. Talk about mothers-in-law. If one of 'em's worth as much as she is, I'd like to have a dozen. Don't know, though. I'm afraid the rest would have to take back seats while Mrs. Kinzer was in the house."

Very likely Ham was right; but just then he heard the voice of Dab Kinzer behind him.

"I say, Ham, when you've looked at the other things I want to show you the 'Swallow.' I haven't hurt her a bit, and her new grapnel's worth three of the old one."

"All right, Dab. I think I'd like a sniff of the water. Come on. There's nothing else like that smell of the shore with the tide half out."

No more there is, and there have been sea-shore men, many of them, who had wandered away into the interior of the country, hundreds and hundreds of long miles, and settled there, and even got rich and old there, and yet who have come all the way back again just to get another smell of the salt marshes and the sea breeze and the outgoing tide.

Ham actually took a little boat and went on board the "Swallow" when they reached the landing, and Dab kept close by him.

"She's all right, Ham. But what are you casting loose for?"

"Dab, they wont all be ready for breakfast in two hours. The stock and things can go. The men 'll 'tend to 'em. Just haul on that sheet a bit. Now the jib. Look out for the boom. There. The wind's a little ahead, but it isn't bad. Ah!"

The last word came out in a great sigh of relief, and was followed by a chuckle which seemed to gurgle up all the way from Ham's boots.

"This is better than railroading," he said to Dabney, as they tacked into the long stretch where the inlet widened toward the bay. "No pounding or jarring here. Talk of your fashionable watering-places! Why, Dab, there aint anything else in the world prettier than that reach of water and the sand island with the ocean beyond it. There's some ducks and some gulls. Why, Dab, do you see that? There's a porpoise inside the bar."

It was as clear as daylight that Ham Morris felt himself "at home" again, and that his brief experience of the outside world had by no means lessened his affection for the place he was born in. If the entire truth could have been known, it would have been

found that he felt his heart warm toward the whole coast and all its inhabitants, including the clams. And yet it was remarkable how many of the latter were mere empty shells when Ham finished his breakfast that morning. He preferred them roasted, and his mother-in-law had not forgotten that trait in his character.

Page 55

Once or twice in the course of the sail Dabney found himself on the point of saying something about boarding-schools, but each time his friend suddenly broke away to discuss other topics, such as blue-fish, porpoises, crabs, or the sailing qualities of the "Swallow," and Dab dimly felt it would be better to wait till another time. So he waited.

And then, as they sailed up the inlet, very happy and very hungry, he suddenly exclaimed: "Ham, do you see that? How could they have guessed where we had gone? There's the whole tribe, and the boys are with 'em, and Annie."

"What boys and Annie?"

"Oh, Ford Foster and Frank Harley. Annie is Ford's sister."

"What's become of Jenny?"

"You mean my boat? Why, there she is, hitched a little out, there by the landing."

And Dabney did not seem to guess the meaning of Ham's queer, quizzical smile.

CHAPTER XVIII.

There was a sort of council at the breakfast table of the Foster family that morning, and Ford and Annie found themselves "voted down."

"Annie, my dear," said Mrs. Foster, in a gentle but decided way, "I'm sure your aunt Maria, if not your uncle, must feel hurt about your coming away so suddenly. If we invite Joe and Foster to visit us, it will make it all right."

"Yes!" sharply exclaimed Mr. Foster. "We must have them come. They'll behave themselves here. I'll write to their father; you write to Maria."

"They're her own boys, you know," added Mrs Foster, soothingly.

"Well, mother," said Annie, "if it must be. But I'm sure they'll make us all very uncomfortable."

"I can stand 'em for a week or so," said Ford, with the air of a man who can do or bear more than most people. "I'll get Dab Kinzer to help me entertain them."

"Excellent," said Mr. Foster, "and I hope they will be civil to him."

"To Dabney?" asked Annie.

"Fuz and Joe civil to Dab Kinzer?" exclaimed Ford.

“Certainly, I hope so.”

“Father,” said Ford, “may I say just what I was thinking?”

“Speak it right out.”

“Well, I was thinking what a good time Fuz and Joe would be likely to have trying to get ahead of Dab Kinzer.”

Annie looked at her brother and nodded, and there was a bit of a twinkle in the eyes of the lawyer himself, but he only remarked:

“Well, you must be neighborly. I don’t believe the Hart boys know much about the sea-shore.”

“Dab and Frank and I will try and educate them.”

Annie thought of the ink and her box of ruined cuffs and collars while her brother was speaking. Could it be that Ford meant a good deal more than he was saying? At all events she fully agreed with him on the Dab Kinzer question. That was one council, and it was of peace or war according as events and the Hart boys themselves should determine.

Page 56

At the same hour, however, matters of even greater importance were coming to a decision around the well-filled breakfast-table in the Morris mansion. Ham had given a pretty full account of his visit to Grantley, including his dinner at Mrs. Myers', and all he had learned of the academy.

"It seems like spending a great deal of money," began Mrs. Kinzer, when Ham at last paused for breath, but he caught her up at once with, "I know you've been paying out a great deal, Mother Kinzer, but Dab must go if I pay—"

"You pay, indeed, for my boy! I'd like to see myself. Now I've found out what he is, I mean he shall have every advantage, if this Grantley's the right place."

"Mother," exclaimed Samantha, "it's the very place Mr. Foster is to send Ford to, and Frank Harley."

"Exactly," said Ham. "Mr. Hart spoke of a Mr. Foster,—his brother-in-law,—a lawyer."

"Why," said Keziah, "he's living in our old house now! Ford Foster is Dab's greatest crony."

"Yes, I heard about it last night, but I hadn't put the two together," said Ham. "Do you really mean Dab is to go?"

"Of course," said Mrs. Kinzer.

"Well, if that isn't doing it easy. Do you know it's about the nicest thing since I got here?"

"Except the barn afire," said Dabney, unable to keep still any longer. "Mother, may I stand on my head a while?"

"You'll need all the head you've got," said Ham. "You wont have much time to get ready."

"Books enough after he gets there," exclaimed Mrs. Kinzer. "I'll risk Dabney."

"And they'll make him give up all his slang," added Samantha.

"Yes, Sam, when I come back I'll talk nothing but Greek and Latin. I'm getting French now from Ford, and Hindoo from Frank Harley. Then I know English and slang and Long Islandish. Think of one man with seven first-rate languages."

But Dabney found himself unable to sit still, even at the breakfast-table. Not that he got up hungry, for he had done his duty by Miranda's cookery, but the house itself seemed too small to hold him, with all his new prospects swelling so within him. Perhaps, too,

the rest of the family felt better able to discuss the important subject before them after Dab had taken himself into the open air.

“It beats dreaming all hollow,” said the latter to himself, as he stood, with his hands in his pockets, half-way down toward the gate between the two farms. “Now I’ll see what can be done about that other matter.”

Two plans in one head, and so young a head as that? Yes, and it spoke very well for Dab’s heart, as well as his brains, that plan number two was not a selfish one. The substance of it came out in the first five minutes of the talk he had with Ford and Frank, on the other side of the gate.

“Ford, you know there’s twenty dollars left of the money the Frenchman paid us for the blue-fish.”

Page 57

"Well, what of it? Isn't it yours?"

"One share's mine, the rest yours and Dick's."

"He needs it more'n I do."

"Ford, did you know Dick was real bright?"

"Cute little chap as I ever saw. Why?"

"Well, he ought to go to school."

"Why don't he go?"

"He does, except in summer. He might go to the academy if they'd take him and he had money enough."

"What academy?"

"Why, Grantley, of course. I'm going, and so are you and Frank. Why shouldn't Dick go?"

"You're going? Hurrah for that! Why didn't you say so before?"

"Wasn't sure till this morning. You fellows'll be a long way ahead of me, but I mean to catch up."

For a few minutes poor Dick was lost sight of in a storm of talk, but Dab came back to him with:

"Dick's folks are dreadful poor, but we might raise it. Twenty dollars to begin with—"

"I've ten dollars laid up, and I know mother'll say pass it right in," exclaimed Ford.

It was hardly likely Mrs. Foster would express her assent precisely in that way, but Frank added:

"I think I can promise five."

"I mean to speak to Ham Morris and mother about it," said Dab. "All I wanted was to fix it about the twenty to start on."

"Frank," shouted Ford, "let's go right in and see our crowd."

Ford was evidently excited, and it was hardly five minutes later when he wound up his story with:

"Father, may I contribute my ten dollars to the Richard Lee Education Fund?"

"Of course, but he will need a good deal more than you boys can raise."

"Why, father, the advertisement says half a year for a hundred and fifty. He can board for less than we can. Perhaps Mrs. Myers would let him work out a part of it."

"I can spare as much as Ford can," said Annie.

"Do you leave me out entirely?" asked her mother, with a smile that was even sweeter than usual. As for sharp-eyed lawyer Foster, he had been hemming and coughing in an odd sort of way for a moment, and he had said, "I declare," several times, but he now remarked, somewhat more to the purpose: "I don't believe in giving any man a better education than he will ever know what to do with, but then, this Dick Lee, and you boys, —well, see what you can do, but no one must be allowed to contribute outside of the Foster and Kinzer families and Frank. As for the rest, hem,—ah, I think I'll say there wont be any difficulty."

"You, father?"

"Why not, Annie? Do you s'pose I'm going to be beaten by a mere country boy like Dab Kinzer?"

"Father," said Ford, "if you'd seen how Dick behaved, that night, out there on the ocean, in the 'Swallow!'"

"Just as well, just as well, my son!"

"Hurrah!" shouted Ford, "then it's all right, and Dick Lee'll have a fair shake in the world."

Page 58

"A what, my son?" exclaimed his mother.

"I didn't mean to talk slang, mother, I only meant,—well, you know how dreadfully black he is, but then he can steer a boat tip-top, and he's splendid for crabs and blue-fish, and Dab says he's a good scholar, too."

"Dab's a very good boy," said Mrs. Foster, "but your friend Dick will need an outfit, I imagine. Clothes and almost everything. I must see Mrs. Kinzer about it."

Meantime Dick Lee's part in the matter had been taken for granted all around. An hour later, however, Mrs. Kinzer's first reply to her son, after a calculation on his part which made it almost seem as if Dick would make money by going to Grantley, was: "What if Mrs. Lee says she can't spare him?"

Dab's countenance fell. He knew Mrs. Lee, but he had not thought so far as that.

"Well, Dabney, if we can make the other arrangements, I'll see her about it."

Ham Morris had been exchanging remarkable winks with Miranda and Samantha, and now gravely suggested: "May be the academy authorities will refuse to take him."

"They had a blacker boy than he is there last year, Ford says."

"Now, Dab," exclaimed Ham.

"Well, I know he's pretty black, but it don't come off."

"Mother," said Samantha, "Mrs. Foster and Annie are coming through the gate."

Dab just waited long enough, after that, to learn the news concerning the "Richard Lee Education Fund," and Mr. Foster's offer, and then he was off toward the shore. He knew very well in which direction to go, for, half-way to the landing, he met Dick coming up the road with a basket of eels on his arm.

"Dick, I'm going to boarding-school, at an academy."

"Cad'my? Whar?"

"Up in New England. They call it Grantley Academy. Where Ford and Frank are going."

"Dat spiles it all," exclaimed Dick, ruefully. "Now I's got to fish wid fellers 'at don't know nuffin."

"No you wont. You're going with us. It's all fixed, money and all."

Dick would never have thought of questioning a statement made by "Captain Kinzer," but the rueful expression deepened on his face, the basket of eels dropped heavily on the grass, the tough, black fingers twisted nervously together for a moment, and then he sat mournfully down beside the basket.

"It aint no use, Dab."

"No use? Why not?"

"I aint a w'ite boy."

"What of it? Don't you learn well enough over at the school?"

"More dar like me. Wot'd I do in a place whar all de res' was w'ite?"

"Well as anybody."

"Wot'll my mudder say, w'en she gits de news? You isn't a jokin', is you, Dab Kinzer?"

"Joking? I guess not."

"You's lit on me powerful sudden, 'bout dis. Yonder's Ford an' Frank a-comin'. Don't tell 'em, not jist yet."

"They know all about it. They helped raise the money."

Page 59

"Did dey? Well, 'taint no use. All I's good for is eels and crabs and clams and sech. Har dey come. Oh, my!"

But Ford and Frank brought a fresh gust of enthusiasm with them, and they had Dick and his eels up from the grass in short order. "We must see Mrs. Lee right away," said Ford. "It would never do to let Dick tell her."

[Illustration: "I HASN'T SAID HE MIGHT GO."]

"Guess dat's so," said Dick.

Quite an embassy they made, those four boys, with Dab Kinzer for spokesman, and Dick half crouching behind him. Mrs. Lee listened with open mouth while Dab unfolded his plan, but when he had finished she shut her lips firmly together. They were not very thin and not at all used to being shut, and in another instant they opened again.

"Sho! De boy! Is dat you, Dick? Dat's wot comes of dressin' on him up. How's he goin' to git clo'es? Wot's he got to do wid de 'cad'my, anyhow? Wot am I to do, yer, all alone, arter he's gone, I'd like to know? Who's goin' to run err'nds an' do de choahs? Wot's de use ob bringin' up a boy 'n' den hab 'im go trapesin' off to de 'cad'my? Wot good 'll it do 'im?"

"I tole yer so, Dab," groaned poor Dick. "It aint no use. I 'most wish I was a eel."

Dab was on the point of opening a whole broadside of eloquence when Ford Foster pinched his arm and whispered: "Your mother's coming, and our Annie's with her."

"Then let's clear out. She's worth a ten-acre lot full of us. Come on, boys."

If Mrs. Lee was surprised by their very sudden retreat, she need not have been after she learned the cause of it. She stood in wholesome awe of Mrs. Kinzer, and a "brush" with the portly widow, re-enforced by the sweet face of Annie Foster, was a pretty serious matter. Still, she did not hesitate about beginning the skirmish, for her tongue was already a bit loosened.

"Wot's dis yer, Mrs. Kinzer, 'bout sendin' away my Dick to a furrin 'cad'my? Isn't he most nigh nuff sp'iled a'ready?"

"Oh, it's all arranged, nicely. Miss Foster and I only came over to see what we could do about getting his clothes ready. He must have things warm and nice, for the winters are cold up there."

"I hasn't said he might go,—Dick, put down dem eels,—an' he hasn't said he'd go,—Dick, take off your hat,—an' his father—"

“Now, Glorianna,” interrupted Mrs. Kinzer, calling Dick’s mother by her first name, “I’ve known you these forty years, and do you s’pose I’m going to argue about it? Just tell us what Dick’ll need, and don’t let’s have any nonsense. The money’s all provided. How do you know what’ll become of him? He may be governor yet—”

“He mought preach.”

That idea had suddenly dawned upon the perplexed mind of Mrs. Lee, and Dick’s fate was settled. She was prouder than ever of her boy, and, truth to tell, her opposition was only what Mrs. Kinzer had considered it, a piece of unaccountable “nonsense,” to be brushed away by such a hand as the widow’s.

Page 60

CHAPTER XIX.

That was a great day for the boys, but, before the close of it, Ford Foster had told his friends the news that Joe Hart and his brother Fuz had been invited to visit with him.

"Will they come?" asked Dab.

"Certainly. That kind of boy always comes. Nobody wants to keep him from coming."

"When do you look for them?"

"Right away. Vacation's most gone, you know."

"Wont they be ashamed to meet your sister!"

"Not a bit. They'll try their tricks even after they get here."

"All right. We'll help 'em all we know how. But, boys, I tell you what we must try for."

"What's that?"

"One grand, good sailing party, in the 'Swallow,' before they get here."

"Hurrah for that! Annie was wishing for one only yesterday."

"We'll have all of your folks and all of ours. The 'Swallow' 's plenty big enough."

"Mother wouldn't go and father can't, just now. He's trying a case. But there's Annie and Frank and me—"

"And my mother and Ham and Miranda and our girls. Ham'll go, sure. Then we must take Dick Lee along. It'd make him sick if we didn't."

"Of course. And aint I glad about him? Could we get ready and go to-morrow?"

"Guess not so quick as that. We might by the day after, if the weather's all right."

Exactly. There is always a large sized "if" to be put in where anything depends on the weather. Mrs. Kinzer took the matter up with enthusiasm, and so did the girls, Miranda included, and Ford Foster was right about his own part of the company.

But the weather!

It looked well enough to unpracticed eyes, but Ham Morris shook his head and went to consult his fishermen friends. Every human barometer among them warned him to wait a day or so.

“Such warm, nice weather,” remonstrated Ford Foster, “and there isn’t any wind to speak of.”

“There’s too much of it coming,” was Ham’s response, and there was no help for it. Not even when the mail brought word from “Aunt Maria” that her two boys would arrive in a day or so.

“Our last chance is gone, Annie,” said Ford, when the news came.

“O, mother, what shall we do?”

“Have your sail, just the same, and invite your cousins.”

“But the Kinzers—”

“Why, Annie! Mrs. Kinzer will not think of neglecting them. She’s as kind as kind can be.”

“And we are to pay her with Joe and Fuz,” said Ford. “Well, I wish Ham Morris’s storm would come along.”

He only had to wait till next day for it, and he was quite contented to be on shore while it lasted. There was no use in laughing at the prophecies of the fishermen after it began to blow. Still, it was not a long one, and Ham Morris remarked: “This is only an outside edge of it. It’s a good deal worse at sea. Glad we’re not out in it.”

Page 61

Ford Foster thought the worst of it was when the afternoon train came in, and he had to show a pair of tired, moist and altogether unpleasant cousins to the room set apart for them. Just after tea a note came over from Mrs. Kinzer, asking the Hart boys to join the yachting party next morning.

"The storm may not be over," growled Ford.

"Oh," said Annie, "Mrs. Kinzer adds that the weather will surely be fine after such a blow, and the bay will be quite safe and smooth."

"Does she know the clerk of the weather," asked Joe Hart.

"Got one of her own," said Ford.

Fuz Hart laughed but said nothing. Both he and his brother felt a little "strange" as yet, and were almost inclined to try and behave themselves.

When morning came, however, sea and earth and sky seemed to be the better for what they had just been through. The grass and trees were greener and the bay seemed bluer, while the few clouds visible in the sky were very white and clean, as if all the storms had been washed out of them. Not a single thing went wrong in Mrs. Kinzer's management of the "setting out" of the party, and that was half the day now to begin with. Ford had some trouble in getting Joe and Fuz up so very early, but an intimation that "Ham Morris wouldn't wait five minutes for the Queen of England, or even me," was sufficient to rouse them.

"Joe," whispered Fuz, after they got on board, "are we to be gone a week?"

"Why? What's up?"

"Such piles of provisions as they've stowed away in that kennel!"

The bit of a water-tight cabin under the half-deck, at which Fuz pointed, was pretty well filled, beyond a doubt, but Mrs. Kinzer knew what she was about. She had provided lunch for most of that party before, and the effect of the sea-air was also to be taken into account.

"Dab," said Ford Foster, "you've forgotten to unhitch the 'Jenny.' Here she is, towing astern."

"That's all right. We may need her. She's too heavy to take on board."

A careful fellow was Mr. Hamilton Morris, and he knew very well the value of a row-boat to a picnic party. As for Joe and Fuz they were compelled to overcome a strong

inclination to cast the boat loose. Such a joke it would have been, but Ham was in the way as long as he held the tiller.

The “Swallow” was “steady” enough to inspire even Annie Foster with a feeling of confidence, but Ford carefully explained to her the difference between slipping along over the little waves of the land-locked bay, and plunging into the great billows of the stormy Atlantic.

“I prefer this,” said Annie.

“But I wouldn’t have missed the other for anything,” replied Ford. “Would you, Dick?”

Mr. Richard Lee had taken his full share in the work of starting, and had made himself singularly useful, but if all the rest had not been so busy they would have noticed his silence. Hardly a word had he uttered, that anybody could remember, and, now he was forced to say something, his mouth opened slowly, as if he had never tried to speak before and was not quite sure he knew how:

Page 62

"No,-Mr.-Foster,-I-would-not-have-missed-that-trip-for-a-good-deal."

Every word by itself, and as different from Dick's ordinary talk as a cut stone is from a rough one. Ham Morris opened his eyes wide, and Ford puckered up his lips in a sort of a whistle, but Annie caught the meaning of it quicker than they did.

"Dick," she said, "are we to fish to-day?"

"May be,-but-that-depends-on-Mr.-Morris."

Every word slowly and carefully uttered, a good deal like a man counts over doubtful money, looking sharp for a counterfeit.

"Look here, Dick!" suddenly exclaimed Dab Kinzer, "I give it up. You can do it. But don't try to keep it up all day. Kill you, sure as anything, if you do."

"Did I say 'em all right, Cap'n Dab?" anxiously inquired Dick, with a happy look on his black, merry face.

"Every word," said Dab. "Well for you they were all short. Keep on practicing."

"I'll jest do dat, shuah!"

Practicing? Yes, that was it, and Dick himself joined heartily in the peal of laughter with which the success of his first attempt at "white folk's English" was received by the party. Dab explained that as soon as Dick found he was really to go to the academy he determined to teach his tongue new habits, and the whole company heartily approved, even while they joined Dab in advising him not to try too much at a time.

Plenty of talk and fun all around as the "Swallow" skimmed onward, and the long, low outlines of the narrow sand-island were rapidly becoming more distinct.

"Is that a light-house?" asked Annie of Dab.

"Yes, and there's a wrecking station close by."

"Men there all the while? Are there many wrecks on this coast?"

"Ever so many, and there used to be more of them. It was a bad place to run ashore, in those days. Almost as bad as Jersey."

"Why?"

“Because of the wreckers. The shore’s bad enough, and the bar’s a mean place to escape on, but the wreckers used to make it worse.”

And Dab launched out into a slightly exaggerated description of the terrors of the Long Island coast in old times and new, and of the character of the men who were formerly the first to find out if anything or anybody had gone ashore.

“What a prize that French steamer would have been!” said Annie, “the one you took Frank Harley from.”

“No, she wouldn’t. Why, she wasn’t wrecked at all. She only stuck her nose in the sand and lay still till the tugs pulled her off. That isn’t a wreck. A wreck is where the ship is knocked to pieces and people are drowned, and all that sort of thing. Then the wreckers have a notion that everything that comes ashore belongs to them. Why, I’ve heard even some of our old fishermen—best kind of men, too—talk of how government has robbed ’em of their rights.”

“By the new system?”

“By having wrecks prevented, and saving the property for the owners.”

Page 63

"Isn't that strange! Did you say they were good men?"

"Some of 'em. Honest as the day is long about everything else. But they weren't all so. There was old Peter, and he lives on the Island yet. There's his cabin now. You can just see it in the edge of that great sand-hill."

"What a queer thing it is!"

"Sometimes the storms drift the sand all over it, and old Peter has to dig it out again. He's snowed under two or three times every winter."

They were now coasting along the island, at no great distance, and, although it was not nearly noon, Dab heard Joe Hart say to his brother:

"Never was so hungry in all my life. Glad they did lay in a good stock of provisions."

"So am I," returned Fuz. "Isn't there any such thing as our getting into the cabin!"

No, there was not, so long as Mrs. Kinzer was the "stewardess" of that expedition, and Joe and Fuz were compelled to wait her motions.

(To be continued.)

THE FOX AND THE TURKEYS; OR, CHARLEY AND THE OLD FOLKS.

By Susan Coolidge.

[Illustration: [A cunning fox perceived some turkeys roosting securely on the bough of a high tree. Unable to climb, he resolved to get at them in another way. Night after night he stationed himself beneath the tree, and there played off all sorts of curious tricks. He jumped, he capered, he turned somersaults, he walked on his hind legs, he pretended to be dead, he raised and expanded his tail until, in the moonlight, it looked like a flame of fire,—in short, he performed every antic conceivable. The turkeys, who, to sleep in safety, had only to turn their backs and forget the fox, were so agitated and excited by his pranks that for whole nights they never closed their eyes; the consequence was that they lost strength, and one by one dropped from the bough and into the jaws of Renard, who soon made an end of them.]

Moral.—It is unwise to concern one's self with the tricks and antics of mischievous persons.—*La Fontaine's Fables.*]]

It was midsummer at the old Brush Farm. When I say "midsummer," how many pretty things it means,—woods at their freshest and greenest, meadows sweet with newly cut



hay, cinnamon-roses in the hedges and water-lilies in the ponds, bees buzzing in and out of the clove-pinks and larkspurs which edge the beds of cabbages and carrots in the kitchen-garden, a humming-bird at work in the scarlet trumpets of the honeysuckle on the porch,—everywhere the sense of fullness and growth, with no shadow as yet of rankness or decay. August is over-ripe. September's smile is sad, but midsummer is all rosy hope, the crown and blossom of the year.

Page 64

Charley Brush lay under an apple-tree, face downward, and absorbed in "The Red Rover," a book he had read at least ten times before. Stories about ships and sea-life and freebooters and buccaneers were his favorite reading, and, unfortunately, what with illustrated papers and cheap novels, and so-called "Boys' books," plenty of such tales abound nowadays. I say unfortunately, for beside teaching him nothing, these books made Charley utterly dissatisfied with his life at home. Hoeing vegetables, chopping wood, and going to the district school, seemed dull work indeed to a boy who was longing to stand sword in hand on a blood-stained deck, in a gory uniform trimmed with skulls and cross-bones, and order his enemies to be thrown one by one into the sea. "The shark awaits your car-casses!" spouted the imaginary desperado with a vicious snap of his teeth; and when Aunt Greg interrupted by asking him to bring in an armful of kindling, he glared at her like the Red Rover himself. Poor Aunt Greg! how little she guessed what was passing in his mind!

"You look real pale to-day," she said. "I was afraid all that mince-pie for supper would be bad for you. Here, Charley, I'll mix you some ginger-and-water. That'll settle you, and make all right again."

"Mis-cre-ant!" was what Charley yearned to say, but instead he muttered, gruffly, "I aint sick, and I don't want no ginger." Very bad grammar, as you perceive; but grammar seemed such an unnecessary accomplishment for a would-be buccaneer, that Charley never could be induced to pay the least attention to it.

That afternoon, under the apple-tree, he made up his mind. A pirate he must and he would be, by fair means or by foul. He was cunning enough to know that the very word "pirate" would frighten his grandmother into fits, so he only asked her leave to go to sea. Going to sea was, to his mind, a necessary first step toward the noble profession he desired to enter.

"I want to so bad," he whined. "Please say I may."

Grandmother began to cry. Aunt Hitty was sure he must be out of his mind, and ran for the Epsom salts. Aunt Greg quoted, "There's no place like home," and told a story about a boy she once heard of who ran away to sea and never came back, "foundered or drowndered," she couldn't remember which. Aunt Prue seized his shoulders and gave him a sound shake. This was what came of idling over story-books all day long, she said,—he could just shut up and go and give the pig its supper, and not let her hear any more trash like that—making them all feel so bad about nothing.

Charley twisted his shoulder out of her grasp with a scowl, but he took the pail and went out to the pen. All the time that piggy ate, he was considering what to do. "I'll tease 'em," he decided, "and tease and tease, and then they'll let me go."

So he did tease, and plead and expostulate, but it was all in vain. Grandmother and the aunts could not be reached by any of his entreaties, and at the end of a week he seemed as far from his desire as ever.

Page 65

You will wonder, perhaps, that Charley did not run away, as so many boys do in books, and a few out of them. Somehow he never thought of that. He was not a hardy, adventurous fellow at all. His desire to go to sea was a fancy born of foolish reading, and he wanted to have his going made easy for him.

"I must set to work in another way," he thought at last. "Asking of 'em aint no use. I must make 'em want to have me go." Then he fell to thinking how this could be done.

"Aunt Hitty wouldn't hold out long if the others didn't," he thought. "I could coax her into it as easy as fun. She'll do anything if I kiss and pet her a bit. Then there's Aunt Greg, —she thinks so much of poetry and such stuff. I'll hunt up the pieces in the 'Reader' about 'The sea, the sea, the deep blue sea,' and all that, and learn 'em and say 'em to her, and I'll tell her about coral groves and palm-trees, and make her think it's the jimmest thing going to sail off and visit 'em. Grandmother's always bothering about my being sick, and afraid of this and afraid of that; so I'll just *be* sick—so sick that nothing but a *viyage*'ll cure me! As for Aunt Prue, 'taint no use trying to impose on *her*. I guess I'll have to be real hateful and troublesome to Aunt Prue. I'll tease pussy and slop on the pantry shelves, and track up the floor every time she mops it, and leave the dipper in the sink, and all the other things she don't like, and by and by she'll be just glad to see the last of me! Hi!—that'll fetch 'em all!" He ended his reflections with a chuckle. Charley wasn't really a bad boy,—not bad through and through, that is,—but he had a cunning, tricky side to his nature which made him like to play on the weaknesses of his grandmother and aunts. A sharp boy may prove more than a match for four unsuspecting old women; and though in this case they were in the right and he in the wrong, none the less was he likely to succeed in his crafty plans.

He waited a few days to let opposition subside, and then began his tricks. Charley's first victim was Aunt Hitty. She was a gentle, weak-minded person, easy to persuade, and when Charley put his head into her lap and called her coaxing names, and was sure she was too kind to disappoint him in the thing he was set upon, her heart softened, and she began to think that they all had been hard and unkind. "The dear boy wants to go awful bad," she told Aunt Greg, and to her surprise Aunt Greg did not fly out and scold as she had expected, but answered, with a sigh, "I suppose sailing on the ocean *is* beautiful!" Aunt Greg had never seen the ocean in her life, but she was naturally romantic; and Charley, who had been hard at work at the "Reader," had crammed her with all sorts of poetical quotations and fancies concerning it. Flying fish, coral islands, pole stars, dolphins, gallant mariners, wet sheets and flowing seas, figured largely in these extracts, but there was no mention whatever of storms, sharks, drowning, hard work, or anything disagreeable. Aunt Greg could not see the charm of "wet sheets," but all the rest sounded delightful; and gradually a picture formed itself in her mind of a sea which was always blue and always smooth, and of Charley standing on the deck of a ship repeating poetry to himself in the moonlight; and her opposition grew feebler and feebler.

Page 66

"Charley's got a lot of ideas in his head," she said one day when she and her sisters were slicing apples for drying. "He aint no common boy, Charley aint. He'll make a mark yet—see if he don't."

"Dear little fellow!" sighed Aunt Hitty. "So lovin' and affectionate! He used to be a little worrisome in his ways at times, but he's got all over that!"

"Oh, has he?" snapped Aunt Prue. "I'd like to know when? He's been more of a plague the last six weeks than ever in his life before. When he upset that milk last night I could have cuffed him. It's the third time since Wednesday. Mark, indeed! The only mark he'll ever make is a dirt-mark on clean floors. The kitchen looks like Sancho at this moment. I've washed it up twice as often as ordinary, but as sure as I get it clean, in he comes stamping about with his muddy boots and tracks it from end to end. I believe he does it a-purpose."

"O, Prue!" began Aunt Hitty, in a pleading tone, while Aunt Greg broke in, indignantly:

"A-purpose! Well! Charley's mind is on other things, I can tell you, and it it's no wonder he sometimes forgets to wipe his feet."

"Other things! Getting off to sea, I suppose you mean?" remarked Aunt Prue, grimly. "He's pulled the wool over your eyes and Hitty's finely, I declare. As for me, if he's goin' on to behave as he has done for a spell back, the sooner he quits the better. I wash *my* hands of him," and Aunt Prue flounced into the buttery just as Grandmother came in at the other door.

"Charley is it you was talking about?" she asked. "Did you hear him coughin' last night? I did, and I couldn't sleep a wink for worrying about it. A real deep cough it was. Do you suppose it the lungs, and what's good for him to take?"

"He's well enough except for mischief," put in Aunt Prue through the buttery door.

"Prue never thinks anything ails anybody," said Mrs. Brush, sinking her voice to a whisper. "I'm really consarned about Charley. He don't eat hardly anything at dinner. That aint a bit natural for a growin' boy. And he says he lies awake a great deal of nights. He thinks it's the air about here makes him feel bad, but I don't know if he's right about it. I wish we'd a doctor here to say if going off to sea—or somewhere—would be the best thing for him. I'm clean confused as to what we'd best do about it, but I'm real uneasy in my mind."

Charley, coming in just then, chuckled to himself as he heard her.

So things went on, and by October Charley had his wish. It was settled that he should go to sea. Aunt Greg drove over to Wachuset Center and consulted with old Mr. Greg, her father-in-law, who was the wise man of the neighborhood.



“Let him go—let him go,” was Mr. Greg’s advice. “When a chap like that gets the bit between his teeth, it’s no use to keep yanking at the reins. Let him go for one long cruise, and see how he likes it. Ten to one he’ll come back then and be glad to settle down. He aint the kind of boy to make a sailor of, I judge. There’s Ben Bradley,—my first wife’s cousin,—captain of one of them China traders; ship Charley with him. I’ll write a line, and I guess Ben’ll kind of keep an eye on him for the sake of the connection.”

Page 67

So, late in the fall, Charley went to sea. Grandmother and the aunts felt dreadfully sad when it came to the parting; but he was full of satisfaction and triumph, and never shed a tear. The “Helen Weeks,” as Captain Bradley’s ship was named, sailed from Boston on the second of November, and for fifteen months nobody at home heard a word of Charley.

Those were sad days at the old Brush Farm. Grandmother fell ill from anxiety, and even Aunt Prue looked white and miserable. Aunt Greg and Aunt Hitty spent their time crying in corners, and “Why did we let him go?” was the language of all their hearts. But in February, when everything was at its coldest and iciest, Charley came back,—Charley or his ghost, for the tall, thin, starved-looking ragged boy set down at the gate was very unlike the stout, rosy lad of the year before.

He was so weak and forlorn that it was several days before he recovered enough to explain what had happened to him, and then it was little by little, and not as I give it, in one connected story.

“I don’t ever want to go to sea again,” he began. “It aint a bit like what we thought it was. I don’t know why them chaps in the ‘Reader’ called it ‘blue.’ It’s green and black and yellow, and all kinds of colors, but I never see it look blue exceptin’ when folks was looking at it from the land. It’s cold, too, and wet and nasty. I wasn’t dry once for the first two months, it seems to me. Ugh! I hate it. Never let to sleep till you’re rested, and such horrid stuff to eat, and sick—my, how sick I was! Captain Bradley was a fair enough sort of man, but he fell ill of China fever, and we had to leave him behind in Canton, and Bill Bunce, the first mate, took his place. After that we had a hard time enough. I thought it was bad at first, but it wasn’t nothing to that. He was always walloping us boys, and swearing and kicking and cuffing us about. Then we had a storm, and lost our mainmast, and came near foundering; and then we were stuck in a calm for three weeks, and the water aboard ran short. That was the time I had the fever. I’d have died, I know, if it hadn’t been for Tad Brice. He was one of the sailors, and a real nice man. His boy at home was just as old as I am, and he sort of took an interest in me from the start. He used to come in and feed me, and when we were put on allowance, he saved half his water ration for me; and when I got to crying, and thinking about home and you all, he’d—” Here Charley choked and was silent. Aunt Hitty, who sat next, possessed herself of his thin hand and wept silently over it.

“When I went away I meant to be a pirate, you know,” went on Charley.

“A pirate!” cried Aunt Hitty and Aunt Greg in awe-struck voices.

Page 68

“Yes. I didn’t know much about what it meant, but it sounded somehow nice in the books, and I wanted to be one. But when I asked ’em about it aboard they roared and hooted and made fun, and they all called me Captain Kidd from that time on. And once, when we were in Shanghai” (Charley’s voice sounded full of horror), “we saw two pirates. Tad Brice said they was pirates. The folks was taking ’em to jail. They was *dreadful*, black and ugly, and their eyes were so fierce and bad that it made me cold to look at ’em. I never wanted to be a pirate any more after that, but Bunce and the others, they all kept on calling me Captain Kidd just the same.”

“You absurd, ridiculous boy!” began Aunt Prue, but Grandmother hushed her up.

“Now, Prue, I wont have poor Charley scolded when he’s been so sick,” she said—“He’s only a boy, anyhow, and he’s going to turn over a new leaf now; aint you, Charley? and go to school regular, and do his chores, and be the comfort of his granny’s life. He’s had enough of goin’ to sea; haven’t you, Charley? and he’ll stay on the farm now, and we wont ever talk about this bad time he’s had, and just be thankful to get him back home again.”

Charley didn’t answer in words, but he turned and gave Grandmother a big kiss, which she knew meant “yes,” and they were all very happy that night as they sat together around the fire.

So you see that the fox, though he succeeded in his tricks, was not a particularly happy fox after all. Too much turkey may not be good for a fox, and too much of his own way is certainly not good for a boy.

[Illustration: OUT FISHING.]

HIDDY-DIDDY!

Hiddy-Diddy! Hiddy-diddy!—
Ten small chicks and one old biddy!
“Cluck!” says Biddy, “cluck, cluck, cluck!”
“Scratch as I do!—try your luck!”

[Illustration]

How the chickens, one and all,
Crowd around her at her call!
One chick, missing, peeps to say:
“Chirp, chirp, chirp!—I’ve lost my way!”

Shrill and shriller, comes the sound!
“Chirp! chirp! chirp!—I shall be drowned!”



Biddy clucks, and bustles quick,—
“Where, oh, *where*’s my little chick?”

Mister Rooster bustles, too,
Screaming “Cock-a-doodle-doo!
Biddy, I just chanced to look,
And saw your bantling in the brook!”

“Gob!” shrieks Turkey, “gob, gob, gobble!
Mrs. Hen, you’re in a hobble!
Why don’t some one stir about,
And help your little chicken out?”

“Moo!” roars Sukey, “moo, moo, moo!
What is there that I can do?”
“Uff!” grunts Piggy, “uff, uff, uff!
Say you’re sorry, that’s enough.”

“Quack!” says Ducky, “quack, quack, quack!
I have brought your chicken back!”
“Oh!” says Biddy, “cluck, cluck, cluck!
Thank you!—*thank you!* Mrs. Duck!”

Page 69

THE SQUIRRELS AND THE CHESTNUT-BURR.

[Illustration]

Four squirrels once saw a chestnut-burr growing on a tree. They wanted the chestnuts in the burr, but were afraid to touch it, because it was full of sharp points. Just then, along came a flying-squirrel. "I will tell you what you must do," said he: "wait until the burr opens, and the chestnuts fall out. The burr always opens when the right time comes." So they waited, and got the chestnuts.

It is a good rule to wait until things are ready for us.

[Illustration]

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

Vacation's over! School's begun! A splendid holiday time you've had, no doubt, my dears, and now you feel like setting to work again with earnest good-will. That's right. But don't try to do too much at first. Better start easily and keep up the pace, than make a quick run for a while only to falter and grow weary before you are half-way.

MOQUI PEEKEE.

Word is sent to me of a queer kind of bread called "Peekee," which is used by the Moqui American Indians. It comes in square loaves that are made by folding, twice across, several sheets of what looks like very thin bluish-green crust.

First, the meal is made by women, who grind it into flour between two stones, and then it is mixed with water until it is a thin blue paste or batter, when a little cedar-ash is sprinkled into it. The oven is a smooth-faced stone heated by kindling a fire under it. The batter is smeared over the hot stone, and is soon baked into a thin sheet, about two feet long and a foot and a half wide. Several sheets are folded, while yet warm and soft, to make a loaf, which is then set aside to dry.

This curious bread is very brittle and is eaten by breaking off little bits with the fingers. People who have never eaten it before soon become quite fond of it.

POTATO BLOSSOMS AS ORNAMENTS.

"Potato plants used to be grown, a very long time ago, in front yards on Broadway, New York, for the sake of the flowers, which were much prized for bouquets and other ornamental purposes. However, the potatoes themselves,"—I suppose this means the tubers,—"became such favorite food in a few years, that the plants were promoted

backward from the flower-beds to the kitchen-gardens and open fields. The beauty of the blossoms was forgotten in the usefulness of their roots.”

The moral of this paragram is: If you are merely good-looking, you will not be apt to get on in life, but will stay about where you are; and if it should be found out that you can be put to use, you will be planted in the open fields.

This doesn't seem to read quite right, somehow; but, dear me, what do we want with a moral all the time? I leave you to find out what it ought to be in this case, if you think it's worth while. Only, if you *do* find out, I wish you would let me know.

Page 70

SHARP-WITTED ROBINS.

Detroit, Michigan.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: Z.R.B.'s anecdote, "A Congress of Birds," in the July number, reminds me of an incident of which I was an eye-witness:

A cherry-tree grew near the house, and was yearly full of luscious cherries; but the robins scarcely allowed us to have one that did not have their monogram picked in it. One year, however, my brother determined to outwit the birds, and hung a large stuffed eagle from one of the boughs. The birds assembled on a neighboring tree and eyed the eagle sharply, while a grand consultation was held. Finally, a courageous robin darted from the tree, swooped directly under the eagle, and flew triumphantly back to tell the rest there was nothing to be feared. At once the whole flock of robins flew to the cherry-tree, and our hopes of a cherry-pie were doomed to disappointment for that year.

H.P.B.

A VERY DEAD LANGUAGE.

I once heard of a green-colored South American parrot who was more than one hundred years old. This aged fellow could speak in a real language which was known to have been used by a tribe of South American Indians who, it is supposed, petted and taught him when he was young. One by one the Indians died, until there was no one left who could understand a word of their language. The poor old bird tried hard to keep cheerful, but there were sorry times when he would mope by himself and say over some of the words of the language that had been spoken by his earliest and dearest human friends.

That was a very dead language, indeed, my dears; so dead that it is no wonder it made the old green parrot blue to speak it now and then. However, by this time it is past all power to worry anybody else, let us hope.

A PLANT THAT WALKS UPSIDE DOWN.

Shrubs, trees, Jack-in-the-Pulpits, and all such plants, grow with their roots down in the ground; but I've lately heard that a man called a philosopher, once wrote of a plant that grows and walks with the roots upward!

Lord Francis Bacon is the man's name, and the plant he meant is Man. Only he wrote in Latin, I believe, and so, instead of calling Man "a plant upside down," he called him "planta inversa." He explained these words by saying that the brain in man, whence the

nerves start, to spread like a net-work all through the body, corresponds to the roots in a plant.

If this is so, my dears, you are a kind of walking plants, only you are obliged to walk top-side down. This seems curious, but it is pleasant to think you are not so very different from a Jack-in-the-Pulpit after all.

THE SMALLEST INSECT KNOWN.

The Red Schoolhouse.

Page 71

MY DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: No doubt, you have heard of the “leaf-cutter” bees, who line their nests with small round pieces of leaves, which they themselves cut and then fit together so exactly, without gum, that they hold their stores of honey and do not leak a bit. Well, a sharp-eyed observer has found, on one of these bees, an insect whose body is no longer than the width of the dot of this “i” (1-90th of an inch), and which is believed to be the smallest insect known. It is called *Pteratomus*, a word which means “winged atom,” and it lives entirely upon the body of the bee. It has beautiful hairy wings, and long feelers, and its legs are rather like those of a mosquito, though, of course, very much smaller. Its feet are so small that they can only just be seen when magnified to four hundred times their natural size! Now, for a full-grown insect, as it is, I think the *Pteratomus* is very small.—Sincerely yours,

THE LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM.

[Illustration: A WATER-SPOUT.]

A WATER-SPOUT.

Did any of you ever hear of water-spouts at sea? I don't know much about them myself, but the St. Nicholas artist will draw a picture of one for you, and the editors will kindly put it in. According to travelers, the water seems to come down from the clouds, or go up from the sea,—I don't know which,—and drives along, through the storm, in a great watery column. I have heard of whirlwinds, and I think this might be called a “whirl-water.”

THE USES OF HAIR ON PLANTS.

M.E.K. writes, in answer to my question in July, that her “Botany” book says, “Hair on plants seems to afford them security against changes of weather, and plants with hair can stand more heat than bare ones.” A.W. Ferris says:

“If a plant that needs much moisture is dug up from its native wet home and planted in a dry spot, hairs will sprout on it and try to get from the air the moisture that can no longer be drawn from the earth. But if you put back this plant in its old home, it will lose its hair—becoming bald. Sometimes, plant hairs are connected with glands of poisonous liquid, as with the nettle, whose hairs we say ‘sting,’ because of the pain the poison gives when the skin is pricked by them.”

Frances and Margaret Bagley, also, write on this subject, and I'm much obliged to all four. Besides these letters, I've had word that plant-hair is put to the following uses: On some plants it catches insects and helps to eat them; in others, the hair sends out a kind of juice which keeps away insects that might harm the plant; on the mulleins, the

stiff hairs are supposed to prevent cattle from browsing on them; and on yet others, the hairs suck in gases and liquids as part of the food of the plants. And there may be other uses for these hairs that I haven't heard of yet.

Page 72

DARK SUNS.

Here's something strange,—so strange that, may be, you 'd better inquire further into it. I give you the paragram just as it comes to me:

“The bright star Sirius, itself a vast flaming sun, has a companion which is also a sun,—nearly seven times as large as our own,—but which is dark, and gives no light at all. This dark sun was seen through a very powerful telescope in 1862, and it is thought that there are a great many like it, although no others have been found.”

THE LETTER-BOX.

To the little girl who asks if Bryant wrote any poem that would interest “us children” and to all young readers of ST. NICHOLAS:

Yes, indeed. You will find in the collected works of this beloved American writer many songs and poems that you can understand with ease and read with delight. A good, pure-hearted man, like William Cullen Bryant; a man so honest, so simple and earnest, so truly great, that with a deep knowledge of the world about him he worshiped God, honored his fellow-man, and loved nature as a child loves its mother—such a man could not be far removed from young sympathies. He could not be a poet without singing, sometimes, just the song that little folks would love to hear.

And children, themselves, were dear to him. More than once in the course of an acquaintance that dates back to our own early youth, we have seen his eyes light with pleasure at some incident of boy and girl life. Often his kindly interest and hearty words about St. Nicholas have given us better hope and courage to try to make the magazine just what it should be. “Good!” from his quiet lips was well worth striving for. His standard in everything was high. Hear “The Old Man’s Counsel,” which, through his own verse, he once gave to his own heart.

“Wisely, my son, while yet thy days are long,
And this fair change of seasons passes slow,
Gather and treasure up the good they yield—
All that they teach of virtue, of pure thoughts
And kind affections, reverence for thy God
And for thy brethren; so when thou shalt come
Into these barren years, thou mayst not bring
A mind unfurnished and a withered heart.”

But Bryant was not always solemn in his teaching. If you like playful, sprightly verses that yet are full of poetry, read his “Robert of Lincoln,” where



“Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.”

Page 73

And while the poet is telling you of these singers of the air, read “The Return of The Birds,” written in the early spring of 1864, when, as you know, the country was in great trouble, and the birds saw many a sorry sight. If you like a beautiful fairy-tale in verse, all about children and the elves or sprites that children love, read his “Little People of The Snow.” There also is the pretty legend of “The White-footed Deer”; or if you bigger boys and girls wish something more weird and exciting, read his tragic story of “The Strange Lady.” Then, on some lovely autumn day, when “the melancholy days are come,” and the procession of flowers has nearly passed by, read his verses “To the Fringed Gentian.” There are other poems in the collection quite as easy to understand as these. Some of the most admired indeed, that would seem “hard” to many a tall youngster at the head of the school-class, were written in the poet’s own boyhood. His most famous poem, “Thanatopsis,” was composed when he was but eighteen years of age. When you, too, are eighteen you will more than enjoy it, if you do not do so already. But you will like a song of his youth,—lines “To a Waterfowl,”—and the beautiful poem entitled “June,” which has been very much quoted of late because of the fulfillment of his wish that when he should come to lie at rest within the ground, he might be laid there

“in flowery June,
When brooks send up a cheerful tune,
And groves a joyous sound.”

Another beautiful poem, called “Waiting by the Gate,” will be quite clear to many of you; and one and all can understand “An Invitation to the Country,” addressed to Julia, the poet’s devoted daughter, the joy of his old age, who brightened his declining years, and to the last was the faithful companion of his home.

You remember the story of his boyhood days that Mr. Bryant told you in these pages nearly two years ago? Good as that story is, there is a picture in his lovely home at Roslyn that could tell you even better things. It is the portrait of his beautiful young mother, which for years has shone upon him from the walls of his bedroom with such a strong, sweet, loving look in her face that it makes one feel sure that he was reared in a happy home, that his noble, useful manhood sprang from a sunny, well-directed boyhood. Long ago the good mother passed from earth, and now the gate through which she passed has opened for him in his serene old age, the gate of which he wrote:

“And some approach the threshold whose looks are blank with fear,
And some whose temples brighten with joy in drawing near,
As if they saw dear faces, and caught the gracious eye
Of Him, the Sinless Teacher, who came for us to die.

“I mark the joy, the terror; yet these, within my heart,
Can neither wake the dread nor the longing to depart;

And, in the sunshine streaming on quiet wood and lea,
I stand and calmly wait till the hinges turn for me.”



Page 74

* * * * *

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: One of your little readers has found the word “mutch” in one of my poems, and inquires its meaning, and I was rather surprised, on looking into the dictionaries, to discover that it was not there. I have heard it used from childhood,—applied to anything tied around the head in kerchief fashion. The word is in use in old legends, and possibly comes from the French mouchoir, “handkerchief;” but some better linguist than myself must say whether this suggestion is correct. To show, how the word is used, I can refer my questioner to the little story of “Gertrude’s Bird,” or the woodpecker, that is said to “fly about with a red mutch on her head.” The legend is in Dasent’s “Popular Tales from the Norse.” And I may say here that I am almost glad I made that mistake about the white-throated sparrow, since receiving a note from a lady who writes from among the Berkshire hills, where the sweet call of this bird is constantly repeated. It is very pleasant to know that a little girl out in that beautiful region honors me so much as to recite my verse when she hears the fresh note of this charming songster, as this lady tells me her little daughter does. Surely the songs of our wild birds are far better than any songs that can be made about them; but if these serve to remind us how delightful the winged singers of the deep forests and lonely mountain-sides are, they are perhaps worth while.—Truly your friend,

LUCY LARCOM.

* * * * *

Arlington Hotel, Cobourg, Canada, July 10, 1878.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Do you remember the little boy who traveled with you on the train last month from Meadville, Pa., to Jamestown, N.Y., when you were returning from California, and who promised to write you all about his visit to Niagara Falls? I have not forgotten my promise, but we have only just settled down for the rest of the summer at Cobourg, Canada. Well, we reached Niagara that night and staid there two or three days, and I enjoyed it so much. The fall on the American side is much smaller than the Canadian, and I remembered what you told me about part of the rock having fallen away, so that now, instead of being shaped like a horseshoe, it is like a Y. The old table rock has fallen away too. We drove every day over Goat Island, the new Park, around all the beautiful drives, and across the bridges. The best view is on the Canadian side, just after you cross the bridge, and then you have a grand view of all the falls at once. We drove out to Lundy’s Lane, and a man came out and invited us to go up Scott’s Tower and see the battle-field. Papa and mamma had been up some years ago, so said they did not care to go again, as the stairs were hard to climb. I said I would go, so the man took me up and showed me the battle-field and the lakes

Page 75

through an opera-glass. When I got into the carriage I thanked him for his kindness, and you may imagine my surprise when he asked me for fifty cents: of course I had to give it to him, but it was all I had. Papa and mamma laughed at me all the way home, but papa gave me the half dollar back afterward. We spent a week at St. Catherine's Wells, visited Toronto, Belleville, Napanee and Kingston, and went over on a lake steamer to spend the Fourth of July at Oswego, such a pretty town in New York on Lake Ontario. Cobourg is a pretty little town, too, right on the lake, and the Arlington Hotel, where we are staying, is very nice, with nice shade-trees and lawns. Do you know, dear St. Nicholas, I always thought of you as an old gray-bearded man, like the pictures of Santa Claus; but now that I know you and have talked to you, I shall enjoy St. Nicholas more than ever.—Your friend and constant reader,

CALVERT WILSON.

* * * * *

New York.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I thought I would tell you about some people I heard of who like to talk to each other, and everything they say begins with the same letter. How queer it must sound. I send you a sentence: Sarah said she saw Susy sewing small shoes swiftly. I wish some of your scholars would try it, and see who could send you a sentence with the words beginning with Z.—I remain, your loving

MAUD.

* * * * *

Albany, N.Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Perhaps some of your other boys, who, like myself, wish to grow big and strong, would like to hear about the largest human being ever known,—Goliath of Gath,—a person almost large enough to need introduction by installments, but he is so well known that the ceremony is needless. As nearly as I can make out, he was between ten and eleven feet high. When he went to battle he wore a coat-of-mail weighing one hundred and fifty-six pounds,—as heavy as a good-sized man; and the rest of his armor amounted to at least one hundred and fifteen pounds more. The head of his spear weighed eighteen pounds,—as heavy as six three-pound cans of preserved fruit,—and this he carried at the end of a long and heavy shaft! Think what might happen if a man equally big and strong should live among us now, and insist on taking part in our games and sports! If he joined a boat-club, a curious six-oared crew could be made up, with him at one side and five other men opposite. And just imagine him “booming along” on a velocipede! If he joined the champion Nine, and hit a ball, where would that

ball go to? If he called for a “shoulder-high” ball, wouldn’t the catcher have to climb a stepladder to catch behind the giant? And if he threw a ball to a baseman, wouldn’t he be apt to throw it clean through him?

Probably no one can answer these questions, but they are interesting, all the same, to yours sincerely,

Page 76

R.V.D.

* * * * *

Lancaster, Pa.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Can you please tell me whether there are fire-flies in England or not? We have had several discussions, and I would like so much to know.—Yours truly,

AMY.

According to all accounts within our reach there are in England no fire-flies like those of the United States. But there are glow-worms there, and, sometimes, the male glow-worm (which has wings), has been called a “fire-fly.” It belongs to a branch (genus) of the family *Lampyridae*, which is also the family of its fire-fly cousins, but it is not shaped quite like them, and bears a different scientific name.

* * * * *

Philadelphia, Pa.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have seen so many little stories written by girls of my age, that I thought I would write also—about iron. It is a very useful metal, without which we would be very much at a loss. Without iron, we could not cook very well; we could not build such houses as we do, because the nails are made of iron, and some of the tools; nor could we have gas, for the gas is conveyed through the different parts of the houses and city by iron pipes. Nor could we have steam-boats, for the machinery which makes them move is made of iron. The buckets which we have to carry water in have iron hoops. The doors have iron locks. The ink with which we write has iron in it. Last, but not least, we have iron in our blood, enough to make a ten-penny nail. I will tell you of a trip we took to the lead mines. We were spending the summer of 1877 in Wythville, Virginia, and there became acquainted with a family boarding in the same hotel as ourselves. One day they invited us to go with them to see the mines; we had a very long but pleasant ride, and ate our lunch on the grass in the woods, then went on, and at last arrived at the mines. The man who was outside told us that he was “going to harness the ladies’ sleeping car;” the mouth of the cave was so low that a man of ordinary height could hardly stand upright in it: when we started they hitched two carts which were used to carry the ore out of the mine, and put a little donkey to it; the man called the donkey Jenny; we had two or three tallow candles which would not stay lighted; as we advanced further, the water began to leak from the rocks, and the car ran off track; but when we were inside the mine, we were more than rewarded for what we had suffered. The men were working in groups, each group having a lantern, and the lead itself shined; a few men went up a pair of stairs to nearly the top of the mine; but all

these beauties could not induce me stay a minute longer than I was obliged, and I can assure you we were all very thankful when we arrived at the hotel, to find a nice supper and warm beds waiting for us.—Your little friend,

JOYCE.

Page 77

* * * * *

Junction City, Kansas.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I like to read you very much, especially “Under the Lilacs” and “Dab Kinzer.” I live in Junction City, and have a very pleasant home. We have a great many wild flowers growing on the prairies. One of them is called the soap plant. Our teacher says its name is “Yucca.” It has long slim leaves with sharp edges, and the flower grows on all sides of the stalk, which sometimes is four feet high: the flowers are white. Then we have a sensitive rose. The rose looks like a round purple silk tassel. We have lots more of odd flowers, which I will tell you about some other time.—Yours truly,

MARY KEYS.

* * * * *

Bunker Hill.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I read an article lately against nicknames and spelling names with “ie,” but I don’t agree with it. I think when people are grown up their real names look better, but at home, among one’s own friends, a pet name is pretty. I don’t like to see a nickname in a marriage or death notice, but I do like it for young folks and in the family. They say it is a French fashion to spell names “ie.” Whether it is true or not I like it, for all wise people say against it. I know I am only a little girl, and my opinion may not be worth much, but I mean to stand up for it, whatever they say. I suppose every one has a right to her own opinion, and if others don’t agree with me, they needn’t; but I don’t like them to call me “silly” because I don’t think as they do. I am willing they should have their own opinions, but I want the same privilege,—isn’t that fair? I don’t like such nicknames as “Tom” and “Bob,” or “Mollie” and “Sallie,” but like such as “Charlie” or “Hattie,” and I think they look prettier spelt so than they do spelt “Charley” or “Hatty.” If other people like them so, I am willing; but I want the right to follow my own choice in the matter, whether others like it or not. I think people have a right to spell their own names as they please.—Your friend,

ALLIE BERTRAM.

P.S.—My parents think my name is too pretty to be used so often as to get common, and so they call me “Allie,” and I like it. I don’t want any one but my friends who love me, and whom I love, to call me “Alma.”

* * * * *

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: May I tell you about a miniature fountain my sister and myself made long ago? It was lovely when finished, and fully repaid us for our labor.

We first chose a board, about four feet long, and two feet wide, on the sides of which we nailed laths, to hold the earth we laid upon it, after having bored two holes, one near the middle and the other close in the corner. We then placed the board on a box, and set a barrel near it on blocks that stood about a foot higher than the board.

We now cut a gourd in two, and making holes through the centers, fitted them over those in the board, the large one for the fountain-basin, the small one for a little spring in the corner.



Page 78

The next thing was to connect this with the barrel by pipes. For this we used reeds, placing a small upright piece in the center of the middle basin, and joining to this a larger reed which ran beneath the board, and was let into the barrel near the bottom. The spring was finished in the same manner, with this exception, that there was no upright piece in the middle. We now searched the woods for moss, bits of twigs, and even some tiny pine and cedar trees, which we planted with other things in the earth banked upon the board. We arranged a small rockery with vines trailing over it; we made paths covered with sand; and laid out tiny dells, and hills and plains. We lined the fountain-basin with shells and the "spring" with moss, and made little water-courses for the overflow; and, after it was all completed, we filled the barrel with water; and, lo! we had the prettiest little garden imaginable, with a fountain spurting and plashing in the center, and a pretty little mossy spring in the corner.

LILLIE F. FALES.

* * * * *

Sitapur, Oude, India.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: The people here live in little mud huts clustered together in rude villages. They worship grotesque idols, wear very odd clothing, and eat strange food. Carpenters, and tailors, and shoe-makers, use their toes almost as much and as well as they use their fingers, and men do the sewing and a great deal of the cooking. Little girls very, very seldom go to school, and are betrothed when they are babies. Little boys do not play ball or such games, but they are very fond of flying the kite. There are monkeys here by hundreds. They live in groves and eat fruits. These are not monkeys which hang up by their tails at night to go to sleep,—they live in the mountains,—but great big fellows like plump dogs, only their fore-legs are short and their "feet" are hands. The other day I saw a fight between some monkeys and about a hundred crows. The monkeys wounded one poor crow, and it hopped about upon the ground unable to fly. Then the crows settled around it and tried to carry it off; but they could not. The monkeys charged down upon them, and then the crows charged the monkeys. It was an exciting time. Seeing the crows were getting the worst of the battle I came to their rescue, but the monkeys charged upon me, and I had to run. At last, I carried off the poor crow, hoping to cure it, but it died the same day. The other crows followed me home, and made a most dismal noise, as if they could not trust me.

Here the squirrels are quite small and not at all wild. I saw a little boy, the other day, walking along with a saucy little squirrel perched upon his shoulder.

Page 79

In the schools in the villages here, the boys sit upon the ground, write upon wooden slates, and study aloud. They have wonderful memories and commit everything, though they do not understand very much of it. It is much better to understand every lesson as we go along, isn't it?

Nearly all the little boys in India wear only a long coat which comes down to their knees. It is so very warm here for most of the year that the very little folks go without any clothing at all.

There are 60,000 soldiers in India, sent from England. One of the regiments is in Sitapur, where I live, and they have a brass band which makes first-rate music. They also have bagpipes.

In India there are persons from almost every nation—Hindus, Arabians, Chinese, Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Frenchmen, Americans. There are twenty-three languages native to India. A great many Indians speak English, which is taught in all the schools, as Greek or Latin or French is taught at home.

But, although this is a great country, there is no place like America, especially to Americans. Three cheers for the boys and girls of America!

J.E.S.

* * * * *

Nauvoo, Ill.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Here is something about my sister Lu and a strange pet she had: Her childhood was spent in a wild, new country. I cannot remember that she was ever amused with dolls and baby-houses. She made amends, however, by surrounding herself with kittens, dogs, fawns, ponies, squirrels, opossums, 'coons, and various birds, which, in turn, she petted and loved.

She lived in the Red River country of Louisiana. The climate there is so warm that out-door play may be had at any season.

The summer she was thirteen, with an older brother and other friends, she went fishing on the lake, whose waters were dark and still, studded here and there with cypress-trees in close ranks. Heavy timber filled the valley surrounding the lake. After catching a full supply of fish, some of which were cooked on the spot, brother Ed., in wandering about, captured a young alligator, and led it along to where sister Lu was seated, saying: "I've brought you a new pet, Lu." She adopted the little monster at once, and it was carried home, and turned loose in the creek below the house. In a few days the alligator was quite at home. It would eat anything which was brought to it, and soon



learned to come to a call, seeming more delighted with notice than with what there was to eat. It whined and barked like a dog, and wagged its big tail when pleased. It enjoyed being patted on the head, and would caper around, the most awkward thing that ever attempted a frolic. In a few months, the pet became so large

Page 80

and familiar as to be a nuisance. He would track up sister Lu through the field and about the garden, showing his scent to be true and keen. Often when Lu was seated, perhaps, at her tatting, he would come to her feet and lie as still as if carved out of stone, waiting for a little notice. He soon grew to like eating the young goslings and chickens, and began to climb the fence, and look longingly at the young pigs. At last the scaly, good-natured creature disappeared. He probably made his way to a neighboring bayou, and was never seen again by any little girl's eyes.

But Lu has never forgotten him, although probably he remembers nothing now of the good times of his youth.—Yours truly,

G.M.K.

* * * * *

THE WITCHERY OF ARCHERY. By Maurice Thompson. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Archery has become so popular, of late, that this book will be of interest to all boys and girls, as well as grown people, who practice shooting with bows and arrows. Mr. Thompson, the author, wrote the articles on Archery in Scribner's Monthly, which have excited such an interest in bow-shooting, and he probably knows more about the matter than any one else in the country.

There is much in the book about the various pleasures and advantages of archery, which are very many; but there are also a great many plain and practical directions to those who are unaccustomed to the use of a bow and arrows. The author tells the young archer just what to do and how to do it, and, as no one should use a bow who does not know how to use it properly, such directions are very valuable, and should be carefully read and followed.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

CLASSICAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The initials and finals, read downward, name two Latin poets.

1. To affirm. 2. A male character in Shakspeare. 3. To cry aloud. 4. One of the United States. 5. An order of architecture. 6. Small.

VERTI.



NAMES OF AUTHORS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

1. An Italian river. 2. A prefix, and an enemy. 3. A berry, and a spine. 4. A machine, and a small house. 5. The cat'll eat it. 6. What doves do, and an expression of contentment. 7. Bright things that fly upward. 8. What should be done with a sister in the sulks. 9. What should be done to one's mother. 10. Half of a New England city, and what is useless when dry.

RUSTICUS.

ENIGMA.

My first is in boy, but not in lad;
My second in merry, but not in sad.
My third is in stripe, but not in streak;
My fourth is in proud, but not in meek.
My fifth is in little and also in tall;
My sixth in none, but not in all.
My whole a trusty guide is found
For animals men ride around.

Page 81

JANIE M.B.

WHAT IS IT?

Name the thing described in the following paragraph:

Kingdom: Animal, vegetable, and mineral. Conducive to travel; dreaded by all with whom it comes in contact; an article of personal adornment; when misplaced, causes terrible disasters; false; beaten, hardened, and fire-tested; of various colors; preferred when green and flexible; constantly changed, and changing others; its use enjoined by Scripture.

M.S.R.

CHARADE.

Darker and darker still, the slow hours creeping,
Bring to my *first* the inexorable gloom;
Silent and soft, the tender skies are weeping
For all the beauty they no more illumine.

Stay not. O wand'rer, by the hurrying river,
Nor in the whispering wood, nor where above
Rises the perilous crag. My *second* ever,
With added final, welcomes all who rove.

Wildly my *third* over the hill is flying,
Over the wide moor, and the wider sea,
Moaning as one whose latest hope, in dying,
Leaves an eternity of agony.

Listen! oh, listen! to my *whole*, while filling
My shadowy *first* with ecstasy divine!
Listen! oh, listen! would ye not be willing
Ever in gloom to dwell, and not repine,—
Ever to joy in such melodious gladness,—
Ever to sorrow in such rapturous sadness?

L.S.



INCOMPLETE SENTENCES.

In each of the following sentences, fill up the blanks with suitable words having the same sound but spelled differently and having different meanings.

1. It is but —— to pay your —— to the conductor. 2. When the —— was over, he did —— to —— to his father. 3. The —— was —— to do her work well. 4. She —— that the —— of South America are exceedingly tall. 5. The enraged farmer —— his neighbor's cow for eating his —— . 6. Don't —— if the —— should hit you. 7. The —— of a knave is not always as —— as his character. 8. He —— would —— but is awed into sincerity before this sacred ——.

GRACE G.C.

PICTORIAL ANAGRAM PUZZLE.

[Illustration]

The answer—a line from Young's "Night Thoughts"—contains six words.

Each numeral beneath the pictures represents a letter in that word of the line which is indicated by the numeral—1 denoting that the letter it designates belongs to the first word of the line, 4 to the fourth word, and so on.

Page 82

Find a word, letters, or a letter, descriptive of each picture, and containing as many letters as there are numerals beneath the picture itself. This is the first process. Then write down, some distance apart, the figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, to correspond with the words of the answer. Group beneath figure 1 all the letters designated by the numeral 1 in the numbering beneath the pictures. You will thus have in a group all the letters that spell the first word of the line, and these letters, when set in the right order, will spell the word itself. Follow the same process of grouping and arranging, in making the remaining five words of the answer. Of course, the re-arrangement of the letters need not be begun until all of them have been set apart in their proper groups.

S.R.

THREE DIAMONDS.

I.—1. A consonant. 2. A kind of carriage. 3. A well-known river of Italy. 4. A precious stone. 5. In circumnavigator.

II.—1. In inconspicuous. 2. A Turkish name. 3. A spice. 4. A climbing plant. 5. In herbalist.

III.—1. In iniquity. 2. A girl's name. 3. A country in Asia. 4. Purpose. 5. In Niagara.

ALLIE.

RIDDLE.

A head have I, though never do I think;
A mouth as well, but with it never drink.
A body, too, is mine, of giant growth and strength,
Combining with its force majestic length.
But, as to feet, of them I have not one,
Though I am never still, but always run.
Ne'er was I known to leave my lowly bed,
Or open my mouth so that I might be fed.

E.S.S.

POSITIVES AND COMPARATIVES.

The positive is found from the first definition given, and the comparative is made by adding the sound "er" to the positive.



1. My positive is level, and my comparative is what one's true friends never do. 2. My positive is an article of food, and my comparative is a tool. 3. My positive is coarse, and my comparative is a trade. 4. My positive is a youth, and my comparative is an instrument for climbing. 5. My positive is a preposition, and my comparative is to esteem. 6. My positive is a part of the body, and my comparative is wrath. 7. My positive is an American poet, and my comparative is part of the body. 8. My positive is an article of food, and my comparative is something used in a part of Asia. 9. My positive is a public place, and my comparative is a sufferer.

G.S.

HIDDEN NAMES.

Find a girl's or a boy's name hidden in each of the following sentences.

1. Arthur likes my apples. 2. Herbert expected letters every night. 3. Alice rode to her uncle Robert's. 4. Mr. Allen bought eight lambs. 5. Hattie Arnold reached Rochester yesterday. 6. Even Theodore has eaten little. 7. Every rainy night Eva sews trimming. 8. Ellen's dog is terribly hurt. 9. Florence rides every day. 10. Softly the evening light lingers around. 11. Even dull wits improve, nowadays. 12. Generally, raisins are capital eating. 13. Fido ran after Ned's kite.

Page 83

C.K.

EASY CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

My first is in edict, but not in law;
My second's in chilly, but not in raw.
My third is in ice, but not in snow;
My fourth is in cut, but not in mow.
My fifth is in mild, but not in bland;
My sixth is in country, not in land.
My seventh is in silent, not in still;
My eighth is in slaughter, but not in kill.
My ninth is in learn, but not in teach;
My tenth is in sandy, but not in beach.
My whole is the name of a useful book,
As soon you'll see, if you'll closely look.

W.B.H.

DOUBLE WORD-SQUARE.

Across: 1. Departed. 2. Declare. 3. Look askance. 4. Terminates. Down: 1. High wind. 2. Part of a stove. 3. Want. 4. Mistakes.

H.H.D.

REBUS.

A two-line quotation from a poem by Thomas Gray.

[Illustration]

CENTRAL SYNCOPATIONS.

1. Syncopate an orifice, and leave a troublesome insect. 2. Syncopate to cut, and get a natural underground chamber. 3. Syncopate a wise saying, and get to injure. 4. Syncopate a small house, and leave a fugitive named in the Bible. 5. Syncopate a crown of a person of rank, and leave a musical instrument.

A.B.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The initials form the name of a European sovereign. The finals form the name of a great statesman.

1. Striking. 2. A vowel repeated. 3. A body of soldiers. 4. A lofty building. 5. A musical drama. 6. Scarce. 7. A pastoral poem. 8. The surname of a celebrated Italian poet.

DYCLE

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN AUGUST NUMBER.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—Primrose, 1. PeaR. 2. RomeO. 3. IsthmuS. 4. MacE.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.—All owing: allowing.

PICTORIAL TRANSPOSITION PUZZLES.—1. Ten mugs; nutmegs. 3. Ten tea-pots; potentates.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.—1. M. 2. JAY. 3. MaCaw. 4. YAk. 5. W.

SQUARE-WORD.—1. Crane. 2. Raven. 3. Avert. 4. Nerve. 5. Enter.

SHAKSPEAREAN REBUS.—“Hamlet,” Act III., Scene i.

“Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought.”

GEOGRAPHICAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—1. Chill. 2. HellesponT. 3. IndiA. 4. NepauL. 5. AlleghanY.

METAGRAM.—Dip, fip, lip, hip, rip, nip, pip, sip, tip.

VERY EASY HIDDEN FURNITURE.—1. Table. 2. Sofa. 3. Chair. 4. Stool. 5. What-not. 6. Crib. 7. Cot. 8. Hat-rack. 9. Desk.

DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Holmes, Lowell.

TRANSPOSITIONS.—1. Warned, warden, wander. 2. Red nag, gander, ranged, garden, danger. 3. No elms, Lemnos, lemons, melons, solemn. 4. Red opal, pale rod, real pod, leopard.

Page 84

PROVERB REBUS.—“One swallow does not make a summer.”

CHARADE.—Pondicherry; pond, I, cherry.

HOURL-GLASS PUZZLE.—Centrals, Arrow, 1. CHAnt 2. ORe. 3. R. 4. COg. 5. BoWer.

CONTRACTIONS.—1. Brown, brow. 2. Plane, plan. 3. Lathe, lath. 4. Heath, heat. 5. Hazel, haze. 6. Plume, plum. 7. Crown, crow. 8. Lunge, lung. 9. Forty, fort.

WORD-SYNCOPIATIONS.—1. Leveret; ever, let. 2. Slashing; ash, sling. 3. Slashings; lash, sings. 4. Carpenter; pea, carter. 5. Carpets; pet, cars.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE JULY NUMBER were received, before July 18, from Bessie Hard, C.C. Bourne; Mamie H.S., and Louise G.H.; Cari Hinkle, O.C. Turner, “Prebo,” “La Gazza Ladra,” “Cosy Club,” Bertha E. Keferstein, Nellie M. Slade, “Duchess May” R.H.R.; Alice MacNary and Elliot MacNary; “Kelloke and Cary and Rose,” Fred W.M., E. Farnham Todd, “Winnie,” “Stock-Broker and Doctor,” “Dottie and Daisy,” May and Charlie Pray; Laurie T. Sanders, May Chester, “Hyacinth,” H.P.B.; Frances and Margaret Bagley; W.H. McGee, Charlie Kellogg, Nellie Kellogg, T.W.H., A.G.D., Nessie E. Stevens, “Romeo and Juliet” Bella W. Brown, May Duffan, “St. Nicholas Club,” H.B. Ayers; “Orada and Ibylsa,” William W. Bellinger, Lillian Willams E.J.F., A.C.S., George D. Mitchell, Arthur Boehm, Bessie Taylor, J.B.H., George C. Wedderburn, William T. Gray, John V.L. Pierson, Henry Kummel, Virginia Simpson; F.M.J., Jr.; Kitty Curtis, Mildred Meredith, Louisa F. Riedel; “Bessie and Tic,” X.Y.Z., Sarah Duffield, Dycie Warden, Nettie A. Ives, “Violet,” R.T. French, Josie Hamilton, Alice M. Mason, Ellen Smith, Liffie D. Hacker, Mamie Packer, Jennie A. Carr, Willie Sellie, Arnold Guyot Cameron, Grant Squires, Georgine C. Schnitzspahn, T.H. Loomis, Rachel Hutchins, Mary G. Arnold, M.W. Collet, Laura Maude Benton, Willie Robinson, Fanny J. Schonacker; May and Louis Ogdea; Arthur Stowe, Nellie C. Graham, Mattie Olmsted, W.A. Wheeler, Maggie T. Gemmill, Rufus B. Clark, Lewis G. Davis, Clare G. Hess; Ella and Kittie Blanke; Nellie Quayle, Gertrude Weasondonk, Clara F. Allen, Addie S. Church, “My Maryland,” Nellie L. Ninde, F. Popenhausen, A.B.C., “Hard and Tough,” Nellie Emerson, L.B. Bancroft, M.P., Wm. C. Ferguson, Alice Lanigan, Florence Van Rensselaer, Anna E. Mathewson, Josie Morris Brown, Charles N. Cogswell, “Fritters,” “Bertha and Daisy,” “Beech-Nut,” Stephen Waterman, E.M. Biddle, Jr., “So So and his Cousin,” Georgie B., Chas. Alfred Christian, George J. Fiske, Esther L. Fiske; Frank Allen and May; “Lena Kate,” Milly E. Adams, Eddie Vultee, Willie B. Deas, F.D., “Fannie,” Grace E. Fuller, C. Speiden, M. Speiden, Austen M. Poole, Ada L. Goodwin, Fred Huckel, Estelle Jennings; William Guillet, of Canada; “Brutus and Cassius,” Kate Sampson, Edwin C. Garngues, “Bessie and her Cousin,” “A.B. and C.D.,” Bessie Barnes, and Charles H. Stout.

“Fanny Pop” and Ernest B. Cooper answered correctly all the puzzles in the July number.