

St. Nicholas Magazine for Boys and Girls, Vol. 5, October 1878, No. 12 eBook

St. Nicholas Magazine for Boys and Girls, Vol. 5, October 1878, No. 12

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Page 1

THE VIOLIN VILLAGE.

By Edith Hawkins.

On the borders of the Tyrol and the lovely district known as the "Bavarian Highlands," there is a quaint little village called "Mittenwald," which at first sight appears shut in by lofty mountains as by some great and insurmountable barrier. The villagers are a simple, industrious people, chiefly occupied in the manufacture of stringed musical instruments, the drying of which, on fine days, presents a very droll appearance. The gardens seem to have blossomed out in the most eccentric manner; for there, dangling from lines like clothes, hang zithers, guitars, and violins, by hundreds, from the big bass to the little "kit," and the child's toy.

In this valley, one clear morning in August, as the church clock struck five, a lad issued from the arched entrance of one of the pretty gabled houses along the main street. He was not more than twelve years of age, yet an expression of thoughtfulness in his clear, blue eyes, gave and added an older look to his otherwise boyish face. His costume was a gray suit of coarse cloth, trimmed with green; his knees and feet were bare, but he wore knitted leggings of green worsted. A high-crowned hat of green felt, adorned with some glossy black cock's feathers, a whip and a small brass horn slung by a cord from his shoulder completed the outfit of the village goatherd. He hastened along by the green-bordered brook crossed by planks, over one of which Stephan—for that was our hero's name—leaped as he came up to the simple wooden fountain, which, as in most Bavarian villages, stood in the middle of the road.

A piece of black bread and a long draught from the fountain was Stephan's breakfast, which being speedily finished, he broke the morning stillness with repeated blasts from the horn, which seemed to awake the valley as by magic; for scarcely had the more distant mountains echoed the summons, than from almost every door-way scampered one or more goats. All hurried in the direction of the water-tank, where they stood on their hind legs to drink, jostled one another or frisked about in the highest spirits, till fully two hundred were assembled, rendering the street impassable. A peculiar cry from the boy and a sharp crack of the whip were the signals for a general move. Away they skipped helter-skelter through the town, along the accustomed road, high up the rocky mountain-side. The little animals were hungry, so stopped every now and then to nibble the attractive grassy tufts, long before the allotted feeding ground was reached. There was, however, little fear of losing them, as each wore a tiny bell round the neck, which, tinkling at every movement, warned the boy of the straggler; a call invariably brought it back, though often by a circuitous route, enabling the animal to keep beyond the reach of the whip, which Stephan lashed about with boyish enjoyment.

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Noon found the goats encamped under the shade of some tall pine-trees, and Stephan Reindel was busily arranging a bunch of bright red cranberries at the side of his hat, when a shot arrested his attention. He jumped up, and with boyish curiosity explored the pine wood; but fearing to go too far on account of his flock, he was returning, when a second shot followed by a sharp cry, convinced him it was some hunter who had driven his game much lower down than was at all usual. The second report had sounded so near that he continued his fruitless search till it was time to go home, when, as usual, he drove his flock back by five o'clock.

Directly they entered the village, each goat trotted off to its own abode, and Stephan to his, where, after eating his supper of black bread and cheese, he sat listlessly watching his mother varnish violins, by which she earned a trifle every week. This was due to the kindness of the chief manufacturer in the village, who, since her husband's death, had supplied her regularly with some of the light work usually performed by women, and to which she was well accustomed, having frequently assisted her husband, who had been one of Herr Dahn's best workmen, and whose death had left her entirely dependent on her own exertions for the support of herself and child; for the last two years, however, Stephan had bravely earned his mite by taking daily care of the goats belonging to the whole valley. He was now discussing with his mother the possibility of his ever being able to maintain them both by following his father's trade of making guitars and violins, when a loud knock put the future to flight, and caused Stephan to open the door so suddenly that a very excited old woman came tumbling into the room.

"Oh! Bridgetta, how could you lean against the door?" said Frau Reindel, hastening to her assistance. "I hope you are not hurt, and do pray remember, in future, that our door opens inside, and that you must step down into the room. Sit down, neighbor," she added, placing a stool for the old woman, who was, however, far too angry to notice it; but turning toward Stephan, whom she unfortunately caught smiling, she pointed to her large fur cap, that had rolled some distance across the floor, saying: "Pick it up, boy, and don't stand grinning like that, especially as you must know why I have come here so late in the evening." Then snatching it from him, without heeding his apologies, she added: "Yes, indeed, you have more cause to cry than laugh. A pretty herd-boy you are, to come home without people's goats! sitting here as contentedly as if you had done your day's duty! You had better be more careful or you will certainly lose your work, if I have a voice in the village!"

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Stephan and his mother stood aghast at this angry tirade, and it was only after repeated questions, sulkily answered, that they finally understood that her own goat was really missing. She had, as usual, gone into the stable to milk it, and after waiting in vain till past seven o'clock, she had come to tell Stephan he must at once seek for it among the neighbors' goats. He was quite willing, nay, anxious to do so, being unable to account in any way for its absence; for he could not remember having noticed the little gray goat with the white face since the early part of the morning. There was consequently nothing left to be done that night but to make an immediate inquiry at every house in the village. He did not return till past nine o'clock,—a very late hour in that primitive spot, where people usually rise at four or five and go to bed at eight. No one had seen the goat, but almost all blamed his carelessness, so that he was too unhappy to sleep, especially as he could not forget how distressed his poor mother looked, knowing, as she did, that somehow or other she must pay the value of the goat, though how such a sum was to be earned was beyond guessing.

A week passed, nothing was heard of the strayed one; Stephan had searched every possible spot up the mountain, and inquired of every person he met coming from the neighboring villages or beyond the frontier of the Tyrol,—but all in vain. A report had spread in the valley that he had lamed the goat with a stone, and so caused it to fall over a precipice. Many people believed this, which greatly increased the unhappiness of Stephan and his mother, though he had denied the charge most positively.

"I, at least, believe you, my son," said his mother, one day, when Bridgetta was present. "You never told me a lie, and I thank God for my truthful child, more than for all else."

"You can believe what you like," said Bridgetta, angrily; "but, as your boy has lost my goat, and as I am poor, and have already waited longer than I can afford, I must ask you to pay me by to-morrow evening, so that I may buy another, for you forget that I have done without milk all these days."

"No, I do not forget," said the widow, sadly. "I will do my best to get the money for you. It is right you should have your own, and you know I would have paid you at once had it been in my power. I will, however, see what I can do by to-morrow, so good-night."

As they walked home, they discussed for the hundredth time the impossibility of getting five florins; they could not save that sum in six months. "There is nothing to be done unless Herr Dahn would lend it to us," suggested Stephan. "We could pay him by degrees, and he is so rich that I dare say he would be satisfied with that."

"I have thought of asking him," replied the mother, "and, even if he refuses, he will do so kindly."

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As she spoke, they saw the important little gentleman coming out of a house, and hastened to overtake him. He greeted them with the extreme politeness so noticeable among all classes in Bavaria, even in the remote villages. After hearing the widow's request, he stood musing a minute, looked up and down the street, took off his hat, and polished his bald head, ejaculating the usual "So! so!" then, as if a bright thought had cleared up all doubts, he said: "Now, don't you think it would be pleasanter and more independent if you gave something in exchange for the five florins? Something that can be of no use to yourself—your husband's tools, for instance? I will give you a fair price, —enough to pay for this unlucky goat, and something over for a rainy day. But, my good woman, what's the matter?" he added, seeing tears in her eyes and Stephan eagerly clutching her arm, as if to get her away.

"Nothing, sir, nothing; you are quite right; I had forgotten the tools would bring money; but you must excuse me if I do not decide till to-morrow, for my boy here has set his heart on being a guitar and zither maker, like his poor father, and always fancies he would work better with those tools."

"What! Stephan make violins? How is he ever to do that, when he spends all his days up the mountains? Have you not told me yourself that you cannot manage without his earnings?"

"Neither do I think we could, sir, or I should have tried it long ago, for it is hard for him to be minding goats, when he might be earning something to help him on in life."

"Can he do anything? Has he any taste for the work?"

"Yes, I think so; he generally works at it in the evening, and has made several small violins for Christmas gifts to the neighbors' children. But they are toys. Perhaps you would allow me to bring one to show you to-morrow," she ventured to add.

"Certainly, neighbor, but I don't promise anything, mind, except about the tools. I shall be at the warehouse at six o'clock. Be punctual. Good-evening."

"O, mother! Don't give him the tools. Give him anything else. There's my new green hat—my best jacket—I can easily do with the one I have on," said Stephan, anxiously, as he watched the receding figure of the rich man of the village.

"My dear child! of what use could your clothes be to the gentleman? He wants the tools. I am very sorry, but there is really nothing else of any value, and we have no right to borrow money when we can obtain it by the sacrifice of something we should like to keep. We must never hesitate to perform a plain duty, however disagreeable. So, now show yourself a brave boy, and help me to do this one cheerfully."

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The next day, Stephan began his day's work with a determination to look on the bright side of his troubles. His goats, however, had in some way become a greater charge than he had ever felt them before. He feared to lose sight of one for an instant; so, what with racing after the stragglers and searching, as was now his habit, for the lost one, he was so tired and worn out by noonday, that instead of eating his dinner, he threw himself on the ground and cried bitterly. The goats sniffed round and round him, as if puzzled at the unwonted sounds. He often sang and whistled as he sat among them carving some rough semblance of animals with his pocket-knife, but these unmusical sounds were new to them and seemed to make them uneasy. A sudden pause in the monotonous tinkle of the little bells caused Stephan to raise his head, and he encountered the amused gaze of two gentlemen in the Bavarian hunting costume of coarse gray cloth and green facings; thick boots studded with huge nails and clamps to prevent slipping in the dangerous ascent after game; high-crowned hats, with little tufts of chamois beard as decoration and proof of former success; the younger of the two having, in addition, a bunch of pink Alpen-rose showing he must have climbed high up the mountains.

"What sort of music do you call that?" asked the latter, resting his gun-stock on the ground. "If you howl in that way, there will be no use hunting in your neighborhood for a month; you would frighten the tamest game over the frontier in five minutes. A little more of this music and there won't be a chamois for miles round. But what's the matter? Have you had a fight with your goats and got the worst of it? How many horns have been run through your body, and where are the wounds?"

Stephan had fancied that his goats were his only auditors, so felt thoroughly ashamed of himself, but jumping up, he answered with some spirit:

"I have not any wounds, sir, and should never cry if I had. I lost a goat some days ago and now my mother has to pay for it by giving up the only valuable thing she has in the world."

"That can't be yourself, then," said the young man, laughing; "for such a careless little chap would not be of much value, I should think. But tell us the story. When did you lose it?"

After listening to Stephan's account, the hunters spoke apart with each other for some minutes, and then the young one took out his purse and gave the astonished boy six florins—about ten English shillings.

"There, you can get a very good goat for that, but remember, no more howling, and if you ever find your own again, I shall expect you to repay me this money."

“That I will, indeed, gentlemen, and I thank you heartily,” said the boy, so earnestly that both laughed, as, nodding him an adieu, they began descending the mountain, and were soon lost among the trees.

Stephan threw his hat into the air with a joyous cheer, and the echoes repeated his gleeful shout.

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The day appeared very long, and glad enough he was when the sinking sun warned him that it was time to return. He found his mother dusting the tools, and looking sadder than he had ever seen her since his father died.

“We wont sell them, dear mother,” he cried exultingly, dancing round the table and shaking the florins in his hat. “See what luck your blessing brought me this morning!” and he related his adventure with the hunters.

They at once started off to pay Bridgetta the five florins, and, as compensation for the loss of the milk for so many days, they offered her the extra florin, which she coldly and decidedly refused, asking no questions, and appearing very anxious to get rid of them. As they walked home, they entered the church for a few minutes, and, after reverently kneeling at one of the side altars, the widow dropped the remaining florin into the poor-box. It was the largest thank-offering she had ever been able to make in her life. The warehouse was at the corner of the street on the south side of the church, and as the clock struck six they hurried up the stairs of the long, low building, and entered a small room fitted up as an office. Herr Dahn was busily writing in a large ledger, but quitting it as they entered, he said approvingly:

“So here you are! That’s right; business people should be punctual—never get on otherwise! But where are the tools?”

The widow told him all about the six florins, and then placing a toy violin on the counter, she asked him to give his opinion of it. He twisted the little instrument about, carefully examining the workmanship while he talked, and finally declared that it was a very fair specimen for a self-taught lad. He evidently thought more of it than he chose to say, for after some conversation with his foreman, to whom he showed the violin, he greatly astonished the poor woman by offering to take Stephan at once and place him under one of his best workmen if she could do without his earnings for a time, as of course the goats must be given up. Then, noticing the boy’s delight and the mother’s anxious, undecided countenance, he added before she could reply:

“Perhaps, if Stephan is steady and careful enough, I can trust him here alone every morning to sweep and dust the warehouses, for which I will pay him thirty kreutzers a week (nearly a shilling). I suppose he gets little more than that for tending the goats.”

“Oh! thank you, sir,” said the boy eagerly, anticipating his mother’s reply, “I will, indeed, be careful and steady.”

“Gently, boy, your mother is to decide.”

“I cannot thank you enough, sir,” she quickly answered. “Your offer is more than we had ever hoped for, and I trust my child’s conduct will prove how grateful we both feel. He

would like to begin at once, I know, but must, of course, wait a few days till another boy is found to take his place as herd-boy.”

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Herr Dahn nodded approvingly, and told them to let him know as soon as a substitute was found. How thankful they were that evening as they talked over the happy termination of their troubles, and still more so when a neighbor came in to tell them that Bridgetta and some others of the village had voted against Stephan continuing his post as herd, alleging that they feared to trust him any longer with their goats. This was, of course, very unpleasant news, for it was a sort of disgrace to be thus displaced, however undeserved. It also explained the cause of Bridgetta's extreme coolness and indifference as to how they had obtained the money. No wonder she was unfriendly after her action, which, but for the fresh turn affairs had taken, would have seriously injured them.

However, Stephan was now free to begin his new work the next day, when all arrangements were made, and he was introduced as an apprentice to his new master, Heinrich Brand.

PART II.

Stephan had been with the violin-maker about six weeks, when one day the little Gretchen, his master's daughter, rushed in to tell them the cows were coming down from the Alp.

It is the custom in the Bavarian Tyrol to send the cows to small pastures high up among the mountains where the grass is green and plentiful, being watered by the dews and mists, and less exposed to the scorching sun. Here the cows remain all the summer under the care of two or three men, called "senner," or women, called "sennerinnen," who are always busily engaged making butter and cheese, and rarely come down to the valley, even for a day, till the season is over, when, collecting their tubs, milk-pans, and other dairy utensils, they descend the mountain with great rejoicings and consider the day a festival.

This return is an event of importance in every village. Brand, like his neighbors, hastened out with his little daughter, and told Stephan to follow them. The gay procession wound slowly along the main road, accompanied by a band of music playing a cheerful Tyrolese air. The cows came trooping along, decorated with garlands of wild flowers, preceded by peasants in their gayest costumes, carrying blue and white flags. The "sennerinnen" wore their brightest neckerchiefs and gowns, and seemed quite rejoiced to be down among their friends again.

Stephan joined his mother in the crowd, and they were in the full enjoyment of the scene when he suddenly exclaimed: "See, mother, there's the lost goat!" and sure enough there it was, limping along by the side of a "sennerin." One leg was evidently broken or severely injured, but otherwise the little animal looked well and fat.



Old Bridgetta had likewise seen it, and the three hastened to question the “sennerin,” who seemed very glad to find the owner, and told them it had been brought to the Alp by a peasant, who gave her a florin to take care of it and bring it down to the village as soon as she could. He did not tell her where he had found it, or indeed any particulars, so she supposed the poor little thing had fallen over some precipice and broken its leg, which was, however, nearly well.

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[Illustration: *Stephan shows the baron's letter to Gretchen.* [See page 775.]]

"Goats don't often fall in that way,—stones are much more likely to have caused the mischief," said Bridgetta, with a meaning look at Stephan, which was, however, only noticed by his mother, who replied:

"Well, Bridgetta, if you still think so badly of my boy, you can keep the money as a recompense for the damage done to your goat, though I am quite convinced he has had nothing to do with it. Some day we shall hear the truth of the whole affair, and of that I make no doubt."

"I don't want your money," said the old woman, testily, "and shall return it as soon as I have sold the other goat;"—whereupon, she took the leading-string from the "sennerin" and hobbled off with her new-found property, apparently as little pleased as possible.

The next day, the five florins were sent back, and then Stephan told his mother, for the first time, how he had promised to return the money if he ever found the goat again. This now seemed impossible, for he knew neither the name nor address of the gentleman. The money was, therefore, put away safely, and the savings of a few months soon made up the original sum of six florins, but still nothing could be heard of the giver.

Time wore on, and the boy was rapidly becoming an expert workman. He had regularly swept the warehouse for three years, then finding he could earn more by violin-making during the time so occupied, he resigned in favor of a boy as poor as he had been. Brand had pronounced him quite worthy of regular work, having often tested his ability by leaving to him the most difficult parts of the instruments. He had made himself a zither, and could play all those national airs so peculiarly the property of the mountaineers, and which are so suited to the plaintive sweetness of that instrument.

Before Stephan was eighteen, his fame as a zither-player had spread far and wide; no marriage, or festival of any kind, was complete without his well-looking, good-humored face.

One day, Stephan was putting away his tools when he was sent for by a nobleman, who had stopped overnight at the village, and he soon came back with the news the Baron Liszt had engaged him to act as guide to the Krotten Kopf mountain the next day, and Brand was also wanted to help to carry the wraps and needful provisions.

Early in the morning the party started. The Baroness accompanied her husband, and there were one or two gentlemen with their wives. Stephan and Brand, laden with shawls, umbrellas, and knapsacks, then led the way with the slow, steady pace always adopted by the mountaineers, who know that speed avails nothing when great heights have to be climbed, as it cannot possibly be kept up, and only exhausts the strength at

the onset. After climbing two hours, a turn in a very steep portion of the path brought them suddenly

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upon a green plateau, walled in, as it were, by mountain peaks, which looked of no particular height till the ascent began. Though the sun had scarcely set, yet, at such an elevation, the air was more than chilly, and as the Baroness put on a warm shawl she said, one could easily account for the fresh looks of the “sennerinnen,” who spend the intensely hot months in so cool and healthful an atmosphere; for the Alps are never scorched and dried up as elsewhere during the summer. The Esterberg Alp, as it is called, consists of two large tracts of rich meadow, green and fresh as in our own fertile land, with a border of underwood straggling some distance up the mountain, and whence at midday issue the clear sounds of the musical cow-bells, the only signs of life in that wild, solitary spot.

They soon came in sight of a long low house, one-half of which was devoted to the cows and the hay. The earth around was trodden down and bare; a few flowers grew against the house-wall, and some milk-pans were ranged along it to dry. The door was opened by a wild-looking man devoid of shoes and coat; his long, shaggy hair looked as if it had never experienced the kindly influence of a comb or brush. He had evidently been roused from a heavy sleep, but soon understanding that they wished to spend the night in the hut, he told them, in a most singular German dialect, that the “oberschweizer,” or chief, was away, but that he alone could arrange all that was needful; for he was accustomed to attend to the visitors who came there in the warm weather.

The “senner” prepared the meal, consisting of a large bowl full of a dark chopped pancake called “schmarren,” often the only food of the cowherds for weeks together.

The next consideration was a resting-place. They had been warned that they would get nothing but hay, so it was no surprise when the “senner” led the ladies out to one side of the house, where, mounting a short ladder, he placed his lantern in the center of a large hay-loft, one side of which was open to the free air of heaven, which blew in, fresh and cool, as also it did from numerous chinks in the roof, through which the clear moonbeams shone, rendering the lantern a matter of form. The man proceeded to arrange the hay in heaps, so that each person could recline or sit, as most conducive to rest. Only those accustomed (as, indeed, most mountain climbers in Bavaria are) to spending a night half-buried in hay, can sleep. The hours of the night were spent by the ladies in laughing at one another and discussing the absurdity of spending a night ranged against the sides of a hay-loft, with heads tied up in handkerchiefs, like wounded soldiers in a hospital.

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Meantime, the gentlemen sat outside enjoying their cigars by moonlight, and relating their hunting adventures. "Ah," said the Baron, after one of the stories, "that reminds me of a northern friend of mine who was staying with us some years ago. He was very short-sighted, but passionately fond of a hunt, so we made up several parties, at which he appeared in spectacles, to the great amusement of us all. He took our jokes in good part, and enjoyed himself without doing any mischief for a time. One unlucky day, however, I missed our path, and had to descend the mountain in search of some landmark from which to start afresh. Suddenly, with the exclamation: 'Hush! a chamois!' he leveled his rifle, and before I could say one word he had shot—a goat! He was too much vexed to laugh, so I had it all to myself, and it was some minutes before I could assist him to raise the little animal, whose leg was broken. The flock was not far off, and the herd-boy was evidently searching the wood, having heard the shot. Now it never would have done to let such an unsportsmanlike event get wind, so we carried the goat to some distance, when, meeting a peasant, we paid him to leave it at a hut on a neighboring Alp, and request it should be taken down to the valley at the first opportunity. I never mentioned the subject to any one but my brother Heinrich. Some time after, he was hunting in the same locality, and came upon a lad who was crying, with a regular mountain voice, for the loss of that very goat, for which it seemed his mother had to pay. I must confess, the consequence of kidnapping the animal for a time had never struck me, and I was therefore glad to know that my brother had given the lad money enough to pay all damages. But come, it is time we tried our hay-berths, for if we can't sleep we can rest."

Stephan, who had been eagerly listening, exclaimed: "Oh, please sir, wait a moment. I was that boy to whom the gentleman gave the money, and he told me he should expect it returned if I ever found the goat. Some time afterward I did find it, and I have always carried the money sewn into my coat-pocket in case I should meet the gentleman again when I am away from home, but I never did so; perhaps, sir, you will be kind enough to give it to him," he added, beginning to unfasten the little packet from the lining of his side-pocket.

Turning to Brand, the Baron asked if he knew anything of this romantic goat story.

"Yes, indeed, sir, and so does every one in the village, for the boy got into trouble with the neighbors, who all thought he had been throwing stones at the animal, and they even turned him out of his situation, but, as luck would have it, something else was offered the same day, so that it did not hurt him or his mother either."

"It was the best thing that ever happened to me. I had always wished to make violins and zithers, and owing to that accident I got my wish," said Stephan, in reply to the Baron's expressions of regret.

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"As to the money," said the Baron, "we will make an exchange; you shall have my purse, which contains about ten florins, and I will take your little bag, just as it is, as a proof of Bavarian honesty and honor. We shall see more of one another," he added; "meantime, don't forget that we must be off by four in the morning. Good-night!"

The moon still shone when the travelers commenced their mountain journey. Slowly they wound their way round the ever-ascending path. About half-way up they came to a small rocky plain, where some young cattle were grazing. Their alarmed wild movements proved how rarely human beings passed their high-walled prison. From this point their climbing became a real labor, but before long they arrived at the summit, where, amidst much laughter and want of breath, they all threw themselves on the ground and gave vent to their satisfaction at being nearly 7,000 feet above the sea, and to their admiration of the glorious view.

But their stay on the summit was short, as they wished to make the descent of the mountain in one day. They did not reach Partenkirchen till nearly midnight, nor Mittenwald till the following day, where, of course, their adventures were related, and Stephan's story was soon the talk of the village. He became a perfect hero for the time, and many a neighbor shook hands and hoped he would forgive the doubt cast upon his word, although years had since passed and the goat of contention had been gathered to its fathers.

Some time after, a letter came to the Post Inn for Stephan, causing much curiosity in the village, as it was the first he had ever received. It came from the Baron, who offered him an excellent situation on his estate, under the forester, who, being childless and old, would not only instruct Stephan in his duties, but would soon leave the management in a great measure to him; moreover, he himself might hope to succeed as Forester, if he found the life suited to his taste. A week was given him for consideration. He did not at all like the idea of leaving his native place, to which he was attached with that intensity of feeling said to be peculiar to the mountaineers; but so good an offer was not to be refused, especially as Herr Dahn and Brand both approved of his going. So the letter was written to tell the Baron he would come in a few weeks, as requested. Meantime his old master gave him an order for a zither of the best quality, to be made of handsome wood, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and as the price was of no consequence, he was to make it quite a specimen instrument, to show how well he could work. Stephan was very much pleased with the commission, and when, at the end of three weeks, it was finished, his delight was great when Herr Dahn pronounced it "One of the very best he had ever had in his warehouse, and quite fit for the king." The day came for Stephan's departure, but it was not a sad one, as everything was arranged for him to return in three months to fetch Gretchen, his old master's daughter, who had promised to marry him, and Stephan's mother was to live with them.

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Stephan's letters were most satisfactory. He liked the new life and the old Forester, and was sure Gretchen would admire the pretty houses, the large balcony, along the rails of which he was growing some of the beautiful dark carnations she was so fond of, and he knew she would rejoice to see the glowing mountain-peaks rising from the dark pine woods at sunset.

The wedding-day arrived at last, and in the course of the second evening,—for the festivities lasted two days,—some strangers staying in the village came up to see the dancing, which took place in a very large room in the inn. Among them was the Baron Liszt, who, after dancing the last waltz with Gretchen, requested the visitors would remain a few minutes, as he had something to show them.

A box was then brought in by the hostess, dressed in her best costume and fur cap. She placed it with much solemnity before the Baron, who lifted the lid, took out the beautiful zither that Stephan had made with such care, and handing it to the pretty, blushing Gretchen, he said he could offer her nothing better as a wedding gift than this specimen of her husband's talent, which he hoped she would always keep and use as a token of his respect and admiration for Bavarian honesty and truth. Then, shaking hands with them both, he took leave amidst loud acclamations and waving of hats; and so ended the wedding of Stephan and Gretchen.

TROUBLES IN HIGH LIFE.

By Mrs. J. G. Burnett.

[Illustration]

Two miniature mothers at play on the floor
Their wearisome cares were debating,
How Dora and Arabelle, children no more,
Were twice as much trouble as ever before,
And the causes each had her own cares to deplore
Were, really, well worth my relating.

Said one little mother: "You really don't know
What a burden my life is with Bella!
Her stragvagrant habits I hope she'll outgrow.
She buys her kid gloves by the dozen, you know,
Sits for *cartes de visites* every fortnight or so,
And don't do a thing that I tell her!"

Those stylish young ladies (the dollies, you know)
Had complexions soft, pearly and waxen,



With arms, neck and forehead, as white as the snow,
Golden hair sweeping down to the waist and below,
Eyes blue as the sky, cheeks with youth's ruddy glow,—
Of a beauty pure Grecian and Saxon.

"Indeed!" said the other, "that's sad to be sure;
But, ah," with a sigh, "no one guesses
The cares and anxieties mothers endure.
For though Dora appears so sedate and demure,
She spends all the money that I can secure
On her cloaks and her bonnets and dresses."

Then followed such prattle of fashion and style
I smiled as I listened and wondered,
And I thought, had I tried to repeat it erewhile,
How these fair little Israelites, without guile,
Would mock at my lack of their knowledge, and smile
At the way I had stumbled and blundered.

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And I thought, too, when each youthful mother had conned
Her startling and touching narration,
Of the dolls of which I in my childhood was fond,
How with Dora and Arabelle they'd correspond,
And how far dolls and children to-day are beyond
Those we had in the last generation!

A TALE OF MANY TAILS.

By Katharine B. Foot.

Carry stood in the door-way with her dolly on one arm and her kitten hanging over the other. Kitty didn't look comfortable, but she bore up bravely, only once in a while giving a plaintive mew. Carry gazed into the bright white sunshine.

"It's melting hot," she said. "I guess, grandma, I'll take my doll and Friskarina out to the wash-house and have a party."

"Well," said grandma, looking over her spectacles, "I've no objection; only there's a black cloud coming up, and you may get caught out there in a thunder storm."

"If I do, can Jake come for me with an umbrella, and can I take off my shoes and stockings and come home barefoot?"

"Yes; I don't believe it would hurt you."

"Then I'll go;" and Carry picked up a box with a little tea-set in it, and started off, saying: "Do you believe it'll rain cats and dogs and pitchforks, grandma? That's what Jake says."

"No, my dear. You'd better ask him if he ever saw such a rain."

"So I will," and away went Carry through the sunshine. And she said to herself: "Wouldn't it be funny if it did rain so? I guess grandma wouldn't like it much if cats rained down, 'cause she says five cats are too many now."

The tea-party on an old chair without a back wasn't much of an affair, after all; for, although the doll—Miss Rose de Lorme—was propped up against a starch-box more than half a dozen times, she would keep on sliding feet first until she came down flat on her back and thumped her head. The kitten went to sleep in the corner just as Carry put her down.

“Oh, dear!” sighed the little girl. “It’s so lonely with cats and dolls and things that can’t talk!” And then she sat down in a corner by the old wash-boiler, where she could see out of the open door, and took Kitty into her lap.

The great fluffy clouds banked up higher and higher, and from being white and dazzling they began to grow black at the edges; and the black masses rolled up and up, until the sun was all hidden and the sky was dark. Then came the rain, gently at first, in drops far apart, but soon it fell faster and faster, and the little leaves on the currant-bushes jumped up and down and seemed to enjoy the shower-bath. To Carry’s great delight, little streams began to creep over the path, now in separate little trickles, and presently with sudden little darts into one another, as they came to uneven places in the walk. She watched it all with great wide eyes, and felt quiet and cool just to smell the damp earth.

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But soon the drops grew bigger, and all at once they weren't drops of rain at all!

"Good gracious!" cried Carry. "Kittens,—little blind kittens! It'll rain dogs next, I suppose!"

That's exactly what did happen; for down came puppies along with the kittens. They squirmed and mewed and hissed and yelped, and all the time kept growing bigger and bigger. Some came head first pawing the air as they fell; some tail first, looking scared to death; but most miserable of all were those that came down tumbling over and over. It made them so dizzy to come down in that whirligig fashion, that they staggered about when they tried to stand. Carry felt truly sorry for them, and yet she couldn't help laughing. And the cats and dogs who had come first laughed too.

"Dear me! That's sort of funny, isn't it?" she thought; but the surprise didn't last long, for, in the midst of a tremendous shower, down came two most remarkable figures, and, with them, what at first sight appeared to be several long sticks; but, on looking again, Carry saw these were pitchforks!

"Oh!" said she, "I thought they'd come."

Then she stared for a minute at the two odd figures, and cried: "Why! it's Mother Hubbard's dog and Puss in Boots!" And sure enough, so it was!

Puss had a blue velvet cloak on his shoulders, large boots, and a velvet cap with a long plume. He turned toward Carry and made her a low bow, gracefully doffing his hat.

"You are right, Mademoiselle," said he. "I am that renowned personage, and your humble servant. Permit me to add, Mademoiselle, that my eyes have not beheld a fairer damsel than they now rest upon, since last I saw my beloved mistress, the charming Marquise de Carabas."

Mother Hubbard's dog was dressed in a suit of fine old-fashioned clothes, and held tightly between his teeth a very short stemmed pipe from which he puffed great clouds of smoke.

He came up beside Puss, and said, without removing his pipe: "Stuff and nonsense! We don't talk so stupidly in our village. Don't waste your time in silly yarns, but let's settle this fight at once."

Puss turned away and, addressing Carry, said:

"Mademoiselle, this plebeian does not understand the language of court circles, to which I have been used for many years. Mademoiselle will pardon his ignorance." And here Puss rolled up his eyes and placed his hand upon his heart and bowed so low that he was actually standing on his head before he had finished. But he turned a graceful

somersault and came right side up again in half a second, without looking at all disturbed.

“Sir!” said the dog, with dignity, “this matter should be settled at once, or the sun will be out, and then——” he stopped short and winked at Puss in a very knowing manner.

“Ah! that is true,” replied the cat, “I had forgotten. Shall it be a general or a single combat?”

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"Well," said the dog, gravely, sitting down on a large flower-pot nearby, "I think, as we have been wanting to fight this out for some time,—indeed, I may say, almost since time began,—we had better allow every one to have a tooth and a claw in it. Then, perhaps, this matter will be settled forever."

"Quite my opinion," responded Puss. "But first the ladies, infants, and weak and wounded, must be removed from the field."

"All right!" said the dog. "But look here. You first stop that, will you?" and he pointed to a fine gray cat that was rubbing herself against a large, comfortable-looking Newfoundland.

"Immediately," said Puss, and he bawled in a loud voice: "There is to be no friendly intercourse between soldiers of the two armies. It is in the highest degree detrimental to military discipline."

And the dog shouted: "Stop being pleasant to each other, right off. I can't have it. You always have fought, and you've got to fight now."

The big Newfoundland at once made a snap at the gray cat, and she put up her back, spit and clawed at him, and ran off as fast as she could.

Then Puss waved his handkerchief, as a flag of truce, and said in a loud voice, "There will be a cessation of hostilities for five minutes, until the non-combatants are removed."

The able-bodied cats arranged themselves in rows, and the dogs did the same. The two generals stepped grandly in front of the lines, and the battle seemed about to begin, when a young and frisky cat, at the far end of the front rank, took advantage of a dog opposite who had turned his head, and jumped upon his back, clawing him in so cruel a way that he howled dreadfully.

At this, Mother Hubbard's dog advanced angrily, and taking the cat by the nape of the neck, threw her among the cat army, saying: "The trumpet hasn't sounded, and we haven't begun yet. That was a real sneaky trick, just like a cat."

"Sir!" cried Puss in Boots, loftily, "Do you mean to insinuate that I am a sneak?"

"I didn't say so precisely," returned the dog. "But if you want me to, I will." Then he added, in a taunting tone, "You are a sneak!"

Puss trembled with rage at this insult, and drew the little sword he wore at his side.

"Prove it!" he cried, brandishing his blade.

“Didn’t you sneak yourself and your master into a castle and fine clothes that you had no right to?”

“Didn’t you pretend to be dead once and frighten your poor mistress nearly out of her wits? Take *that*, sir!” and he made a furious cut at him.

But the dog dodged the weapon, and, with a cutlass suddenly pulled from behind him, made a fierce blow at the cat. Puss leaped nimbly away, with a scream of triumph and defiance. Then they set to with all their skill and hate and cunning.

Presently Puss fell, apparently dead, and Sir John Hubbard, the victor, was leaning on his cutlass, looking sorry, when suddenly Puss jumped up, grasped his sword and made a savage lunge at the dog. “That was only one of *my* lives!” he screamed. “I have eight left. Cats have nine lives, but you—you miserable dog—have only one.”

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Then they fought worse than ever, and neither seemed willing to yield.

[Illustration: *Raining cats and dogs.*]

But the fight ended in a strange way. Just as the dog again laid Puss low, a tremendous shower of pitchforks fell, beating on everything with dreadful effect. Sir John saved himself by getting under a tree, but poor Puss couldn't move to a shelter, and his remaining seven lives were being rapidly knocked out of him, when the brave dog rushed out into the storm and proved himself a generous foe by shielding Puss from the pitchforks with his own body.

"You are a dear good dog!" cried Carry. "I always loved you the best!" But even as she was speaking there came a terrific clap of thunder, and her own cat, who had been trembling with fear, sprang to her shoulder and buried her claws there and as Carry shrieked with fright and pain, Jake was holding her in his arms.

"Were you frightened, out here all alone?" said he. "I was busy and I didn't think you'd mind the rain; but when the thunder began I came out quick."

"Rain?" said Carry, "I don't mind rain, Jake; but I don't like it to rain cats and dogs when they fight. Why, where are they?" She lifted her face from Jake's shoulder, and looked about her amazed, for not a cat was to be seen nor a dog, but only the steady rain, pouring straight down.

"Cats and dogs!" said Jake, laughing.

"And pitchforks, too, Jake,—yes, really!"

"Well," said Jake; "if you aint the most *curious* little gal!"

But Carry don't think she is half as curious as other people are who wont believe what she saw with her own eyes.

[Illustration: *We came,—we saw,*]

[Illustration: *We left.*]

UNDER THE LILACS.

By Louisa M. Alcott.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Somebody comes.

Bab and Betty had been playing in the avenue all the afternoon, several weeks later, but as the shadows began to lengthen both agreed to sit upon the gate and rest while waiting for Ben, who had gone nutting with a party of boys. When they played house, Bab was always the father, and went hunting or fishing with great energy and success, bringing home all sorts of game, from elephants and crocodiles to humming-birds and minnows. Betty was the mother, and a most notable little housewife, always mixing up imaginary delicacies with sand and dirt in old pans and broken china, which she baked in an oven of her own construction.

Both had worked hard that day, and were glad to retire to their favorite lounging-place, where Bab was happy trying to walk across the wide top bar without falling off, and Betty enjoyed slow, luxurious swings while her sister was recovering from her tumbles. On this occasion, having indulged their respective tastes, they paused for a brief interval of conversation, sitting side by side on the gate like a pair of plump gray chickens gone to roost.

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"Don't you hope Ben will get his bag full? We shall have such fun eating nuts evenings," observed Bab, wrapping her arms in her apron, for it was October now, and the air was growing keen.

"Yes, and Ma says we may boil some in our little kettles. Ben promised we should have half," answered Betty, still intent on her cookery.

"I shall save some of mine for Thorny."

"I shall keep lots of mine for Miss Celia."

"Doesn't it seem more than two weeks since she went away?"

"I wonder what she'll bring us."

Before Bab could conjecture, the sound of a step and a familiar whistle made both look expectantly toward the turn in the road, all ready to cry out with one voice, "How many have you got?" Neither spoke a word, however, for the figure which presently appeared was not Ben, but a stranger,—a man who stopped whistling, and came slowly on, dusting his shoes in the way-side grass, and brushing the sleeves of his shabby velveteen coat as if anxious to freshen himself up a bit.

"It's a tramp, let's run away," whispered Betty, after a hasty look.

"I aint afraid," and Bab was about to assume her boldest look when a sneeze spoiled it, and made her clutch the gate to hold on.

At that unexpected sound the man looked up, showing a thin, dark face, with a pair of sharp, black eyes, which surveyed the little girls so steadily that Betty quaked, and Bab began to wish she had at least jumped down inside the gate.

"How are you?" said the man with a good-natured nod and smile, as if to re-assure the round-eyed children staring at him.

"Pretty well, thank you, sir," responded Bab, politely nodding back at him.

"Folks at home?" asked the man, looking over their heads toward the house.

"Only Ma; all the rest are gone to be married."

"That sounds lively. At the other place all the folks had gone to a funeral," and the man laughed as he glanced at the big house on the hill.

"Why, do you know the Squire?" exclaimed Bab, much surprised and re-assured.

"Come on purpose to see him. Just strolling round till he gets back," with an impatient sort of sigh.

"Betty thought you was a tramp, but I wasn't afraid. I like tramps ever since Ben came," explained Bab, with her usual candor.

"Who's Ben?" and the man came nearer so quickly that Betty nearly fell backward.

"Don't you be scared, Sissy. I like little girls, so you set easy and tell me about Ben," he added, in a persuasive tone, as he leaned on the gate, so near that both could see what a friendly face he had in spite of its eager, anxious look.

"Ben is Miss Celia's boy. We found him almost starved in the coach-house, and he's been living near here ever since," answered Bab, comprehensively.

"Tell me all about it. I like tramps too," and the man looked as if he did, very much, as Bab told the little story in a few childish words that were better than a much more elegant account.

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"You were very good to the little feller," was all the man said when she ended her somewhat confused tale, in which she had jumbled the old coach and Miss Celia, dinner-pails and nutting, Sancho and circuses.

"Course we were! He's a nice boy and we are fond of him, and he likes us," said Bab, heartily.

"Specially me," put in Betty, quite at ease now, for the black eyes had softened wonderfully, and the brown face was smiling all over.

"Don't wonder a mite. You are the nicest pair of little girls I've seen this long time," and the man put a hand on either side of them, as if he wanted to hug the chubby children. But he didn't do it; he merely rubbed his hands and stood there asking questions till the two chatter-boxes had told him everything there was to tell, in the most confiding manner, for he very soon ceased to seem like a stranger, and looked so familiar that Bab, growing inquisitive in her turn, suddenly said:

"Haven't you ever been here before? It seems as if I'd seen you."

"Never in my life. Guess you've seen somebody that looks like me," and the black eyes twinkled for a minute as they looked into the puzzled little faces before him. Then he said, soberly:

"I'm looking round for a likely boy; don't you think this Ben would suit me? I want just such a lively sort of chap."

"Are you a circus man?" asked Bab, quickly.

"Well, no, not now. I'm in better business."

"I'm glad of it—we don't approve of 'em; but I do think they're splendid!"

Bab began by gravely quoting Miss Celia, and ended with an irrepressible burst of admiration which contrasted drolly with her first remark.

Betty added anxiously, "We can't let Ben go, any way. I know he wouldn't want to, and Miss Celia would feel bad. Please don't ask him."

"He can do as he likes, I suppose. He hasn't got any folks of his own, has he?"

"No, his father died in California, and Ben felt so bad he cried, and we were real sorry, and gave him a piece of Ma, 'cause he was so lonesome," answered Betty, in her tender little voice, with a pleading look which made the man stroke her smooth cheek and say, quite softly:

“Bless your heart for that! I wont take him away, child, or do a thing to trouble anybody that’s been good to him.”

“He’s coming now. I hear Sanch barking at the squirrels!” cried Bab, standing up to get a good look down the road.

The man turned quickly, and Betty saw that he breathed fast as he watched the spot where the low sunshine lay warmly on the red maple at the corner. Into this glow came unconscious Ben, whistling “Rory O’Moore,” loud and clear, as he trudged along with a heavy bag of nuts over his shoulder and the light full on his contented face. Sancho trotted before and saw the stranger first, for the sun in Ben’s eyes dazzled him. Since his sad loss Sancho cherished a strong dislike to tramps, and now he paused to growl and show his teeth, evidently intending to warn this one off the premises.

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"He wont hurt you——" began Bab, encouragingly; but before she could add a chiding word to the dog, Sanch gave an excited howl, and flew at the man's throat as if about to throttle him.

Betty screamed, and Bab was about to go to the rescue when both perceived that the dog was licking the stranger's face in an ecstasy of joy, and heard the man say as he hugged the curly beast:

"Good old Sanch! I knew he wouldn't forget master, and he doesn't."

"What's the matter?" called Ben, coming up briskly, with a strong grip of his stout stick.

There was no need of any answer, for, as he came into the shadow, he saw the man, and stood looking at him as if he were a ghost.

"It's father, Benny; don't you know me?" asked the man, with an odd sort of choke in his voice as he thrust the dog away, and held out both hands to the boy.

Down dropped the nuts, and crying, "Oh, Daddy, Daddy!" Ben cast himself into the arms of the shabby velveteen coat, while poor Sanch tore round them in distracted circles, barking wildly, as if that was the only way in which he could vent his rapture.

What happened next, Bab and Betty never stopped to see, but, dropping from their roost, they went flying home like startled Chicken Littles with the astounding news that "Ben's father has come alive, and Sancho knew him right away!"

Mrs. Moss had just got her cleaning done up, and was resting a minute before setting the table, but she flew out of her old rocking-chair when the excited children told the wonderful tale, exclaiming as they ended:

"Where is he? Go bring him here. I declare it fairly takes my breath away!"

Before Bab could obey, or her mother compose herself, Sancho bounced in and spun round like an insane top, trying to stand on his head, walk upright, waltz and bark all at once, for the good old fellow had so lost his head that he forgot the loss of his tail.

"They are coming! they are coming! See, Ma, what a nice man he is," said Bab, hopping about on one foot as she watched the slowly approaching pair.

"My patience, don't they look alike! I should know he was Ben's Pa anywhere!" said Mrs. Moss, running to the door in a hurry.

They certainly did resemble one another, and it was almost comical to see the same curve in the legs, the same wide-awake style of wearing the hat, the same sparkle of the eye, good-natured smile and agile motion of every limb. Old Ben carried the bag in

one hand while young Ben held the other fast, looking a little shame-faced at his own emotion now, for there were marks of tears on his cheeks, but too glad to repress the delight he felt that he had really found Daddy this side heaven.

Mrs. Moss unconsciously made a pretty little picture of herself as she stood at the door with her honest face shining and both hands out, saying in a hearty tone, which was a welcome in itself:

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"I'm *real* glad to see you safe and well, Mr. Brown! Come right in and make yourself to home. I guess there isn't a happier boy living than Ben is to-night."

"And I *know* there isn't a gratefuler man living than I am for your kindness to my poor forsaken little feller," answered Mr. Brown, dropping both his burdens to give the comely woman's hands a hard shake.

"Now don't say a word about it, but sit down and rest, and we'll have tea in less 'n no time. Ben must be tired and hungry, though he's so happy I don't believe he knows it," laughed Mrs. Moss, bustling away to hide the tears in her eyes, anxious to make things sociable and easy all round.

With this end in view she set forth her best china, and covered the table with food enough for a dozen, thanking her stars that it was baking day, and everything had turned out well. Ben and his father sat talking by the window till they were bidden to "draw up and help themselves" with such hospitable warmth that everything had an extra relish to the hungry pair.

Ben paused occasionally to stroke the rusty coat-sleeve with bread-and-buttery fingers to convince himself that "Daddy" had really come, and his father disposed of various inconvenient emotions by eating as if food was unknown in California. Mrs. Moss beamed on every one from behind the big tea-pot like a mild full moon, while Bab and Betty kept interrupting one another in their eagerness to tell something new about Ben and how Sanch lost his tail.

"Now you let Mr. Brown talk a little; we all want to hear how he 'came alive,' as you call it," said Mrs. Moss, as they drew round the fire in the "settin'-room," leaving the tea-things to take care of themselves.

It was not a long story, but a very interesting one to this circle of listeners: all about the wild life on the plains, trading for mustangs, the terrible blow that nearly killed Ben, senior, the long months of unconsciousness in the California hospital, the slow recovery, the journey back, Mr. Smithers's tale of the boy's disappearance, and then the anxious trip to find out from Squire Allen where he now was.

"I asked the hospital folks to write and tell you as soon as I knew whether I was on my head or my heels, and they promised; but they didn't; so I came off the minute I could, and worked my way back, expecting to find you at the old place. I was afraid you'd have worn out your welcome here and gone off again, for you are as fond of traveling as your father."

[Illustration: *Mrs. Moss welcomes Ben's father.*]

“I wanted to, sometimes, but the folks here were so dreadful good to me I *couldn't*,” confessed Ben, secretly surprised to find that the prospect of going off with Daddy even cost him a pang of regret, for the boy had taken root in the friendly soil, and was no longer a wandering thistle-down, tossed about by every wind that blew.

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"I know what I owe 'em, and you and me will work out that debt before we die, or our name isn't B.B.," said Mr. Brown, with an emphatic slap on his knee, which Ben imitated half unconsciously as he exclaimed heartily:

"That's so!" adding, more quietly, "What are you going to do now? Go back to Smithers and the old work?"

"Not likely, after the way he treated you, Sonny. I've had it out with him, and he won't want to see *me* again in a hurry," answered Mr. Brown, with a sudden kindling of the eye that reminded Bab of Ben's face when he shook her after losing Sancho.

"There's more circuses than his in the world; but I'll have to limber out ever so much before I'm good for much in that line," said the boy, stretching his stout arms and legs with a curious mixture of satisfaction and regret.

"You've been living in clover and got fat, you rascal," and his father gave him a poke here and there, as Mr. Squeers did the plump Wackford, when displaying him as a specimen of the fine diet at Do-the-boys Hall. "Don't believe I could put you up now if I tried, for I haven't got my strength back yet, and we are both out of practice. It's just as well, for I've about made up my mind to quit the business and settle down somewhere for a spell, if I can get anything to do," continued the rider, folding his arms and gazing thoughtfully into the fire.

"I shouldn't wonder a mite if you could right here, for Mr. Towne has a great boarding-stable over yonder, and he's always wanting men," said Mrs. Moss, eagerly, for she dreaded to have Ben go, and no one could forbid it if his father chose to take him away.

"That sounds likely. Thanky, ma'am. I'll look up the concern and try my chance. Would you call it too great a come-down to have father an 'ostler after being first rider in the 'Great Golden Menagerie, Circus, and Colosseum,' hey Ben?" asked Mr. Brown, quoting the well-remembered show-bill with a laugh.

"No, I shouldn't; it's real jolly up there when the big barn is full and eighty horses have to be taken care of. I love to go and see 'em. Mr. Towne asked me to come and be stable-boy when I rode the kicking gray the rest were afraid of. I hankered to go, but Miss Celia had just got my new books, and I knew she'd feel bad if I gave up going to school. Now I'm glad I didn't, for I get on first rate and like it."

"You done right, boy, and I'm pleased with you. Don't you ever be ungrateful to them that befriended you, if you want to prosper. I'll tackle the stable business a Monday and see what's to be done. Now I ought to be walking, but I'll be round in the morning, ma'am, if you can spare Ben for a spell to-morrow. We'd like to have a good Sunday tramp and talk; wouldn't we, Sonny?" and Mr. Brown rose to go, with his hand on Ben's shoulder, as if loth to leave him even for the night.

Mrs. Moss saw the longing in his face, and forgetting that he was an utter stranger, spoke right out of her hospitable heart.

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"It is a long piece to the tavern, and my little back bed-room is always ready. It wont make a mite of trouble if you don't mind a plain place, and you are heartily welcome."

Mr. Brown looked pleased, but hesitated to accept any further favor from the good soul who had already done so much for him and his. Ben gave him no time to speak, however, for running to a door he flung it open and beckoned, saying, eagerly:

"Do stay, father; it will be so nice to have you. This is a tip-top room; I slept here the night I came, and that bed was just splendid after bare ground for a fortnight."

"I'll stop, and as I'm pretty well done up, I guess we may as well turn in now," answered the new guest; then, as if the memory of that homeless little lad so kindly cherished made his heart overflow in spite of him, Mr. Brown paused at the door to say hastily, with his hands on Bab and Betty's heads, as if his promise was a very earnest one:

"I don't forget, ma'am, and these children shall never want a friend while Ben Brown's alive;" then he shut the door so quickly that the other Ben's prompt "Hear, hear!" was cut short in the middle.

"I s'pose he means that we shall have a piece of Ben's father, because we gave Ben a piece of our mother," said Betty, softly.

"Of course he does, and it's all fair," answered Bab, decidedly. "Isn't he a nice man, Ma?"

"Go to bed, children," was all the answer she got; but when they were gone, Mrs. Moss, as she washed up her dishes, more than once glanced at a certain nail where a man's hat had not hung for five years, and thought with a sigh what a natural, protecting air that slouched felt had.

If one wedding were not quite enough for a child's story, we might here hint what no one dreamed of then, that before the year came round again Ben had found a mother, Bab and Betty a father, and Mr. Brown's hat was quite at home behind the kitchen door. But, on the whole, it is best not to say a word about it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The great gate is opened.

The Browns were up and out so early next morning that Bab and Betty were sure they had run away in the night. But on looking for them, they were discovered in the coach-house criticising Lita, both with their hands in their pockets, both chewing straws, and looking as much alike as a big elephant and a small one.

“That’s as pretty a little span as I’ve seen for a long time,” said the elder Ben, as the children came trotting down the path hand in hand, with the four blue bows at the ends of their braids bobbing briskly up and down.

“The nigh one is my favorite, but the off one is the best goer, though she’s dreadfully hard bitted,” answered Ben the younger, with such a comical assumption of a jockey’s important air that his father laughed as he said in an undertone:

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"Come, boy, we must drop the old slang since we've given up the old business. These good folks are making a gentleman of you, and I won't be the one to spoil their work. Hold on, my dears, and I'll show you how they say good-morning in California," he added, beckoning to the little girls, who now came up rosy and smiling.

"Breakfast is ready, sir," said Betty, looking much relieved to find them.

"We thought you'd run away from us," explained Bab, as both put out their hands to shake those extended to them.

"That would be a mean trick. But I'm going to run away *with* you," and Mr. Brown whisked a little girl to either shoulder before they knew what had happened, while Ben, remembering the day, with difficulty restrained himself from turning a series of triumphant somersaults before them all the way to the door, where Mrs. Moss stood waiting for them.

After breakfast, Ben disappeared for a short time, and returned in his Sunday suit, looking so neat and fresh that his father surveyed him with surprise and pride as he came in full of boyish satisfaction in his trim array.

"Here's a smart young chap! Did you take all that trouble just to go to walk with old Daddy?" asked Mr. Brown, stroking the smooth head, for they were alone just then, Mrs. Moss and the children being upstairs preparing for church.

"I thought maybe you'd like to go to meeting first," answered Ben, looking up at him with such a happy face that it was hard to refuse anything.

"I'm too shabby, Sonny, else I'd go in a minute to please you."

"Miss Celia said God didn't mind poor clothes, and she took me when I looked worse than you do. I always go in the morning; she likes to have me," said Ben, turning his hat about as if not quite sure what he ought to do.

"Do you want to go?" asked his father in a tone of surprise.

"I want to please her, if you don't mind. We could have our tramp this afternoon."

"I haven't been to meeting since mother died, and it don't seem to come easy, though I know I ought to, seeing I'm alive and here," and Mr. Brown looked soberly out at the lovely autumn-world as if glad to be in it after his late danger and pain.

"Miss Celia said church was a good place to take our troubles, and to be thankful in. I went when I thought you were dead, and now I'd love to go when I've got my Daddy safe again."

No one saw him, so Ben could not resist giving his father a sudden hug, which was warmly returned as the man said earnestly:

"I'll go, and thank the Lord hearty for giving me back my boy better'n I left him!"

For a minute, nothing was heard but the loud tick of the old clock and a mournful whine from Sancho, shut up in the shed lest he should go to church without an invitation.

Then, as steps were heard on the stairs, Mr. Brown caught up his hat, saying hastily:

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"I ain't fit to go with them, you tell 'em, and I'll slip into a back seat after folks are in. I know the way." And, before Ben could reply, he was gone.

[Illustration: BEN AND HIS FATHER OPEN THE GREAT GATE.]

Nothing was seen of him along the way, but he saw the little party, and rejoiced again over his boy, changed so greatly for the better; for Ben was the one thing which had kept his heart soft through all the trials and temptations of a rough life.

"I promised Mary I'd do my best for the poor baby she had to leave, and I tried, but I guess a better friend than I am has been raised up for him when he needed her most. It wont hurt me to follow him in this road," thought Mr. Brown as he came out into the highway from his stroll "across lots," feeling that it would be good for him to stay in this quiet place for his own as well as for his son's sake.

The bell had done ringing when he reached the green, but a single boy sat on the steps and ran to meet him, saying with a reproachful look:

"I wasn't going to let you be alone and have folks think I was ashamed of my father. Come, Daddy, we'll sit together."

So Ben led his father straight to the Squire's pew, and sat beside him with a face so full of innocent pride and joy that people would have suspected the truth if he had not already told many of them. Mr. Brown, painfully conscious of his shabby coat, was rather "taken aback," as he expressed it, but the Squire's shake of the hand and Mrs. Allen's gracious nod enabled him to face the eyes of the interested congregation, the younger portion of which stared steadily at him all sermon time, in spite of paternal frowns and maternal tweakings in the rear.

But the crowning glory of the day came after church, when the Squire said to Ben, and Sam heard him:

"I've got a letter for you from Miss Celia. Come home with me and bring your father. I want to talk to him."

The boy proudly escorted his parent to the old carry-all, and tucking himself in behind with Mrs. Allen, had the satisfaction of seeing the slouched felt hat side by side with the Squire's Sunday beaver in front, as they drove off at such an unusually smart pace that, it was evident, Duke knew there was a critical eye upon him. The interest taken in the father was owing to the son at first, but, by the time the story was told, old Ben had won friends for himself, not only because of the misfortunes which he had evidently borne in a manly way, but because of his delight in the boy's improvement, and the desire he felt to turn his hand to any honest work, that he might keep Ben happy and contented in this good home.

“I’ll give you a line to Towne. Smithers spoke well of you, and your own ability will be the best recommendation,” said the Squire, as he parted from them at his door, having given Ben the letter.

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Miss Celia had been gone a fortnight, and every one was longing to have her back. The first week brought Ben a newspaper, with a crinkly line drawn round the “marriages” to attract attention to that spot, and one was marked by a black frame with a large hand pointing at it from the margin. Thorny sent that, but the next week came a parcel for Mrs. Moss, and in it was discovered a box of wedding-cake for every member of the family, including Sancho, who ate his at one gulp and chewed up the lace paper which covered it. This was the third week, and as if there could not be happiness enough crowded into it for Ben, the letter he read on his way home told him that his dear mistress was coming back on the following Saturday. One passage particularly pleased him:

“I want the great gate opened, so that the new master may go in that way. Will you see that it is done, and all made neat afterward. Ronda will give you the key, and you may have out all your flags if you like, for the old place cannot look too gay for this home-coming.”

Sunday though it was, Ben could not help waving the letter over his head as he ran in to tell Mrs. Moss the glad news, and begin at once to plan the welcome they would give Miss Celia, for he never called her anything else.

During their afternoon stroll in the mellow sunshine, Ben continued to talk of her, never tired of telling about his happy summer under her roof. And Mr. Brown was never weary of hearing, for every hour showed him more plainly what a lovely miracle her gentle words had wrought, and every hour increased his gratitude, his desire to return the kindness in some humble way. He had his wish, and did his part handsomely when he least expected to have a chance.

On Monday he saw Mr. Towne, and, thanks to the Squire’s good word, was engaged for a month on trial, making himself so useful that it was soon evident he was the right man in the right place. He lived on the hill, but managed to get down to the little brown house in the evening for a word with Ben, who just now was as full of business as if the President and his Cabinet were coming.

Everything was put in apple-pie order in and about the old house; the great gate, with much creaking of rusty hinges and some clearing away of rubbish, was set wide open, and the first creature who entered it was Sancho, solemnly dragging the dead mullein which long ago had grown above the top of it. October frosts seemed to have spared some of the brightest leaves for this especial occasion, and on Saturday the gate-way was decorated with gay wreaths, red and yellow sprays strewed the flags, and the porch was a blaze of color with the red woodbine, that was in its glory when the honeysuckle was leafless.

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Fortunately, it was a half-holiday, so the children could trim and chatter to their hearts' content, and the little girls ran about sticking funny decorations where no one would ever think of looking for them. Ben was absorbed in his flags, which were sprinkled all down the avenue with a lavish display, suggesting several Fourth-of-Julys rolled into one. Mr. Brown had come down to lend a hand, and did so most energetically, for the break-neck things he did with his son during the decoration fever would have terrified Mrs. Moss out of her wits if she had not been in the house giving last touches to every room, while Ronda and Katy set forth a sumptuous tea.

All was going well, and the train would be due in an hour, when luckless Bab nearly turned the rejoicing into mourning, the feast into ashes. She heard her mother say to Ronda, "There ought to be a fire in every room, it looks so cheerful, and the air is chilly spite of the sunshine," and never waiting to hear the reply that some of the long-unused chimneys were not safe till cleaned, off went Bab with an apron full of old shingles and made a roaring blaze in the front room fire-place, which was of all others the one to be let alone, as the flue was out of order. Charmed with the brilliant light and the crackle of the tindery fuel, Miss Bab refilled her apron and fed the fire till the chimney began to rumble ominously, sparks to fly out at the top, and soot and swallows' nests to come tumbling down upon the hearth. Then, scared at what she had done, the little mischief-maker hastily buried her fire, swept up the rubbish, and ran off, thinking no one would discover her prank if she never told.

Everybody was very busy, and the big chimney blazed and rumbled unnoticed till the cloud of smoke caught Ben's eye as he festooned his last effort in the flag line, part of an old sheet with the words "Father has come!" in red cambric letters, half a foot long, sewed upon it.

"Hullo, I do believe they've got up a bonfire without asking my leave! Miss Celia never would let us, because the sheds and roofs are so old and dry; I must see about it. Catch me, Daddy, I'm coming down!" cried Ben, dropping out of the elm with no more thought of where he might alight than a squirrel swinging from bough to bough.

His father caught him, and followed in haste as his nimble-footed son raced up the avenue, to stop in the gate-way, frightened at the prospect before him, for falling sparks had already kindled the roof here and there, and the chimney smoked and roared like a small volcano, while Katy's wails and Ronda's cries for water came from within.

"Up there, with wet blankets, while I get out the hose!" cried Mr. Brown, as he saw at a glance what the danger was.

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Ben vanished, and, before his father got the garden hose rigged, he was on the roof with a dripping blanket over the worst spot. Mrs. Moss had her wits about her in a minute, and ran to put in the fire-board and stop the draught. Then, stationing Ronda to watch that the falling cinders did no harm inside, she hurried off to help Mr. Brown, who might not know where things were. But he had roughed it so long that he was the man for emergencies, and seemed to lay his hand on whatever was needed, by a sort of instinct. Finding that the hose was too short to reach the upper part of the roof, he was on the roof in a jiffy with two pails of water, and quenched the most dangerous flames before much harm was done. This he kept up till the chimney burned itself out, while Ben dodged about among the gables with a watering-pot, lest some stray sparks should be overlooked and break out afresh.

While they worked there, Betty ran to and fro with a dipper of water trying to help, and Sancho barked violently, as if he objected to this sort of illumination. But where was Bab, who reveled in flurries? No one missed her till the fire was out, and the tired, sooty people met to talk over the danger just escaped.

"Poor Miss Celia wouldn't have had a roof over her head if it hadn't been for you, Mr. Brown," said Mrs. Moss, sinking into a kitchen chair, pale with the excitement.

"It would have burnt lively, but I guess it's all right now. Keep an eye on the roof, Ben, and I'll step up garret and see if all's safe there. Didn't you know that chimney was foul, ma'am?" asked the man, as he wiped the perspiration off his grimy face.

"Ronda said it was, and I'm surprised she made a fire there," began Mrs. Moss, looking at the maid, who just then came in with a pan full of soot.

"Bless you, ma'am, I never thought of such a thing, nor Katy neither. That naughty Bab must have done it, and so don't dar'st to show herself," answered the irate Ronda, whose nice room was in a mess.

"Where is the child?" asked her mother, and a hunt was immediately instituted by Betty and Sancho, while the elders cleared up.

Anxious Betty searched high and low, called and cried, but all in vain, and was about to sit down in despair, when Sancho made a bolt into his new kennel and brought out a shoe with a foot in it, while a doleful squeal came from the straw within.

"Oh, Bab, how could you do it? Ma was frightened dreadfully," said Betty, gently tugging at the striped leg, as Sancho poked his head in for another shoe.

"Is it *all* burnt up!" demanded a smothered voice from the recesses of the kennel.

"Only pieces of the roof. Ben and his father put it out, and I helped," answered Betty, cheering up a little as she recalled her noble exertions.

“What do they do to folks who set houses afire?” asked the voice again.

“I don’t know; but you needn’t be afraid; there isn’t much harm done, I guess, and Miss Celia will forgive you, she’s so good.”

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"Thorny wont; he calls me a 'botheration,' and I guess I am," mourned the unseen culprit, with sincere contrition.

"I'll ask him; he is always good to me. They will be here pretty soon, so you'd better come out and be made tidy," suggested the comforter.

"I never can come out, for every one will hate me," sobbed Bab among the straw; and she pulled in her foot, as if retiring forever from an outraged world.

"Ma wont, she's too busy cleaning up; so it's a good time to come. Let's run home, wash our hands, and be all nice when they see us. I'll love you, no matter what anybody else does," said Betty, consoling the poor little sinner, and proposing the sort of repentance most likely to find favor in the eyes of the agitated elders.

"P'r'aps I'd better go home, for Sanch will want his bed," and Bab gladly availed herself of that excuse to back out of her refuge, a very crumpled, dusty young lady, with a dejected face, and much straw sticking in her hair.

Betty led her sadly away, for she still protested that she never should dare to meet the offended public again; but in fifteen minutes both appeared in fine order and good spirits, and naughty Bab escaped a lecture for the time being, as the train would soon be due.

At the first sound of the car whistle every one turned good-natured as if by magic, and flew to the gate, smiling as if all mishaps were forgiven and forgotten. Mrs. Moss, however, slipped quietly away, and was the first to greet Miss Celia as the carriage stopped at the entrance of the avenue, so that the luggage might go in by way of the lodge.

"We will walk up and you shall tell us the news as we go, for I see you have some," said the young lady, in her friendly manner, when Mrs. Moss had given her welcome and paid her respects to the gentleman, who shook hands in a way that convinced her he was indeed what Thorny called him, "regularly jolly," though he was a minister.

That being exactly what she came for, the good woman told her tidings as rapidly as possible, and the new-comers were so glad to hear of Ben's happiness they made very light of Bab's bonfire, though it had come near burning their house down.

"We wont say a word about it, for every one must be happy to-day," said Mr. George, so kindly that Mrs. Moss felt a load taken off her heart at once.

"Bab was always teasing me for fire-works, but I guess she has had enough for the present." laughed Thorny, who was gallantly escorting Bab's mother up the avenue.

“Every one is so kind! Teacher was out with the children to cheer us as we passed, and here you all are making things pretty for me,” said Miss Celia, smiling with tears in her eyes, as they drew near the great gate, which certainly did present an animated if not an imposing appearance.

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Ronda and Katy stood on one side, all in their best, bobbing delighted courtesies; Mr. Brown, half hidden behind the gate on the other side, was keeping Sancho erect, so that he might present arms promptly when the bride appeared. As flowers were scarce, on either post stood a rosy little girl clapping her hands, while out from the thicket of red and yellow boughs, which made a grand bouquet in the lantern frame, came Ben's head and shoulders, as he waved his grandest flag with its gold paper "Welcome Home!" on a blue ground.

"Isn't it beautiful!" cried Miss Celia, throwing kisses to the children, shaking hands with her maids, and glancing brightly at the stranger who was keeping Sanch quiet.

"Most people adorn their gate-posts with stone balls, vases, or griffins; your living images are a great improvement, love, especially the happy boy in the middle," said Mr. George, eying Ben with interest, as he nearly tumbled overboard, top-heavy with his banner.

"You must finish what I have only begun," answered Miss Celia, adding gayly, as Sancho broke loose and came to offer both his paw and his congratulations, "Sanch, introduce your master, that I may thank him for coming back in time to save my old house."

"If I'd saved a dozen it wouldn't have half paid for all you've done for my boy, ma'am," answered Mr. Brown, bursting out from behind the gate quite red with gratitude and pleasure.

"I loved to do it, so please remember that this is still his home till you make one for him. Thank God, he is no longer fatherless!" and Miss Celia's sweet face said even more than her words, as the white hand cordially shook the brown one with a burn across the back.

"Come on, sister. I see the tea-table all ready, and I'm awfully hungry," interrupted Thorny, who had not a ray of sentiment about him, though very glad Ben had got his father back again.

"Come over, by and by, little friends, and let me thank you for your pretty welcome,—it certainly is a warm one;" and Miss Celia glanced merrily from the three bright faces above her to the old chimney, which still smoked sullenly.

"Oh, don't!" cried Bab, hiding her face.

"She didn't mean to," added Betty, pleadingly.

"Three cheers for the bride!" roared Ben, dipping his flag, as leaning on her husband's arm his dear mistress passed through the gay party, along the leaf-strewn walk, over the threshold of the house which was to be her happy home for many years.



The closed gate where the lonely little wanderer once lay was always to stand open now, and the path where children played before was free to all comers, for a hospitable welcome henceforth awaited rich and poor, young and old, sad and gay, Under the Lilacs.

[Illustration]

HAPPY LITTLE FROGGY.

BY E. MUELLER.

[Illustration]

Happy little Froggy, he
Was proud enough
Of his trousers and his coat,
Green and buff.

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Came and caught him Rob and Bess,
Quick as flash,
Dressed him up in Dolly's dress,
And her sash.

Froggy gave a frantic leap,
And in three springs
Took into the water deep
All Dolly's things.

HOW TO KEEP A JOURNAL.

BY W. S. JEROME.

Autumn is as good a time as any for a boy or girl to begin to keep a journal. Too many have the idea that it is a hard and unprofitable task to keep a journal, and especially is this the case with those who have begun, but soon gave up the experiment. They think it is a waste of time, and that no good results from it. But that depends upon the kind of journal that you keep. Everybody has heard of the boy who thought he would try to keep a diary. He bought a book, and wrote in it, for the first day, "Decided to keep a journal." The next day he wrote, "Got up, washed, and went to bed." The day after, he wrote the same thing, and no wonder that at the end of a week he wrote, "Decided not to keep a journal," and gave up the experiment. It is such attempts as this, by persons who have no idea of what a journal is, or how to keep it, that discourage others from beginning. But it is not hard to keep a journal if you begin in the right way, and will use a little perseverance and patience. The time spent in writing in a journal is not wasted, by any means. It may be the best employed hour of any in the day, and a well-kept journal is a source of pleasure and advantage which more than repays the writer for the time and trouble spent upon it.

The first thing to do in beginning a journal, is to resolve to stick to it. Don't begin, and let the poor journal die in a week. A journal, or diary, should be written in *every day*, if possible. Now, don't be frightened at this, for you do a great many things every day, and this isn't a very awful condition. The time spent may be longer or shorter, according to the matter to be written up; but try and write, at least a little, every day. "*Nulla dies sine linea*"—no day without a line—is a good motto. It is a great deal easier to write a little every day, than to write up several days in one.

Do not get for a journal a book with the dates already printed in it. That kind will do very well for a merchant's note-book, but not for the young man or woman who wants to keep a live, cheerful account of a happy and pleasant life. Sometimes you will have a picnic or excursion to write about, and will want to fill more space than the printed page allows. Buy a substantially bound blank-book, made of good paper; write your name



and address plainly on the fly-leaf, and, if you choose, paste a calendar inside the cover. Set down the date at the head of the first page, thus: "Tuesday, October 1, 1878." Then begin the record of the day, endeavoring as far as possible to mention the events in the correct order of time,—morning, afternoon and evening. When this is done, write in the middle of the page, "Wednesday, October 2," and you are ready for the record of the next day. It is well to set down the year at the top of each page.

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But what are you to write about? First, the weather. Don't forget this. Write, "Cold and windy," or "Warm and bright," as the case may be. It takes but a moment, and in a few years you will have a complete record of the weather, which will be found not only curious, but useful.

Then put down the letters you have received or written, and, if you wish, any money paid or received. The day of beginning or leaving school; the studies you pursue; visits from or to your friends; picnics or sleigh-rides; the books you have read; and all such items of interest should be noted. Write anything that you want to remember. After trying this plan a short time, you will be surprised at the many things constantly occurring which you used to overlook, but which now form pleasant paragraphs in your book. But don't try to write something when there is nothing to write. If there is only a line to be written, write that, and begin again next day.

Do not set down about people anything which you would not wish them to see. It is not likely that any one will ever see your writing, but it is possible, so, always be careful about what you write. The Chinese say of a spoken word, that once let fall, it cannot be brought back by a chariot and six horses. Much more is this true of written words, and once out of your possession, there is no telling where they will go, or who will see them.

The best time to write in a journal is in the evening. Keep the book in your table-drawer, or on your desk, and, after supper, when the lamps are lighted, sit down and write your plain account of the day. Don't try to write an able and eloquent article, but simply give a statement of what you have seen or done during the day. For the first week or two after beginning a journal, the novelty of the thing will keep up your interest, and you will be anxious for the time to come when you can write your journal. But, after a while, it becomes tedious. Then is the time when you must persevere. Write something every day, and before long you will find that you are becoming so accustomed to it, that you would not willingly forego it. After that, the way is plain, and the longer you live the more valuable and indispensable your journal will become.

But some practical young person asks: What is the good of a journal? There is very much. In the first place, it teaches habits of order and regularity. The boy or girl who every evening arranges the proceedings of the day in systematic order, and regularly writes them out, is not likely to be careless in other matters. It helps the memory. A person who keeps a journal naturally tries during the day to remember things he sees, until he can write them down. Then the act of writing helps to still further fix the facts in his memory. The journal is a first-class teacher of penmanship. All boys and girls should take pride in having the pages of their journals as neat and handsome as possible.

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Compare one day's writing with that of the one before, and try to improve every day. Keeping a journal cultivates habits of observation, correct and concise expression, and gives capital practice in composition, spelling, punctuation, and all the little things which go to make up a good letter-writer. So, one who keeps a journal is all the while learning to be a better penman, and a better composer, with the advantage of writing original, historical, and descriptive articles, instead of copying the printed letters and sentences of a writing-book.

But, best of all, a well-kept journal furnishes a continuous and complete family history, which is always interesting, and often very useful. It is sometimes very convenient to have a daily record of the year, and the young journalist will often have occasion to refer to his account of things gone by. Perhaps, some evening, when the family are sitting and talking together, some one will ask, "What kind of weather did we have last winter?" or, "When was the picnic you were speaking of?" and the journal is referred to. But the pleasure of keeping a journal is itself no small reward. It is pleasant to exercise the faculty of writing history, and to think that you are taking the first step toward writing newspapers and books. The writer can practice on different kinds of style, and can make his journal a record, not only of events, but of his own progress as a thinker and writer.

SIMPLE SIMON.

[Illustration]

"Simple Simon went a-fishing,
For to catch a whale,
And all the water that he had,
Was in his mother's pail."

PRINCE CUCURBITA.

BY EDITH A. EDWARDS.

[Illustration: PRINCE CUCURBITA ON THE TRELLIS.]

Prince Cucurbita was very unhappy. His smooth, shiny face was all puckered up into little wrinkles, every now and then a big sob shook his jolly little person till you really felt like crying yourself at the sight of him. Here was a prince living in a lovely garden full of birds and flowers, surrounded by a large family of brothers and sisters, and always dressed in a pretty green jacket, which could not get soiled or torn. In spite of all this,

he was not happy, for Queen Cucurbita, in order to keep her children out of harm's way, had hoisted them all up on a high trellis, and would never let them get down.

You may think the Prince might have been smart enough, or naughty enough, to have jumped down when his mother's back was turned, but, alas! how could he? for she held tightly to the tassel of his cap, and his cap fitted so closely to his head that no effort of his was ever able to get it off. Across the way lived another big family, the Filberts. They were just the merriest set that ever was seen, nodding gayly to Cucu now and then when they could spare the time from their own fun, and telling stories to each other, which must have been very amusing; for sometimes they all laughed together till they nearly fell out of bed, and their mother was obliged to shake them all round. One day, there was a great commotion among the Filberts. The eldest brother had determined to go out into the world and seek his fortune, so he climbed out of bed and quietly dropped to the ground.

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"Oh, dear me!" cried Cucu; "it is too mean that I should have to stay up on this old trellis."

"Naughty boy!" scolded his mother. "What are you talking about? That ever I should be afflicted with such a fractious child; 'tis enough to turn me yellow;" and she spread out her pretty green apron, and waved her ribbons in the air, while she took a firmer hold upon the poor little Prince's cap.

"Don't you know that if I were to let go, off you would fall flat on your back upon the nasty wet ground, and very likely lie there all the rest of your life, growing wrinkled and yellow and sickly, while great ugly worms crawled over you, and everybody blamed me for a careless parent? No! no! I shall take good care you don't get away from me, you may be sure."

So, Cucu had to accept his fate as best he might, and amused himself watching his neighbors. Every day, now, one or more of them left home and disappeared among the grass and flowers below. Cucu imagined them as traveling off around the garden, but if he had seen them lying half buried in the earth, their bright brown faces dirty and streaked with tears, their merry little hearts nearly broken with woe, he would not have envied them so much.

Day after day passed, and the month of October came with its clear and cool nights. Queen Cucurbita did not relish this at all, and, every morning, when the sun peeped at her, he wondered how he ever could have admired such a dried-up yellow old creature. Cucu's heart, on the contrary, grew happier all the time, he lifted up his heavy head that seemed to be lighter each day, and when the wind blew, he rattled against the trellis and wondered how it was he could move so easily. "Poor Prince!" the Cat-bird whistled, as she perched above him, "your face is getting as brown and shining as one of those little Filberts, your cap is no longer green and pretty, and you look so light that a breath might blow you away."

"I don't care," returned Cucu, "for I feel delighted, and so long as I can't see my own face, what's the odds?"

The next night was clear and very cold. The people to whom the garden belonged brought out sheets and covered over the tender heliotropes and other flowers they valued, but they couldn't have cared much for Queen Cucurbita, for they never gave her a thought. When Cucu woke up bright and early and said good-morning to his mother, she did not reply. He turned his head to look at her. Oh, frightful sight! she hung to the trellis wilted and dead; her green dress was brown and torn, but her hard and wrinkled hand still grasped poor Cucu's cap.

After the sun had been up some hours, a lady came into the garden and approached the home of the Cucurbita family.



“Oh, you beauty!” she cried, “what a lovely basket I shall make of you!” and, placing a hand on each of Cucu’s cheeks, she gave him a slight twist,—his mother’s fingers let go; he was free. The lady put him in her basket, and now he was really setting off on his travels.

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This was, in fact, only the beginning of his career. The lady with a sharp knife lifted his cap from his head; then she painted him all over a pale green. After the paint was dry, she bored three holes in his sides. My! how it hurt! but it was soon over, and she had fastened three slender chains through them, and hung the little Prince up in a sunny window. "What next?" he wondered. If he had got to hang here all his life, it wouldn't be much better than the old trellis. But that wasn't the end, for his mistress filled him with nice black earth, and planted delicate little ferns and runaway-robins which climbed over and twined lovingly round his face. They patted his cheeks with their soft little hands, and whispered pretty stories of the woods they had come from.

"Dear Cucu," said they, "how much we love you, and how kind you are to hold us all so carefully!" When they said this, he felt so proud and happy that he could not contain himself any longer, and sang at the top of his voice; but the people in the house did not hear him, for mortal ears are not adapted to such music. Only the Cat-bird flying past understood and stopped to congratulate him.

"Plenty to do, and plenty to love," she sang; "that is the way to be happy. I found it out last spring when it took me from morning till night to find food for my four hungry babies. Good-bye! I am going south with them to-day. I haven't a bit of time to lose," and away she flew.

[Illustration: CUCURBITA IN THE WINDOW.]

And the ferns and the runaway-robins clapped their hands and sang, "Yes, that is the secret. Good-bye! Good-bye!"

MRS. PRIMKINS' SURPRISE.

BY OLIVE THORNE.

Our older readers will remember Nimpo, whose "Troubles" interested them in ST. NICHOLAS'S first year. To our newer friends it is only necessary to say, that Nimpo and Rush were boarding with Mrs. Primkins during their mother's absence, by Nimpo's own desire, and were very unhappy under the care of that well-meaning—but very peculiar—person, who was so greatly surprised on the occasion of the Birthday Party.

One morning, Mrs. Primkins received a letter. This was a very unusual occurrence, and she hastened to wipe her hands out of the dish-water, hunt up her "specs," clean them carefully, and, at last, sit down in her chintz-covered "Boston rocker," to enjoy at her leisure this very rare literary dissipation.

Nimpo, who was boarding with Mrs. Primkins while her mother was off on a journey, was engaged in finishing her breakfast, and did not notice anything. Having found her scissors, and deliberately cut around the old-fashioned seal, Mrs. Primkins opened the

sheet and glanced at the name at the bottom of the page, then turned her eyes hastily toward Nimpo, with a low, significant “Humph!”

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But Nimpo, intent only on getting off to school, still did not see her. Mrs. Primkins went on to examine more closely, covering with her hands something which fell from the first fold, rustling, to her lap. Very deliberately, then, as became this staid woman, did she read the letter from date to signature, twice over, and, ending as she had begun with a significant “Humph!” she refolded the letter, slipped in the inclosure, put it into her black silk work-bag which hung on the back of her chair, and resumed her dish-washing, for she was a genuine “Yankee housekeeper” of the old-fashioned sort, and scorned the assistance of what she called “hired help.”

Meanwhile, Nimpo finished her breakfast, gathered up her books, and hurried off to school, though it was an hour too early, never dreaming that the letter had anything to do with her. After the morning work was done,—the pans scalded and set in the sun; the house dusted from attic to cellar; the vinegar reheated and poured over the walnuts that were pickling; the apples drying on the shed roof, turned over; the piece of muslin (“bolt,” she called it) that was bleaching on the grass, thoroughly sprinkled; and, in fact, everything, indoors and out, in Mrs. Primkins’ domain, put into perfect order, that lady sat down to consider. She drew the letter from the bag, and read it over, carefully inspecting a ten-dollar bill in her hands, and then leaned back, and indulged herself in a very unusual, indeed totally unheard-of, luxury—a rest of ten minutes with idle hands!

If Nimpo had chanced to come in, she would have been alarmed at such an extraordinary state of things; but she was at that moment in her seat in the long school-house, with wrinkled brow, wrestling with sundry conundrums in her “Watts on the Mind,” little suspecting how her fate was hanging in the balance in Mrs. Primkins’ kitchen at this moment. At last, Mrs. Primkins’ thin lips opened. She was alone in the house, and she began to talk to herself:

“Wants her to have a birthday-party! Humph! I must say I can’t see the good of pampering children’s folks do nowadays! When I was young, now, we had something to think of besides fine clothes, unwholesome food, and worldly dissipation! I must say I think Mis’ Rievor has some very uncommon notions! Hows’ever,” she went on, contemplating fondly the bill she still held in her hand, “I do’ know’s I have any call to fret my gizzard if she chooses to potter away her money! I don’t see my way clear to refuse altogether to do what she asks, ’s long ’s the child’s on my hands. Ten dollars! Humph! She ’hopes it’ll be enough to provide a little supper for them!’ It’s my private opinion that it will, and a mite over for—for—other things,” she added, resolutely closing her lips with a snap. “I aint such a shif’less manager’s all that comes to, I *do* hope! ’T wont take no ten dollars to give a birthday-party in *my* house, I bet a cookey!”

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That night, when supper was over, Nimpo sat down with the family by the table, which held one candle that dimly lighted the room, to finish a book she was reading. Not that the kitchen was the only room in the house. Mrs. Primkins had plenty of rooms, but they were too choice for every-day use. They were always tightly closed, with green paper shades down, lest the blessed sunshine should get a peep at her gaudy red and green carpets, and put the least mellowing touch on their crude and rasping colors. Nimpo thought of the best parlor with a sort of awe which she never felt toward any room in her mother's house.

"Nimpo," said Mrs. Primkins at last, when she had held back the news till Nimpo had finished her book, and was about to go upstairs, "wait a bit. I got a letter from your Ma to-day."

"Did you?" exclaimed Nimpo, alarmed. "Oh! what is the matter?"

"Don't fly into tifficks! Nothing is the matter," said Mrs. Primkins.

"Is she coming home?" was the next eager question.

"No, not yet," fell like cold water on her warm hopes. "But she says to-morrow's your birthday."

"Why, so it is!" said Nimpo, reflecting. "I never thought of it."

"Wal, she thinks perhaps I'd best let you have a few girls to tea on that day, if 't wont be too much of a chore for me," went on Mrs. Primkins, deliberately.

Nimpo's face was radiant. "Oh, Mrs. Primkins, if you *will*!" But it fell again. "But where could they be?"—for trespassing on the dismal glories of the Primkins' parlor had never entered her wildest dreams.

"I've thought of that," said Mrs. Primkins, grimly. "Of course, I couldn't abide a pack of young ones tramping up my best parlor carpet, and I thought mebbe I'd put a few things up in the second story, and let you have 'em there."

The second story was unfurnished.

"Oh, that will be splendid!" said Nimpo, eagerly. "But,—but,"—she hesitated,—“could they take tea here?” and she glanced around the kitchen, which was parlor, sitting-room, dining-room, and, in fact, almost the only really useful room in the house. The front part Mrs. Primkins enjoyed as other people enjoy pictures, or other beautiful things,—looking at, but not using them.

“No; I shall set the table in the back chamber, and let you play in the front chamber. We can put some chairs in, and I’m sure a bare floor is more suitable for a pack of young ones.”

Mrs. Primkins always spoke of children as wild beasts, which must be endured, to be sure, but carefully looked after, like wolves or hyenas.

“Oh yes! We wouldn’t be afraid of hurting that. Oh, that’ll be splendid!” continued Nimpo, as the plan grew on her. “I thank you so much, Mrs. Primkins!—and we’ll be so careful not to hurt anything!”

“Humph!” said Mrs. Primkins, not thinking it necessary to tell her that her mother had sent money to cover the expense. “You’re a master hand to promise.”

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"I know I forget sometimes," said Nimpo, penitently. "But I'll try really to be careful, this time."

"Wal," said Mrs. Primkins, in conclusion, as she folded her knitting and brought out the bed-room candles, "if you don't hector me nigh about to death, I'll lose my guess! But as I'm in for 't now, you may's well bring the girls when you come home from school tomorrow. Then you'll have time to play before supper, for their mothers'll want them home before dark."

"Do you care who I invite?" asked Nimpo, pausing with the door open on her way to bed.

"No, I do' know's I do. Your intimate friends, your Ma said."

"Oh, goody!" said Nimpo, as she skipped upstairs, two at a time. "Wont we have fun! How nice it'll be!"

The next morning she was off, bright and early, and, before the bell rang, every girl in the school knew that Nimpo was going to have a birthday-party, and was wondering if she would be invited. At recess, she issued her invitations, every one of which was promptly accepted; and in the afternoon all came in their best dresses, ready to go home with Nimpo.

At four o'clock, they were dismissed, and Nimpo marshaled her guests and started. Now, the truth was, that the girls had been so very lovely to her when she was inviting, that she found it hard to distinguish between intimate friends and those not quite so intimate, so she had asked more than she realized till she saw them started up the street. However, she had not been limited as to numbers, so she gave herself no concern, as she gayly led the way.

Meanwhile, the Primkins family had been busy. After the morning work was done, Mrs. Primkins and her daughter Augusta made a loaf of plain, wholesome cake, a couple of tins of biscuits, and about the same number of cookies with caraway-seeds in them. After dinner, they carried a table into the back chamber and spread the feast. Nimpo's mother had sent, as a birthday-present, a new set of toy dishes. It had arrived by stage while Nimpo was at school, and been carefully concealed from her; and Augusta, who had not yet forgotten that she was once young (though it was many years before), thought it would be nice to serve the tea on these dishes. Not being able to think of any serious objection, and seeing advantage in the small pieces required to fill them, Mrs. Primkins had consented, and Augusta had arranged a very pretty table, all with its white and gilt china. The biscuits and cookies were cut small to match, and, when ready, it looked very cunning, with tiny slices of cake, and one little dish of jelly—from the top shelf in Mrs. Primkins' pantry.

During the afternoon, a boy came up from the store (Nimpo's father was a country merchant) with a large basket, in which were several pounds of nuts and raisins and candy, which her father had ordered by letter.

Everything was prepared, and Mrs. Primkins had put on a clean checked apron, to do honor to the occasion, and sat down in her rocker, feeling that she had earned her rest, when Augusta's voice sounded from upstairs: "Ma, do look down street!"

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Mrs. Primkins went to the window that looked toward the village, and was struck with horror.

[Illustration: "DO LOOK DOWN STREET!"]

"Goodness gracious! Why, what under the canopy! Did you ever!" came from her lips in quick succession, for there was Nimpo, the center of a very mob of girls, all in Sunday best, as Mrs. Primkins' experienced eye saw at a glance.

"Ma!" exclaimed Augusta, rushing down, "I do believe that young one has invited the whole school!"

"The trollop!" was all Mrs. Primkins could get out, in her exasperation.

"I'd send 'em right straight home!" said Augusta, indignantly. "It's a burning shame!"

"Mercy on us! This is a pretty kettle of fish!" gasped Mrs. Primkins.

"I wouldn't stand it! So there!" said Augusta, sharply. "I never did see such a young one! I'd just send every chick and child home, and let Miss Nimpo take her supper in her own room—to pay her off! Things have come to a pretty pass, I think!"

"I never did!" ejaculated Mrs. Primkins, not yet recovering her ordinary powers of speech.

"Shall I go out and meet them, and send them packing?" asked Augusta.

"No," said her mother, reluctantly, remembering the unbroken bill in her "upper drawer." "I do' know's I have a right to send them back. I didn't tell her how many, but—mercy on us!—who'd dream of such a raft! If there's one, there's forty, I do declare!"

"That's the meaning of those enormous packages of nuts and things from the store," said Augusta, "that we thought were enough for an army."

"But the table!" gasped Mrs. Primkins. "For such a crowd! Augusta," hastily, "fly around like a parched pea, and lock the doors of that room, till I think what we can do. This is a party with a vengeance!"

Augusta obeyed, and was none too quick, for the girls crowded into the front chamber before she had secured the doors.

Being a "party," of course they had to go into the house. But as soon as they had thrown off their slat sun-bonnets,—which was in about one second,—and began to look around the bare room, to see what they should do next, Nimpo was seized with a bright idea.

“Girls, let’s go out in the yard, and play till tea-time,” she said; and the next moment sun-bonnets were resumed, and the whole troop tramped down the back stairs, Nimpo not daring, even on this festive occasion, to disturb the silence of the solemn front hall, and the gorgeous colored stair-carpet. In two minutes, they were deep in the game of “Pom-pom-peel-away,” and now was Mrs. Primkins’ chance.

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She hastily sent Augusta out to the neighbors, letting her out slyly by the front door, so the “party” shouldn’t see her, to beg or borrow something to feed the crowd; for, the next day being baking-day, her pantry was nearly empty, and there was not such a thing in the village as a bakery. As soon as she was gone, Mrs. Primkins cleared the table upstairs, hid the small biscuits and minute slices of cake, and brought tables from other rooms to lengthen this. She then carried every cup and saucer and plate of her own up there, and even made several surreptitious visits herself to accommodating friends, to borrow, telling the news, and getting their sympathy, so that they freely lent their dishes, and even sent their boys to carry them over, and their big girls to help arrange.

For an hour, the games went on in the side yard, while a steady stream came in by the front door—the grand front door!—and up the august stairs, carrying bread, cake, dishes, saucers, *etc.*, *etc.*, till there was a tolerable supply, and Mrs. Primkins was in debt numerous loaves of bread and cake, and dishes of “preserves.”

At five o’clock, they were called in, and, before their sharp young appetites, everything disappeared like dew in the sunshine. It was a queer meal,—bread of various shapes and kinds, and not a large supply; cakes, an equally miscellaneous collection, from cup-cake which old Mrs. Kellogg had kept in a jar two months, “in case a body dropped in unexpected,” to bread-cake fresh from some one else’s oven; cookies of a dozen kinds; doughnuts and ginger-cakes, and half a dozen dishes of sweet-meats, no two alike.

But all deficiencies were forgotten when they came to the nuts and candies, for of these there was no lack. Augusta had filled every extra dish in the house with these delightful things, and I sadly fear the children ate shocking amounts of trash. But they had a good time. The entertainment was exactly to their liking,—little bread and butter, and plenty of candy and raisins. It was incomparably superior to ordinary teas, where bread predominated and candy was limited.

After eating everything on the table, putting the remainder of the candy in their pockets, as Nimpo insisted, they flocked into the front room, where Mrs. Primkins told them they might play a while, if they would not make a noise, as a little sprinkle of rain had come up. To insure quiet, each girl took off her shoes, and played in stocking-feet on the bare, rough floor, “blind-man’s-buff,” “hunt the slipper,” and other games, for an hour more.

Suddenly, Nimpo held up her foot.

“Girls! look there!” Nimpo’s tone was tragic.

The soles of her stockings were in awful holes! All eyes were instantly turned on her, and forty feet were simultaneously elevated to view. The tale was the same,—every stocking sole was black as the ground, and worn to rags!

“What will Ma say?” rose in horror to every lip.

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This awful thought sobered them at once, and, finding it getting dark, shoes were hastily sought out of the pile in the corner, sun-bonnets donned, and slowly the long procession moved down the back stairs and out again into the street.

Nimpo flung herself on to the little bed in her room, and sighed with happiness.

“Oh! wasn’t it splendid?—and I know mamma’ll forgive my stockings. Besides, I’ll wash them myself, and darn them.”

(While I am about it, I may as well say that every girl who went to Nimpo’s party had a long and serious task of darning the next week.)

When it was all over, and Mrs. Primkins and Augusta, assisted by two or three neighbors, had washed and returned dishes, brought down tables and chairs, swept out front hall, and reduced it to its normal condition of dismal state, to be seen and not used, and the neighbors had gone, and it was nine o’clock at night, Augusta sat down to reckon up debts, while Mrs. Primkins “set the bread.”

Augusta brought out her account, and read: “Mrs. A., blank loaves of bread, ditto cake, one dish preserves; Mrs. B., ditto, ditto; Mrs. C., ditto, ditto.”

Mrs. Primkins listened to the whole list, and made a mental calculation of how much of the ten-dollar bill it would take to pay up. The result must have been satisfactory, for her grim face relaxed almost into a smile, as she covered up the “sponge” and washed her hands.

“Wal, don’t let your Pa get away in the morning till he has split up a good pile of oven-wood. We’ll heat the brick oven, and have over Mis’ Kent’s Mary Ann to help. I guess the money’ll cover it, and I can pay Mary Ann in old clothes.”

THE LINNET’S FEE.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

Once I saw a wee brown linnet
Dancing on a tree,
Dancing on a tree.
How her feet flew every minute
As she danced at me-e-e;
How her feet flew every minute
As she danced at me!

“Sing a song for me, wee linnet,
Sing a song for me,



Sing a song for me.”

“Oh, Miss, if you’ll wait a minute,
Till my mate I see-e-e;
Oh, Miss, if you’ll wait a minute,
He will sing for thee.”

“Thank you, thank you, wee brown linnet,
For amusing me,
For amusing me;
You have danced for many a minute,
You must tired be-e-e,
You have sung for many minutes,
You must tired be.”

“Thanks would starve us,” cried the linnets,—
As he sung at me,
As she danced at me.
“Should you sing like this ten minutes,
You would want a fee-e-e;
Should you dance like this ten minutes
You would want a fee.”

“Pardon me, I pray, dear linnet,
Fly down from your tree,
Fly down from your tree.
I will come back in a minute
With some seed for thee-e-e;
I will come back in a minute
With some seed for thee.”

DAB KINZER: A STORY OF A GROWING BOY.



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BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XX.

Dismally barren and lonesome was that desolate bar between the "bay" and the ocean. Here and there it swelled up into great drifts and mounds of sand, which were almost large enough to be called hills; but nowhere did it show a tree or a bush, or even a patch of grass. Annie Foster found herself getting melancholy as she gazed upon it and thought of how the winds must sometimes sweep across it, laden with sea-spray and rain and hail, or the bitter sleet and blinding snow of winter.

"Dabney," she said, "was the storm very severe here last night and yesterday?"

"Worse here than over our side of the bay, ten times."

"Were there any vessels wrecked?"

"Most likely; but it's too soon to know just where."

At that moment the "Swallow" was running rapidly around a sandy point, jutting into the bay from the highest mound on the bar, not half a mile from the light-house, and only twice as far from the low, wooden roof of the "wrecking station," where, as Dab had explained to his guests, the life-boats and other apparatus were kept safely housed. The piles of drifted sand had for some time prevented the brightest eyes on board the "Swallow" from seeing anything to seaward; but now, as they came around the point and a broad level lay before them, Ham Morris sprang to his feet in sudden excitement as he exclaimed:

"In the breakers! Why, she must have been a three-master. All up with her now."

"Look along the shore!" shouted Dab. "Some of 'em saved, anyhow. The coast-men are there, life-boats and all."

So they were, and Ham was right about the vessel, though not a mast was left standing in her now. If there had been, indeed, she might have been kept off the breakers, as they afterward learned. She had been dismasted in the storm, but had not struck until after daylight that morning, and help had been close at hand and promptly given. No such thing as saving that unfortunate hull. She would beat to pieces just where she lay, sooner or later, according to the kind of weather and the waves it should bring with it.

The work done by the life-boat men had been a good one, and had not been very easy either, for they had brought the crew and passengers from the wreck safely to the sandy beach. They had even saved some items of baggage. In a few hours, the "coast wrecking tugs" would be on hand to look out for the cargo. No chance whatever for the



'longshoremen, good or bad, to turn an honest penny without working hard for it. Work and wages enough, to be sure, helping to unload, when the sea, now so very heavy, should go down a little; but "wages" were not what some of them were most hungry for.

Two of them, at all events—one a tall, weather-beaten, stoop-shouldered, grizzled old man, in tattered raiment, and the other, even more battered, but with no "look of the sea" about him—stood on a sand-drift gloomily gazing at the group of shipwrecked people on the shore, and the helpless mass of timber and spars out there among the beatings of the surf.

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"Not more 'n three hunder yards out. She'd break up soon 'f there was no one to hender. Wot a show we'd hev."

"I reckon," growled the shorter man. "Is your name Peter?"

"Aye. I belong yer. Allers lived about high-water mark. Whar'd ye come from?"

The only answer was a sharp and excited exclamation. Neither of them had been paying any attention to the bay side of the bar and, while they were gazing at the wreck, a very pretty little yacht had cast anchor, close in shore, and then, with the help of a row-boat, quite a party of ladies and gentlemen—the latter somewhat young-looking—had made their way to the land, and were now hurrying forward. They did not pay the slightest attention to Peter and his companion, but, in a few minutes more, they were trying to talk to those poor people on the sea-beach. Trying, but not succeeding very well, for the wreck had been a Bremen bark with an assorted cargo and some fifty passengers, all emigrants. German seemed their only tongue, and none of Mrs. Kinzer's pleasure-party spoke German.

"Too bad," Ford Foster was saying, when there came a sort of wail from a group at a little distance, and it seemed to close with—"pauvre enfant."

"French!" he exclaimed. "Why, they look as Dutch as any of the rest. Come on, Annie, let's try and speak to them."

The rest followed a good deal like a flock of sheep, and it was a sad enough scene which lay before them. No lives had been lost in the wreck, though there had been a great deal of suffering among the poor passengers, cooped up between-decks with the hatches closed, while the storm lasted. Nobody drowned, indeed, but all dreadfully soaked in the surf in getting ashore; and among the rest had been the fair-haired child, now lying there on his mother's lap, so pinched and blue, and seemingly so lifeless.

French, were they? Yes and no; for the father, a tall, stout young man, who looked like a farmer, told Ford they were from Alsace, and spoke both tongues.

"The child, was it sick?"

Not so much sick as dying of starvation and exposure.

Oh, such a sad, pleading look as the poor mother lifted to the moist eyes of Mrs. Kinzer as the portly widow bent over the silent boy. Such a pretty child he must have been, and not over two years old; but the salt water was in his tangled curls now, and his poor lips were parted in a weak, sick way, that spoke of utter exhaustion.

"Can anything be done, mother?"



“Yes, Dabney; you and Ham, and Ford and Frank, go to the yacht, quick as you can, and bring the spirit-heater, lamp and all, and bread and milk, and every dry napkin and towel you can find. Bring Keziah’s shawl.”

Such quick time they made across that sand-bar!

And they were none too soon; for, as they came running down to their boat, a mean, slouching sort of fellow walked rapidly away from it.

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"He was going to steal it."

"Can't go for him now, Dab; but you'll have to mount guard here while we go back with the things."

He did so, and Ham and Frank and Ford hurried back to the other beach to find that Mrs. Kinzer had taken complete possession of that baby. Every rag of his damp things was already stripped off, and now, while Miranda lighted the "heater" and made some milk hot in a minute, the good lady began to rub the little sufferer as only a mother knows how.

Then there was a warm wrapping up in cloths and shawls, and better success than anybody had dreamed of in making the seemingly half-dead child eat something.

"That was about all the matter," said Mrs. Kinzer. "Now if we can get him and his mother over to the house, we can save both of them. Ford, how long did you say it was since they'd eaten anything?"

"About three days, they say."

"Mercy on me! And that cabin of ours holds so little! Glad it's full, anyhow. Let's get it out and over here at once."

"The cabin?"

"No, the provisions."

And not a soul among them all thought of their own lunch, any more than Mrs. Kinzer herself did; but Joe and Fuz were not just then among them. On the contrary, they were over there by the shore, where the "Jenny" had been pulled up, trying to get Dab Kinzer to put them on board the "Swallow."

"Somebody ought to be on board of her," said Fuz, in as anxious a tone as he could, "with so many strange people around."

[Illustration: "WHOM DO YOU THINK I'VE SEEN TO-DAY?"]

"It isn't safe," added Joe.

"Fact," replied Dab; "but then I kind o' like to feel a little unsafe."

And the Hart boys felt, somehow, that Dab knew why they were so anxious to go on board, and they were right enough, for he was saying to himself at that moment,

"They can wait. They do look hungry, but they'll live through it. There aint any cuffs or collars in Ham's locker."

All there was then in the locker, however, was soon out of it when Mrs. Kinzer and the rest came, for they brought with them the officers of the wrecked bark, and neither Joe nor Fuz had a chance to so much as "help distribute" that supply of provisions. Ham went over to make sure it should be properly done, while Mrs. Kinzer saw her little patient with his father and mother safely stowed on board the "Swallow."

"I'll save that baby, anyhow," she said to Miranda, "and Ford says his father's a farmer. We can find plenty for 'em to do. They'll never see a thing of their baggage, and I guess they hadn't a great deal."

She was just the woman to guess correctly, but at that moment Dab Kinzer said to Annie Foster in a low tone:

"Whom do you think I've seen to-day?"

"I can't guess. Who was it?"

"The tramp!"

"The same one—"

"The very same. There he goes, over the sand-hill yonder, with old Peter, the wrecker. We've got to hurry home now, but I'm going to set Ham Morris on his track."

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"You never'll find him again."

"Do you s'pose old Peter'd befriend a man that did what he did, right on the shore of the bay? No, indeed, there isn't a fisherman from here to Montauk that wouldn't join to hunt him out. He's safe whenever Ham wants him, if we don't scare him now."

"Don't scare him, then," whispered Annie.

The wind was fair and the home sail of the "Swallow" was really a swift and short one, but it did seem dreadfully long to her passengers. Mrs. Kinzer was anxious to see that poor baby safely in bed. Ham Morris wanted to send a whole load of refreshments back to the shipwrecked people. Dab Kinzer could not keep his thoughts from that "tramp." And then, if the truth must come out, every soul on board the beautiful little yacht was getting more and more aware, with every minute that passed, that they had had a good deal of sea air and excitement, and a splendid sail across the bay and back, but no dinner. Not so much as a herring or a cracker.

CHAPTER XXI.

As for the Kinzers, that was by no means their first experience in such matters, but their friends had never before been so near to a genuine, out and out shipwreck. Perhaps, too, they had rarely if ever felt so very nearly starved. At least Joe and Fuz Hart remarked as much a score of times before the "Swallow" slipped through the inlet and made her way toward the landing.

"Ham," said Dab Kinzer, "are you going right back again?"

"Course I am, soon as I can get a load of eatables from the house and the village. You 'll have to stay here."

"Why can't I go with you?"

"Plenty for you to do at the house and around while I'm gone. No, you can't go."

Dab seemed to have expected as much, for he turned to Ford with,

"Then I'll tell you what we must do."

"What's that?"

"See about the famine. Can you cook?"

"No."

"I can, then. Ham'll have one half of our house at work getting his cargo ready, and that baby'll fill up the other half."

"Mother wont be expecting us so soon, and our cook's gone out for the day. Annie knows something."

"She can help me, then. Those Hart boys'll die if they're not fed. Look at Fuz. Why, he can't keep his mouth shut."

Joe and his brother seemed to know, as if by instinct, that the dinner question was under discussion; and they were soon taking their share of talk. Oh, how they wished it had been a share of something to eat! The "Swallow" was moored, now, after discharging her passengers, but Dab did not start for the house with his mother and the rest. He even managed to detain some of the empty lunch-baskets, large ones, too.

"Come on, Mr. Kinzer," shouted Joe Hart, "let's put for the village. We'll starve here."

"A fellow that'd starve here just deserves to, that's all," said Dab. "Ford, there's Bill Lee's boat and three others coming in. We're all right. One of 'em's a dredger."

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Ford and Frank could only guess what their friend was up to, but Dab was not doing any guessing.

"Bill," he exclaimed, as Dick's father pulled within hearing,—“Bill, put a lot of your best pan-fish in this basket and then go and fetch us some lobsters. There's half a dozen in your pot. Did those others get any luck?”

"More clams 'n 'ysters," responded Bill.

"Then we'll take both lots."

The respect of the city boys for the resources of the Long Island shore began to rise rapidly a few minutes later, for not only was one of Dab's baskets promptly provided with "pan-fish," such as porgies, black fish and perch, but two others received all the clams and oysters they were at all anxious to carry to the house. At the same time, Bill Lee offered, as an amendment to the lobster question,

"Ye 'r' wrong about the pot, Dab."

"Wrong? Why—"

"Yes, you's wrong. Glorianny's been an' b'iled every one on 'em an' they 're all nice an' cold by this time."

"All right. I never eat my lobsters raw. Just you go and get them, Dick. Bring 'em right over to Ford's house."

Bill Lee would have sent his house and all on a suggestion that the Kinzers or Fosters were in need of it, and Dick would have carried it over for him.

As for "Gloriana," when her son came running in with his errand, she exclaimed:

"Dem lobsters? Sho! Dem aint good nuff. Dey sha'n't hab 'em. I'll jist send de ole man all 'round de bay to git some good ones. On'y dey isn't no kin' o' lobsters good nuff for some folks, dey isn't."

Dick insisted, however, and by the time he reached the back door of the old Kinzer homestead with his load, that kitchen had become very nearly as busy a place as Mrs. Miranda Morris's own, a few rods away.

"Ford," suddenly exclaimed Dab, as he finished scaling a large porgy, "what if mother should make a mistake?"

"Make a mistake? How?"

“Cook that baby! It’s awful!”

“Why, its mother’s there.”

“Yes, but they’ve put her to bed, and its father too. Hey, here come the lobsters. Now, Ford—”

The rest of what he had to say was given in a whisper, and was not heard by even Annie Foster, who was just then looking prettier than ever as she busied herself around the kitchen fire. As for the Hart boys, Mrs. Foster had invited them to come into the parlor and talk with her till dinner should be ready.

Such a frying and broiling!

Before Ham Morris was ready for his second start, and right in the midst of his greatest hurry, word came over from Mrs. Foster that “the table was waiting for them all.”

Even Mrs. Kinzer drew a long breath of relief and satisfaction, for there was nothing more in the wide world that she could do, just then, for either “that baby” or its unfortunate parents, and she was beginning to worry about her son-in-law, and how she should get him to eat something. For Ham Morris had worked himself up into a high state of excitement in his benevolent haste, and did not seem to know that he was hungry. Miranda had entirely sympathized with her husband until that message came from Mrs. Foster.

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"Oh, Hamilton, and good Mrs. Foster must have cooked it herself!"

"No," said Ham, thoughtfully; "our Dabney went home with Ford and Annie. I can't stay but a minute, but I think we'd better go right over."

Go they did, while the charitable neighbors whom Ham had stirred up concerning the wreck attended to the completion of the cargo of the "Swallow." There would be more than one good boat ready to accompany her back across the bay, laden with comforts of all sorts.

Even old Jock, the village tavern-keeper, not by any means the best man in the world, had come waddling down to the landing with a demijohn of "old apple brandy," and his gift had been kindly accepted by the special advice of the village physician.

"That sort of thing has made plenty of ship-wrecks around here," remarked the man of medicine; "and the people on the bar have swallowed so much salt-water, the apple-jack can't hurt 'em."

May be, the doctor was wrong about it, but the demijohn went over to the wreck in the "Swallow."

Mrs. Foster's dining-room was not a large one. There were no large rooms in that house. Nevertheless, the entire party managed to gather around the table,—all except Dab and Ford.

"Dab is head cook and I'm head waiter," had been Ford's explanation, "and we can't have any women folk a-bothering about our kitchen. Frank and the boys are company."

Certainly the cook had no cause to be ashamed of his work. The coffee was excellent. The fish were done to a turn. The oysters, roasted, broiled or stewed, and likewise the clams, were all that could have been asked for. Bread there was in abundance, and everything was going finely till Mrs. Kinzer asked her son, as his fire-red face showed itself at the kitchen door:

"Dabney, you've not sent in your vegetables; we're waiting for them."

Dab's face grew still redder, and he came very near dropping a plate he had in his hand.

"Vegetables? Oh yes. Well, Ford, we might as well send them in now. I've got them all ready."

Annie opened her eyes and looked hard at her brother, for she knew very well that not so much as a potato had been thought of in their preparations. Ford himself looked a little queer, but he marched out, white apron and all. A minute or so later, the two boys came in again, each bearing aloft a huge platter.

One of these was solemnly deposited at each end of the table.

“Vegetables?”

“Why, they’re lobsters!”

“Oh, Ford, how could you?”

The last exclamation came from Annie Foster as she clapped her hands over her face. Bright red were those lobsters, and fine-looking fellows, every one of them, in spite of Mrs. Lee’s poor opinion; but they were a little too well dressed, even for a dinner-party. Their thick shoulders were adorned with collars of the daintiest material and finish, while every ungainly “flipper” wore a “cuff” which had been manufactured for very different uses. Plenty of cuffs and collars, and queer enough the lobsters looked in them. All the queerer because every item of lace and linen was variegated with huge black spots and blotches, as if some one had begun to wash it in ink.

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Joe and Fuz were almost as red as the lobsters, and Mrs. Foster's face looked as severe as it could, but that is not saying a great deal. The Kinzer family knew all about those cuffs and collars, and Ham Morris and the younger ladies were trying hard not to laugh.

"Joe," said Fuz, half snappishly, "can't you take a joke? Annie's got the laugh on us this time."

"I?" exclaimed Annie, indignantly. "No, indeed. That's some of Ford's work and Dabney's. Mr. Kinzer, I'm ashamed of you."

Poor Dab!

He muttered something about "those being all the vegetables he had," and retreated to the kitchen. Joe and Fuz were not the sort to take offense easily, however, and promptly helped themselves liberally to lobster. That was all that was necessary to restore harmony at the table; but Dab's plan for "punishing the Hart boys" was a complete failure. As Ford told him afterward,

[Illustration: "VEGETABLES?" "WHY, THEY'RE LOBSTERS!"]

"Feel it? Not they. You might as well try to hurt a clam with a pin."

"And I hurt your sister's feelings instead of theirs," replied Dab. "Well, I'll never try anything like it again. Anyhow, Joe and Fuz aint comfortable. They ate too many roasted clams and too much lobster."

CHAPTER XXII.

Ham Morris did not linger long at the dinner-table, and Dab would have given more than ever for the privilege of going with him. Not that he felt so very charitable, but that he did not care to prolong his stay at Mrs. Foster's, whether as "cook" or otherwise. He had not lost his appetite, however, and after he had taken care of that, he slipped away "on an errand for his mother," and hurried toward the village. Nearly everybody he met had some question or other to ask him about the wreck, and it was not to have been expected that Jenny Walters would let her old acquaintance pass her without a word or so.

Dab answered as best he could, considering the disturbed state of his mind, but he wound up with:

"Jenny, I wish you'd come over to our house by and by."

"What for?"



“Oh, I’ve got something to show you. Something you never saw before.”

“Do you mean your new baby,—the one you found on the bar?”

“Yes; but that baby, Jenny!”

“What’s wonderful about it?”

“Why, it’s only two years old and it can squall in two languages. That’s more’n you can do.”

“They say your friend, Miss Foster, speaks French,” retorted Jenny. “Was she ever shipwrecked?”

“In French? May be so. But not in German.”

“Well, Dabney, I don’t propose to squall in anything. Are your folks going to burn any more of their barns this year?”

“Not unless Samantha gets married. Jenny, do you know what’s the latest fashion in lobsters?”

“Changeable green, I suppose.”

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"No; I mean after they're boiled. It's to have 'em come on the table in cuffs and collars. Lace around their necks, you know."

"And gloves?"

"No, not any gloves. We had lobsters to-day at Mrs. Foster's, and you ought to have seen 'em."

"Dabney Kinzer, it's time you went to school again."

"I'm going in a few days."

"Going? Do you mean you're going away somewhere?"

"Ever so far. Dick Lee's going with me."

"I heard about him, but I didn't know he meant to take you along. That's very kind of Dick. I s'pose you wont speak to common people when you get back."

"Now, Jenny——"

"Good afternoon, Dabney. Perhaps I'll come over before you go, if it's only to see that shipwrecked baby."

A good many of Mrs. Kinzer's lady friends, young and old, deemed it their duty to come and do that very thing within the next few days. Then the Sewing Circle took the matter up, and both the baby and its mother were provided for as they never had been before. It would have taken more languages than two to have expressed the gratitude of the poor Alsatians. As for the rest of them, out there on the bar, they were speedily taken off and carried "to the city," none of them being much the worse for their sufferings, after all. Ham Morris declared that the family he had brought ashore "came just in time to help him out with his fall work, and he didn't see any charity in it."

Good for Ham! but Dab Kinzer thought otherwise when he saw how tired Miranda's husband was on his late return from his second trip across the bay. Real charity never cares to see itself too clearly. They were pretty tired, both of them; but the "Swallow" was carefully moored in her usual berth before they left her. Even then they had a good load of baskets and things to carry with them.

"Is everything out of the locker, Dab?" asked Ham Morris.

"All but the jug. I say, did you know it was half full? Would it do any hurt to leave it here?"

"The jug? No. Just pour out the rest of the apple-jack, over the side."

“Make the fish drunk.”

“Well, it sha’n’t bother anybody else if I can help it.”

“Then, if it’s good for water-soaked people, it wont hurt the fish.”

“Empty it, Dab, and come on. The doctor wasn’t so far wrong, and I was glad to have it with me; but medicine’s medicine, and I only wish people’d remember it.”

The condemned liquor was already gurgling from the mouth of the jug into the salt water, and neither fish nor eel came forward to get a share of it. When the cork was replaced, the demijohn was set down again in the “cabin,” with no more danger in it for anybody.

Perhaps that was one reason—that and his weariness—why Ham Morris did not take the pains even to lock it up.

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Dabney was so tired in mind if not in body, that he postponed until the morrow anything he may have had to say about the tramp. He was not at all sure whether the latter had recognized him, and at all events the matter would have to wait. So it came to pass that all the village and the shore was deserted and silent, an hour or so later, when a stoutly built "cat-boat" with her one sail lowered, was quietly sculled up the inlet. There were two men on board,—a tall one and a short one,—and they ran their boat right alongside the "Swallow," as if that were the very thing they had come to do.

"Burgin," remarked the tall man, "what ef we don't find anything arter all this sailin' and rowin'? Most likely he's kerried it to the house. In course he has."

The keenly watchful eyes of Burgin had followed the fortunes of that apple-jack from first to last. To tell the truth, he had more than half tried to work himself in as one of the "sufferers," but with no manner of success. He had not failed, however, to see the coveted treasure stowed away, at last, under the half-deck of the "Swallow." That had been all the inducement required to get Peter and his boat across the bay, and the old "wrecker" was as anxious about the result as the tramp himself could be. It was hard to say which of them was first on board the "Swallow."

* * * * *

A disappointed and angry pair they were when the empty jug was discovered; but Burgin's indignation was loudest and most abusive. Peter checked him, at last, with:

"Look a yer, my friend, is this 'ere your boat?"

"No, I didn't say it was, did I?"

"Is that there your jug? I don't know 'at I keer to hev one o' my neighbors abused all night jest bekase I've been an' let an entire stranger make a fool of me."

"Do you mean me?"

"Well, ef I didn't I wouldn't say it. Don't git mad, now. Jest let's take a turn 'round the village."

"You go and I'll wait for ye. 'Pears like I don't keer to walk about much."

"Well, then, mind you don't run away with my boat."

"If I want a boat, there's plenty here better'n your'n."

"That's so. I wont be gone a great while."

He was, however, whatever may have been his errand. Old Peter was not the man to be at any loss for one, even at that time of night, and his present business kept him away from the shore a full hour. When at last he returned he found his boat safe enough, and so, apparently were all the others; but he looked around in vain for any signs of his late companion. Not that he spent much time or took any great pains in looking, for he muttered to himself:

“Gone, has he? Well then, a good riddance to bad rubbidge. I aint no angel, but he’s a long ways wuss than I am.”

Whether or not old Peter was right in his estimate of himself or of Burgin, in a few moments more he was all alone in his cat-boat, and was sculling it rapidly up the crooked inlet.

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His search had been indeed a careless one, for he had but glanced over the gunwale of the "Swallow." A second look would have shown him the form of the tramp, half covered by a loose flap of the sail, deeply and heavily sleeping at the bottom of the boat. It was every bit as comfortable a bed as he had been used to, and there he was still lying, long after the sun looked in upon him, next morning.

But other eyes were to look in upon Burgin's face before he awakened from that untimely and imprudent nap.

It was not so very early when Ham Morris and Dabney Kinzer were stirring again; but they had both arisen with a strong desire for a "talk," and Ham made an opportunity for one by saying:

"Come on, Dab; let's go down and have a look at the 'Swallow.'"

Ham had meant to talk about school and kindred matters; but Dabney's first words about the tramp cut off all other subjects.

"You ought to have told me," he said. "I'd have had him tied up in a minute."

Dabney explained as well as he could, but, before he had finished, Ham suddenly exclaimed:

"There's Dick Lee on board the 'Swallow.' What's he there for?"

"Dick!" shouted Dabney.

"Cap'n Dab, did yo' set dis yer boat to trap somebody?"

"No. Why?"

"Well den, you's gone an' cotched um. Jes you come an' see."

The sound of Dick Lee's voice, so near them, reached the dull ears of the slumbering tramp and, as Ham and Dabney sprang into a yawl and pushed alongside the yacht, his unpleasant face was slowly and sleepily lifted above the rail.

"It's the very man!" excitedly shouted Dabney.

"The tramp?"

"Yes, the tramp."

No one would have suspected Ham Morris of so much agility, although his broad and well-knit frame promised abundant strength, but he was on board the "Swallow" like a

flash and Burgin was “pinned” by his iron grasp before he could guess what was coming.

It was too late, then, for any such thing as resistance, and he settled at once into a dogged, sullen silence, after the ordinary custom of his kind when they find themselves cornered. It is a species of brute, animal instinct, more than even cunning, seemingly, but not a word did Ham and Dabney obtain from their prisoner until they delivered him to the safe keeping of the village authorities. That done, they went home to breakfast, feeling as if they had made a good morning’s work, but wondering what the end of it all would be.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The other boys were very much interested in the story of the tramp, and so was Mr. Foster when he came home, but poor Annie was a good deal more troubled than pleased.

“Oh, mother,” she exclaimed, “do you suppose I’ll have to appear in court as a witness against him?”

“I hope not, dear. Perhaps your father can manage to prevent it.”

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It would not have been easy for even so good a lawyer as Mr. Foster, if Burgin himself had not saved them all trouble on that score. Long before the slow processes of country criminal justice could bring him to actual trial, so many misdeeds were brought home to him from here and there, that he gave the matter up and freely related not only the manner of the barn-burning, but his revengeful motive for it. He made his case so very clear that when, in due course of time, he was brought before a judge and jury, there was nothing left for him to do but to plead "guilty."

That was some months later, however, and just at that time the manner of his capture—for the story of the demijohn leaked out first of all—gave the village something new to talk about. It was as good as a temperance lecture in spite of old Jock's argument that:

"You see, boys, good liquor don't do no harm. That was real good apple-jack, an' it jist toled that chap across the bay and captured him without no manner of diffikilty."

There were plenty who could testify to a different kind of "capture."

One effect of the previous day's work, including his adventures as an ornamental cook, was that Dab Kinzer conceived himself bound to be thenceforth especially polite to Joe and Fuz. The remaining days of their visit would have been altogether too few for the various entertainments he laid out for them.

They were to catch all that was to be caught in the bay. They were to ride everywhere and see everything.

"They don't deserve it, Dab," said Ford; "but you're a real good fellow. Mother says so."

"Does she?" and Dab evidently felt a good deal better after that.

Dick Lee, when his friends found time to think of him, had almost disappeared. Some three days afterward, while all the rest were out in the "Jenny," having a good time with their hooks and lines, "Gloriana" made her appearance in Mrs. Kinzer's dining-room with a face that was darker than usual with motherly anxiety.

"Miss Kinzer, has you seed my Dick dis week?"

"No, he hasn't been here at all. Anything the matter with him?"

"Dat's de berry question. I doesn't know wot to make ob 'im."

"Why, is he studying too hard?"

"It aint jist de books. I isn't so much afeard ob dem, but it's all 'long ob dat 'cad'my. I wish you'd jist take a look at 'im, fust chance ye git."

“Does he look bad?”

“No, taint jist altogeder his looks. He’s de bes’ lookin’ boy ’long shoah. But den de way he’s goin’ on to talk. ’T aint nateral. He use to talk fust rate.”

“Can’t he talk now?”

“Yes, Miss Kinzer, he kin talk, but den de way he gits out his words. Nebber seen sech a t’ing in all my born days. Takes him eber so long jist to say good-mornin’. An’ den he don’t say it like he used ter. I wish you’d jist take a good look at ’im.”

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Mrs. Kinzer promised, and gave her black friend such comfort as she could, but Dick Lee's tongue would never again be the free and easy thing it had been. Even at home and about his commonest "chores," he was all the while struggling with his pronunciation. If he succeeded as well with the rest of his "schooling," it was safe to say that it would not be thrown away upon him.

Gloriana went her way, and the next to intrude upon Mrs. Kinzer's special domain was her son-in-law himself, accompanied by his rosy bride.

"We've got a plan!"

"You? A plan? What about?"

"Dab and his friends."

"A party!" exclaimed Dab, when his mother unfolded Ham's plan to him. "Ham and Miranda give a party for us boys! Well, now, aren't they right down good! But, mother, we'll have to get it up mighty quick."

"I know, but that's easy enough with all the help we'll have. I'll take care of that."

"But, mother, what can we do? There's only a few know how to dance. I don't, for one."

"You must talk that over with Ford. Perhaps Annie and Frank can help you."

Great were the consultations and endless were the plans and propositions, till even Mrs. Kinzer found her temper getting a little worried over them.

"Miranda," she said, on the morning of the day, "all the invitations are sent now, and we must get rid of Dabney and the boys for a few hours."

"Send 'em for some greens to rig the parlor with," suggested Ham. "Let 'em take the ponies."

"Do you think the ponies are safe to drive just now?"

"Oh, Dab can handle 'em. They're a trifle skittish, that's all. They need a little exercise."

So they did, but it was to be doubted if the best way to secure it for them was to send them out in a light, two-seated wagon, with a load of five lively boys.

"Now, don't you let one of the other boys touch the reins," said Mrs. Kinzer.

Dab's promise to that effect was a hard one to keep, for Joe and Fuz almost tried to take the reins away from him before they had driven two miles from the house. He was

firm, however, and they managed to reach the strip of woodland, some five miles inland, where they were to gather their load, without any disaster, but it was evident to Dab all the way, that his ponies were in unusually "high" condition. He took them out of the wagon while the rest began to gather their very liberal harvest of evergreens, and did not bring them near it again until all was ready for the start homeward.

"Now, boys," he said, "you get in. Joe and Ford and Fuz on the back seat to hold the greens. Frank, get up there, forward, while I hitch the ponies. These fellows are full of mischief."

Very full, certainly, nor did Dab Kinzer know exactly what the matter was, for a minute or so after he seized the reins and sprang up beside Frank Harley. Then, indeed, as the ponies reared and kicked and plunged, it seemed to him he saw something work out from under their collars and fall to the ground. An acorn-burr is just the thing to worry a restive horse, if put in such a place, but Joe and Fuz had hardly expected their "little joke" would be so very successful as it was.

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The ponies were off now.

“Joe,” shouted Fuz, “let’s jump!”

“Don’t let ’em, Ford,” exclaimed Dab, giving his whole energies to the horses. “They’ll break their necks if they do. Hold ’em in!”

Ford, who was in the middle, promptly seized an arm of each of his panic-stricken cousins, while Frank clambered over the seat to help him. They were all down on the the bottom now, serving as a weight to hold the branches, as the light wagon bounced and rattled along over the smooth, level road.

In vain Dab pulled and pulled at the ponies. Run they did, and all he could do was to keep them fairly in the road.

Bracing strongly back, with the reins wound around his tough hands, and with a look in his face that should have given courage even to the Hart boys, Dab strained at his task as bravely as he had stood at the tiller of the “Swallow” in the storm.

No such thing as stopping them.

And now, as they whirled along, even Dab’s face paled a little.

“I must reach the bridge before he does. He’s just stupid enough to keep right on.”

And it was very stupid indeed for the driver of that one-horse “truck wagon” to try and reach the narrow little unrailed bridge first. It was an old, used-up sort of a bridge, at best.

Dab loosened the reins a little, but could not use his whip.

“Why can’t he stop!”

It was a moment of breathless anxiety, but the wagoner kept stolidly on. There would be barely room to pass him on the road itself; none at all on the narrow bridge.

The ponies did it.

They seemed to put on an extra touch of speed, on their own account, just then.

There was a rattle, a faint crash, and then, as the wheels of the two vehicles almost grazed one another in passing, Ford shouted:

“The bridge is down!”

Such a narrow escape!

One of the rotten girders, never half strong enough, had given way under the sudden shock of the hind wheels and that truck wagon would have to find its path across the brook as best it could.

There were more wagons to pass as they plunged forward, and rough places in the road, for Dabney to look out for, but even Joe and Fuz were now getting confidence in their driver. Before long, too, the ponies themselves began to feel that they had had nearly enough of it. Then it was that Dab used his whip again, and the streets of the village were traversed at such a rate as to call for the disapprobation of all sober-minded people.

"Here we are, Ham, greens and all."

"Did they run far?" asked Ham, quietly.

CHAPTER XXIV

The boys had returned a good deal sooner than had been expected, but they made no more trouble. As Ford Foster remarked, they were all "willing to go slow for a week" after being carried so very fast by Dab Kinzer's ponies.

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There was a great deal to be said about the runaway, and Mrs. Foster longed to see Dab and thank him on Ford's account, but he himself had no idea that he had done anything remarkable, and was very busily at work decking Miranda's parlors with the "greens."

A very nice appearance they made, all those woven branches and clustered sprays, when they were in place, and Samantha declared for them that,

"They had kept Dab out of mischief all the afternoon."

At an early hour after supper, the guests began to arrive, for Mrs. Kinzer was a woman of too much sense to have night turned into day when she could prevent it. As the stream of visitors steadily poured in, Dab remarked to Jenny Walters:

"We shall have to enlarge the house after all."

"If it were only a dress, now?"

"What then?"

"Why, you could just let out the tucks. I've had to do that with mine."

"Jenny, shake hands with me."

"What for, Dabney?"

"I'm so glad to meet somebody else that's outgrowing something."

There was a tinge of color rising in Jenny's face, but, before she could say anything, Dab added:

"There! Jenny, there's Mrs. Foster and Annie. Isn't she sweet?"

"One of the nicest old ladies I ever saw——"

"Oh, I didn't mean her mother."

"Never mind. You must introduce me to them."

"So I will. Take my arm."

[Illustration: "MAY I HAVE THE HONOR?"]

Jenny Walters had been unusually kindly and gracious in her manner that evening, and her very voice had much less than its accustomed sharpness, but her natural

disposition broke out a little some minutes later, while she was talking with Annie. Said she:

"I've wanted so much to get acquainted with you."

"With me?"

"Yes. I've seen you in church, and I've heard you talked about, and I wanted to find out for myself."

"Find out what?" asked Annie a little soberly.

"Why, you see, I don't believe it's possible for any girl to be as sweet as you look. I couldn't, I know. I've been trying these two days, and I'm nearly worn out."

Annie's eyes opened wide with surprise, and she laughed merrily as she answered:

"What can you mean? I'm glad enough if my face doesn't tell tales of me."

"But mine does," said Jenny, "and then I'm so sure to tell all the rest with my tongue. I wish I knew what were your faults."

"My faults? What for?"

"I don't know. Seems to me if I could think of your faults instead of mine, it wouldn't be so hard to look sweet."

Annie saw that there was more earnestness than fun in the queer talk of her new acquaintance. The truth was that Jenny had been having almost as hard a struggle with her tongue as ever poor Dick Lee with his, though not for not the same reason. Before many minutes she had frankly told Annie all about it, and she could never have done that if she had not somehow felt that Annie's "sweetness" was genuine. The two girls were sure friends after that, much to the surprise of Mr. Dabney Kinzer.

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He, indeed, had been too much occupied in caring for his guests to pay special attention to one of them. His mother had looked after him again and again with eyes brimful of pride and of commendation of the way he was acquitting himself.

Even Mrs. Foster said to her husband, who had now arrived:

“Do you see that? Who would have expected as much from a raw, green country boy?”

“But, my dear, don’t you see? The secret of it is that he’s not thinking of himself at all. He’s only anxious his friends should have a good time.”

“That’s it; but then that too is a very rare thing in a boy of his age.”

“Dabney!” exclaimed the lawyer in a louder tone of voice.

“Good-evening, Mr. Foster. I’m glad you’ve found room. The house isn’t half large enough.”

“I understand your ponies ran away with you to-day?”

“They did come home in a hurry; but nobody was hurt.”

“I fear there would have been, but for you. Do you start for Grantley with the other boys to-morrow?”

“Of course. Dick Lee and I need some one to take care of us. We never traveled so far before.”

“On land, you mean. Is Dick here to-night?”

“Came and looked in, sir, but got scared by the crowd and went home.”

“Poor fellow! Well, we will do all we can for him.”

Poor Dick Lee!

And yet, if Mr. Dabney Kinzer had known his whereabouts at that very moment he would half have envied him.

Dick’s mother was in the kitchen helping about the supper, but she had not left home until she had compelled Dick to dress himself in his best,—white shirt, red neck-tie, shining shoes and all,—and she had brought him with her almost by force.

“You’s good nuff to go to de ‘cad’mey and leab yer pore mother, an’ I reckon you’s good nuff for de party.”

And Dick had actually ventured in from the kitchen through the dining-room and as far as the door of the back parlor, where few would look.

[Illustration: "PINNED!"]

How his heart did beat as he looked on the merry gathering, a large part of whom he had known "all his born days!"

But there was a side door opening from that dining-room on the long piazza which Mrs. Kinzer had added to the old Morris mansion, and Dick's hand was on the knob of that door almost before he knew it.

Then he was out on the road to the landing, and in five minutes more he was vigorously rowing the "Jenny" out through the inlet toward the bay.

His heart was not beating unpleasantly any longer, but as he shot out from the narrow passage through the flags and saw the little waves laughing in the cool, dim starlight, he suddenly stopped rowing, leaned on his oars, gave a sigh of relief, and exclaimed:

"Dar! I's safe now. I aint got to say a word to nobody out yer. Wonder 'f I'll ebber git back from de 'cad'my an' kitch fish in dis yer bay? Sho! Course I will. But goin' away's awful!"

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Dab Kinzer thought he had never known Jenny Walters to appear so well as she looked that evening; and he must have been right, for good Mrs. Foster said to Annie:

"What a pleasant, kindly face your new friend has! You must ask her to come and see us. She seems quite a favorite with the Kinzers."

"Have you known Dabney long?" Annie had asked of Jenny a little before that.

"Ever since I was a little bit of a girl, and a big boy seven or eight years old pushed me into the snow."

"Was it Dabney?"

"No, but Dabney was the boy that pushed him in for doing it, and then helped me up. Dab rubbed his face for him with snow till he cried."

"Just like him!" exclaimed Annie with emphasis. "I should think his friends here will miss him."

"Indeed they will," replied Jenny, and then she seemed disposed to be quiet for a while.

The party could not last forever, pleasant as it was, and by the time his duties as "host" were met, Dabney was tired enough to go to bed and sleep soundly. His arms were lame and sore from the strain the ponies had given them, and that may have been the reason why he dreamed half the night that he was driving runaway teams and crashing over rickety old bridges.

But why was it that every one of his dream-wagons, no matter who else was in it, seemed to have Jenny Walters and Annie Foster smiling at him from the back seat?

He rose later than usual next morning, and the house was all in its customary order by the time he got down-stairs.

Breakfast was ready also, and, by the time that was over, Dab's great new trunk was brought down-stairs by a couple of the farm-hands.

"It's an hour yet to train-time," said Ham Morris; "but we might as well get ready. We must be on hand in time."

What a long hour that was, and not even a chance given for Dab to run down and take a good-bye look at the "Swallow!"

His mother and Ham and Miranda and the girls seemed to be all made up of "good-bye" that morning.

“Mother,” said Dab.

“What is it, my dear boy?”

“That’s it exactly. If you say ‘dear boy’ again, Ham Morris ’ll have to carry me to the cars. I’m all kind o’ wilted now.”

Then they all laughed, and before they got through laughing, they all cried except Ham.

He put his hands in his pockets and drew a long whistle.

The ponies were at the door now. The light wagon had three seats in it, but when Dab’s trunk was in, there was only room left for the ladies; Ham and Dab had to walk to the station.

It was a short walk, however, and a silent one, but as they came in sight of the platform, Dab exclaimed:

“There they are, all of them!”

“The whole party?”

“Why, the platform’s as crowded as our house was last night.”

Mrs. Kinzer and her daughters were already the center of the crowd of young people, and Ford Foster and Frank Harley, with Joe and Fuz Hart were asking what had become of Dab, for the train was in sight.

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A moment later, as the puffing locomotive drew up by the water-tank, the conductor stepped out on the platform, exclaiming:

“Look a here, folks. This aint right. If there was going to be a picnic you’d ought to have sent word, and I’d have tacked on an extra car. You’ll have to pack in, now, best you can.”

He seemed much relieved when he found how small a part of the crowd were to be his passengers.

“Dab,” said Ford, “this is your send-off, not ours. You’ll have to make a speech.”

Dab did want to say something, but he had just kissed his sisters and his mother, and half a dozen of his school-girl friends had followed the example of Jenny Walters, and then Mrs. Foster had kissed him, and Ham Morris had shaken hands with him, and Dab could not have said a loud word to have saved his life.

“Speech!” whispered Ford, mischievously, as Dab stepped upon the platform; but Dick Lee, who had just escaped from the tremendous hug his mother had given him, came to his friend’s aid in the nick of time. Dick felt that “he must shout, or he should go off,” as he afterward told the boys, and so at the top of his shrill voice he shouted:

“Hurrah for Cap’n Kinzer! Dar aint no better feller lef’ along shore!”

And, amid a chorus of cheers and laughter, and a grand waving of white handkerchiefs, the engine gave a deep, hysterical cough, and hurried the train away.

The two homesteads by the Long Island shore were a little lonely for a while, after the departure of all those noisy, merry young fellows. Mr. Foster had enough to do in the city, and Ham Morris had his farm to attend to, besides doing more than a little for Mrs. Kinzer. It was much the better for both estates that he had that notable manager at his elbow. The ladies, however, old and young, had plenty of time to come together and wonder how the boys were getting along, even before the arrival of the first batch of letters.

“They must be happy,” remarked kind Mrs. Foster, after the long, boyish epistles had been read, over and over; “and such good letters! Not one word of complaint of anything.”

Mrs. Kinzer assented somewhat thoughtfully. Dabney had not complained of anything; but while he had praised the village, the scenery, the academy, the boys, and had covered two full sheets of paper, he had not said a word about the table of his boarding-house.

“He is such a growing boy,” she said to herself. “I do hope they will give him enough to eat.”

It went on a good deal in that way, however, for weeks, even till the Fosters broke up their summer residence and returned to the city. There were plenty of letters, and all his sisters wondered where Dabney had learned to write so capitally; but Mrs. Kinzer’s doubts were by no means removed until Ham Morris showed her a part of a curious epistle Dabney had sent to him in a moment of confidence.

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"I tell you what, Ham," he wrote, "mother doesn't know what can be done with corn. Mrs. Myers does. She raised a pile of it last year, and the things she makes with it would drive a cook-book crazy. I've been giving them Latin names, and Frank, he turns them into Hindustanee. It's real fun, but I sha'n't be the boy I was. I'm getting corned. My hair is silkier and my voice is husky. My ears are growing. I'd like some fish and clams for a change. A crab would taste wonderfully good. So would some oysters. They don't have any up here; but we went fishing, last Saturday, and got some perch and cat-fish and sun-fish. They call them pumpkin-seeds up here, and they aint much bigger. Don't tell mother we don't get enough to eat. There's plenty of it, and you ought to see Mrs. Myers smile when she passes the johnny-cake. We are all trying to learn that heavenly smile. Ford does it best. I think Dick Lee is getting a little pale. Perhaps corn doesn't agree with him. He's learning fast, though, and so am I; but we have to work harder than the rest. I guess the Hart boys know more than they did when they came here, and they didn't get it all out of their books, either. We keep up our French and our boxing; but oh, wouldn't I like to go for some blue-fish, just now! Has mother made any mince-pies yet? I've almost forgotten how they taste. I was going by a house here the other day and I smelt some ham, cooking. I was real glad I hadn't forgotten. I knew what it was right away. Don't you be afraid about my studying, for I'm at it all the while, except when we're playing ball or eating corn. They say they have sleighing here earlier than we do, and plenty of skating. Well, now, don't say anything to mother about the corn; but wont I eat when I get home.—Yours all the while.
DABNEY KINZER."

"Why, the poor fellow!" exclaimed Mrs. Kinzer, and it was not very many days after that before young Dabney received a couple of boxes by express.

There was a boiled ham in the first one and a great many other things, and Dab called in all the other boys to help him get them out.

"Mince-pies!" shouted Ford Foster. "How'd they ever travel so far?"

"They're not much mashed," said Dabney. "There's enough there to start a small hotel. Now let's open the other."

"Ice. Sawdust. Fish, I declare. Clams. Oysters. Crabs. There's a lobster. Ford, Frank, Dick, do you think we can eat those fellows?"

"After they're cooked," said Ford.

"Well, I s'pose we can; but I feel like shaking hands with 'em, all round. They're old friends and neighbors of mine, you know."

"I guess we'd better eat 'em."

“Cap’n Dab,” remarked Dick Lee, “dey jest knocks all de correck pronunciation clean out of me.”

Eaten they were, however, and Mrs Myers was glad enough to have her boarders supply such a remarkable “variety” for her table, which, after that “hint,” began to improve a little.

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And so we leave Dab Kinzer, still, in mind and body, as when first we saw him, a growing boy.

WHERE?

BY MARY N. PRESCOTT.

Where does the Winter stay?
With the little Esquimaux,
Where the frost and snow-flake grow?
Or where the white bergs first come out,
Where icicles make haste to sprout,
Where the winds and storms begin,
Gathering the crops all in,
Among the ice-fields, far away?

Where does the Summer stay?
In distant sunny places,
'Midst palms and dusky faces,
Where they spin the cocoa thread,
Where the generous trees drop bread,
Where the lemon-groves give alms,
And Nature works her daily charms,
Among the rice-fields, far away?

[Illustration]

PARLOR MAGIC.

(Pleasing, Harmless, and Inexpensive Experiments, chiefly Chemical, for Young People.)

BY LEO H. GRINDON.

This series of experiments is designed for the use of young people who are interested in the wonders and the beautiful realities of nature, and who delight to observe for themselves how curious are the phenomena revealed by scientific knowledge. Simple instructions are given for the performance of a number of pretty experiments, all of which are perfectly safe, and cost very little money. For "evenings at home," it is hoped that these experiments will be found indefinitely amusing and recreative, at the same time that they will lead the minds of boys and girls to inquiries into the entire fabric of the grand sciences which explains the principles on which they are founded. All the materials spoken of, and all the needful apparatus, which is of the simplest and most



inexpensive kind, can be obtained at a good chemist's. It is of the highest importance that all the materials be pure and good.

PARLOR SUNSHINE.

Obtain a yard of "magnesium tape" or "magnesium wire," sold very cheap by most druggists. Cut a length of six or eight inches; bend one extremity so as to get a good hold of it with a pair of forceps, or even a pair of ordinary scissors, or attach it to the end of a stick or wire. Then hold the piece of magnesium vertically in a strong flame, such as that of a candle, and in a few seconds it will ignite, burning with the splendor of sunshine, and making night seem noonday. As the burning proceeds, a quantity of white powder is formed. This is pure magnesia. While performing this splendid experiment, the room should be darkened.

CADAVEROUS FACES.

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This is an amusing contrast to the lighting-up by means of magnesium; Again let the room be nearly darkened. Put about a tea-cupful of spirits of wine in a strong common dish or saucer, and place the dish in the middle of the table. Let every one approach to the distance of about a yard. Then ignite the spirit with a match. It will burn with a peculiar yellowish-blue flame, and in the light of this the human countenances, and all objects of similar color, lose their natural tint, and look spectral. The contrast of the wan and ghostly hue with the smiling lips and white teeth of those who look on, is most amusing. The effect of this experiment is heightened by dissolving some common table-salt in the spirit, and still further by putting into it a small quantity of saffron. Let the spirit burn itself away.

THE BREATH OF LIFE.

[Illustration: THE BREATH OF LIFE.]

Procure a tolerably large bell-glass, such as is used for covering clocks and ornaments upon the mantel-piece. It should not be less than eighteen inches high, and eight or nine inches in diameter. Provide also a common dish, sufficiently large to allow the bell-glass to stand well within its raised border. Then procure two little wax candles, three or four inches in length, and stand each in a little bottle or other temporary candlestick. Place them in the center of the dish and light the wicks. Then pour water into the dish to the depth of nearly an inch, and finish by placing the bell over the candles, which of course are then closely shut in. For a few minutes all goes on properly. The flames burn steadily, and seem to laugh at the idea of their being about to die. But, presently, they become faint,—first one, then the other; the luster and the size of the flames diminish rapidly, and then they go out. This is because the burning candles consumed all the oxygen that was contained within the volume of atmosphere that was in the bell, and were unable, on account of the water, to get new supplies from outside. It illustrates, in the most perfect manner, our own need of constant supplies of good fresh air. The experiment may be improved, or at all events varied, by using candles of different lengths.

ROSE-COLOR PRODUCED FROM GREEN.

Obtain a small quantity of roseine,—one of the wonderful products obtained from gas-tar, and employed extensively in producing what are called by manufacturers the “magenta colors.” Roseine exists in the shape of minute crystals, resembling those of sugar. They are hard and dry, and of the most brilliant emerald green. Drop five or six of these little crystals into a large glass of limpid water. They will dissolve; but instead of giving a *green* solution, the product is an exquisite crimson-rose color, the color seeming to trickle from the surface of the water downward. When the solution has

proceeded for a short time, stir the water with a glass rod, and the uncolored portion of it will become carmine.

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SOME ELECTRICAL EXPERIMENTS.

Take a piece of common brown paper, about a foot in length, and half as wide. Hold it before the fire till it becomes quite hot. Then draw it briskly under your left arm several times, so as to rub it on both surfaces against the woolen cloth of your coat. It will now have become so powerfully electrified, that if placed against the papered wall of the parlor, it will hold on for some time, supported, as it were, by nothing.

While the piece of brown paper is thus so strangely clinging to the wall, place a small, light, and fleecy feather against it, and this, in turn, will cling to the paper.

Now, again, make your piece of brown paper hot by the fire, and draw it, as before, several times under the arm. Previously to this, attach a string to one corner, so that it may be held up in the air. Several feathers, of a fleecy kind, may now be placed against each side of the paper, and they will cling to it for several minutes.

Another curious electrical experiment is to take a pane of common glass, make it warm by the fire, then lay it upon two books, allowing only the edges to touch the books, and rub the upper surface with a piece of flannel, or a piece of black silk. Have some bran ready, strew it upon the table under the piece of glass, and the particles will dance.

TO CUT A PHIAL IN HALF.

Wind round it two bands of paper, corresponding in position to the two temperate zones of the earth, leaving a space between, corresponding to the equatorial zone. Secure the two bands of paper with thread or fine twine. Then wind a long piece of string once around the equatorial space. Let an assistant hold one end of the string, and while holding the other end yourself, move the phial rapidly to and fro, so that the string shall work upon the glass between the two pieces of paper. When the glass becomes hot in the equatorial space, pour some cold water upon it, and the glass will break as evenly as if cut with a knife.

[Illustration: CUTTING THE PHIAL.]

The principle involved in this curious experiment may be applied to the removal of a glass stopper, when too tight in the neck of the bottle for the fingers to stir it. All that is necessary is to wind a piece of thick string round the neck of the bottle, get an assistant to hold one end, and then work the bottle to and fro. The glass of the neck will become so warm as to expand, and the stopper will become loosened. It is often necessary to continue this friction for some minutes before the desired result is attained.

THE INVISIBLE RENDERED VISIBLE.

Place a coin in an empty basin, and let the basin be near the edge of the table. Ask one of the company to stand beside it, and to retire slowly backward until he or she can no longer see the coin. Then pour cold, clear water into the basin, and the person, who the moment before could not perceive the coin, now will see it quite plainly, though without moving a hair's breadth nearer.

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[Illustration: THE COIN INVISIBLE.]

[Illustration: THE COIN VISIBLE.]

LIGHT FROM SUGAR.

In a dark room, rub smartly one against the other, a couple of lumps of white sugar, and light will be evolved. A similar effect is produced by rubbing two lumps of borate of soda one against the other.

MINIATURE FIRE-SHIPS.

Procure a good-sized lump of camphor. Cut it up into pieces of the size of a hazel-nut, and having a large dish filled with cold water in readiness, lay the pieces on the surface, where they will float. Then ignite each one of them with a match, and they will burn furiously, swimming about all the time that the burning is in progress, until at last nothing remains but a thin shell, too wet to be consumed.

PURPLE AIR.

Obtain an olive-oil flask, the glass of which must be colorless. In default of an oil-flask, a large test-tube may be employed. Put into it a small quantity of solid iodine (procurable at the chemist's and very cheap), then lightly stop the mouth of the flask or test-tube with some cotton-wool, but not hermetically, and hold it slantwise over the flame of a spirit-lamp. The heat will soon dissolve the iodine, which will next turn into a most beautiful violet-colored vapor, completely filling the glass, and disappearing again as the glass gets cold.

THE TWO EGGS.

Dissolve as much common table-salt in a pint of water as it will take up, so as to prepare a strong brine. With this brine half fill a tall glass. Then pour in pure water, very carefully. Pour it down the side, or put it in with the help of a spoon, so as to break the fall. The pure water will then float upon the top of the brine, yet no difference will be visible. Next, take another glass of exactly the same kind, and fill it with pure water. Now take a common egg, and put it into the vessel of pure water, when it will instantly sink to the bottom. Put another egg into the first glass, and it will not descend below the surface of the brine, seeming to be miraculously suspended in the middle. Of course the two glass vessels should be considerably wider than the egg is long.

THE MAGIC APERTURE.

Put several lighted candles upon the table, in a straight row and near together. Lay upon the table, in front of them, a large piece of smooth, white paper. Have ready a piece of pasteboard, large enough to conceal the candles, with a small hole cut in it above the middle. Place this so as to stand upon its edge between the row of candles and the sheet of paper in front, and there will be as many images of flames thrown through the hole and upon the paper as there are burning candles.

[Illustration: THE MAGIC APERTURE.]

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GREEN FIRE.

Obtain some boracic acid, mix it well with a small quantity of spirits of wine, or alcohol, place the alcohol in a saucer upon a dish, and then ignite it with a match. The flame will be a beautiful green. To see the color to perfection, of course, the room should be somewhat darkened.

A green flame may also be produced by using chloride of copper instead of boracic acid. And instead of mixing it with the alcohol, a small quantity may be imbedded in the wick of a candle.

A BEAUTIFUL IMITATION OF HOAR FROST.

Obtain a large bell-glass, with a short neck and cork at the top, such as may be seen in the chemists' shops. Then procure a small quantity of benzoic acid, which exists in the shape of snowy crystals. Elevate the bell-glass upon a little stage made of books or pieces of wood, so as to allow a spirit-lamp to be introduced underneath, and a little evaporating dish to be held above the flame by means of a ring of wire with suitable handle. Place the benzoic acid in the evaporating dish, over the flame, and presently the acid will ascend in vapor and fill the bell, which must not be quite closed at the top. Before setting up the apparatus, introduce into the bell a small branch of foliage, which may be hung by a thread from the neck of the bell. The stiffer and more delicate this branch, the better. In a short time, it will become covered with a soft white deposit of the acid, very closely resembling hoar-frost. This makes an extremely pretty ornament for the parlor.

[Illustration: IMITATING HOAR-FROST.]

TO BOIL WATER WITHOUT FIRE.

Half fill a common oil-flask with water, and boil it for a few minutes over the flame of a spirit-lamp. While boiling, cork up the mouth of the flask as quickly as you can, and tie a bit of wet bladder over the cork, so as to exclude the air perfectly. The flask being now removed from the lamp, the boiling ceases. Pour some cold water upon the upper portion of the flask, and the ebullition recommences! Apply hot water, and it stops! And thus you may go on as long as you please.

TO CONVERT A LIQUID INTO A SOLID.

Dissolve about half a pound of sulphate of soda in a pint of boiling water, and after it has stood a few minutes to settle, pour it off into a clean glass vessel. Pour a little sweet oil

upon the surface, and put it to stand where it can get cold, and where no one will touch it. When cold, put in a stick, and the fluid, previously clear, will at once become opaque, and begin to crystallize, until at length there is a solid crystalline mass.

ICE ON FIRE.

Make a hole in a block of ice with a hot poker. Pour out the water, and fill up the cavity with camphorated spirits of wine. Then ignite the spirit with a match, and the lump of ice will seem to be in flames.

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EXPERIMENTS REQUIRING CHEMICAL SOLUTIONS.

To prepare these solutions, purchase of a druggist a small quantity of the solid crystals of the substance needed for the experiment you wish to try. Dissolve the crystals in clear pure water, and keep the solution in a little bottle, labeled with the name. It is seldom that the solutions need be strong. When the crystal is a colored one, enough should be used to give the water a light tint, blue, yellow, or what it may be. None of these solutions will do any harm to the hands, unless there is a cut or a wound of any kind upon the skin. It is well also, not to let a drop of any of them fall upon the clothes, or upon furniture, for some of them will stain. And none of them should ever be tasted, or touched by the lips or tongue, many of them being acrid and even poisonous.

With the acids still greater care is needed, the stronger acids being corrosive and poisonous. The greater portion of these substances must likewise not be smelled, as the fumes or vapors would affect the nostrils painfully.

For the proper performance of these experiments with solutions, *etc.*,—at all events for the neatest and most elegant performance of them,—there should be obtained from the chemist's shop about a dozen test-tubes. These are little glass vessels, manufactured on purpose, and very cheap. Do not take glasses that may afterward be used for drinking or household purposes. Be careful to have every one of your experiment glasses perfectly clean.

To produce a Beautiful Violet-Purple Color.

Take a nearly colorless solution of any salt of copper. The sulphate is the cheapest and handiest. Fill the test-tube or other experimenting-glass about two-thirds full. Then drop in, slowly, a little liquid ammonia. It will cause a beautiful blue to appear, and presently a most lovely violet-purple, which, by stirring with a glass rod, extends all through the fluid.

If now you drop into this a very little nitric acid, the fluid will again become as clear as pure water.

To Make a Splendid Scarlet.

Again take some solution of sulphate of copper. Add to it a little solution of bichromate of potash. Then add a little solution of nitrate of silver, and there is produced a splendid scarlet color.

To Make a Deep Blue.



Now, take a nearly colorless solution of sulphate of iron, and drop into it, slowly, a small quantity of solution of yellow prussiate of potash. This will induce a beautiful deep blue, quite different from the blues that are produced from copper salts.

To Make a Yellow Color.

Take a solution of acetate of lead, and add a few drops of solution of iodide of potassium, and a most lovely canary-yellow color is produced.

Invisible Inks.

Nearly all those experiments which result in the production of color may be performed in another way, and be then applied to the purposes of secret writing. Thus:

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Write with dilute solution of sulphate of copper. The writing will be quite invisible, but become blue when held over the vapor of liquid ammonia.

Write with the same solution, and wash the paper with solution of yellow prussiate of potash, and the writing, previously invisible, will become brown. If you choose you may reverse this method, writing with solution of the prussiate of potash, and washing the paper with solution of the copper salt.

Write with solution of sulphate of iron, and the writing will again be invisible. Wash it over with tincture of galls, and it becomes black.

Write with sulphate of iron, and use a wash of yellow prussiate of potash, and the writing will come out blue. This experiment may likewise be reversed, and with similar result.

How to Copper a Knife-Blade.

Make a rather strong solution of sulphate of copper. Let a clean and polished piece of steel or iron, such as the blade of a knife, stand in it for a few minutes, and the iron will become covered or encrusted with a deposit of pure copper.

To Make Beautiful Crystals.

Dissolve, in different vessels, half an ounce each of the sulphates of iron, zinc, copper, soda, alumina, magnesia, and potash. The solutions can be made more rapidly by using warm water. When the salts are all completely dissolved, pour the whole seven solutions into a large dish, stir the mixture with a glass rod, then place it in a warm place, where it will not be disturbed. By degrees, the water will evaporate, and then the salts will re-crystallize, each kind preserving its own proper form and color. Some occur in groups, some as single crystals. If carefully protected from dust, these form extremely pretty ornaments for the parlor.

Alum Baskets.

These may be prepared by dissolving alum in water in such quantity that at last the water can take up no more, and the undissolved alum lies at the bottom of the vessel. The solution thus obtained is called a saturated one. Then procure a common ornamental wire basket, and suspend it in the solution, so as to be well covered in every part. There should be twice as much solution as will cover the basket. The wires of the basket should be wound with worsted, so that the surface may be rough. Leave it undisturbed in the solution, and gradually the crystals will form all over the surface. Before putting in the basket, it is best to further strengthen the solution by boiling it down to one half, after which it should be strained.

The Lead-Tree.



Dissolve half an ounce of acetate of lead in six ounces of water. The solution will be turbid, so clarify it with a few drops of acetic acid. Now put the solution into a clean phial, nearly filling the phial. Suspend in the solution, by means of a thread attached to the cork, a piece of clean zinc wire. By degrees, the wire will become covered with beautiful metallic spangles, like the foliage of a tree.

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UN ALPHABET FRANCAIS.

PAR LAURA CAXTON.

[Illustration: A—ANNETTE A UN TRES JOLI PETIT AGNEAU]

[Illustration: B—BAPTISTE A UNE PAIRE DE GRANDES BOTTES]

[Illustration: C—CECILE EST CHARMEE DE FAIRE ROULER SON CERCEAU.]

[Illustration: D—DENIS PLEURE PARCEQU'IL A MAL AUX DENTS.]

[Illustration: E—EDOUARD VA GAIEMENT A L'ECOLE, AVEC SES LIVRES.]

[Illustration: F—FANCHON FAIT UNE CRAVATE POUR SON FRERE.]

[Illustration: G—GABRIELLE A ETE GRONDEE PAR SON GRAND-PERE.]

[Illustration: H—HENRI VA PATINER SUR LA GLACE PENDANT L'HIVER.]

[Illustration: I—ISABELLE EST UNE PAUVRE PETITE INVALIDE.]

[Illustration: J—JACQUES S'AMUSE TOUTE LA JOURNEE AVEC SES JOUJOUX.]

[Illustration: K—K EST LA LETTRE QUE JEAN TIENT SOUS LA MAIN.]

[Illustration: L—LOUISE DONNE DES LEGUMES A SES PETITS LAPINS.]

[Illustration: M—MARIE A DES MARGUERITES POUR SA CHERE MAMAN.]

[Illustration: N—NARCISSE A TROUVE DES OISEAUX DANS UN NID.]

[Illustration: O—OLIVIER, AVEC SON PARAPLUIE, N'A PAS PEUR DE L'ORAGE.]

[Illustration: P—PAULINE A BEAUCOUP DE PLAISIR AVEC SA PETITE POUPEE.]

[Illustration: Q—QUENTIN AIME A JOUER AUX QUILLES DE BOIS.]

[Illustration: R—ROLAND REMPLIT UN POT POUR Y PLANTER SON ROSIER.]

[Illustration: S—SUSETTE A UN MORCEAU DE SUCRE POUR SON SERIN.]

[Illustration: T—THERESE EST TRISTE PARCEQUE SON TABLIER EST SALE.]

[Illustration: U—URBAIN A LE DRAPEAU DES ETATS-UNIS.]



[Illustration: V—VIRGINIE ARROSE SES VIOLETTES CHAQUE MATIN ET CHAQUE SOIR.]

[Illustration: W—WINIFRED EST AMERICAINE, ELLE N'EST PAS UNE PETITE FRANCAISE.]

[Illustration: X—XENOPHON EST LE GENERAL RENOMME A QUI PAUL CROIT RESSEMBLER.]

[Illustration: Y—Y A-T-IL UNE AUTRE PETITE FILLE DE SI JOLIS YEUX?]

[Illustration: Z—ZENOBIE SAIT COMPTER D'UN JUSQU'A ZERO.]

A FAIR EXCHANGE.

BY MRS. M. F. BUTTS.

“Oh, Willow, where did you get your fringe,
In New York or in Paris?
Tell me, and I will get some too,
Because I am an heiress;
And I buy me everything I want;
I have a ring and a feather;
I promenade in my white kid boots
Each day in pleasant weather.”

“Oh, little one, where did you get the pink,
In your pretty, round cheek glowing?
And where did you get the yellow curls,
Over your shoulders flowing?
Perhaps you can tell me how they are made;
If you think so, darling, try it;
And when you succeed, I'll tell you about
My fringe, and where to buy it.”

HOW TEDDY CUT THE PIE.

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(A Geometrical Jingle.)

BY ROSSITER JOHNSON.

Teddy, Jimmy, Frank, and I
Fished all day for smallest fry,
And as evening shades drew nigh,
Stopped to see if we could buy,
At a road-side groce-ry,
Anything they called a pie.

There was one, and only one,
Deeply filled and brownly done,
Warm from standing in the sun,
Flanked on each side by a bun,
Since that summer day begun.

From the window it was brought,
With our pennies it was bought;
Then a knife was quickly sought—
Who would cut it as he ought?

“Leave it all,” says Ted, “to me,”
As the knife he flourished free;
“I have cut a great ma-ny.”

“But,” says Frank, who feared our fate,
“Will you cut it fair and straight?”
“Straight?” says Ted. “I’ll tell you what—
Straighter than a rifle-shot:
Straighter than the eagle’s flight.
Straight as any ray of light.”

“I will mark the place,” says Jim—
Great exactness was his whim—
And he measured, on the rim,
Starting-points, as guides for him.

Ted put in the knife with glee;
First he cut from A to B!
Then he cut from C to D!!
Then he took the piece marked E!!!

Every cut was straight, he said,—
He would bet his curly head.
Such a perfect, born-and-bred
Geometric rogue was Ted.

[Illustration]

“CHAIRS TO MEND!”

BY ALEXANDER WAINWRIGHT.

The art of doing small things well has a good illustration in the humble chair-mender of the London streets, who is also one of the most interesting of out-door tradesmen.

He carries all his implements and materials with him. A very much worn chair is thrown over one arm as an advertisement of his occupation, and it is needed, for his cry, “Chair-s to men-n-nd,” is uttered in a melancholy and indistinct, though penetrating, tone. Under the other arm he usually has a bundle of cane, split into narrow ribbons.

His look is that of forlorn respectability; his hat is greasy, and mapped with so many veins, caused by crushings, that it might have been used as a chair or, at least, a foot-stool; around his neck he wears a heavy cloth kerchief, and his long coat of by-gone fashion reaches nearly to the ankles, which are covered by shabby gaiters. He walks along at a very gentle pace and scans the windows of the houses for some sign that his services are wanted.

[Illustration: “CHAIRS TO MEND!”]

Perhaps business is dull, but in the neighborhoods where there are plenty of children he is pretty sure to find some work. Cane-seated chairs are durable, but they will not stand the rough usage of those little boys and girls who treat them as step-ladders and stamp upon them. It often happens that a neat English house-maid appears at the area railings with a chair that has a big, ragged hole in the seat, through which Master Tommy has fallen, with his boots on, in an effort to reach the gooseberry jam on the pantry shelf.

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Master Tommy probably looks on while the repairs are being made, and is much interested by the dexterity with which the mender does his work. The old and broken canes are cut away, and the new strips are woven into a firm fabric, with little eight-sided openings left in it. The overlapping ends of the ribbons are trimmed with a sharp knife, and the chair-seat is as good as new.

It seems so easy that Tommy thinks he could have done it himself; but when he experiments with a slip of cane that the mender gives him, he finds that chair-mending is really a trade that must be learned.

Some chair-menders are blind men, and it is still more interesting to watch them at their work. The plaiting of the canes is done as unerringly by their unseeing fingers as by the men who can see, and with wonderful quickness. Occasionally the business is combined with that of basket-making, and should we follow poor old "Chairs-to-mend" home, we might discover his family busy weaving reeds and willowy branches with the same cleverness the father shows in handling the canes.

TWO KITTIES.

BY JOY ALLISON.

[Illustration]

Two little kitties
Wandered away
Into the prairie
One summer day.
One on two feet,
Rosy and fair,
Almost a baby,—
"Golden Hair."

Four feet,—useless,
Eyes fast closed,
Borne in a basket
The other dozed.
Searching in terror
Far and wide,
"Golden Hair's" mother
Moaned and cried.

Mother Puss calmly
Following slow,



Listening,—calling
Meoh!—Meoh!—
Mother Puss found them,
A little heap,
Down in the deep grass
Fast asleep.

“HARE AND HOUNDS.”

[Illustration]

“What shall we do?” the children said,
By the spirit of frolic and mischief led,
Frank and Lulu and Carrie, three
As full of nonsense as they could be;
Who never were known any fun to stop
Until they were just about ready to drop.

Frank, whose “knowledge-box” surely abounds
With games, spoke up for “Hare and Hounds.”
“Down the cellar, or up the stair,
Here and there, and everywhere,
You must follow, for I’m the Hare!”
Lulu and Carrie gave quick consent,
And at cutting their papers and capers went,
For the stairs were steep, and they must not fail
To have enough for a good long trail.
 Away went the Hare
 Right up the stair,
And away went the Hounds, a laughing pair;
 And Tony, who sat
 Near Kitty, the cat,
And was really a dog worth looking at,
 With a queer grimace
 Soon joined the race,
And followed the game at a lively pace!
 Then Puss, who knew
 A thing or two,

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Prepared to follow the noisy crew,
And never before or since, I ween,
Was ever beheld such a hunting scene!
The Hare was swift; and the papers went
This way and that, to confuse the scent;
But Tony, keeping his nose in air,
In a very few moments betrayed the Hare,
Which the children told him was hardly fair.

I cannot tell you how long they played,
Of the fun they had, or the noise they made;
For the best of things in this world, I think,
Can ne'er be written with pen and ink.
But Bridget, who went on her daily rounds,
Picking up after the "Hare and Hounds,"
Said she didn't mind hearing their lively capers,
But her back was broke with the scraps o' papers.

Carrie, next day, couldn't raise her head;
Frank and Lulu were sick in bed;
The dog and cat were a used-up pair,
And all of them needed the doctor's care.
The children themselves can hardly fail
To tack a moral upon this trail;
And I guess on rather more level grounds
They'll play their next game of "Hare and Hounds."

[Illustration]

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

So, here's October come again. Another pleasant year gone by, another lot of sermons done, and nobody the worse! Dear, dear, how time does fly in cheerful company, to be sure!

Well, my dears, keep a bright lookout for the new volume, and, meantime, don't open your eyes too wide while I bring to your notice

THE LARGEST MAN.

Albany, N.Y.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: 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 step-ladder to catch behind the giant? And if he threw a ball to a base-man, 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,



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R.V.D.

CATCHING BIRDS ON THE WING.

As if a man could ever hope to do that, or even to do so much as fly! And yet, word has already come to me of a man who has made a machine with which he actually has flown, up, down, with the wind, against the wind, and, in fact, any way he wished!

The particular machine he used looked, I'm told, rather like a big bolster-case blown full of air, and with a light frame-work of hollow brass tubes strapped to it underneath. In this frame-work was a seat for the man, and near him were two circular fans, which he turned round very fast indeed; one of the fans made the machine fly backward or forward, and the other made it go up or down, as he liked.

Now, this certainly seems to be a step ahead, or, rather, a flap upward; but you needn't expect to be chasing and catching eagles and albatrosses on the wing by dropping salt on their tails; at least, not just yet, my dears. The time for that sort of fun may come, perhaps; but it would be well not to crow too loudly at present.

THE BEE AND THE ANEMONE.

Des Moines, Iowa.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: The bee you told us of in your August sermon did not mistake the anemone for a flower. At least, *I* think not. No bee ever makes such a mistake as to settle on a poisonous flower, and I believe that this bee went to the anemone for water and not for honey. Bees will settle on pieces of straw afloat in the water, when seeking for water, and I believe they know, even while on the wing, where to find honey. Good-bye.—Your friend. N.E.H.

FRANGIPANI SCENT AND PUDDINGS.

"Let's begin with the puddings, and make sure of *them*," as a little boy once remarked. Well, then, in former times, Frangipani puddings were of broken bread, and their queer name is made from two words,—*frangi*, meaning "to break," and *panus*, "bread"; but, after some time, these puddings were made with pastry-crust and contained cream and almonds.

Frangipani scent, however, was named after a great marquis who first made it, getting it from the jasmine plant. And the marquis got *his* name from an ancestor whose duty it had been to break the holy bread or wafer in one of the church services, and who on that account was called "Frangipani," or "Breaker of Bread."



Now, this way of explaining how words come to be formed, sounds well enough, no doubt. But how are we to know, in this case, that the marquis didn't invent the pudding as well as the scent? However, I must leave you to puzzle out the problem for yourselves, my dears, while I give you some information about

A SEALED POSTMAN.

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You've all heard of sealed letters, of course, and seen some, too, no doubt; but did you ever hear of the letter-carrier, also, being sealed? Well, a bit of news has come saying that, among the Himalaya Mountains, the men who carry the mails on horseback are sealed to their saddles, in such a way that while they can ride easily enough they cannot get down from their seats; and, what is more, the mail-packages are sealed to the men! Once started on the route, the seals are not allowed to be broken, except by the postmaster at the next station, and, if they happen to get broken otherwise than by accident, the carrier is severely punished.

The result of this sealing is that a mail-carrier who wishes to steal the letters in his charge is obliged to steal also the saddle and horse,—and himself as well, I suppose.

Nice places these carriers have to ride through, at times! Why, in some parts, the road is so steep that, in going down, the rider is kept upright by a rope passed under his arms and held in the hands of two men who are above him on the mountain. If it were not for this, the rider would fall over the head of his horse, or else cause the horse itself to go over head first.

Altogether, the postmen of the Himalayas must have a hard time of it.

WIND-HARPS.

East Saginaw, Mich.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: Please will you or any of your "chicks" tell me how to make a wind-harp, or Eolian harp?

Your friend, MINNIE WARNER.

Time and again have I heard tell of wind-harps and the sweet music the wind coaxes out of them. The sighing and singing of the breezes through the tree-tops must be something like it, no doubt. But I never heard a wind-harp's song, and of course don't know how to make one. Perhaps, some of you know, however, and if so I shall be obliged if you will send me word, so that I can pass it on to Minnie and the rest of my chicks.

"THE JOY OF THE DESERT."

In Africa is a vast, dreary waste, called the Desert of Sahara. In widely scattered spots of this desert there grows a tree that sends its roots down to springs far beneath the parched ground. Sometimes these springs are so far down that the trees are planted in deep holes, something like wells, so that the roots may reach water. Hardly anything except this tree can grow in that desert.

The fruit of the tree is delicious food; the long trunk makes poles for tents; the leaf-stalks make many kinds of basket and wicker work, walking-sticks and fans; the leaves themselves are made into bags and mats; and the fibers at the base of the leaf-stalks are twisted into cordage for tents and harness. The sap of the tree, drawn from a deep cut in the trunk near the top, after standing a few days, becomes a sweet and pleasant liquor. Cakes of the fruit pounded and kneaded together “so solid as to be cut with a hatchet,” are carried by travelers going across the terrible desert.

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[Illustration]

Besides all this, trees of this kind, planted in groups, cast a shade which keeps the ground moist, so that other fruit-trees can live beneath them.

When the tree is about one hundred years old, it ceases to bear fruit, and is cut down for timber; but in its long life it has made its owner rich and a great many people comfortable.

The paragram which told me all this said, further, that this tree is the date-palm, and is called "The Joy of the Desert." Well may it be so called, I should think; though once I heard some of the children of the red school-house say they hated "dates." Perhaps they meant "dates" of some other kind.

BABIES IN BOOTS.

Where do you suppose Tartar mothers carry their little children?

Not on their shoulders, nor on their hips, nor in their arms, nor at their backs, nor on their heads.

Well, I'm told they carry them in their boots! These are made of cloth, and each is large enough to hold a child five years old!

ROOK COURTS AND BLACKBIRD POWWOWS.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: In England, where I come from, I have seen meetings of vast numbers of birds, though never as many of such different kinds as those named by Z.R.B. in the letter which you gave us in July. Sometimes, a great number of rooks gather in a ring, and in the center of it is one lonely, dejected-looking rook, who holds his head down in silence. The other rooks seem to hold a consultation, chattering and cawing back and forth, sometimes one alone and sometimes all together, until they seem to decide what to do.

Then three or four old, solemn-looking rooks fly upon the lonely one and put him to death, as if he had been found guilty of some dreadful crime.

In this country, during spring, the blackbirds meet almost daily in the tops of high trees, especially elms and locusts, and there they chatter by the hour. Sometimes a few will fly off, angrily, with quick, sharp notes, to some tree a little way off. After a while, two or three more birds will join them from the large body. Then, perhaps, some of them will go back as "peace commissioners," and after a few more flights back and forth, and

endless chatter, the little party may return to the main body; or, increasing in number, may form a second crowd as noisy as the first.

No doubt you have heard and seen many such powwows, dear Jack. Long may you live to watch the birds and repeat to us their wisdom!
Truly your friend,

C.B.M.

AN INTERVAL NOT ON THE PROGRAMME.

I'm told that at Pompeii, Italy, in the year 79, a play was being acted in one of the theaters, when a storm of cinders fell, buried the whole city, and, of course, put a stop to the play, which has never been completed. A few months ago, however, an operatic manager named Languri made up his mind to have a new theater just where the old one stood; so, he printed in the Italian newspapers a notice that ran something like this:

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"After a lapse of eighteen hundred years, the theater of Pompeii will be re-opened, with the opera of 'La Figlia del Reggimento.' I ask the continuation of the favor shown to my predecessor, Marcus Quintus Martius, and beg to assure the public that I shall make every effort to equal the rare qualities he displayed during his management."

If only Marcus Quintus Martius and his actors, and musicians, and the ancient audience, could have been at that re-opening of their long-buried theater, how they would have stared!

THE LETTER-BOX.

Our older boys and girls will find in this number an excellent article on "Parlor Magic," in which they are told, by Professor Leo Grindon, one of the Faculty of the Royal School of Chemistry in Manchester, England, how to perform some very interesting, and in some cases, quite astonishing experiments in chemistry, optics, *etc.* Some of our readers may be familiar with a few of these experiments, but the majority of them will be found novel to nearly all young people. Occasionally, there are materials or ingredients called for, which are somewhat expensive, and some of the experiments require a good deal of time and patience. But these are the exceptions, for nearly all the experiments described in the article can be performed by any careful and intelligent boy or girl of fourteen or fifteen, in a short time and at a very small cost.

Of course, in getting up a little "Parlor Magic Entertainment" it will not be necessary to try all the experiments described. Choose such as you think you can perform without fail, and which will be likely to interest the company you expect. Be careful not to try to do too many things in one evening, and, if possible, make each experiment in private, before you attempt to show your friends how it is done. This will not be necessary in every case, but if you make an experiment, for the first time, before company, be sure that you know exactly what you are going to do and how it ought to be done.

One more thing, the most important of all, we would impress on the mind of every reader of ST. NICHOLAS who tries any of these experiments, and that is the necessity for great care in handling and disposing of the chemical ingredients which may be used. Some of these, although perfectly harmless, when used as directed, are very injurious, if tasted, or even smelt very closely; and although the performer may himself be very prudent and careful with his materials and apparatus, he must not give the slightest opportunity to young children, or indeed any one who has not studied up the subject, to handle his chemicals.

With careful attention to the directions given in the article, a pleasant evening entertainment may easily be had, and if an occasional failure should take place, both the performer and the company should remember that an *experiment* is only a trial, and cannot be expected always to succeed.

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* * * * *

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I went over to my uncle's one Saturday lately, to tea, and had baked beans. He never eats vinegar on them, excepting some made in January, 1851, when 40 gallons were frozen in 53 quart bottles. He told me there was no other such vinegar in the United States, and if I could hear of any one who has some prepared like it, and as old, he would give me as handsome a doll as I wanted. My object is to ask you to please publish my letter, and I may receive the doll, which I want very much, and oblige, with many thanks, one of your subscribers.

L.D.H.

* * * * *

London, England.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We are traveling in Europe for a short time, and I thought, perhaps, you might like to hear a short account of our journey. First, we went to Chester, one of the oldest cities in England. It is inclosed by a wall two miles around, which was built 1800 years ago. The "Rows" of Chester are very strange and interesting. They are rows of stores in the second stories of houses—with a sidewalk in front, supported by pillars and covered overhead. One may walk out on a rainy day and do a great variety of shopping without being at all exposed to the weather. The sidewalks below these rows, and on a level with the middle of the street are dingy and shabby, lined with forlorn looking little places inhabited by the poorer class.

There is an old house standing in an alley, in the garret of which one of the earls of Derby was hidden for three months.

A small part of an old church, which was built 200 A. D., still stands, and is one of the curiosities. There is also a tower where King Charles II stood and saw his army defeated, only, that was before he became king. Next we went to Stratford-on-Avon, where we saw Shakespeare's house, and I sat in his chair. We lunched at the Red Horse Inn, in the room which Washington Irving had when he was there. I also sat in his chair. In the afternoon we went to Shakespeare's other house and gardens. He had two homes, but he only lived in one until he was seventeen years old. We are now in London, and have been to see a few of the principal places. Westminster Abbey is one of the great sights. We saw a sitting figure of a duchess who died from the effects of lock-jaw, caused by pricking her finger with a needle, while at needle work on Sunday. We also saw St. Paul's Cathedral, where there is a whispering gallery, so called, because, if you whisper on one side of the gallery, it may be heard on the other side as distinctly as if you were over there.

The South Kensington Museum contains a great many curiosities, and some of the things which Doctor Schliemann has dug up.

The National Art Gallery contains a great many beautiful pictures, and one room is devoted to Turner's paintings.

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We have also been to see the Tower, where the little princes were murdered; they do not take you into the room where they stayed; but ST. NICHOLAS gave us a fine picture of that in January of 1874. We shall start for Paris soon.—From your little friend,

MAMIE CHARLES.

* * * * *

“MOTHER.” Unpainted, strong and really amusing playthings, such as you inquire for, are to be found, we think, in almost any large toy-store. Animals, wagons, and various amusing things cut out of plain wood, abound nowadays, and they can be sent you by express from your nearest town. In our experience, however, we have found building blocks of most lasting interest to the little folks. Crandall's are the best, for they admit of an endless variety of combination.

* * * * *

Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have a little sister, named Josie, who is six years old. She can read only a little, and she does not like to do it at all. She has plenty of toys, and a nice baby-house, but often she gets tired of playing and then comes to me to know what to do.

Now, I want to know if you cannot tell me something for her to do that will keep her quiet? I have another sister who is nine years old, but no brother.—Your loving reader,

ANITA R. NEWCOMB.

Anita may find a satisfactory hint in the answer to “Mother” given above. Also, the Kinder Garten games that are now used in many schools for very little folks may be of service to Josie.

* * * * *

London, Eng.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have just arrived in England. When we were fairly out at sea, the first thing I did was to explore the great ship. It was four hundred feet long, made entirely of iron, and sank twenty feet deep in the water. The masts were of hollow iron, and seventy feet high. It took nine furnaces and forty tons of coal a day to keep the ship going. The crew numbered a hundred and thirty-five. It seems very wonderful that a great heavy iron ship should not sink; the reason it does not is that it is lighter than the water it displaces. When we were a few days out, a flock of land-birds rested on our



ship. We fed them with crumbs, and brought dishes of fresh water on deck for them, but after a day or two they disappeared. A little further on, a hawk alighted on the vessel, and one of the sailors caught it when it was asleep. To find out how fast we were going, the sailors threw the "log," which was no log at all, but a long thin rope with a small three-cornered canvas bag at one end. They throw out the bag, and it catches in the water and keeps the end of the rope steady. The rope runs out as the ship goes. One sailor stands with a time-glass, which holds as much sand as

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will fall in one minute from one half of it into the other. The glass is turned just when a certain mark on the rope passes over the rail, and, when all the sand has run, the rope is stopped. As the rope has lengths marked on it by bits of colored cloth, the sailors can tell how far the ship has gone in one minute, and can roughly calculate from that its rate of speed by the hour. Formerly a real log of wood was used instead of the bag. The greatest event of the voyage was seeing a school of whales. There were dozens of them spouting and showing their backs above water. Another exciting thing was meeting a ship so near that we could salute it, which is done by hoisting and then lowering the flag once or twice. Ships have flags of different kinds, and each has its own meaning. So by hoisting certain flags, the captains of distant ships can exchange news. When nearing the Irish coast, a dense fog settled upon us, so that we could hardly see from one end of the ship to the other. All day and all night the great fog-whistle was kept blowing to warn other vessels that might be in our neighborhood. To see a light house or landmark was impossible, but the captain found out where we were by soundings. Every ship has a long piece of lead with a hole in one end which is filled with tallow. The other end is fastened to a rope, and the lead is thrown overboard and sinks to the bottom. When hauled up, some of the sea-bottom is found stuck to the tallow, and from this and the depth of the water, the captain knows where he is, for the kinds of sand and mud at the bottom of the sea, and the varying depths of water, are plainly marked on his charts. I cannot describe to you what a welcome sight the land was, after seeing nothing but water for so long. But when we had left the great ship behind, it seemed almost as if we were leaving home, glad though I was to get ashore.

Your loving reader,

F. D.

* * * * *

A correspondent sends us the series of "Beheaded Rhymes" which we print below. Each of the stanzas contains two examples of this kind of rhyming, and, in each example, the first blank is to be filled with a word that suits both the sense and the measure. The next blank that occurs is filled with all of the chosen word except its first letter; and this process goes on until the word can no longer be beheaded and yet leave another word. The making of such "Beheaded Rhymes" as these, in company, to see who can succeed best, sometimes whiles away very pleasantly a long evening of disagreeable weather.

A NIGHT'S ADVENTURES.

It made a most tremendous ——! (1.)
I gave my horse a sudden ——:



He threw me full against an ——,
And broke my collar-bone.
“What can I do in such a ——? (2.)
My horse is gone, I have no ——,”
I murmured with a groan.



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I was as wet as any ——; (3.)
The wind and thunder made a ——,
And neither moon nor star was ——;
The night was black as sin.
The fall had given me such a ——! (4.)
And I was miles from any ——:
I floundered on through mud and ——
To reach the nearest inn.

But when I found the wished-for ——, (5.)
And saw through windows dim with ——
A fellow holding up an ——,
I would have cried with fear.
Each seat was filled by such a ——, (6.)
As might have fled from any ——
Of thief or buccaneer.

I strove to overcome my ——, (7.)
And ventured on a traveler's ——
To enter boldly there.
The porter waved aloft a ——, (8.)
But still I stepped within the ——
And took an empty chair.

The leader gave a fearful ——; (9.)
Sprang up, and overturned the ——.
Oh! I could cover half a ——
With what I felt that night.
He came, and gave me such a ——, (10.)
That I cried out amain, though ——
With anguish and affright.

“Come, will you join our game of ——? (11.)
Or do you choose that I should ——
The wretch, who wishes naught but ——
To honest men like us?”
With that he flung me from the ——, (12.)
And seizing on me by the ——,
He drew me forth into the ——
And made a dreadful fuss.

The night had now grown clear and ——. (13.)
I wandered to a distant ——,
And thought the cold ground not so ——,



As was that fearful spot.
But soon there passed a friendly ——, (14.)
Who placed me in his empty ——
And took me to his cot.

M. W.

The solutions are as follows: 1. Clash, lash, ash. 2. Plight, light. 3. Trout, rout, out. 4. Strain, train, rain. 5. Place, lace, ace. 6. Scamp, camp. 7. Fright, right. 8. Broom, room. 9. Scream, cream, ream. 10. Tweak, weak. 11. Skill, kill, ill. 12. Chair, hair, air. 13. Chill, hill, ill. 14. Swain, wain.

* * * * *

Pittsburg, Pa.

DEAR READERS OF "ST. NICHOLAS:" I live in a city of iron and steel
manufactories. I will do my best to tell you how an ax is made.

The works are a beautiful sight at night, with their huge, glowing furnaces and the forms of the brawny workmen, passing between us and the light. In one furnace they are heating pieces of cast-iron, about twelve inches long, four inches wide, and one-half inch thick. A workman takes a pair of long pincers, draws from the furnace one of the red-hot pieces of iron, and passes it to another workman. This workman is standing before two large wheels, which revolve slowly, and which have several notches in them. The piece of hot iron is placed

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between these wheels, with one end in a notch, and the iron is bent double, bringing the two ends together, making it look somewhat like a clothes-pin, except that the clothes-pin should have a hole at the head, like in the piece of iron, for a handle. The ends of the bent iron are next hammered together, after which the coming ax is again heated. It is then taken to the steam hammers. The first hammer joins the parts of the iron firmly together, while the second, having on its face the mold of an ax, gives the iron the same shape. The sides are then made straight and even by a circular saw. But an ax in this shape could never be used to much effect, for cast-iron cannot be ground down to a fine enough edge. Steel can be ground, however, and so a piece of steel must be added to our iron ax. Two workmen take hold of the blade with pincers, and while one holds a sharp tool on the broad edge, the other strikes with a sledge. Into this split thus made, a piece of steel is slipped, and a steam hammer joins them firmly.

After this, the ax is tempered, sharpened and polished; and, when the blade is furnished with a handle, the ax is ready for sale.—Yours truly,

“THE DOCTOR.”

* * * * *

The following is sent to us as written, without help, by a little girl nine years old.

THE HISTORY OF A CAT.

I am the family cat. I am not so very pretty, but they all like me very much. I have a pretty baby-kitten, and I have a daughter named Tortoise-shell. She is a pretty and good cat. She also has a baby-kitten prettier than mine. Mine has such big eyes that its little face does not look as cunning as my daughter's baby-kitten's face. My mistress is very good to me sometimes, but sometimes she pulls my tail and makes me mad, and I scratch her and then she slaps me back; but when she is good to me, and pets me, and gives me cake, then I purr to her.

Once my mistress' brother had a dog given to him. This dog's name was “Captain.” I did not like him one bit.

My mistress' brother's friend tried to set the dog on me, but he would not come near me; so the boy let him alone.

When my mistress went to get my daughter's baby-kitten, Captain went with her. My mistress did not know that Captain went into the room with her. Tortoise-shell was tending her kitten, but, as soon as she saw the dog, she jumped up and scratched his nose good for him. He did not stay very long. He was given to my mistress' brother on

Saturday. The next day, which was Sunday, my mistress and the rest of the family were at church; the dog got out, I don't know how, but when my mistress came home from church she looked all about, but could not find him anywhere. She was very sorry, but I was not sorry one bit; I was glad. So now we've come to the end.

G.M.M.

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* * * * *

Oswego, N. Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Please will you tell me where I can find directions how to build a boat?—Yours respectfully,

HARRY MEAD.

Midland, 1878.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I wish that you would tell me how to make a yatch I have a schooner but she gets beat bad and I should like to know how to make a yatch that will beat them all I think one about 30 inches will be long enough.—I remain your constant Reader,

G.B.J.

In ST. NICHOLAS for July, 1875 (Vol. II.), Harry will find full directions how to make a serviceable boat at a small cost; and G.B.J., whose letter we print *verbatim*, also may find hints that will enable him to build an all-conquering “yatch.”

* * * * *

Milwaukee, Wis.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am going to tell you about a game that we play here a good deal. I do not know what it is called. It can be played by any number, though the more the merrier. Each player must have a sheet of paper and a pencil. When all are supplied, each one must write across the top of the sheet a question, taking up as little room on the page as possible, and turning the paper down so as to cover up the writing, as in “Consequences.” The paper is then passed to the next neighbor, who is to write a common noun, of any kind, under the question, and turn over in like manner. After the noun has been written, the paper is passed on. Then everybody opens the paper that last came to him, and must answer the question in rhyme, inserting the noun. I will give you an illustration.

EXAMPLE:

Question,—“Do you like pigs?”

Common noun,—“Peas.”

Answer, in rhyme,—

“I love the gentle animals
That sport about our home.



And all among the peas and corn
So happily do roam.”

“Ah! little pigs I’ll harm you not,
Nor e’en disturb your play,
But you shall have your own sweet will,
And feed upon the best of swill,
Through all the livelong day.”

Will somebody answer thus this question, that was given to me:
“Which was the greatest battle of Alexander the Great?”

Noun: “Toes.”

Yours truly,

D.J.

* * * * *

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I send you a puzzle, which I hope you will print:

My first is in your body,
Quite useful in its way.
My second flows in Italy,
And flows by night and day.
My third, a thing to cook with, is
In every kitchen found.
My fourth’s a common article,
A very simple sound.
My fifth folks often get into,—
The careless ones, of course.
My whole, a clumsy animal,
Is partly named for horse.

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R.N.P.

Answer: Hip-Po-pot-a-mus, hippopotamus.

* * * * *

Wilmette, Ills.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have been taking your book two years. I think it is splendid. Some of the stories are so funny. I go to a private school, and I am in the Fourth Reader. The girls play on one side of the grounds and the boys on the other; the cherry-trees are on our side, and I like it the best. We have lots of fun. I am nine years old. I have two little sisters, Belle and Marion, and a little brother, Bobo. When we get big we may write some stories for your book. We are little now, but everybody was little once.—Your friend,

KITTY GRIFFITHS.

* * * * *

Philadelphia, Pa.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I do like you so much, and I wish you would tell me something. I see pictures and read books in which are the names Penelope, Juno, Achilles, Hercules, and so on. The dictionary tells but little about these names, and I want to know all about them. Can you tell me how to find out?—Truly your friend,

CARRIE H.

You can learn a good deal about the personages you mention from Bulfinch's "Age of Fable," from Alexander S. Murray's "Manual of Mythology," and from Mrs. Clement's "Handbook of Legendary and Mythological Art"; but the poems of Homer,—the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey,"—of both of which there are good English translations,—are the chief sources of the information.

* * * * *

Chicago, Ills.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I send you an Enigma to publish in your magazine. The answer to the Enigma is "Washington."—Yours truly,

WILLIE M.



My 1, 9, 10, is the same as one.
My 8, 1, is two-thirds of two.
My 6, 5, 10, is three-fourths of nine.
My 10, 9, 8, 4, 5, 6, 9, is nothing.
My 3, 2, 1, is what my 5 did.
My 8, 9, 10, is very heavy; but
My 10, 9, 8, is not.
My 6, 5, 7, 4, 8, is always somewhere, but not here to-day.

* * * * *

THE BOY ENGINEERS: WHAT THEY DID, AND HOW THEY DID IT, is an illustrated book published by Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons. It seems to have been written for readers living in England, but young amateur machinists anywhere would find it an entertaining book. It gives good practical hints about the management of tools, and explains how to turn and carve in wood and metal, how to make a clock, an organ, a small house, and how to set up a steam-engine. The type is large, and the style easy and pleasant.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

VERY EASY SQUARE-WORD.

1. A pointed implement of brass or wood.
2. Wrath.
3. Not old.

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A.W., AND F.E.D.

DECAPITATIONS.

1. Behead a bird's nest, and leave a lake in North America. 2. Behead a marine map, and leave a wild animal. 3. Behead a sail vessel, and leave a small narrow opening. 4. Behead a plant, and leave space. 5. Behead a basket or hamper, and leave standard or proportion. 6. Behead a sharp bargainer, and leave a company of people. 7. Behead a group of individuals, and leave a country girl. 8. Behead an act of deception, and leave high temperature.

ISOLA.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

The whole, composed of twelve letters, is a noted character of American fiction.

The 1, 8, 4, 12 is to rend asunder. The 3, 2, 6, 10 is a flower. The 11, 5, 7, 9 is an open, grassy space.

C. O.

EASY MELANGE.

1. Behead a pavement, and find a planet. 2. Syncopate the pavement, and give a shrub. 3. Transpose the planet, and leave the center. 4. Behead and transpose the center, and find a weed. 5. Transpose the weed, and give degree. 6. Syncopate the center, and leave an animal. 7. Behead the animal, and find skill. 8. Curtail the shrub and give excitement. 9. Behead and curtail the center, and leave a part of the body. 10. Behead and transpose excitement, and find a plant. 11. Syncopate excitement, and give an article of clothing. 12. Transpose skill, and leave an animal. 13. Reverse the animal, and find a sailor.

CABIN PUZZLE.

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.      . . . . .
.      . ...   ... .
.  ... . ...   ... .
.  ... . ...   ... .
.  ... . . . . . .

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The dots show where the letters are to be placed. The perpendicular and sloping lines of the building are read downward, the horizontals from left to right.

The letters that form the foundation, reading from extreme left to extreme right, signify (1) a fireside; those of the lower edge of the roof spell (2) liable to taxation; those of the ridge-pole mean (3) calls for; those of the left-hand corner-post denote (4) the cry of a domestic animal; those of the middle corner-post, (5) a free entertainment; those of the right-hand corner-post, (6) a large bird of prey; those of the left-hand sloping roof-edge, (7) an officer in an English university; those of the middle sloping roof-edge, (8) a regulated course of food; and those of the right-hand sloping roof-edge, (9) withered.

The chimney is a double word-square, and reads, downward, (10) bleared, (11) a man's name, (12) a farm-yard inclosure; across, (13) to plunge, (14) anger, (15) a playing piece in the game of chess. The door, also, is a double word-square: it reads, downward (16) a useful insect, (17) a city of Burmah (Farther India), (18) a resinous substance; across, (19) a wooden club, (20) a girl's name, (21) a part of the human body.

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The left-hand window is a double word-square, and reads, downward (22) to bend under weight, (23) a prefix, (24) hitherto; across, (25) a secret agent, (26) exist, (27) to procure. The right-hand window, also, is a double word-square: it reads, downward, (28) to make brown, (29) a kind of poem, (30) angry; across, (31) a nickname for a boy, (32) a girl's name, (33) another nickname for a boy.

H.H.D.

DROP-LETTER STAIR PUZZLE.

```

—E E—
  E
  E
    —E E—
      E
      E
        —E E—
          E
          E
            —E E—

```

Going upstairs, find (reading from right to left): 1. A fish that lives in English waters. 2. Full to overflowing. 3. Reward 4. An animal. 5. A lively dance. 6. An edible plant. 7. To maintain hold upon.

Going down-stairs, find (reading from left to right): 1. To peep. 2. A part of a boat. 3. To look obliquely. 4. An aquatic plant. 5. To esteem. 6. To gather. 7. The seed of an oriental plant.

H.H.D.

PROVERB ENIGMA.

The proverb is composed of twenty-nine letters.

The 5, 13, 26, 19, 2 is a wild animal. The 9, 14, 20, 16, 3, 11 is a person employed in the building of houses. The 10, 23, 21, 1 is a common reptile. The 13, 4, 21, 7, 29 is a bird of fine plumage. The 25, 17, 6, 27, 8 is a bird that is attached to the dwellings of men. The 18, 28, 12, 24 is a swimming and diving bird of the Arctic Regions.

I.T.

KNIGHT'S-MOVE PUZZLE.

| | | | | | | | | |
| lay | tle | on | dom | braves | still | square | quered |
| | | | | | | | | |

ly

bat-

and

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	reads		hard		than		sian		youth		the		square		this	

	as		right		each		poured		at		horde		ward		fight	

	long		so		knight		ly		thr'gh		the		on		leaps	

	As		on		life's		may		up		bold-		and		to	

The above puzzle consists of a verse of eight rhyming eight-syllable lines; each syllable occupies a square and follows in succession according to the knight's move on the chess board.

F.W.

EASY HIDDEN FISHES.

In each of the following sentences find, concealed, the name of a well-known fish.

1. A Russian soldier, at Toms's, ate a salamander.
2. "Do you spell 'knob' as she does?"
3. "Where is my badge?" "Ella has it."
4. Francesco drew a large prize yesterday.
5. "Have the girls and boys seen Fanny Dunbar?" "Belle has."
6. My dolls had the measles last month.
7. Every soldier leaves his tent. "Rout the enemy!" is the battle-cry.
8. I heard, with regret, that she had lost her ring.
9. I composed a song of which the first verse begins something like this: "Hark! 'tis a cricket chirping."
10. Wax dolls melt when left too near the fire.

A.E.M.



POETICAL REBUS.

A two-line quotation from Cowper.

[Illustration]

RIDDLE.

Gleaming gayly, flashing light;
White as snow, and black as night;
Ladies, I'm your slave, your pride,
Though in ocean I abide.

Power have I o'er life and death,—
I, a creature without breath!
I, so small that you can draw
Fifty, like me, through a straw.

R.S.C.

SUGGESTED WORD-SQUARE.

In the following rhyme, the words of the Square are suggested by the sense, and are to be inserted in the blanks, in order, as the blanks occur,—the first word in the first blank, the second word in the second blank, and so on.

To buy a —— was foolish waste.
(I'd no —— how it would taste!)
"I'll just have bread and ——," said Daisy.
"Who —— a fruit like that, is crazy!"



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B.

ANAGRAMS.

In the following sentence, the words printed in capitals are anagrams of the words that should occupy the same places, so as to make sense. Thus: BATTLE-SCREENS is a compound-word that takes the place of another to be formed of the same letters arranged differently; the right word, in this example, being "center-table;" but each of the other collections of capitals is an anagram of but a single word.

I saw TENT SUDS by the BATTLE-SCREENS, puzzling over THE MICA MATS, and perplexed about MANY ROOTS.

C.T.

REBUS.

A two line quotation from Shakspeare.

[Illustration]

COMPLETE DIAMOND.

The centrals of the diamond are each the same word, of five letters, spelling the name of a Frenchman who became notorious during the great French Revolution. The remainder of the diamond is made of words formed from the letters of his name. The diamond incloses a hollow square, either of whose perpendiculars or horizontals, read backward or forward, will spell a word; and, reading from the middle letter to either end of either of the centrals, a word will be spelled, which, when read backward, will spell another word. Make the Diamond. TREBONIUS.

EASY AMPUTATED QUOTATION.

Two lines from Tennyson. Each word is beheaded and curtailed.

-RU- -EART- -R- -OR- -HA- -ORONET--N- -IMPL- -AIT- -HA- -ORMA- -LOO-

C. L. D.

EASY CROSS-WORD PUZZLE.

My first is in bee, but not in fly;
My second in moon, but not in sky;
My third is in scare, but not in fright;
My fourth is in top, and also in kite;
My fifth is in broad, but not in wide;
My sixth is in ocean, but not in tide;
My whole is all New England's pride.

H. A. S.

ANAGRAM WORD-SQUARES.

From the letters composing each of the following four sentences make a word-square:

1. Doctor, do Irish histories err? 2. Let their hotel gardener grin. 3. Post shall need man's sympathy. 4. Hurrah, Peg has the gallant pup! The meaning of the words composing the four squares, in the proper order of succession, are as follows:

I. 1. A band of singers. 2. A wandering troop of barbarians. 3. A plant with a sweet-smelling root. 4. A simpleton. 5. Is quiet.

II. 1. A spelled number. 2. A lazy person. 3. A dazzling light. 4. A marsh bird. 5. A river of England.

III. 1. Profundity. 2. To try. 3. A sacred song. 4. A claw. 5. Poems.

IV. 1. A noise that no animal but man can make. 2. The name of a letter of the Greek alphabet. 3. Part of a shoe. 4. A town of Belgium. 5. Deer.

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A. + B.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN SEPTEMBER NUMBER.

CLASSICAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—Virgil—Horace. 1. Vouch. 2. lagO. 3. RoaR. 4. GeorgiA. 5. IoniC. 6. Little.

NAMES OF AUTHORS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.—1. Poe. 2. Defoe. 3. Hawthorne. 4. Prescott. 5. Hay. 6. Cooper. 7. Sparks. 8. Lever. 9. Lover. 10. Boswell.

ENIGMA.—Bridle.

WHAT IS IT.—A switch.

CHARADE.—Nightingale; night, in(n), gale.

CENTRAL SYNCOPATIONS.—1. Mouth, moth. 2. Carve, cave. 3. Maxim, maim. 4. Cabin, Cain. 5. Coronet, cornet.

THREE DIAMONDS.—

T	C	I
G I G	A L I	U N A
I. T I B E R	II. C L O V E	III. I N D I A
G E M	I V Y	A I M
R	E	A

PICTORIAL ANAGRAM.—“Procrastination is the thief of time.”

INCOMPLETE SENTENCES.—1. Fair, fare. 2. Rite, right, write. 3. Maid, made. 4. Reads, reeds. 5. Beats, beets. 6. Bawl, ball. 7. Mien, mean. 8. Fain, feign, fane.

RIDDLE.—River.

POSITIVES AND COMPARATIVES.—1. Flat, flatter. 2. Ham, hammer. 3. Gross, grocer. 4. Lad, ladder. 5. On, honor. 6. Eye, ire. 7. Poe, pore. 8. Pie, pyre. 9. Mart, martyr.

DOUBLE WORD-SQUARE.—G O N E
A V E R

LEER
ENDS

HIDDEN NAMES.—In each sentence, take the first letter of each word. 1. Alma. 2. Helen. 3. Arthur. 4. Mabel. 5. Harry. 6. Ethel. 7. Ernest. 8. Edith. 9. Fred. 10. Stella. 11. Edwin. 12. Grace. 13. Frank.

EASY CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Dictionary.

REBUS.—“Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?”

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—Victoria-Disraeli. 1. Vivid. 2. I, I. 3. CorpS. 4. Tower. 5. OperA. 6. Rare. 7. Idyl. 8. Alighieri.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE AUGUST NUMBER were received, before August 20, from Eva D., “Patrolman Gillooley,” John C. Robertson, “Three Sisters,” “So So,” Mary C. Warren, May Bleecker, Daisy Briggs, George P. Dravo, “Doctor,” Louisa F. Riedel, C.A.K., Bessie L. Barnes, Nessie E. Stevens, Southwick C. Briggs, Mary Louise Hood, Olive Mecklem, Edwin E. Ganegues, Anna Halliday, Edith McKeever, M.W.C., Lewis G. Davis, Bessie Hard, Edith Herkimer, Nina Riker, Marnie Riker; Jerome Buck, Jr.; Nellie Emerson, “Soft Soap,” Jessie W. Cox, Fleta M. Holman, “Robbie, Irvie, and Daisy,” Hild Sterling; Edith and Marion W.; Mary H. Bradley, Alice L. Booth, Willie Gray, Mamie, “Nantucket” Harry; F.M.J., Jr.; Jennie R. Beach, Maud L. Smith, Alice Lanigan, Walter Stockdale, Rowen S. McClure, Anita R. Newcomb, Bertie Jackson, M.G.A., Cora Rawson Ryder, “Apelles and his Papa,” “Fritters,” George H. Williams, Richard Weld, Winsor Weld, Georgine C. Schnitzspahn, “Rosalind,” H.B. Ayers,

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“Oriole,” Fred S. Cowperthwait, Benj. W. Mannus, Lizzie Thurber, “The Raven”; Horace White and Grant Squires; Neils E. Hansen, “Winnie,” Chas. H. Stout, Kitty P. Norton, Laurie T. Sanders; “Box 325, St. Thomas,” Annie J. Buzzard, Harry Bennett, Jennie Kimball, Dycie Warden, Margaret McF. Lukens, “Ratie and Katie,” “S.G., and P.M.,” Ann Hulme Wilson, Eddie Vultee, Dolly, Jessie Van Brunt, Willie R.C. Corson, Lincoln Cromwell, T.J. De la Hunt, “Stock-broker,” Bessie C. Barney, Bessie Taylor, Willie F. Floyd, and Louise G. Hinsdale.

Grace Rosevelt, Amy Growly, Ellen Smith, “B.Y.G.H. Caroni and Wife,” “V. and A.,” and O.C. Turner, answered correctly all the puzzles in the August number.

Gladys H. Wilkinson, of Manchester, England answered several of the puzzles in the July number, but his letter did not come in time for adding his name to the July list. The delay was not his fault, so the credit due is now given.