

St. Nicholas Magazine for Boys and Girls, Vol. 5, Nov 1877-Nov 1878 eBook

St. Nicholas Magazine for Boys and Girls, Vol. 5, Nov 1877-Nov 1878

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[Transcriber’s Notes: For ease of navigation, this Table of Contents has been taken from the full contents listing for the volume. Some entries were missing from the index. For completeness they have been added and marked with an asterisk.

The full list of contents for Volume V is to be found at the end of this text.

p. 27: changed ‘rains’ to ‘trains’: ...—; just like the lines by which trains are made to run easily off one track on to another.

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p. 30: Missing opening quote replaced: "The snows that glittered on the disc of Mars..."

p. 31: ' replaced with ": "Don't you think, papa, that that's enough about the sun? Come and play with us on the lawn."

p. 59: Missing) replaced, ...(widening the strip, however, in proportion as the fabric is thinner).

Music Notation (Our Music Page) has been added.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *King Richard II. And his child-queen.*]

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ST. NICHOLAS.

Vol. V. November, 1877. No. 1.

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* * * * *

A CHILD QUEEN.

By Cecilia Cleveland.

I wonder how many of the little girl readers of *st. Nicholas* are fond of history? If they answer candidly, I do not doubt that a very large proportion will declare that they prefer the charming stories they find in *st. Nicholas* to the dull pages of history, with its countless battles and murdered sovereigns. But history is not every bit dull, by any means, as you will find if your elder sisters and friends will select portions for you to read that are suitable to your age and interests. Perhaps you are very imaginative, and prefer fairy tales to all others. I am sure, then, that you will like the story I am about to tell you, of a little French princess, who was married and crowned Queen of England when only eight years old, and who became a widow at twelve.

This child-sovereign was born many hundred years ago—in 1387—at the palace of the Louvre in Paris, of whose noble picture-gallery I am sure you all have heard,—if, indeed, many of you have not seen it yourselves. She was the daughter of the poor King Charles VI., whose misfortunes made him insane, and for whose amusement playing-cards were invented, and of his queen, Isabeau of Bavaria, a beautiful but very

wicked woman. Little Princess Isabella was the eldest of twelve children. She inherited her mother's beauty, and was petted by her parents and the entire court of France.

King Richard II. of England, who was a widower about thirty years old, was urged to marry again; and, instead of selecting a wife near his own age, his choice fell upon little Princess Isabella.

"She is much too young," he was told. "Even in five or six years she will not be old enough to be married." The king, however, thought this objection too trifling to stand in the way of his marriage, and saying, "The lady's age is a fault that every day will remedy," he sent a magnificent embassy to the court of France, headed by the Archbishop of Dublin, and consisting of earls, marshals, knights, and squires of honor uncounted, with attendants to the number of five hundred.

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When the embassy reached Paris, and the offer of marriage had been formally accepted, the archbishop and the earls asked to see the little princess who was soon to become their queen. At first the French Council refused, saying so young a child was not prepared to appear on public occasions, and they could not tell how she might behave. The English noblemen were so solicitous, however, that at last she was brought before them. The earl marshal immediately knelt before her, and said, in the old-fashioned language of the time: "Madam, if it please God, you shall be our lady and queen."

Queen Isabeau stood at a little distance, curious and anxious, no doubt, to know how her little daughter would answer this formal address. To her great pleasure, and the great surprise of all present, Princess Isabella replied:

"Sir, if it please God and my father that I be Queen of England, I shall be well pleased, for I am told I shall then be a great lady."

Then, giving the marshal her tiny hand to kiss, she bade him rise from his knees, and leading him to her mother, she presented him to her with the grace and ease of a mature woman.

According to the fashion of the time, Princess Isabella was immediately married by proxy, and received the title of Queen of England. Froissart, a celebrated historian living at that epoch, says: "It was very pretty to see her, young as she was, practicing how to act the queen."

In a few days, King Richard arrived from England with a gay and numerous retinue of titled ladies to attend his little bride. After many grand festivities they were married and were taken in state to England, where the Baby Queen was crowned in the famous Westminster Abbey.

I must not forget to describe the magnificent *trousseau* that the King of France gave his little daughter. Her dowry was 800,000 francs (\$160,000); her coronets, rings, necklaces, and jewelry of all sorts, were worth 500,000 crowns; and her dresses were of surpassing splendor. One was a robe and mantle of crimson velvet, trimmed with gold birds perched on branches of pearls and emeralds, and another was trimmed with pearl roses. Do you think any fairy princess could have had a finer bridal outfit?

When the ceremonies of the coronation were over, little Isabella's life became a quiet routine of study; for, although a reigning sovereign, she was in the position of that young Duchess of Burgundy of later years, who at the time of her marriage could neither read nor write. This duchess, who married a grandson of Louis XIV. of France, was older than Queen Isabella—thirteen years old; and as soon as the wedding festivities were over, she was sent to school in a convent, to learn at least to read, as she knew absolutely nothing save how to dance. Queen Isabella, however, was not sent away to

school, but was placed under the care of a very accomplished lady, a cousin of the king, who acted as her governess. In her leisure hours, the king, who was a fine musician, would play and sing for her, and, history gravely informs us, he would even play dolls with her by the hour!

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But King Richard's days of quiet pleasure with his child-wife were at last disturbed, and he was obliged to leave her and go to the war in Ireland. The parting was very sad and affecting, and they never met again.

While King Richard was in Ireland, his cousin, Henry of Lancaster, afterward Henry IV., took possession of the royal treasury, and upon the return of Richard from his unfortunate campaign, marched at the head of an army and made a prisoner of him, lodging him in that grim Tower of London from which so few prisoners ever issued alive.

Meantime, the poor little queen was hurried from one town to another, her French attendants were taken from her, and the members of her new household were forbidden ever to speak to her of the husband she loved so dearly. Finally, it was rumored that Richard had escaped. Instantly, this extraordinary little girl of eleven issued a proclamation saying that she did not recognize Henry IV. (for he was now crowned King of England) as sovereign; and she set out with an army to meet her husband. The poor child was bitterly disappointed upon learning that the rumor was false, and her husband was still a prisoner, and before long she also was again a prisoner of Henry IV., this time closely guarded.

In a few months Richard was murdered in prison by order of King Henry, and his queen's childish figure was shrouded in the heavy crape of her widow's dress. Her superb jewelry was taken from her and divided among the children of Henry IV., and she was placed in still closer captivity. Her father, the King of France, sent to demand that she should return to him, but for a long time King Henry refused his consent. Meantime, she received a second offer of marriage from—strange to say—the son of the man who had killed her husband and made her a prisoner, but a handsome, dashing young prince, Harry of Monmouth, often called “Madcap Hal.” Perhaps you have read, or your parents have read to you, extracts from Shakspeare's “Henry IV.,” so that you know of the wild exploits of the Prince of Wales with his friends, in turning highwayman and stealing purses from travelers, often saying,

“Where shall we take a purse to-morrow, Jack?”

and finding himself in prison sometimes as a result of such amusements? Isabella was a child of decided character, and truly devoted to the memory of her husband, and much as she had enjoyed her rank she refused to continue it by marrying handsome Madcap Hal, although he offered himself to her several times, and even as she was embarking for France.

Poor little Isabella, who had left France so brilliantly, returned a sad child-widow, and all that remained to her of her former splendor was a silver drink-cup and a few saucers. As Shakspeare says:

“My queen to France, from whence set forth in pomp,
She came adorned hither like sweet May,
Sent back like Hallowmas or shortest day.”

She was received throughout France with joy, and tears of sympathy.

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When Isabella was eighteen. Madcap Hal again offered his hand to her, supposing she had forgotten her former prejudice, but although she married again she was so far faithful to the memory of her English husband that she would not accept the son of his murderer. Some years later, when Prince Hal was king, he married her beautiful sister Katherine.

Isabella's second husband was her cousin, the Duke of Orleans, whose beautiful poems are considered classic in France. Again she was the joy of her family and the pride of France, but all her happiness was destined to be fleeting, for she survived her marriage only one year. Her husband, who loved her fondly, wrote after her death:

“Alas!
Death, who made thee so bold,
To take from me my lovely princess,
Who was my comfort, my life,
My good, my pleasure, my riches?
Alas! I am lonely, bereft of my mate—
Adieu! my lady, my lily!
Our loves are forever severed.”

And in another poem, full of expressions that show how very devoted was his affection for her, he says:

“Above her lieth spread a tomb
Of gold and sapphires blue,
The gold doth show her blessedness,
The sapphires mark her true.

“And round about, in quaintest guise,
Was carved—’Within this tomb there lies
The fairest thing to mortal eyes.’”

Farewell, sweet Isabella!—a wife at eight, a widow at twelve, and dead at twenty-two, —your life was indeed short, and, though not without happy days, sorrow blended largely with its joy!

CHASED BY WOLVES

By George Dudley Lawson.

Some forty years ago the northern part of the State of New York was very sparsely settled. In one of the remote counties, which for a name's sake we will call Macy County, a stout-hearted settler, named Devins, posted himself beyond the borders of civilization, and hewed for his little family a home in the heart of a forest that extended

all the way from Lake Champlain to Lake Ontario. His nearest neighbor was six miles away, and the nearest town nearly twenty; but the Devinses were so happy and contented that the absence of company gave them no concern.

It was a splendid place to live in. In summer the eye ranged from the slope where the sturdy pioneer had built his house over miles and miles of waving beech and maple woods, away to the dark line of pines on the high ground that formed the horizon. In the valley below, Otter Creek, a tributary of the St. Lawrence, wound its sparkling way northward. When Autumn painted the scene in brilliant hues, and it lay glowing under the crimson light of October sunsets, the dullest observer could not restrain bursts of admiration.

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Mr. Devins's first attack on the stubborn forest had been over the brow of the hill, some four miles nearer Owenton, but his house was burned down before he had taken his family there from Albany. He had regretted that he had not "pitched his tent" on the slope of Otter Creek; so now he began with renewed energy his second home, in which the closing in of the winter of 1839 found him. He had sixty acres of rich soil under cultivation at the time of which we are to speak, his right-hand man being his son Allan, —a rugged, handsome, intelligent boy of sixteen.

The winter of '39 was a terrible one; snow set in before the end of November, and, even in the open country, lay upon the ground until the beginning of April, while in the recesses of the forest it was found as late as the middle of June. There was great distress among the settlers outside of the bounds of civilization, to whom the deep snow was an impassable barrier. The Devinses neither saw nor heard from their nearest neighbors from the first of December till near the beginning of February, when a crust was formed upon the snow sufficiently firm to bear the weight of a man, and a friendly Cayuga Indian brought them news of how badly their neighbors fared.

Mr. Devins was especially touched by the bad case of his friend Will Inman, who lived on the nearest farm. The poor man lay ill of a fever; Mrs. Inman was dead and temporarily buried, until her body could be removed to the cemetery in Owenton, and all the care of the family devolved upon Esther, his daughter, fourteen years old. After a short consultation, the next morning breaking bright and clear though very cold, it was determined to allow Allan to go over the hill to Inman's, bearing medicine, tea, and other little necessities for the family. He was impressively warned to begin his return at so early an hour that he might reach home before the short day's end, especially because of the danger from wild animals. The severity of the winter had made the wolves more venturesome and dangerous than they had been for many years. Mr. Devins had lost several sheep and hogs, and deemed it unsafe for any of his family to be caught far from the house at night.

Allan armed himself with his light rifle, put some biscuits and cold meat in a pouch strapped to his waist, mounted one of the strong farm-horses, and set out on his journey. The road through the forest was better than he expected to find it, as the snow had been drifted off, but at the turns, and in the thickest part of the wood, his horse floundered through drifts more than breast high; and more than once Allan had to dismount and beat a path ahead. Therefore, he did not reach Inman's till two o'clock, and, by the time he had helped Esther about her work, assisted her young brother to get in a good supply of wood, and made things more comfortable for the invalid, it was almost sundown. He stoutly refused to wait for supper, declaring that the luncheon still in his pouch would serve, and started just as the short twilight came on. He was a brave lad, and, with no thought of peril, went off, kissing his hand gayly to Esther.

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It took him an hour to traverse the first three miles, and then he came to a stretch of comparatively bare ground leading through his father's old clearing, and almost to the top of the hill back of Mr. Devins's house. He was just urging old Bob into a trot, when a long, clear howl broke upon his ear; then another and another answered from east and south. He knew what that meant. It was the cry of the advance-guard of a pack of wolves.

The howling sounded near, and came swiftly nearer, as though the wolves had found his tracks and scented their prey. Old Bob trembled in every limb, and seemed powerless to move. Allan realized that he could not, before dark, reach home through the drifts ahead, and the increasing cold of the advancing night would render a refuge in a tree-top probably as deadly as an encounter with the pack.

Presently there came a cry, shriller and sharper than before, and Allan, looking back, saw a great, lean, hungry gray wolf burst from the underbrush into the road, followed by dozens more; and in a moment the road behind him was full of wolves, open-mouthed and in keen chase. Their yells now seemed notes of exultation, for the leader of the pack—the strongest, fleetest, hungriest one among them—was within a dozen yards of Allan, who was now riding faster than ever old Bob had gone before or ever would go again. Excitement made the lad's blood boil in his veins, and he determined to show fight. The moon had risen, and the scene was almost as light as day. Now he could count the crowding host of his enemies, and just as he broke from the forest road into the old clearing, he turned in his saddle and fired. The foremost of the pack rolled over and over; the rest gathered around and tore their leader in pieces.

By the time they resumed the chase, Allan was a hundred yards ahead with his rifle loaded. He determined to make a running fight of it to the hill, where he was sure of meeting his father, or could take to a tree and shoot until help came. This had hardly flashed through his brain when, right ahead of him, a detachment of the pack sprang into the road and answered with double yells the cries of the rest coming up behind. The horse wheeled suddenly, almost unseating Allan, and dashed across the clearing toward the wood; but he had not taken a dozen bounds when a wolf sprang upon him. Old Bob reared and fell, pitching Allan nearly twenty feet ahead, and was covered with wolves before he could regain his footing. That was the last of poor old Bob.

[Illustration: "*Old Bob fell, pitching Allan ahead.*"]

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But Allan! What of him? When he recovered from the effects of the shock, he found himself over head and ears in snow. He had no idea where he was, but struggled and plunged in vain endeavors to extricate himself, until at last he broke into a space that was clear of snow, but dark as Erebus, damp and close. Feeling about him he discovered over his head logs resting slantingly against the upper edge of a pit, and then he knew that he was in the cellar of the old house his father had built, and which had been burned down nine years before! The cellar was full of snow, except at the corner roofed over by the fallen logs, and Allan, bursting through the snow into the empty corner, was as secure from the wolves as though seated by his father's fireside. It was not nearly as cold in there as outside, and he found a dry spot upon which he lay down to think.

He was in no danger of freezing to death, his food would keep him from starvation a week at least, and Allan concluded that, with the first glimpse of dawn, his father would be in search of him, and, following the tracks, find old Bob's bones, and quickly rescue him from his predicament. He reasoned wisely enough, but the elements were against him. Before sunrise a furious storm of wind and snow had completely obliterated every trace of horse, rider and wolves.

At home, as the night wore on, the anxiety of the family had increased. While they were watching the gathering storm, they heard the long, dismal howl of the wolves coming over the hill. The chill of fear that they should never see the boy again settled down upon all their hearts, until the house was as dreary within as the winter waste and gloomy forest were without.

Meanwhile the brave youth was sound asleep, dreaming as peacefully as though snugly resting with his brother in his warm bed at home. He slumbered on unconscious of the raging storm without, and did not awake until late the next forenoon. It took him several seconds to realize where he was and how he came there, but gradually he remembered his ride for life, the falling of his horse, his struggle in the snow, and his breaking into the protected space where he lay.

The storm lasted all day and far into the succeeding night. Allan ate slightly, quenched his thirst with a few drops of water obtained by melting snow in the palm of his hand, and began casting about for means to get out. He soon found that to dig his way up through the mass of snow that filled the cellar was beyond his powers. If he could have made a succession of footholds, the task would have been easy; but all his efforts only tended to fill his retreat, without bringing him nearer the air. As soon as he saw this, he gave himself up to calmly waiting for help from without.

The second morning of his imprisonment broke clear and cheerful, and Mr. Devins set out to search for traces of his boy. He visited the Inmans' and learned the particulars of Allan's stay and departure, then mournfully turned his face homeward, his heart filled with despair. When he emerged from the forest into the clearing, he met the Indian who

had visited him a few days before, and he told the red man of Allan's loss. The Indian stood a moment in deep thought, and then asked:

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"No horse, no boy back there?" pointing to the road just traversed by Mr. Devins.

"No. I have looked carefully, and if there had been a trace left by the recent storm I should have detected it."

"Ugh! well, me come over the hill; nothing that way either; then they here."

"Why do you think so?"

"Ah! me know wolves. When Allan come to this place they ahead; horse turn; wolves caught 'em this side woods; we look there," and Tayenathonto pointed to the very course taken by the horse and rider.

It so happened when Allan was thrown from the horse's back that his rifle flew from his hand and struck, muzzle down, in a hollow stump, where, imbedded in the snow, it stood like a sign to mark the scene of the last struggle of the lost boy. The snow had whitened all its hither side. When the Indian came abreast of it, he cried:

"Told you so! See! Allan's gun! And here rest of 'em," pointing to the little heap over the ruins of the old cabin.

Kicking the snow hastily aside, the Indian examined the ground carefully a moment and then said: "No, only horse; Allan further on."

The Indian, with head bent down, walked quickly forward, threw up his arms, and disappeared. He had stepped over the clean edge of the cellar and sunk exactly as Allan had. A few desperate plunges sufficed to take the strong Indian through the intervening snow and into the protected corner where Allan, just rousing from his second sleep, sat bolt upright. The Indian's coming disturbed the snow so that a glimmer of light penetrated into the dark space. Allan supposed a wolf had found its way down there, and hastily drew his large knife, bracing himself for an encounter.

The Indian sputtered, thrashed about to clear himself from the snow, and in so doing rapped his head smartly against the low ceiling of logs.

"Waugh! waugh!" exclaimed he. "Too much low; Indian break 'em head; look out."

Allan instantly recognized the voice of the Indian, his comrade on many a fishing and hunting tour.

"Tayenathonto!" he cried, "dear old fellow, who would have thought of you finding me!"

The Indian quietly replied:

"Tayenathonto no find; come like water-fall; couldn't help his self."

A very few minutes sufficed to put both on the surface again, where Allan was received “like one come from the dead,” and closely folded in his father’s arms. Oh, the joy of that embrace! The past grief and suffering were forgotten in the bliss of that moment.

The Indian had to return with the happy father and son to their home, where he was hailed as Allan’s rescuer, and enjoyed to the full a share of the festivities.

In after years Allan married Esther Inman, and now, by the fireside in winter, he tells his grandchildren of his escape from the wolves, and the little ones never tire of petting their faithful old Tayenathonto.

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* * * * *

[Illustration]

There was an old person of Crewd,
Who said, "We use saw-dust for food;
It's cheap by the ton,
And it nourishes one,
And that's the main object of food."

MOLLIE'S BOYHOOD.

By Sarah E. Chester.

A little girl sat squeezed in between an old fat man and his old bony wife in a crowded hall on a sultry evening in October. On one side it was as if feather pillows loomed above her with intent to smother; on the other, sharp elbows came into distressing contact with her ribs. The windows were open; but the hall had not been built with reference to transmitting draughts on suffocating nights for the benefit of packed audiences; and everybody gasped for breath, though everybody fanned—that is, everybody who had a fan, a newspaper, a hat, or a starched handkerchief. Mollie had neither fan, newspaper, hat, nor handkerchief, and yet she of all the audience gasped unawares. She was stifled, but happy. Elbows and bad air might do their worst; her body suffered, but her spirit soared. She was lifted above her neighbors, into an atmosphere where she was conscious of nothing but the eloquence that fell in such soft tones from the lips of the beautiful woman on the stage.

Mollie was fatherless and brotherless. She had no male cousins within a thousand miles. Her only uncle, two blocks off, was a man whose dinners rebelled against digestion, and who might have been beyond the seas for all the good he did her. They were a feminine family,—Mollie, her mother, the old cat and her kittens three,—bereft of masculine rule and care, and in need of money earned by masculine hands.

The mother bore losses and lacks with the philosophy of her age; but Mollie's age was only twelve, and knew not philosophy. She realized that she was a mistake. She was miserably aware that she was a mistake which could never be corrected. Friends repeatedly assured her that it was a great pity she had not been born a boy, and tantalized her with boyhood's possibilities. Frequent mention was made of ways in which she might minister to her mother's comfort if she were a son; and all Mollie's day-dreams were visions of that gallant son's achievements. She used to close her eyes and see wings and bay-windows growing around their little cottage and making it a mansion; their old clothes gliding away, and fine new robes stepping into their places; strong servants working in the kitchen; pictures stealing up the walls, and luxuries

scattering themselves hither and thither, till she felt the spirit of the boy within her, and seemed equal to the deeds he would have done. Then she used to open her eyes wide to the fact of her girlhood and have little seasons of despair.

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This had been going on a long time, the visions, their destruction by facts, and the consequent despair; for, of course, she had always believed there was nothing to be done. And now here was one telling her that something could be done—that she, even she, the little girl Mollie, had equal rights with boys, and that it was not only her privilege but her duty to claim them. Here was one exhorting her to throw off the yoke of her girlhood, talking of a glorious career that might be hers, of emancipation and liberty, of a womanhood grand as manhood itself. And how the tremendous sentiments, so beautifully uttered, thrilled through Mollie from the crown of her hat to the toes of her boots! She would have given worlds for one glance from that bravest of her sex who had thrown off the yoke, and for a chance to ask her just how she did it. For while Mollie had fully made up her mind to wear her yoke no longer, she did not know exactly by what means to become an emancipated creature. As she walked home with her hand in that of the fat gentleman who had treated her to the lecture, she reached the conclusion that no special instructions had been given because it was taken for granted that each woman's nobler instincts would guide her. She entered the gate a champion of freedom, a believer in the equality of the sexes—a girl bound to be a boy, and trusting to her nobler instincts to teach her how.

No trembling and glancing back over her shoulder for goblins and burglars to-night as she put the key into the door! No scared chattering of teeth in the dark hall! No skipping three steps at a time up the stairs pursued by imaginary hands that would grip at her ankles! She faced the darkness with wide-open eyes, instead of feeling her way with lids squeezed down as had been her custom; and when eyes seemed to look back at her from the darkness, her boyhood laughed at her girlhood, and she did not quicken her pace. But—Mollie was glad to step into the room where the light burned. Her mother had gone to bed early with one of her tired-out headaches, and she only half woke to see that her little girl was safely in. Mollie kissed her softly (for boys may kiss their mothers softly) and took the lamp into the little room beyond, where she always slept.

The first thing that she did was to look in the glass. What a girlish little face it was! How foolishly its dimples came and went with its smiles! In what an effeminate manner the hair crinkled above it, and then went rambling off into half a yard of stylish disorder! Mollie lifted the hair in her hand and surveyed it thoughtfully. Then she took a thoughtful survey of the scissors in her work-basket. Then she reached them. She allowed herself a moment of conscientious reflection; then the boy's naughty spirit crept down through her fingers and set the scissors flying, and the deed was done.

It was not easy to satisfy her mother's amazement and vexation in the morning; but Mollie stumbled through it and went to school. There opportunities were few. She coaxed her teacher to let her study book-keeping, and took one disagreeable lesson in its first principles; but she accomplished nothing else that day except the putting of a general check upon weak-minded inclinations to be frolicsome.

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But that evening there was a fair sky, one of the soft, deep skies that make imaginative little girls' brains dizzy; and Mollie tramped down the gravel path to the gate and leaned over; then she soon nestled her head in her arms and looked up and lost herself. Boyhood was far from her dreamy fancies, when they were scattered by a tweak at one of her cropped locks.

"What does this mean?" asked the voice of the neighbor over the fence. "How came it to be done without my leave?"

"Don't I look manly, Mr. John?" said Mollie.

"What does it mean?" said he, severely.

"That would be telling," said Mollie.

"I intend that you shall tell me," said he.

"Oh, it's a secret!" said Mollie.

"All the better; we'll keep it together. Tell it."

He was a grown-up man, nearer thirty than twenty years old, who stooped to take an interest in his neighbor's little girl, and flattered himself that he was bringing her up in the way she should go. It amused him in his leisure moments to try the experiment of rearing a girl to be as unlike as possible the girl of the period.

From mere force of habit, Mollie opened her mouth and poured out her heart to him. He seemed quite impressed by the solemn confession. Mollie studied his face closely while she was speaking, and saw nothing but a grave and earnest interest in her project. She could not see deep enough to discover the indignation that was fuming over the loss of her pretty locks, and the purpose that was brewing to cure her of her folly.

"Don't have any half-way work about it, Mollie," said Mr. John. "Do the thing thoroughly, if you undertake it." "Oh yes, indeed!" said Mollie.

"If you should need an occasional reminder, I will try and help you," said he; "for of course it won't do to be off guard at all. But now get your hat, and we'll go for some ice-cream. I know you need cooling off this warm evening."

Mollie skipped about to run toward the house.

"Be careful of your steps," he called; and she tramped as boyishly as she could.

"No, don't take hold of my hand," as she came back and slipped her fingers in his. "Put your hands in your pockets."

"I've only one pocket," she answered meekly, putting her right hand in it.

"Difficulties at once, aren't there?" said Mr. John. "Your clothes want reforming, you see. You'll have to put on Bloomers."

"Oh!" said Mollie.

"I'm afraid you're not very much in earnest," he said. "You surely are not frightened by a trifle like that?" Mollie looked up imploringly.

"Must I?" she asked.

"Well," he answered, her earnestness making him fear that she would actually appear publicly in masculine array, "I don't know that it is necessary at present. A few days won't matter; and, after a while, it will seem to you the natural way to dress."

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He was so faithful that evening in reminding her of her short-comings that their *tete-a-tete* over the little table in the ice-cream saloon, which usually was so cosey and delightful, was quite spoiled. She went to sleep regretting that she had taken Mr. John into her confidence and made it necessary for him to treat her as a boy.

She did not see him again for several days: and meanwhile she had taken her lessons in book-keeping, practiced the writing hours on heavy masculine strokes, learned to walk without dancing little whirligigs on her tiptoes every other minute, and made some progress in the art of whistling. She felt that she had done much to earn his commendation, and was anxious for a meeting.

On the way home from school, one afternoon, she saw his sister's baby at the window—the roundest, fattest, whitest and sweetest of all the babies that had taken up an abode in Mollie's heart, where babies innumerable were enshrined. There it was, being danced in somebody's hands before the window, and reaching out its ten dear little fingers to beckon her in.

She was quickly in, regardless of her gait. In a moment from the time the tempting vision appeared she was cuddling it in her arms, glibly talking the nonsense that it loved to hear, and kissing and petting it to her heart's content. She was so absorbed that she did not hear Mr. John come in; and he was close by her when she looked up and saw his face—not the genial, welcoming look she had been in the habit of meeting since he became her friend, but one of grave disapproval.

"I am ashamed of you, Mollie," he said. "Boys of your age don't pet babies in that way."

Mollie dropped it—she hardly knew whether on the floor or the stove—and flew. When she got home, she ran into the little back room that used to be her play-room. She was all ready for a good cry, and she closed the door. Then she thought, what if Mr. John were to see her crying like a girl-baby!—and she marched to the window, and through the dimness in her eyes tried to see something cheering. Her nature was very social, and her need of companionship great at that moment; so she turned to the friend who had been brother, sister and child to her through most of her little girlhood—her big doll Helena, who sat in a chair in the corner beholding her agitation with fixed, compassionless gaze.

"Come here, you dear," said Mollie, folding her tenderly in her arms and finding comfort in the contact of her cold china cheek. She had loved her so long that she had given her a soul; and to Mollie's heart the doll was as fit for loving as if she had had breath and speech. She did not play with her any longer, but Helena was still her dear old friend—an almost human confidant and crony.

As she held her closely, suddenly she thought of Mr. John. If he had objected to the petting of babies, what would he say to dolls? She gave her a frantic kiss, put her away,

and turned her back on her to reflect; for she did not mean to shirk the most disagreeable reflections in the new line of duty she had chosen to follow.

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If it had really been a human friend whose destinies Mollie considered, she could not have been more serious; and if it had been a human friend whom she at last decided must be put far from her, she could hardly have suffered severer heart-pangs. But she would have no compromising with inclination in this matter. She would be brave and strong, as it became her mother's son to be. So to the lowest depths of the deepest trunk in the garret she mentally consigned Helena. There, beyond the reach of her loving eyes and arms, she should lie in banishment until her heart became callous.

But there was something so repulsive in the idea of smothering human Helena under layers of old garments, that Mollie finally thought of a better way. Helena should no longer be Helena, dear to her heart in all her little feminine adornings and her sympathetic, tender traits of character. She should undergo a change; a radical reform. She, too, should become a boy, and her name should be Thomas. Thenceforth Mollie spent her leisure moments in manufacturing garments suitable for the change; and at last she saw a boy-doll, in roundabout and pantaloons, occupying the chair where Helena had so long sat in dainty dresses. The sight was a perpetual offense to her eyes; but she bore it bravely, keeping in store for herself a reward of merit in Mr. John's approval. She did not fail to mention to him Helena's reform the next time they met, which was one morning before breakfast. She was sweeping the front steps when he came and leaned over the fence and called her.

She shouldered the broom, as she had seen men shoulder implements of labor,—hoes, rakes, *etc.*,—and tramped toward him. Mr. John watched her, with an expression of disgust under his mustache.

"Well, Bob," he said, "I'm glad to see you out so early. Form good habits before you're grown, and when you come to manhood you'll make money by it. Where are your Bloomers to-day? It isn't possible your mind's not made up to them yet?"

There was something in Mr. John's tone and manner which did not seem quite courteous to Mollie; but she had hardly hung her head when he began to talk in his old half-fatherly, half-brotherly fashion; and then, in the lively conversation, she found a chance to introduce Thomas. Mr. John gave her a long, solemn, searching look.

"Mollie," he said, "I am very much afraid you will never succeed as a boy. It seems to me that even an ordinarily masculine girl of your age would have been clear-headed enough to see the absurdity of your little farce. It is nothing but a farce, mere babyishness. You have been playing with yourself and with your doll. No boy could have done it."

There was a short pause; then Mollie's voice piped out into a humble question as to what course a boy would have pursued in the matter.

“Why, that is clear enough,” said Mr. John. “If you want to do what a boy would do, dispose of the doll on the shortest notice. Get it out of your sight and mind as soon as possible, and then never give it any more thought than you’d give the rattle you used to shake when you were a baby, or the rubber ring you cut your teeth on.”

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Could he be made to understand the immense difference between Helena and other toys? Could any words explain to him about the soul that had grown out of Mollie's love into the cloth and sawdust body? Mollie looked up to catch a sympathetic expression that should help her to tell him; but she did not find it.

"You don't understand," she said desperately.

"No?" said he.

"Mr. John," said Mollie, not looking him in the eye, "when you have a doll as long as I have had Helena, it is only natural that she should seem to you like a live person. If I didn't play with her at all, she'd seem real to me, and I shouldn't like to have her go away any more than I would mother."

"Which tells the secret that you have some sort of human fondness for the lifeless bundle of rags," said Mr. John, "and proves what I feared, that you are a very weak-minded little girl, Mollie."

"You wont believe in me at all," said Mollie.

"You wont think I am doing my best, and that I ever succeed. You are not like you used to be."

"That naturally follows *your* being different," said Mr. John. "Of course, we can't have the same feelings toward each other now as when you were contented to be a little girl and to let me treat you as one. I'm sorry you don't find me as agreeable as before, Mollie; but you must acknowledge that I am acting as a friend in doing all that I can to help you in your dear project."

"It isn't dear!" burst forth Mollie, indignantly. "I hate it!—but I'll never give it up!"

"Of course not," Mr. John said. "Then I presume you are all ready to part with Helena."

"I'll go and get her," said Mollie.

No one saw the parting in the play-room. It was quickly over, and she was back by the fence.

"Give her to Bessie," said Mollie, putting Helena and her wardrobe into Mr. John's arms. Bessie was one of his many nieces.

"To Bessie!" said he. "Where you can feel that she is away on a visit; where you know that she will be petted and cared for; where you can see her occasionally. If you are sincere in this matter, Mollie, send her off where you can no longer care to think of her. Our ash-man would be very glad to carry her home to his little girls."

Mollie's hands made a wild dive toward Helena as a vision of the little grimy man who crept into their areas for ashes rose before her.

"Decide now," said Mr. John. "Take your doll and be Mollie Kelly again, or be a boy and give her to the ash-man's children without a pang."

Mollie hung her head. There was color coming and going in her cheeks, her fingers trembled,—how they longed to snatch Helena!—and her mind was full of indecision. Mr. John watched her closely, and he thought he saw the tide turning in favor of her girlhood. He held the doll nearer that it might tempt her fingers; but, on the instant, she turned and ran away. He tucked Helena under his coat and carried her upstairs and locked her in a drawer, there to abide until Mollie should want her again.

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That was a gloomy day to Mollie. She was out of humor with her boyhood. She was ashamed of herself one moment for bewailing Helena, and furious the next with Mr. John and the ash-man. She felt cross and discouraged, and was glad when the darkness came, and she could go to bed and sleep. But the next morning she was in no cheerier, braver frame of mind; and she walked home at noon, considering plain sewing *versus* book-keeping as a means of subsistence. Mr. John would have rejoiced if he could have seen his “little leaven” working.

“The gutters on the roof are full of leaves, Mollie,” said her mother as she came in. “Stop on your way back to school and send Michael to clean them out. I think we are going to have rain, and we don’t want them washed into the pipes.”

“How much will he charge, mother?”

“About fifty cents.”

“That fifty cents shall buy something for you,” said Mollie to herself. “The boy of the family shall clean the roof.”

There was just enough recklessness in her mood to make her rather enjoy than fear the prospect. She left her mother getting dinner, and took a broom and escaped up the garret stairs and through the scuttle. The roof did not slope steeply, and she let herself down with an easy slide to the rear eaves. She rested her feet on the edge of the house and swept as far as her arms would reach east and west. Then she shifted her position and swept again until the whole length was clean.

She heard her mother calling her to dinner, but she had the front gutter yet to sweep, and, climbing up, went down on the other side. There was a thought which gave zest to her work on that side,—Mr. John would be coming home that way to dinner and would see her. Besides, other people would see her, and no passer-by should say that she did not do her work as thoroughly and fearlessly as any boy. She had taken for granted that Mr. John’s eyes would be drawn upward; but when he had walked almost by, looking straight ahead, she sent him a shrill call. He looked at the windows, around the yard, and even as far up as the trees.

“On the roof,” screamed Mollie, and in her excitement she forgot her situation and lost her balance and slipped,—not far, but one foot went out beyond the eaves into the air. The other one rallied to the rescue, supported her whole weight, and helped her to regain her position. Danger was over in a moment, but it had been danger of death, and Mollie’s heart beat wildly, and a faintness came over her. Still through it all she was able to see Mr. John’s approving smile as he lifted his hat and waved it gayly in applause.

“He wouldn’t care if I had fallen and been killed,” thought Mollie, as she recovered herself. “All he wants is to have me succeed in being a horrid boy. I’ve a mind to give it up just to spite him.”

She could not know—so successfully had he concealed his agitation under that bland smile—how faint he, too, had been in the moment of her danger, nor how fast his heart was still beating as he walked on, nor what resolves he was forming to put a speedy end to her boyhood.

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He stopped on his way back from dinner to tell her that he had engaged to take a party of his nephews and nieces nutting that afternoon, and that he wanted her to come.

"It will be so nice to have a big boy on hand, Mollie," said Mr. John, "especially one that isn't afraid of heights. We may have some to climb."

Not a word about her danger and his gladness for her safety, and she knew he had seen her narrow escape. But she felt so gay over memories of Mr. John's nutting parties, and the prospect of another, that she forgave him all, and prepared to be thoroughly happy that afternoon.

School closed at three o'clock, and Mollie flew to Mr. John's yard, where they were all waiting. She came dancing by the gate, her cheeks rosy, her eyes shining,—just her old self, as she had been in the days when no boyhood loomed like an ugly shadow between her and Mr. John. He saw it all, and charged himself to be stony. So he gave no better response to her impulsive greeting than he would have given an ordinary boy. Her spirits fell a degree; but with those happy children bobbing around her, expecting her to be the happiest of all, they could do nothing but rise again.

Mr. John did not offer to lift her over fences as he lifted the other girls; he even called on her to help the little ones over. He held back branches that came across other girls' paths; he let her clear her own way. He carried Kittie and Bessie, and Esther and Dora, over the brook; he let her splash across on the stones with the boys. He gallantly made cups and gave the other girls to drink; he suggested to Mollie that she should scoop the water up in her hand, as he was doing for his own use.

She wished many a time before they came to the walnut-trees that she had staid at home. She wished her boyhood's days were over, or had never been. She couldn't bear Mr. John, and all the children noticed that she moped, and asked her why.

Well, there were no nuts when they got there, Mr. John had known there wouldn't be. They should have come much earlier in the day to find these trees full, and the next trees were too far away. So they concluded to turn their nutting party into a picnic. They had a basket of provisions, and Mr. John sent the big boys into the next lot to get wood for a fire. Then came his grand opportunity for crushing Mollie. He called her, and she ran to him gladly, ready to take him back to her favor on his own terms.

"Please, go and help the boys bring wood for our fire," he said. "They have all gone but you."

She went, but not without giving him a look that actually made him blush for his rudeness. She went with the aspect of a tragedy queen, and by the time she overtook the boys she had calmly made up her mind to two things: never, never again to be friends with Mr. John, and to give up her boyhood just to spite him. But one more

temptation still held her. There was a little cliff over in that next lot, stony and steep, and high enough to make a leap which it was some credit to a boy to achieve. The boys stood on the edge, measuring the distance with experienced eyes and preparing to go over.

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Now Mollie as a girl had always been a very good jumper, so she resolved at once to try the leap, and have the report of her valiant deed carried back to Mr. John. She joined the boys, and seeing that one after another went down safely, she soon asked for a turn. She was gravely remonstrated with. She was overwhelmed with sage masculine advice, but she swept her way clear and jumped—with all the recklessness of her reckless mood. She knew well enough the backward inclination proper for her head, what the relative positions of her knees and chin should be, and if she had taken the least forethought might have redeemed the declining reputation of her boyhood. The knowledge flashed across her in her swift descent that her spine had not preserved the proper perpendicular, and that she was coming down wrong. Chin and knees knocked together as she fell in a heap on the grass below.

[Illustration: MOLLIE IS CARED FOR BY THE BOYS.]

It was a caving in of skull, she thought, that made that horrible crashing pain and that sent lightning dancing on a black background before her eyes, then blinded her quite. Nothing but a general chaos of skull and brain could make such terrible pain. She wondered if her friends would be able to recognize one dear lineament in the jumble of her features. She thought what a sad fate it was to die young. She wondered how Mr. John would feel now! and then she found that light dawned upon her and that she had an eye open. In a moment she discovered that the sense of hearing, too, had not abandoned her; for the boys had reached her by this time, and she heard Mr. John's nephew, John, saying:

"She's knocked her teeth through her lip, that's all. I did it once when I jumped wrong and hit my chin on my knee. She'll soon be all right."

Two eyes open now, and she saw a bloody frock, and what seemed an army of boys; for there was something still the matter with her vision which caused it to multiply.

"Boys, boys, nothing but boys!" thought Mollie, dropping her lids. "Where did they all come from, I wonder? There must be a thousand. I never want to see another. I wouldn't be one for the world. I wish they'd go away."

Then she felt some one bathing her face gently, and when the water had refreshed her, she ventured another peep at the world. Boys around her still; but she could see now that their number was only four, and the faces those of friends.

"Cheer up, Mollie," said John, jr. "You got a hard knock, but you're coming on. Bob's gone for the phaeton, and we'll have you home in no time."

They propped her up against a tree, and continued to bathe her head with water from Jerry's felt hat, filled at the little brook close by.

All this while Mr. John had been accounting for their absence by supposing that Mollie was taking some sort of revenge on him, and he would permit none of the girls to go in search of the wanderers. Not until Bob and the phaeton appeared did news of Mollie's valiant deed reach him. Then he went to her at once, and saw her pale and bloody.

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But to display weakness now might be to lose all, reflected Mr. John; so he kept back the words of sympathy that were on his lips as he leaned down and offered to carry her to the phaeton.

"I prefer to walk, thank you," said Mollie, her pride giving her strength to rise and take the arm which John, jr., stood ready to offer. However, Mr. John forcibly made an exchange, and, in spite of Mollie, half led and half carried her to the road.

"Don't be discouraged, Mollie," he said as he put her in, while Bob was busy at the halter. "The next time you'll jump like a man."

"That nonsense is all over, thank you," said Mollie, very loftily, though not very clearly, because of her swollen lips. "Think what you please of me," she mumbled. "It is all ended; and it might have ended sooner, too, if I'd taken better advice."

"With better advice it never would have ended, you contrary little minx," said Mr. John to himself as she drove away.

The doctor came and Mollie was ordered to bed; but even his opiate did not make her sleep. It was soothing, indeed, to lie there in the twilight with her hand in her mother's, and feel that she was her little girl entirely, no more to be her boy while life should last. And pleasant visions of a Gothic school-house, where she should some day be mistress of sweet, rosy-cheeked children, rose gracefully on the ruins of her manly aspirations.

By and by the bell rang, and her mother brought a lamp, and a package which Mollie sat up and opened. There, with a note pinned on the left leg of her trousers and a box of Mollie's best-beloved candies clasped on her jacket, lay Helena.

"I have never been to the ash-man's house, Mother Mollie," said the note. "I have been visiting Mr. John's cuffs and collars in the bureau-drawer. I want my girls' clothes on to-morrow. I claim it as my right. We all have our rights. Put me in dresses and take me home to the play-room. You have your rights too, and I wouldn't let any one tell me that I hadn't a right to be a girl. It is my opinion that if you had been meant for a boy you would have been made one. Come, mother, cuddle me up, and let's go to sleep and have sweet dreams, and a blithe waking to girlhood in the morning, when we will make up with Mr. John; for he sends these chocolate-creams to let you know that he is sorry."

"So we will, dear," said Mollie, tucking Helena's head under her chin. "You were always wiser than your mother, child."

THE LARGEST VOLCANO IN THE WORLD

BY SARAH COAN.

[Illustration: THE LAKE OF FIRE.]

“Why, it isn’t on the top of a mountain at all! What a humbug my geography must have been!”

So wrote a little fellow to a young friend in America.

He was right. It isn’t on the top of a mountain, though the geographies do say, “A volcano is a mountain sending forth fire, smoke and lava,” and give the picture of a mountain smoking at the top.

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This volcano is nothing of the kind; but is a hideous, yawning black pit at the bottom of a mountain, and big enough to stow away a large city.

Of course you want to know, first, where this wonder is. Get out the map of the Western Hemisphere, put your finger on any of the lines running north and south, through North America, and called meridians; follow it south until you come to the Tropic of Cancer, running east and west; then “left-about-face!” and, following the tropic, sail out into the calm Pacific. After a voyage of about two thousand miles, you’ll run ashore on one of a group of islands marked Sandwich. We will call them Hawaiian, for that is their true name. Not one of the brown, native inhabitants would call them “Sandwich.” An English sailor gave them that name, out of compliment to a certain Lord Sandwich.

On the largest of these islands, Hawaii—pronounced “Ha-y-e”—is the volcano, Kilauea, the largest volcano in the world.

We have seen it a great many times, and that you may see it as clearly as possible, you shall have a letter from the very spot. The letter reads:

“Here we are, a large party of us, looking into Kilauea, which is nine miles in circumference, and a thousand feet below us—a pit about seven times as deep as Niagara Falls are high. We came to-day, on horseback, from Hilo, a ride of thirty miles. Hilo is a beautiful sea-shore village, the largest on the island of Hawaii, and from it all visitors to Kilauea make their start.” The road over which we came is nothing but a bridle-path, and a very rough one at that, traversing miles and miles of old lava flows. We had almost ridden to the crater’s brink before we discovered, in the dim twilight, the awful abyss.

“Before us is the immense pit which, in the day-time, shows only a floor of black lava, looking as smooth as satin; and, miles away, rising out of this floor, are a few slender columns of smoke.

“At night, everything is changed; and you can’t conceive of the lurid, demoniacal effect. Each slender column of smoke becomes a pillar of fire that rolls upward, throbbing as it moves, and spreads itself out above the crater like an immense canopy, all ablaze.

“Ships a hundred miles from land see the glow, and we here, on the precipice above, can read ordinary print by its lurid light.

“No wonder the natives worshiped the volcano. They thought it the home of a goddess, whom they named Pele, and in times of unusual activity believed her to be very angry with them. Then they came in long processions, from the seashore villages, bringing pigs, dogs, fowls, and sometimes human beings, for sacrifice. These they threw into the crater, to appease her wrath.” A small berry, called the ohelo, grows on the banks of the pit, and of these the natives never dared to eat until Pele had first had

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her share. Very polite, were they not? And if ever they forgot their manners, I dare say she gave them a shaking up by an earthquake, as a reminder. "Sandal-wood and strawberries grow all about here—and fleas, too! wicked fleas, that bite voraciously, to keep themselves warm, I think, for here, so far from Pele's hearth, it is cold, and we sit by a log fire of our own." The day after our arrival we went into the crater, starting immediately after an early breakfast. There is but one entrance, a narrow ledge, formed by the gradual crumbling and falling in of the precipice. Along this ledge we slipped and scrambled, making the descent on foot—for no ridden animal has ever been able to descend the trail. Holding on to bushes and snags when the path was dangerously steep, we finally landed below on the black satin floor of lava. "Satin! What had looked so smooth and tempting from a thousand feet above, turned out to be a surface more troubled and uneven than the ocean in the most violent storm. And that tiny thread of smoke, toward which our faces were set, lay three miles distant—three miles that were worse than nine on an ordinary road." How we worked that passage! up hill and down hill, over hard pointed lava that cut through our shoes like knife blades; over light, crumbled lava into which we sank up to our knees; over hills of lava that were, themselves, covered with smaller hills; into ravines and over steam-cracks, some of which we could jump with the aid of our long poles, and some of which we had to find our way around; steam-cracks whose depths we could not see, and into which we thrust our walking-sticks, drawing them out charred black or aflame; over lava so hot that we ran as rapidly and lightly as possible, to prevent our shoes being scorched. Three hours of this kind of work for the three miles, and *Hale-mau-mau*, or 'House of Everlasting Fire,' lay spitting and moaning at our feet!

"A lake of boiling lava is what the column of smoke marked out to us,—a pit within a pit,—a lake of raging lava fifty feet below us, of which you have here the picture taken 'from life.'

"It was so hot and suffocating on the brink of this lake that we cut eye-holes in our pocket-handkerchiefs and wore them as masks. Even then we had to run back every few moments for a breath of fresher air, though we were on the windward side of the lake. The gases on the leeward side would suffocate one instantly. Oh, the glory! This Hale-mau-mau, whose fire never goes out, is a huge lake of liquid lava, heaving with groans and thunderings that cannot be described. Around its edge, as you see in the picture, the red lava was spouting furiously. Now and then the center of the lake cooled over, forming a thin crust of black lava, which, suddenly cracking in a hundred directions, let the blood-red

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fluid ooze up through the seams, looking like fiery snakes.“Look at the picture, and imagine these enormous slabs of cooled lava slowly rising themselves on end, as if alive, and with a stately motion plunging beneath the sea of fire, with an indescribable roar.

“For three hours we gazed, spell-bound, though it seemed but a few moments: we were chained to the spot, as is every one else who visits Kilauea.

“The wind, as the jets rose in air, spun the molten drops of lava into fine threads, which the natives call Pele’s hair, and very like hair it is.

“All this time, under our feet were rumblings and explosions that made us start and run now and then, for fear of being blown up; coming back again after each fright, unwilling to leave the spot.

“Occasionally, the embankment of the lake cracked off and fell in, being immediately devoured by the hungry flood. These ledges around Hale-mau-mau are very dangerous to stand upon. A whole family came near losing their lives on one. A loud report beneath their feet and a sudden trembling of the crust made them run for life; and hardly had they jumped the fissure that separated the ledge on which they were standing from more solid footing—separated life from death—than crash went the ledge into the boiling lake!“Sometimes the lake boils over, like a pot of molasses, and then you can dip up the liquid lava with a long pole. You get quite a lump of it, and by quickly rolling it on the ground mold a cylinder the size of the end of the pole, and about six inches long. Or you can drop a coin into the lava to be imprisoned as it cools.“A foreigner once imbedded a silver dollar in the hot lava, and gave the specimen to a native; but he immediately threw it on the ground, breaking the lava, of course, and liberating the dollar, which he pocketed, exclaiming: ‘Volcano plenty enough, but me not get dollar every day.’“One of our party collected lava specimens from around Hale-mau-mau, and tied them up in her pocket-handkerchief. Imagine her astonishment on finding, later, they had burned through the linen, and one by one dropped out.“Terrible as old Pele is, she makes herself useful, and is an excellent cook. She keeps a great many ovens heated for the use of her guests, and no two at the same temperature, so that you may select one of any heat you wish. In these ovens (steam-cracks) she boils tea, coffee and eggs; or cooks omelets and meats. You wrap the beef or chicken, or whatever meat you may wish to cook, in leaves, and lay it in the steam-crack. Soon it is thoroughly cooked, and deliciously, too.

“She also keeps a tub of warm water always ready for bathers.

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“She doesn’t mean to be laughed at, though, for doing this kind of work, and doing it in an original kind of way. After she has given you one or two sound shakings, which she generally does, you’ll have great respect for the old lady, and feel quite like taking off your hat to her. With the shakings and the thunderings under-foot, and now and then the opening of a long steam-crack, she keeps her visitors quite in awe of her powers, though she is probably several hundred years old.” Not far from the little hut where we sleep, close to the precipice, is Pele’s great laboratory, where she makes sulphur. We wear our straw hats to the sulphur banks, and she bleaches them for us.

“Well, this is a strange, strange land, old Pele being only one of its many curiosities.

“I only hope you may all see the active old goddess before she dies. She hasn’t finished her work yet. Once in a while she runs down to the shore, to bathe and look at the Pacific Ocean, and when there she generally gives a new cape to Hawaii by running out into the sea.”

Majestic old Pele! Long may she live!

MAKING IT SKIP

[Illustration]

“I’ll make it skip!”
Cried Charley, seizing a bit of stone.
And, in a trice, from our Charley’s hand,
With scarce a dip,
Over the water it danced alone,
While we were watching it from the land—
Skip! skip! skip!

“I’ll make it skip!”
Now, somehow, that is our Charley’s way:
He takes little troubles that vex one so,
Not worth a flip,
And makes them seem to frolic and play
Just by his way of making them go
Skip! skip! skip!

THE WILLOW WAND. BY A.E.W.

I have a little brother,
And his name is Little Lewy;



His starry eyes are bright as flowers
And they are twice as dewy.
Sometimes the dew o'erflows them,
And trickles down his cheeks;
And then he cries so hard, you'd think
He wouldn't stop for weeks.
Then my other little brother,
A bough of willow bringing,
Drives all the dew-drops far away,
By waving it and singing:

[Illustration]

"One, two, free, fo', five, six, *seven* tears!
You'll be as old as farver in forty sousand years.
Drate big men don't have tears, so let me wipe 'em dry;
In forty sousand years from now you'll never, never cry."

This other little brother,
Whose name is Little Bert,
Frowns in a dreadful manner
Whenever he is hurt;
The wrinkles right above his nose
Look like the letter M,
He keeps them there so long, he must
Be very fond of them.
Then my little brother Lewy,
The branch of willow bringing,
Sends all the naughty frowns away,
By waving it and singing:

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[Illustration]

“A, B, C, D, E, F, G;
How many wrinkles are there? One, two, three!
We’ll send them all off quickly, or they’ll climb up to your hair,
And then to-morrow morning you’ll have lots of tangles there.”

[Illustration]

Sometimes our little Lewy
Loses all his pretty smiles;
He says they’re very far away;
At least a hundred miles.
He looks as sober as a judge,
As stately as a king,
As solemn as a parson and
As still as anything.
And then our little Bertie,
The witching willow bringing,
Sends all the smiles safe home again,
By waving it and singing:

“I want to buy a smile, sir, if you have some about;
I’ll draw this leaf across your lips, and that will bring them out.
And if you cannot spare me one, just let me take a half.
Oh, here they come and there they come, and now we’ll have a laugh.”

[Illustration]

On every “morrow morning,”
This funny little Bertie
Doesn’t want to have his face washed
Because it don’t feel dirty;
He runs half-dressed ’way out-of-doors,
Safe hidden from our view;
We search and call, hunt up and down,
And don’t know what to do,
Until we see our little Lu
The wand of willow bringing,
And leading Bertie back to us,
While all the time he’s singing:

“Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si.
You look like a very small heathen Chinee.



Get the sleep all washed off and hang it up to dry,
And then you'll look as fresh as if you'd just come from the sky."

When all the stars are shining,
Each little sleepy-head
Is lying in a funny bunch
Within the little bed.
Their eyes are so wide open,
They stay awake so long,
They're calling me to tell to them
A story or a song.
So up the stairs again I come,
The magic willow bringing,
And wave it here and wave it there,
While o'er and o'er I'm singing:

"Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep;
Sailing away on the dreamy deep;
Sister to watch you and angels to keep;
Sailing away and away and away,
Away on the d-r-e-a-m-y deep;
Sleep, sleep, s-l-e-e-p, sleep."

[Illustration]

THE STORY THAT WOULDN'T BE TOLD.

BY LOUISE STOCKTON.

"Do tell me one more story; just *one* more!" said the little boy.

It certainly was getting late. The fire lighted the room, the shadows danced in the corners. Down in the kitchen they were hurrying with the dinner, and in a moment nurse would come in to take the boy to bed. But all this made him want to stay. He was very comfortable in his mamma's lap, and he was in no haste to go upstairs to Maggie and the nursery.

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Then his mamma kissed him right on the tip of his little nose, and she said:

“But you must go to bed sometime.”

“Please, mamma dear,” he said, pushing his curly head almost under her arm, “just one little story.”

[Illustration: A SCENE IN THE STORY THAT WOULDN'T BE TOLD.]

“Just one! You can choose it, but mind, a little one!”

“You know what one I want. Of course about the giant Tancankeroareous, and how he stole the slipper of the princess for a snuff-box, and how the Prince Limberlocks climbed up a cherry-tree into the giant's room. That is the story I like!”

“And it must be the ‘amen story’ to-night. Well: Once upon a time the Princess Thistleblossom stood on one foot, while—”

“No, no,” interrupted The Story, “you need not tell *me*! Tell some other story. I am tired of being said over and over. Every night, as soon as your bed-time comes, and you are so sleepy that you don't want to go to bed, you ask for me, and I have to be told. I am sick of it, and I want to rest.”

“But I want you,” said the boy. “I like you best of all my stories. I like that part where the giant comes in and calls out ‘PORTER!’ in such a loud voice that the gate shakes all the bolts loose.”

“I suppose you do like it,” said The Story; “anybody would. I am a very good story, and very fit to be told last, although I cannot see why that is any reason for calling me the ‘amen story.’ That is foolish, I think! But at any rate, that is no reason for telling me every night. Let your mamma tell you Cock Robin, or Jack the Giant-Killer. They are plenty good enough.”

“I don't want them,” said the little boy, beginning to cry; “I want *you*! I wont go to sleep all night if mamma don't tell you.”

“I don't care!” replied The Story; “you needn't cry for me. I've made up my mind. You wont hear me to-night. That as as sure as your name is Paul.”

And it was just as The Story said. There was no use in the boy's crying, for off went The Story, and it was *not* told that night; but it is my private opinion that the boy did go to sleep after all.

POLLY: A BEFORE-CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY HOPE LEDYARD.

[Illustration]

“Santa Claus!” exclaimed Ned, half mockingly.

“Yes,” insisted Mamie, “what’s he going to bring you, Ned?”

“I don’t know, and I don’t care much,” he answered, “for there isn’t any Santa Claus.”

“Why, Ned!” cried Mamie, in astonishment. “Even my big brother Harry believes in Santa Claus. He’s coming home from school to-night, and we’re going to hang up our stockings.”

“Pshaw!” said Ned, “I must go home. Good-bye.”

Merry little Mamie stood in amazement, and then ran in-doors to her mother with her perplexity.

“Why, mother!” she cried, “Ned Huntley said there wasn’t any Santa Claus—and he was real cross about it, too.”

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"Well, Mamie," said her mother, "I wouldn't take any notice of Ned's being cross about Christmas-time. The Huntleys don't keep Christmas."

"Don't keep Christmas!" exclaimed Mamie, astonished beyond measure.

Seeing that her mother was busy, she took her doll, Helena Margaret Constance Victorine, in her arms, and talked the matter over with her.

"What do you think, my dear," said she, "they don't keep Christmas at Ned Huntley's house! I don't know just what mother means by not keeping it, for you know Santa Claus comes down the chimney, and so he can get in during the night and leave Christmas there. Oh, yes, but they don't keep it. They turn it out, I suppose, just like mother told me they acted about the dear little baby Savior; they hadn't any room for him, and I guess Mrs. Huntley hasn't any room to keep Christmas in. I wonder what she does with the Christmas things Santa Claus brings? I wonder if she throws 'em away? I mean to go and ask her;" and putting her child carefully in its cradle, Mamie started.

There was some truth in what Mrs. Gaston had told her little daughter; the Huntleys did not keep Christmas in a loving, hearty way. They kept it in so far that on this very afternoon Mrs. Huntley was busy making the mince pies, dressing the turkey, and doing all she could to be beforehand with the extra Christmas dinner. Mr. Huntley had just stepped into the kitchen for a moment to say to his wife, "What have you settled on for Ned's Christmas?"

"I've bought him a pair of arctics—he needed 'em; and if you want to spend more than common, you might get him half a dozen handkerchiefs."

"Well, wife, I was thinking that perhaps"—the farmer tried to be particular about his words, for Mrs. Huntley did not seem in a very good humor—"I was remembering how you used to enjoy giving the young ones candies and toys; so, perhaps—"

"Now, Noah Huntley, I'm surprised at you! Buy candies and toys for a great lumbering boy like Ned? Why, you must be crazy, man! The next thing will be that you'll want a Christmas-tree yourself!"

"Well, and it wouldn't be a bad idea," thought the father. "There's my man, Fritz, he has been to the woods and cut a little tree for his children, and he seems to get a heap of pleasure out of it. Ah! if only little Polly had lived!" Strangely enough, the wife was thinking the same thing, as she sliced and sifted and weighed. "If little Polly had lived it would have been different, but we can't throw away money on nonsense for Ned."

A little red cloak flashed by the window, a little bright face, just about the age of "our little Polly's," peeped in at the door, and Mamie asked, "May I come in, Mrs. Huntley?"

“Certainly, child. Here’s a fresh cookie. I suppose you’re full of Christmas over at your house?”

“Oh, yes, ma’am! And I’m so sorry you don’t keep it. What’s the reason?”

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“Don’t keep it! Why, we have a regular Christmas dinner as sure as the 25th of December comes round, and Pa gives me a new dress, or something that I need, and we give Ned a suit of clothes, or shoes, or something that he needs.”

“Well,” said Mamie, “but I like our way best. May I tell you how we keep Christmas?”

“Talk away. I can listen.”

“Well, you see, a good while before Christmas my mother begins to get ready, and I often see her hide up something quick when I come in, and then she laughs, and I think, ‘Oh, yes, something’s coming,’ and then mother takes me in her lap and tells me how Jesus is coming, and how He did come. Do you know, Mrs. Huntley?”

“You can tell me, child?”

“You see, He came a long, long time ago as a little baby. Mamma says that he began at the beginning, so that no little child could say, ‘I can’t be like Jesus, for Jesus never was so little as me.’ That first birthday of His, there wasn’t any room for Him at the tavern, and when the dear little baby Jesus was sleepy, they laid Him right in a stable manger, and the shepherds found Him lying there. Christmas is His Birthday, and I suppose they give all the children presents because Jesus loved little children, and then Santa Claus—Oh, Mrs. Huntley, that’s what I came about, and I ’most forgot! If you don’t keep Christmas—I mean as we do,” she added, as Mrs. Huntley frowned, “and if you don’t use the things that Santa Claus leaves here, can’t I come over and get ’em? Only I’d rather Ned should have ’em.”

“Child alive! How your tongue runs! Here, now, take these cookies home with you, I guess Ned’s too busy to play with you.”

“Thank you, ma’am. And you’ll remember about Santa Claus?” said little Mamie, as she walked away with her cookies.

Mrs. Huntley worked on for a few minutes longer, and then, leaving her dishes, she went to her own room and opened a bureau drawer. There lay a bright little dress and pretty white apron,—Polly’s best things,—the little clothes in which she used to look so lovely. There were the last Christmas toys the mother had ever bought,—only a little tin bank, a paper cornucopia, and a doll; but she remembered that Christmas so well! Could it be that it was only three years ago? How Polly had laughed and chattered over her stocking! And Ned,—now that she thought about it,—she remembered that they bought him a pair of skates that year. He had made a great time over those skates, and had taken his little sister out to see him try to use them. Ned was so loving and gentle in those days. And then the mother’s heart reproached her. Could she blame her boy because he seemed to care so little for his parents and his home, when she had nursed her grief for the loss of her baby-girl, and taken no pains to be bright or cheerful with

him? She thought how clearly Mamie had told the story of the Savior's birthday. Could her boy, who was six years older, do as well? He went to Sunday-school sometimes, but she had never talked with him about Jesus—never since God took her Polly. And her eyes filled as she shut the drawer.

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Mrs. Huntley went back to the kitchen, but the room seemed different to her. Ned brought in the milk, and looked at his mother curiously at hearing her say, "Thank you, Ned." Wonders would never end, Ned thought, when, after tea, she said, "Father, it's a moonlight night; couldn't you and I drive to the village? Ned will excuse our leaving him alone."

"Excuse!" When had his mother ever asked him to excuse her? And then, as mother waited for the wagon to be got ready, she asked him to read about the Savior's birth, and surely there were tears in her eyes as father came in, just as Ned read, "And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger."

Mr. Huntley was bewildered, too. To start off for the village at seven o'clock in the evening! When had such a thing happened?

On the road Mrs. Huntley told her husband what Mamie had said to her, and she added, "Perhaps, as I tell it, it don't seem much, but it made me think of our Polly, and"—the woman's voice broke, and the father, saddened too, said, comfortingly, "She's safe, my dear, in heaven."

"Yes, father, but I'm thinking of the one that's left, for all I cried a little. I guess you were near right about getting him something nice. He's but a boy yet, and he'd think more of Christmas, and perhaps of the child that was born on Christmas, if we show him that Jesus has made our hearts a little more tender."

What it cost that hard, reserved woman to say that, none knew, but I think her husband felt dimly how she must have fought with herself, and he was silent for some time. At last he said, with a tone of gladness in his voice, "My dear, I'm glad to get him something. He's a good boy, Ned is."

What a pleasant time they had, and how they caught the spirit of Christmas! They bought a sled and skates, a book or two, and candies, and Mrs. Huntley found a jack-knife that was just the thing Ned wanted. Then she said to her husband:

"I'd like to buy something for Mamie. It will be nice to buy a girl's present."

Their hearts ached a little, as they chose a wonderful little wash-tub and board, with a clothes-horse to match. How Polly's eyes would have shone at these!

Meantime, Ned mused over his mother's tears and her strangely kind tones, and thought: "I wonder if she's going to be as good to me as she was to Polly! I hated to hear Mamie talk about Santa Claus. Polly used to talk just that way, and we did have such good times. I used to get skates and things at Christmas, but now I get some handkerchiefs or a lot of shirts! It makes me mad." Then Ned fell asleep, and so the

mother found him. She woke him gently and he went off to bed, bewildered by more kind words.

Morning dawned and Ned hurried down to light the fire in the kitchen, but he went no further than the sitting-room. There was a sled,—a splendid one,—a pair of skates, and books! He put his hands in his pockets to take a long stare, and felt something strange in one of them. Why! There was a beautiful knife!

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Mother came in and watched his face, but at sight of her the boy fairly broke down. Laying his head on her shoulder, "It's like Polly coming back," he said.

And so it was, and so it continued to be.

[Illustration: BOGGS SHOULD NOT HAVE HAD HIS PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ON THANKSGIVING DAY, AND EATEN A HEARTY DINNER AFTERWARD.]

THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON'S SHOW.

BY JENNIE A. OWEN.

"Aunt Jennie," said my little godson Willie, a few days ago, "wont you go with us to see the Lord Mayor's show? There'll be thirteen elephants and eight clowns, and an elephant picks a man up with his trunk and holds him there. And then mamma's going to take me to Sampson's. Do you know Sampson, Aunt Jennie?"

"I know about Samson in the Bible, Willie."

"Oh, not that one; our Sampson is a man in a shop in Oxford street, and he makes such nice boys' clothes, and he's the master."

I have just come home from the Sandwich Islands, where I have been living; I spent a few years, too, in New Zealand and Tahiti, and so have seen many wonderful things on the land and sea; but a Lord Mayor going to be sworn in to his duties, attended by thirteen elephants and a London crowd, would be a novelty to me. I thought, too, that certain little boys and girls in the Sandwich Islands and the United States, who also call me Aunt Jennie, would like to hear all about it.

This has been an exciting week for the London children. The fifth of November fell on Sunday, and Guy Fawkes had to wait till Monday to make his appearance. All that day he was carried about the streets in various shapes and forms, and the naughty, ignorant little boys, in spite of enlightened school-board teaching, sang at our doors:

"A ha'penny loaf to feed the Pope,
A penn'orth of cheese to choke him,
A pint of beer to wash it all down,
And a jolly good fire to burn him."

"Oh, papa," said Willie, as he ran into the breakfast-room for pennies, "aren't you glad you're a real man and not a pope?"

At last the ninth, the Lord Mayor's day, came. It is also the Prince of Wales' birthday, so the city would be very gay-looking with all the flags flying.

Alas! it was a dark, dull morning, and a heavy fog hung all over the city. Alas for the gilt coaches, the steel armor and other braveries! and then the elephants, how could they possibly feel their way all round the city in a thick, yellow fog? But, happily, by eleven the weather cleared, and the sun shone out brightly. Such a crowd as there was at our railway depot! So many bonny, happy little children never went on the same morning to the busy old town before. It was something new for great elephants to be seen walking through the prosy business streets. Once before, twenty-seven years ago, when Sir John Musgrave was Lord Mayor, not only elephants, but camels, deer, negroes, beehives, a ship in full sail, and Britannia seated on a car drawn by six horses, had made part of the show; since then, however, no Lord Mayor had been thoughtful enough of little and big children's pleasure to order out such delightful things, and so this year everybody must go. To quote from the *Daily News*:

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“Since the reign of Henry III., when, by that monarch’s gracious act the Lord Mayor of London was permitted to present himself before the Barons of Exchequer at Westminster instead of submitting the citizens’ choice for the king’s personal approval, there has been no Lord Mayor’s show at which so great a concourse of spectators assembled.”

We crowd into the cars and are soon in Cannon street. At the gates a boy meets us with little books for sale, shouting, “Thirteen elephants for a penny! the other boys’ll only give you twelve, but I’ll give you thirteen. Sold again! Thirteen elephants for a penny!” This wonderful book consists of a series of common gaudily colored pictures, supposed to represent the procession, which has done service at the show from time immemorial, but it is each year as welcome as ever to the children who each have a penny to buy one. Through the streets we have passing visions of pink silk stockings, canary-colored breeches, and dark green coats and gold lace, also tri-colored rosettes as large as saucers; and pass by shop-windows full of sweet, eager little faces, in the place of hose, shirts, sewing-machines, *etc.*

At last we arrive at our destination in Cheapside, where, through the kindness of a friend, a window on the first floor of a large building is waiting for us. How impatient we are until we hear the band of the Grenadier Guards, which heads the procession. After this band and that of the Royal London Militia, come the Worshipful Company of Loriners, preceded by jolly watermen in blue and white striped jerseys and white trousers, bearing banners; more watermen follow to relieve them; the beadle of the company with his staff of office; the clerk in his chariot; the wardens, wearing silk cloaks trimmed with sables, in their carriages, and amongst them Sir John Bennett, the great watch-maker in Cheapside, a charming-looking old gentleman with rosy cheeks and profuse gray curls; his face lights up with smiles as the shouts of “Bravo, Bennett,” show how popular he is.

Then comes a grand yellow coach, in which rides the Master of the Company, attended by his chaplain. After the Loriners come the Farriers, the band of the First Life Guards, banners, beadle and mace clerk, wardens and master. After them the Broderers. As these pass slowly along, an excitement is caused by the behavior of the horse of a hussar, who is mounting guard. It does not like the proceedings at all, and still less the greasy asphalt on which it stands, dances round, backs into the Worshipful Master of Broderers’ carriage, and finally rears and falls, unseating its rider. The hussar is quite cool and quiet, soon reseats himself, and rejects the offer of a fussy little man in red to hold his horse.

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And now comes the Worshipful Company of Bakers, preceded by their banner, with its good old motto, "Praise God for all." These are really very jolly and well-favored looking companions, most of the members bearing large bouquets of flowers. After them the Vintners' Company, with the band of the Royal Artillery; ten Commissioners, each bearing a shield; eight master porters in vintner's dress; the Bargemaster in full uniform, and the Swan Uppers. These are men who look after the swans belonging to the corporation of London, which build their nests along the banks of the Thames, and they mark the young swans each spring.

The "Uppers" look very well in their dress, consisting of dark cloth jackets slashed with white, blue and white striped jerseys and white trousers.

After this company had passed, a grand shout announced the coming of the elephants. These, as some small boy has observed, are "curious animals, with two tails—one before and one behind." First came a number of large ones, with Mr. Sanger, their owner, who was mounted on a curiously spotted horse. They were gorgeous with oriental trappings and howdahs. On the foremost one rode a man representing a grand Indian prince. He had a reddish mustache, wore spectacles, a magnificent purple and white turban, and showy oriental costume. He produced a great impression on the crowd. In other howdahs sat one, two or three splendid Hindoos, whose dress was past description. Then came several young elephants ridden by boys; one of these was seized with a desire to lie down, and had to be vigorously roused; but, on the whole, they behaved in a wonderfully correct and dignified manner—now and then gracefully swinging round their trunks amongst the sympathizing crowd, in search of refreshment.

The elephants were escorted by equestrians in state costumes, and followed by six knights in steel armor, with lances and pennons, mounted on chargers. One of these "wouldn't go," and had to be dragged on ignominiously by a policeman. Then the Epping Forest rangers came. They were picturesquely dressed in green velvet coats, broad-brimmed hats and long feathers. After these, trumpeters, under-sheriffs in their state carriages, aldermen, the Recorder, more trumpeters, and then a most gorgeous coach—with hammer-cloth of red and gold, men in liveries too splendid to describe, and four fine horses—brings the late lord mayor. The mounted band of household cavalry follows. These really look splendid in crimson coats covered with gold embroidery and velvet caps, riding handsome white horses.

There is a stoppage just as they come up. They are rapturously greeted by the crowd, and requested to "play up." The mayor's servants, in state liveries, follow on foot. After them rides a very important person, the city marshal, on horseback. The city trumpeters come now, preceding the right honorable the lord mayor's most gorgeous gilt coach, drawn by six horses. In it sits Sir Thomas White, supported by his chaplain, and attended by his sword-bearer and the common crier. An escort of the 21st Hussars brings up the rear. Policemen follow, and after them a stray mail-cart, a butcher's boy with his tray; after that, not just the deluge, but the crowd.

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“Oh, mamma!” says Willie, “the beefeaters didn’t come! Nine of them there are in my book, and a grand one going in front, blowing a trumpet. And the man holding his thumb to his nose at the sheriffs; and the policeman knocking a thief down with a staff! And the lord mayor had no spectacles on. That’s not fair! Do beefeaters eat lots of beef, mamma?”

“Oh, no,” says Charlie, with a superior air, “they are only sideboard chaps.”

Willie is still more puzzled, until he is told that in the olden time servants so costumed used to stand by the sideboard, or buffet, as it was called, at feasts, and so got the name of buffetiers, and by degrees the name became changed into beefeaters, which was more easily remembered by the people.

[Illustration: THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON’S SHOW.]

From our window we could not, of course, follow the procession on its winding way, nor had we seen it start. On looking at the paper next morning, we read that at first it was feared that the elephants had failed to keep their appointment. It was almost time to set out, and no elephants were to be seen. What must be done? The people ought not to be cheated out of the best part of the show; and yet, on the other hand, how undignified for a lord mayor to be kept waiting for thirteen elephants! I am sorry to say the police were rather glad. They had been very much afraid that the animals might prove troublesome during so long and unusual a walk; or else, coming from a circus, might, at any sudden pause, imagine themselves in the arena, and take it into their grave heads to perform on two legs and terrify the horses, or possibly annoy the lord mayor and his chaplain by putting their long trunks into his coach. But, happily for us, the police were disappointed. Such dignified creatures could not be expected to come early and be kept waiting.

Just at the right time they came leisurely up, and gravely taking their proper place, marched on with their proverbial sagacity—waiting outside Westminster Hall, whilst the lord mayor swore to do his duty, as quietly as though they were at home—and afterward left the procession at Blackfriars Bridge, to go to their own quarters and eat their well-earned dinner. It is to be hoped that the lord mayor ordered something specially good for them.

The elephants having left, the **embassadors, her majesty’s ministers of state, the nobility, judges, and other persons of distinction, joined the procession, and proceeded to feast with his lordship and the lady mayoress at Guildhall.

[sic]

* * * * *

MY GIRL

BY JOHN S. ADAMS.

I.

A little corner with its crib,
A little mug, a spoon, a bib,
A little tooth so pearly white,
A little rubber ring to bite.

II.

A little plate all lettered round,
A little rattle to resound,
A little creeping—see! she stands!
A little step 'twixt outstretched hands.



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III.

A little doll with flaxen hair,
A little willow rocking-chair,
A little dress of richest hue,
A little pair of gaiters blue.

IV.

A little school day after day,
A "little schoolma'am" to obey,
A little study—soon 'tis past,
A little graduate at last.

V.

A little muff for winter weather,
A little jockey-hat and feather,
A little sack with funny pockets,
A little chain, a ring, and locket.

VI.

A little while to dance and bow,
A little escort homeward now,
A little party, somewhat late,
A little lingering at the gate.

VII.

A little walk in leafy June,
A little talk while shines the moon,
A little reference to papa,
A little planning with mamma.

VIII.

A little ceremony grave,
A little struggle to be brave,
A little cottage on a lawn,
A little kiss—my girl was gone!

* * * * *

MARS, THE PLANET OF WAR.

BY RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

Not long ago, the planet Jupiter came among the stars of our southern evening skies. Those who noted down his track found that he first advanced from west to east, then receded along a track near his advancing one, then advanced again, still running on a track side by side with his former advancing track, and so passed away from the scene, toward the part of the sky where the sun's light prevents our tracking him.

That was a useful and rather easy first lesson about the motions of the bodies called planets.

We have now to consider a rather less simple case, but one a great deal more interesting. Two planets intrude among our evening stars, each following a looped track, but the tracks are unlike; the two planets are unlike in appearance, and they are also very unlike in reality.

I hope many of my young readers have already found out for themselves that these intrusive bodies have been wandering among our fixed stars. I purposely said nothing about the visitors last August, so that those who try to learn the star-groups from my maps may have had a chance of discovering the two planets for themselves. If they have done so, they have in fact repeated a discovery which was made many, many years ago. Ages before astronomy began to be a science, men found out that some of the stars move about among the rest, and they also noticed the kind of path traveled in the sky by each of those moving bodies. It was long, indeed, before they found out the kind of path traveled *really* by the planets. In fact, they supposed our earth to be fixed; and if our earth were fixed, the paths of the planets about her as a center would be twisted and tangled in the most perplexing way. So that folks in those old times, seeing the planets making all manner

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of loops and twistings round the sky, and supposing they made corresponding loops and twistings in traveling round the earth, thought the planets were living creatures, going round the earth to watch it and rule over it, each according to his own fashion. So they worshiped the planets as gods, counting seven of them, including the sun and moon. Some they thought good to men, others evil. The two planets now twisting their way along the southern skies were two of the evil sort, viz.: Mars, called the Lesser Infortune, and Saturn, called the Greater Infortune. In the old system of star-worship, Mars ruled over Tuesday, and Saturn over Saturday,—the Sabbath of olden times,—a day which the Chaldean and Egyptian astrologers regarded as the most unlucky in the whole week.

[Illustration: FIG. 1. THE PATHS OF MARS AND SATURN.]

The actual paths traveled among the stars by these two planets, this fall, are shown in Fig. 1. You will see how wildly the fiery Mars, the planet of war, careers round his great loop, while old Saturn, “heavy, dull, and slow” (as Armado says that lead is—the metal dedicated to Saturn), plods slowly and wearily along. Between August 6 and October 1, Mars traversed his entire backward track,—Saturn, you notice, only a small portion of his much smaller loop. On the sky, too, you will see that while Mars shines with a fierce ruddy glow, well suited to his warlike character, Saturn shines with a dull yellow light, suggestive of the evil qualities which the astrologers of old assigned to him. “My loking,” says Saturn, in Chaucer’s “Canterbury Tales,” “is the fader of pestilence:

“Min ben also the maladies colde,
The derke treasons, and the costes olde;
Min is the drenching in the see so wan,
Min is the prison in the derke cote,[1]
Min is the strangel and hanging by the throte,
The murmure, and the cherles[2] rebelling,
The groyning and the prine empoysoning.”

[Footnote 1: *Dark or gloomy coast*. This line was amusingly rendered, by the printer of my “Saturn and its System,” in which I quoted Chaucer’s lines, “Mine is the prison, and the dirty coat.”]

[Footnote 2: *Churl’s*. Notice this word. It is the same as the word rendered *Charles’s* in the common English name for the Dipper. One should always say Charles’s Wain, not Charles’ (as is the way Tennyson does in the “May Queen”).]

For the present, however, let us consider the planet Mars, leaving slow Saturn to wait for us another month.

It has always seemed to me one of the most useful lessons in astronomy to follow the line by which, long ago, great discoveries were made. Thus, if the young reader went out on every fine night and noted the changing position of Mars, he traced out the track shown in Fig. 1. He noted, also, that the planet, which shone at its brightest about September 5, gradually grew less and less bright as it traveled

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off, after rounding the station near October 5 (really on Oct. 7), toward the east. He observed, then, that the seeming loop followed by the planet was a real looped track (so far, at least, as our observer on the earth was concerned). Fig. 2 shows the apparent shape of Mars's loop, the dates corresponding to those shown in Fig. 1. Only it does not lie flat, as shown on the paper, but must be supposed to lie somewhat under the surface of the paper, as shown by the little upright *a*, *b*, which, indeed, gives the distance under the paper at which the part of the loop is supposed to lie where lowest at *m*. The other similar uprights at M_1, M_2, and M_3 show the depression at these places. You perceive that the part M_1, M_2, lies higher than the part M_2, M_3. If the loop were flat, and, like E, the earth, were in the level of the paper, it would be seen edgewise, and the advancing, receding, and advancing parts of the planet's course would all lie on the same line upon the sky. But being thus out of the level, we see through the loop, so to speak, and it has the seeming shape shown in Fig. 1.[3]

[Footnote 3: I must re-mention that though this explanation is made as simple as I possibly can make it, so far as words are concerned, the figures present the result of an exact geometrical investigation. Every dot, for instance, in Fig. 2, has had its place separately determined by me.]

[Illustration: FIG. 2. ONE OF MARS'S LOOPS.]

This is one loop, you will understand, out of an immense number which Mars makes in journeying round the earth, regarded as fixed. He retreats to a great distance, swoops inward again toward the earth, making a loop as in Fig. 2, and retreating again. Then he comes again, makes another swoop, and a loop on another side, and so on. He behaves, in fact, like that "little quiver fellow," a right martialist, no doubt, who, as Justice Shallow tells us, "would about and about, and come you in, and come you in,—and away again would a go, and again would a come." The loops are not all of the same size. The one shown in Fig. 2 is one of the smallest. I have before me a picture which I have made of all this planet's loops from 1875 to 1892, and it forms the most curiously intertwined set of curves you can imagine,—rather pretty, though not regular, the loops on one side being much larger than those on the other. I would show the picture here, but it is too large. One of these days, it will be given in a book I am going to write about Mars, who is quite important enough to have a book all to himself. I want you, now, to understand me that Mars really does travel in a most complicated path, when you consider the earth as at rest. If a perfect picture of all his loopings and twistings since astronomy began could be drawn,—even on a sheet of paper as large as the floor of a room,—the curves would so interlace that you would not be able to track them out, but be always leaving the true track and getting upon one crossing it slightly aslant,—just like the lines by which trains are made to run easily off one track on to another.

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The unfortunate astronomers of old times, who had to explain, *if they could*, this complicated behavior of Mars (and of other planets, too), were quite beaten. The more carefully they made their observations, the more peculiar the motions seemed. One astronomer gave up the work in despair, just like that unfortunate Greek philosopher who, because he could not understand the tides of the Euboean Sea, drowned himself in it. So this astronomer, who was a king,—Alphonsus of Portugal,—unable to unravel the loops of the planets, said, in his wrath, that if he had been called on by the Creator to assign the planets their paths, he would have managed the matter a great deal better. The plates of the old astronomical books became more and more confusing, and cost more and more labor, as astronomers continued to

... “Build, unbuild, contrive To save appearances, to gird the sphere With centric and eccentric scribbled o’er, Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.”

It was to the study of Mars, the wildest wanderer of all, that we owe the removal of all these perplexities. The idea had occurred to the great astronomer, Copernicus, that the complexities of the planets’ paths are not real, but are caused by the constant moving about of the place from whence we watch the planets. If a fly at rest at the middle of a clock face watched the ends of the two hands, they would seem to go round him in circles; but if, instead, he was on the end of one of the hands (and was not knocked off as the other passed), the end of this other hand would not move round the fly in the same simple way. When the two hands were together it would be near, when they were opposite it would be far away, and, without entering into any particular description of the way in which it would seem to move, you can easily see that the motion would seem much more complicated than if the fly watched it from the middle of the clock face. Now, Copernicus *did* enter into particulars, and showed by mathematical reasoning that nearly all the peculiarities of the planets’ motions could be explained by supposing that the sun, not the earth, was the body round which the planets move, and that they go round him nearly in circles.

[Illustration: FIG. 3. THE PATHS OF MARS, THE EARTH, VENUS, AND MERCURY.]

But Copernicus could not explain *all* the motions. And Tycho Brahe, another great astronomer, who did not believe at all in the new ideas of Copernicus, made a number of observations on our near neighbor Mars, to show that Copernicus was wrong. He gave these to Kepler, another great astronomer, enjoining him to explain them in such a way as to overthrow the Copernican ideas. But Kepler behaved like Balaam the son of Beor; for, called on to curse (or at least to denounce) the views of Copernicus, he altogether blessed them three times. First, he found from the motions of Mars that the planets do not travel in circles, but in ovals, very nearly circular in shape, but not having the sun exactly at the center. Secondly, he discovered the law according to which they move, now faster now slower, in their oval paths; and thirdly, he found a law according to which the nearer planets travel more quickly and the farther planets more slowly,

every distance having its own proper rate. These three laws of Kepler constitute the Magna Charta of the solar system.

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Afterward, Newton showed *how* it happens that the planets obey these laws, but as his part of the work had no particular reference to Mars, I say no more about it in this place.

Here, in Fig. 3, are the real paths of Mars and the Earth, and also of Venus and Mercury. No loops, you see, in any of them, simply because we have set the sun in the middle. Set the earth in the middle, and each planet would have its own set of loops, each set enormously complicated, and all three sets mixed together in the most confusing way. It is well to remember this when you see, as in many books of astronomy, the old theory illustrated with a set of circles looking almost as neat and compact as the set truly representing the modern theory. For the idea is suggested by this simple picture of the old theory that the theory itself was simple, whereas it had become so confusing that not merely young learners, but the most profound mathematicians, were baffled when they tried to unravel the motions of the planets.

I think the figure pretty well explains itself. All I need mention is, that while the shape and position of each path is correctly shown, the size of the sun at center is immensely exaggerated. A mere pin point, but shining with star-like splendor, would properly represent him. As for the figures of the earth and Mars, they are still more tremendously out of proportion. The cross-breadth of the lines representing these planets' tracks is *many times* greater than the breadth of either planet on the scale of the chart.

On September 5 the earth and Mars came to the position shown at E and M. You observe that they could not be much nearer. It is indeed very seldom that Mars is so well placed for observation. His illuminated face was turned toward the dark or night half of the earth, so that he shone brightly in the sky at midnight, and can be well studied with the telescope.

When Galileo turned toward Mars the telescope with which he had discovered the moons of Jupiter, the crescent form of Venus, and many other wonders in the heavens, he was altogether disappointed. His telescope was indeed too small to show any features of interest in Mars, though the planet of war is much nearer to us than Jupiter. Mars is but a small world. The diameter of the planet is about 4,400 miles, that of our earth being nearly 8,000. Jupiter, though much farther away, has an immense diameter of more than 80,000 miles to make up, and much more than make up, for the effect of distance. With his noble system of moons he appears a remarkable object even with a small telescope, while Mars shows no feature of interest even with telescopes of considerable size.

It was not, then, till very powerful telescopes had been constructed that astronomers learned what we now know about Mars.[4]

[Footnote 4: See the "Moons of Mars" in "Letter Box" Department]

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It is found that his surface is divided into land and water, like the surface of our own earth. But his seas and oceans are not nearly so large compared with his continents and lands. You know that on our own earth the water covers so much larger a surface than the land that the great continents are in reality islands. Europe, Asia and Africa together form one great island; North and South America another, not quite so large; then come Australia, Greenland, Madagascar, and so forth; all the lands being islands, larger or smaller. On the other hand, except the Caspian Sea and the Sea of Aral, there are no large seas entirely land-bound. In the case of Mars a very different state of things prevails, as you will see from the three accompanying pictures (hitherto unpublished), drawn by the famous English observer, Dawes (called the Eagle-eyed). The third and best was drawn with a telescope constructed by your famous optician, Alvan Clark, of Cambridge, Massachusetts. The dark parts are the seas, the light parts being land, or in some cases cloud or snow. But in these pictures most of the lighter portions represent land; for they have been seen often so shaped, whereas clouds, of course, would change in shape.

The planet Mars, like our earth, turns on its axis, so that it has day and night as we have. The length of its day is not very different from that of our own day. Our earth turns once on its axis in ——— but before reading on, try to complete this sentence for yourself. Every one knows that the earth's turning on its axis produces day and night, and nine persons out of ten, if asked how long the earth takes in turning round her axis, will answer, 24 hours; and if asked how many times she turns on her axis in a year, will say 365 times, or if disposed to be very exact, "about 365-1/4 times." But neither answer is correct. The earth turns on her axis about 366-1/4 times in each year, and each turning occupies 23 hours 56 minutes and 4 seconds and 1 tenth of a second. We, taking the ordinary day as the time of a turning or rotation, lose count of one rotation each year. It is necessary to mention this, in order that when I tell you how long the day of Mars is, you may be able correctly to compare it with our own day. Mars, then, turns on his axis in 24 hours 37 minutes 22 seconds and 7 tenth-parts of a second. So that Mars requires 41 minutes 18 seconds and 6-tenths of a second longer to turn his small body once round than our earth requires to turn round her much larger body. The common day of Mars is, however, only about 39 minutes longer than our common day.

Mars has a long year, taking no less than 687 of our days to complete his circuit round the sun, so that his year lasts only about one month and a half less than two of ours.

[Illustration: APPEARANCE OF MARS, 1852, MARCH 23, 5 H. 45 M., Greenwich Mean Time. Power of Telescope, 358; 6-1/3 inch object-glass]

[Illustration: APPEARANCE OF MARS, 1852, FEBRUARY 3, 6 H. 50 M., Greenwich Mean Time. Power of Telescope, 242 and 358 on 6-1/3 inch object-glass.]

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[Illustration: APPEARANCE OF MARS, 1860, JULY 6, 11 H. 33 M., Greenwich Mean Time. Power of Telescope, 201; 8-1/4 inch object-glass. Planet very low, yet pretty distinct.]

Like the earth, Mars has seasons, for his polar axis, like that of the earth, is aslant, and at one part of his year brings his northern regions more fully into sunlight, at which time summer prevails there and winter in his southern regions; while at the opposite part of his year his southern regions are turned more fully sunward and have their summer, while winter prevails over his northern regions.

Around his poles, as around the earth's, there are great masses of ice, insomuch that it is very doubtful whether any inhabitants of Mars have been able to penetrate to his poles, any more than Kane or Hayes or Nares or Parry, despite their courage and endurance, have been able to reach our northern pole, or Cook or Wilkes or James Ross our antarctic pole.

In the summer of either hemisphere of Mars, the north polar snows become greatly reduced in extent, as is natural, while in winter they reach to low latitudes, showing that in parts of the planet corresponding to the United States, or mid-Europe, as to latitude, bitter cold must prevail for several weeks in succession.

The land regions of Mars can be distinguished from the seas by their ruddy color, the seas being greenish. But here, perhaps, you will be disposed to ask how astronomers can be sure that the greenish regions are seas, the ruddy regions land, the white spots either snow or cloud. Might not materials altogether unlike any we are acquainted with exist upon that remote planet?

The spectroscope answers this question in the clearest way. You may remember what I told you in October, 1876, about Venus, how astronomers have learned that the vapor of water exists in her atmosphere. The same method has been applied, even more satisfactorily, to the planet of war, and it has been found that he also has his atmosphere at times laden with moisture. This being so, it is clear we have not to do with a planet made of materials utterly unlike those forming our earth. To suppose so, when we find that the air of Mars, formed like our own (for if it contained other gases the spectroscope would tell us), contains often large quantities of the vapor of water, would be as absurd as to believe in the green cheese theory of the moon, or in another equally preposterous, advanced lately by an English artist—Mr. J.T. Brett—to the effect that the atmosphere of Venus is formed of glass.

There is another theory about Mars, certainly not so absurd as either of those just named, but scarcely supported by evidence at present—the idea, namely, advanced by a French astronomer, that the ruddy color of the lands and seas of Mars is due to red trees and a generally scarlet vegetation. Your poet Holmes refers to this in those lines

of his, “Star-clouds and Wind-clouds” (to my mind among the most charming of his many charming poems):

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"The snows that glittered on the disc of Mars
Have melted, and the planet's fiery orb
Rolls in the crimson summer of its year."

It is quite possible, of course, that such colors as are often seen in American woods in the autumn-time may prevail in the forests and vegetation of Mars during the fullness of the Martian summer. The fact that during this season the planet looks ruddier than usual, in some degree corresponds with this theory. But it is much better explained, to my mind, by the greater clearness of the Martian air in the summer-time. That would enable us to see the color of the soil better. If our earth were looked at from Venus during the winter-time, the snows covering large parts of her surface, and the clouds and mists common in the winter months, would hide the tints of the surface, whereas these would be very distinct in clear summer weather.

I fear my own conclusion about Mars is that his present condition is very desolate. I look on the ruddiness of tint to which I have referred as one of the signs that the planet of war has long since passed its prime. There are lands and seas in Mars, the vapor of water is present in his air, clouds form, rains and snows fall upon his surface, and doubtless brooks and rivers irrigate his soil, and carry down the moisture collected on his wide continents to the seas whence the clouds had originally been formed. But I do not think there is much vegetation on Mars, or that many living creatures of the higher types of Martian life as it once existed still remain. All that is known about the planet tends to show that the time when it attained that stage of planetary existence through which our earth is now passing must be set millions of years, perhaps hundreds of millions of years, ago. He has not yet, indeed, reached that airless and waterless condition, that extremity of internal cold, or in fact that utter unfitness to support any kind of life, which would seem to prevail in the moon. The planet of war in some respects resembles a desolate battle-field, and I fancy that there is not a single region of the earth now inhabited by man which is not infinitely more comfortable as an abode of life than the most favored regions of Mars at the present time would be for creatures like ourselves.

But there are other subjects besides astronomy that the readers of the ST. NICHOLAS want to learn about. I do not wish you to have to say to me what a little daughter of mine said the other day. She had asked me several questions about the sun, and after I had answered them I went on to tell her several things which she had not asked. She listened patiently for quite a long time,—fully five minutes, I really believe,—and then she said: "Don't you think, papa, that that's enough about the sun? Come and play with us on the lawn." So, as it was holiday time, we went and played in the sun, instead of talking about him.

* * * * *

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A DOMESTIC TRAGEDY—IN TWO PARTS.

[Illustration: PART I.]

“MOTHER! from this moment, behold me, my own master!
Yes, madam, I am old enough. I mean just what I say.”

[Illustration: PART II.]

AND, but for a sudden and unforeseen disaster,
The puppy might have kept his resolution to this day.

* * * * *

THE STICKLEBACK BELL-RINGERS

BY C. F. HOLDER.

A certain pond in the country was once peopled with a number of turtles, frogs, and fishes which I came to consider my pets, and which at last grew so tame that I fed them from my hands. Among them, however, were four or five little sticklebacks that lived under the shade of a big willow, and these were so quarrelsome that I generally fed them apart from the rest. But sometimes all met, and then the feast usually was ended by the death of a minnow. For, shocking to say, whenever there was a dispute for the food, some one of the little fishes was almost sure to be devoured by the hungry sticklebacks.

These stickleback-and-minnow combats, after a while, came to be of daily occurrence, and the reason for this was a singular one, which I must explain.

Under the willow shade, and from one of the branches, I had hung a miniature “belfry,” containing a tiny brass bell, and had led the string into the water, letting it go down to a considerable depth. At first, I tied bait at intervals upon the line, and the sticklebacks, of course, seized upon it, and thus rang the bell. Generally the ringing was done in a very grave and proper way, although sometimes, when the bait was too tightly tied, the quick peals sounded like a call to a fire.

[Illustration]

I kept up this system of baiting the string for about a week, until I thought they understood it, and then replaced the worms by bits of stone. As I expected, the next morning, as I looked through the grass and down into the water, tinkle! tinkle! rang the bell, and I knew my little friends were saying, “Good-morning!” and expected a



breakfast. You may be sure they got it. I put my hand down, and up they came, and got one worm apiece; and as I raised my hand, down they rushed, and away went the bell, in an uproarious peal, that must have startled the whole neighborhood. I was quick to respond, and they soon learned to ring the bell before coming to the surface; in fact, if they saw me pass, I always heard their welcome greeting. But to return to the minnows.

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I generally fed them first, about twenty feet up the bank; but one morning I found one or two had followed me down to the residence of the stickleback family. They met with a rude reception, however, and, to avoid making trouble, the next day I went to the willow first. But no sooner had the bell begun to ring, than I saw a lot of ripples coming down, and in a second the two factions were in mortal combat. The sticklebacks were fighting not only for breakfast, but for their nests, which were near by; and they made sad work of the poor minnows, who, though smart in some things, did not know when they were whipped, and so kept up the fight, though losing one of their number nearly every morning. The bell now and then rang violently, but I fear it was only sounding an appeal from a voracious stickleback whose appetite had got the better of his rage.

So it went on every morning. The minnows had learned what the bell meant, and though usually defeated in the fight, they in reality had their betters as servants to ring the bell and call them to meals. Finally, they succeeded, by force of great numbers, in driving away their pugnacious little rivals, and the bell hung silent; for, strange to say, they knew what the sound meant, but I could never teach them to ring it, when they could rise and steal the worm from my hand without. But I am inclined to think it was more laziness than inability to learn, as they afterward picked up readily some much more difficult tricks. I taught them to leap from the water into my hand, and lie as if dead; and having arranged a slide of polished wood upon the bank, by placing worms upon it I soon had them leaping out and sliding down like so many boys coasting in the winter. That they afterward did it for amusement I know, as I often watched them unobserved when there was nothing to attract but the fun of sliding. This kind of amusement is not uncommon with many other animals, particularly seals, which delight in making "slides" on the icy shores.

[ILLUSTRATION]

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH

BY MRS. CLARA DOTY BATES.

Old Granny Cricket's rocking-chair,
Creakety-creak, creakety-creak!—
Back and forth, and here and there,
Squeakety-squeak, squeakety-squeak!—
On the hearth-stone, every night,
Rocks and rocks in the cheery light.
Little old woman, dressed in black,
With spindling arms and a crooked back,
She sits with a cap on her wise old head,
And her eyes are fixed on the embers red;



She does not sing, she does not speak,
But the rocking-chair goes creakety-creak!

Cheerily sounds the rocking-chair,
Creakety-creak, creakety-creak!—
While it swings in the firelight there,
Squeakety-squeak, squeakety-squeak!
Old Granny Cricket, rocking, rocking,
Knits and knits on a long black stocking.
No matter how swiftly her fingers fly,
She never can keep her family,
With their legs so long from foot to knee,
Stockinged as well as they ought to be;
That's why, at night, week after week,
Her rocking-chair goes squeakety-squeak!

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* * * * *

HOW I WEIGHED THE THANKSGIVING TURKEY.

BY G. M. SHAW.

"Here, sir! Please take this bird around to Albro's, and see how much it weighs."

The idea! What would the folks over the way say, to see the "professor" walking out with a big turkey under his arm? That was the way the thing presented itself to the good-natured college-student acting as private tutor in the family. But Mrs. Simpson, the portly and practical housewife, had no such idea of the fitness of things.

It was the day before Thanksgiving, and the farmer who had agreed to supply her with a turkey had brought it, but had not weighed it, and, of course, they could not agree on its weight, all of which ended in the startling proposition with which we began.

"Well, if you aint the laziest man—! Just as though it was going to hurt you any to take this bird to the corner and back!" she went on, as she saw me looking, apparently, for a hole to crawl into, but, in reality, for the broom, which, when I found, I made use of in putting into execution a plan I had formed for weighing the turkey at home.

I hung the broom-handle to the gas-jet by a wire loop, and slid it along in the loop until it balanced. By this time all were curious to see what I was about.

I then fixed a wire to the turkey's feet and hooked it so that it would slide on the broom-handle. Next I got a flat-iron and fixed it in the same way. When the broom was nicely balanced, I hung the turkey on the broom end of the stick, two inches from the balancing loop. Then I hung the flat-iron on the other side, and shoved it along until it balanced the turkey. Next I measured the distances of the turkey and flat-iron from the balancing loop, and found that the turkey hung two inches and the flat-iron eight inches from the balancing loop. That was all. I had found the weight of the turkey, and told them: Twenty-four pounds.

"Do you s'pose I'm going to believe all that tomfoolery? It doesn't weigh more'n twenty, I know. Here, Maggie! Take this out and ask Albro to weigh it for you."

"I'm blamed if he hasn't hit it about right," said the farmer who had brought the turkey. "How did you find out?"

"Well, you see," said I, "the flat-iron has a figure 6 on it; that shows that it weighs six pounds. Now, if the turkey had not weighed more than the flat-iron they would have balanced each other at the same distance from the balancing loop; but the turkey was the heavier, so I had to move the flat-iron out further. At the same distance from the

loop as the turkey (two inches), the flat-iron pulled six pounds' weight, and at every addition of that distance it would pull six pounds more. Thus: at four inches it pulled twelve pounds; at six inches, eighteen pounds; and at eight inches, twenty-four pounds. At that distance it just balanced the turkey, thus proving that it weighed——”

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"Well, Maggie, what does Albro say?"

"Twenty-four poun', mum," replied Maggie, coming in.

"Well, I give up," said Mrs. Simpson; and she did, and so do I—till next time.

NIMBLE JIM AND THE MAGIC MELON

BY J. A. JUDSON.

Once upon a time, in a snug little cottage by a brook under a hill, lived an old widow and her only child. She was a tidy, pleasant-faced dame, was "Old Mother Growser;" and as to her boy, there wasn't a brighter lad of his age in all the village. His real name was James, but he had always been so spry and handy that when he was a little bit of a chap the neighbors called him "Nimble Jim." At work in the cottage garden, or at play on the village green, even at his books and slate, he was ever the same industrious, active "Nimble Jim," and always a comfort to his mother.

His father had been the village cobbler, and when he died the folks said: "Who'll mend our shoes now, and auld Jamie gone?"

Then up sprang the boy, saying: "I'll mend them, now father's dead."

The simple folks laughed at him. "Hoot! toot! lad," said they; "ye canna mend shoes!"

But he answered bravely: "Am I not fifteen years old, and e'en a'most a mon? Haven't I all father's tools? Haven't I seen him do it day after day ever since I was a wee boy? It's time I was doing something besides jobbin' and runnin' and pretendin' to work! I may take to th' auld bench, and e'en get my father's place among ye in time, so I be good enough. Mother canna allus be a-spinnin', spinnin', spinnin'. The poor old eyes are growing dim a'ready,"—and Jim gently stroked her thin gray hair.

"Ye're a brave darlin', and my own handy Nimble Jim," said the fond mother, smilingly.

"Ah, well, boy," the neighbors said, "be about it if ye will, for there's no cobbler hereabout now, and the shoes must be mended. But ye'll do the work fairly, mind, or we'll no' pay ye a penny!"

"I'll try my best, and bide your good favor, neighbors," was Jim's cheery answer.

And so he succeeded to his father's old bench by the window, the lap-stone and hammer and awl; and as he waxed his thread and stitched away, singing the old songs, the country folks passing by would listen, look at each other, smile and nod approvingly, or say:

“Hark to that, friend! One might think auld Jamie back again, with the whack o’ the hammer and the blithe song, though the voice ben’t so crackit like as th’ auld one.”

“Aye, it’s a bit clearer, but no happier. Auld cobbler Jamie was a merry soul,” says one.

“And the lad’ll prove worthy his father, I warrant. Listen to the turn of that song, now; I’ve heard Jamie singin’ it many a day,” says another.

“Whack! whack! thump-pet-ty crack!
In go the shoe-nails with many a smack.
Zu! zu! pull the thread through;
Soon will the shoe be, done, master, for you!

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"Nay! nay! there's nothin' to pay,
If it is not mended as good as I say.
I do my work honestly—that is the thing;
Then Jamie the cobbler's as good as the king!"

And the folks passed on, or stopped to leave shoes to mend.

Jim prospered in the old stall, and they called him "Nimble Jim, the Cobbler," for soon he was fairly installed as cobbler to the whole country-side. He was happy, and his old mother was happy, and proud, too, of the success of her boy, who was the light of her home and the joy of her heart.

All day Jim worked away at his bench. Winter evenings he read his few books by the firelight; in the cool of the summer days, or in the early mornings, he busied himself in the little garden. His vegetables were his pride, and for miles around no one had so trim a garden-patch, or so many good things in it, as Nimble Jim.

Only one kind of all his plants failed to come to anything,—his melon-vines,—and these always failed. This began to grieve him sorely, for he was fond of melons; and, besides, he thought if he could only raise fine ones, he might sell them for a deal of money, like gruff, rich old Farmer Hummidge.

"Oh dear! my melons don't grow like other folkses. They don't come up at all, or if they do they wither or spindle away," he said, losing his temper, and tearing up some of the vines by the roots. Then he went into the cottage, angrily, and began to pound away, driving in big hob-nails. With the twilight, his mother called him to the simple meal, but he was sullen and silent.

"What be the matter with ye, my Nimble Jim?" asked the good dame, cheerily.

"Matter enough, mother! My melons wont grow; there's somethin' the matter with them. Faith, I believe some imp has cast a spell over 'em. I do, mother," quoth he, thumping the table with his fist until the dishes rattled.

"Softly, softly, boy! Where's thy good nature gone?" said Mother Growser, staring at him in wonder.

"It be well enough to say 'Softly, softly,'" said he, "and I don't want to grieve ye, mother; but it's naught with me but hammer, stitch, dig,—hammer, stitch, dig,—the day in, the day out, when I might be raisin' fine melons and sellin' 'em for mints of gold in the great city. Yea, mother, sellin' 'em e'en to the king and queen and all the grand lords and ladies at the court, like old Farmer Hummidge."

For almost the first time in his life Jim was unhappy.



"I would you had your wish, Nimble Jim; but then we've a neat bit garden besides the melons; and the home is snug, and you're a good boy and the best o' cobblers. Can't you be happy with that, my lad?"

But Nimble Jim shook his head, for the spirit of discontent had taken possession of him.

Now, for many days, Nimble Jim neglected his cobbling and let the weeds grow in his garden, while he moodily watched his melons as they withered away. Soon he came to idle about them in the evening, too, until, one bright moonlight night, as he was grieving over the wretched, scraggy vines, he heard a tiny, silvery voice quite near him cry, tauntingly:

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"Hello, Nimble Jim! How are your melons?"

Jim would have been very angry at such a question could he have seen anybody to be angry with; but, though he looked and looked with all his eyes, not a soul could he see.

"Hello, Nimble Jim! How are your melons? Ha, ha, ha! Melons! melons! Ha, ha, ha!" And the sweet little voice sang, in a merry, mocking strain:

"Nice sweet melons!
Round ripe melons!
Nimble Jim likes them, I know.
Mean sour melons,
Crooked green melons,
Nimble Jim only can grow!

Ha, ha, ha! How are your melons, Nimble Jim?"

[Illustration: The Elfin Queen]

"Who are you? What are you? Where are you?" cried Jim, hardly knowing whether to be angry, amused, or frightened.

"You ask a good many questions at once, don't you?" said the silvery voice. "*Who* am I? *What* am I? *Where* am I? Eh! I'm the Queen of the Elfs," said her tiny majesty, "and if you look sharply you'll see where I am."

Just then a moonbeam streaming through the trees overhead fell across his path, and, dancing up and down on it, he saw the tiny elfin queen,—a lovely little creature with long, bright, wavy hair, and glittering garments fluttering in the breeze, wings like a butterfly, a mischievous smile on her face, and in her hand a wee wand tipped with a star. But the brightest thing about her was the twinkle that played hide-and-seek in her eye.

Nimble Jim took off his hat and made a low bow.

"Now, what is all this about?—and why are you neglecting your work, sir?" demanded she, sternly.

Jim trembled beneath her royal gaze, little as she was, and replied humbly:

"May it please your majesty, I wish I'd some melon-seeds that'd grow like magic. I am dead tired of being nothin' but a cobbler. I want to be a melon-merchant, and raise the finest, largest melons ever seen,—supply the whole kingdom with them, and grow to be as rich as the king himself."

“Oh, you do, do you?” she answered, laughing her merry little laugh, and capering up and down the moonbeam. “Oh! quite a modest youth! Well, I’ll make a bargain with you; and if you will do something for me, you shall have your wish,” said the queen.

Nimble Jim was about to pour out his gratitude, when she interrupted him, saying: “Now, Nimble Jim, listen to me. Your wish is a foolish one, and I warn you that if you gain it you will be sorry. Why will you not be content as you are?”

“Your majesty,” replied the obstinate youth. “I *cannot* be content as I am.”

“Well, since you insist on having your own way, we’ll make our bargain. Here,”—and, sitting down on the moonbeam, she pulled off a shoe,—“here, sir, I want you to mend my shoe. I tripped just now on a rough place in this moonbeam. Mend the rip; show me you are a good cobbler, and I promise that you shall have your wish.”

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“But, your majesty,” began Nimble Jim, taking the shoe, which was no bigger than a bean, “I can’t sew such a little shoe; my fingers are ——”

“There, there! Stop! I’m a queen, and people don’t say ‘can’t’ or ‘wont’ to me, sir,” interrupted her majesty, with much dignity. “Take the shoe, and find a way to mend it. I will come for it to-morrow night at this same place and hour,” and off she went up the moonbeam, half skipping, half flying, while Jim stood stupidly staring until she had entirely disappeared. Then he began, slowly: “Well,—I—never—in—all—my—life—saw—such—a——”

He said no more, but went in, and sat up all night, thinking how and where he could find needle and thread fine enough to do such a piece of cobbling as this. About dawn a thought struck him. His mother thought he had gone crazy when she saw him chasing bees and pulling down spider-webs. Hours and hours he worked, and though his fingers were big, they were nimble, like his name; so, by and by, with a needle made of a bee’s sting and thread drawn from a spider-web, he sewed up the rip in her fairy majesty’s dainty shoe.

He hardly could wait for the hour of meeting, but went into the garden, with the shoe in his hand, long before the time. At length, the queen came sliding down the moonbeam, laughing and singing:

“Hello, Nimble Jim! How are your melons?”

But he was not angry now; he only laughed respectfully, made a profound bow, and said:

“May it please your majesty, I have mended your majesty’s shoe.”

The merry little queen took it from him, looked at it closely, saying to herself: “Humph! I didn’t think he could, but he did,”—and, turning to Jim, said, much more graciously than before: “I suppose you think yourself quite a cobbler; and so you are—for a mortal. Since you have done your work so well, I will do as I said. Now,” she continued, handing him a little package about as big as a baby’s thumb, “plant these melon-seeds, and——”

“Are these little things melon seeds? They look too small,” interrupted Jim,—for he had made no ceremony, even in the queen’s presence, about peeping into the package,—and it must be confessed that they were very small indeed.

“Certainly they are, or I would not tell you so. They are the magic melons of fairy-land. As I was about to say when you rudely interrupted, plant——”

“I beg your pardon, your majes——”

[Illustration: “BEFORE NIMBLE JIM COULD GET BACK TO THE HOUSE, THE YARD WAS FULL OF MELON-VINE.”]

“*Will* you keep still? Was there ever such a chatterbox!” said she. “I say, plant these melon-seeds to-morrow at sunrise, and you will have your wish, foolish boy.” And, while Jim was thinking of melons and wealth, she skipped away up the moonbeam, singing:

“Nimble Jim is quite demented,—
Wants to be a melon-king!
Silly mortal! not contented
With the riches home-joys bring!
Oh! ho!
Oh! ho!
He will be sorry to-morrow;
To-morrow will bring only sorrow.”

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But Nimble Jim heeded her not. This night also he could not close his eyes, and in the early morning he hastened to tell his mother their good fortune. She looked grave, and said:

“Ah, my lad! I’d rather you minded the cobbler’s bench, nor trafficked with fairies. I fear me they’re uncanny folks to deal with.”

“Never fear, mother; we’ll be rich yet, and I’ll make you a queen yourself, and then you need spin no more,” said Jim, wild with hope and excitement.

“I don’t mind the spinnin’, my boy. I’d rather be——”.

Jim heard no more, for he dashed off at once to the garden to plant his precious seeds just at sunrise. With furious energy, he tore up all his old vines, flung them over the fence, and, after that, spaded up the melon-bed with the greatest care. Then he opened the paper and poured the magical seeds into his hand.

There were only *four*—four wee seeds, each no bigger than a pin’s head! His first impulse was to fling them away in wrath, for he thought such little things couldn’t possibly make as big a fortune as he wanted. But then he reflected, “Fairies are little, so I suppose their seeds are little, too. I’ll try them, anyhow.” And with that he put them in the ground and carefully covered them.

In an instant, the ground burst open in four places, and up shot four sturdy melon-vines, that grew east, west, north, south!

Grew? No! they raced, they tore, they dashed through the country far and wide! In no time, before Nimble Jim could get back to the house door, the whole yard was full of melon-vine, and one great big melon, bigger than the cottage itself, blocked the doorway.

[Illustration: THE MAGIC MELON OVERRUNS THE COUNTRY.]

“Oh! oh! oh!” roared Jim. “What *have* I done? What *shall* I do?” And with his spade he cut a hole through the melon. It took him a whole hour, and when he got into the house he found that his poor mother had fainted from fright.

And all the time the vine and melons kept growing—east, west, north, south.

Nimble Jim was frantic!

But the vines didn’t mind Jim. On they went, growing like mad, a mile a minute, faster than any railroad train. The big arms filled up the main roads; the smaller ones crammed themselves into the lanes and by-paths, while the tendrils embraced the tall trees, the houses, and the church steeples, and snarled up everything. The leaves

grew so large, thick and green that they covered the whole face of the country, shutting out the sun from the fields so the crops couldn't grow; and the whole kingdom became so dark from the awful shade of Nimble Jim's magic melon-vine, that the people had to burn candles day and night.

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It grew like mad. On! on! Stem, branch, leaf, tendril, fruit—on, on it went! The melons grew—great, round, smooth, rich, ripe, juicy melons, as big as houses—at the cross-roads, on the roads, in the fields, filling barn-yards and door-yards so people and cattle couldn't pass, or go in or out, till they had eaten their way through the melons, or got ladders and climbed over, or dug trenches and crawled under! On, on it went, surrounding the king's palaces and choking up his forts! Down, down it grew into the brooks and rivers, and out into the king's harbors, where the tendrils seized and wound about his ships of war riding at anchor, and climbed up the masts, while melons grew on the decks till the vessels sank to the bottom! It choked up and drank up all the rivers and lakes in the kingdom, or dammed them up so the waters overflowed the land, drowning people and cattle, and sweeping away houses and barns!

On, on it grew—melons, melons everywhere! Ruin and starvation stared the nation in the face; while poor, poor Nimble Jim, hid within the rind of the melon he had dug out, shivered, cried and bewailed his folly.

"I'll be killed! I'll be killed! The people will murder me!" he shrieked. But no one of them all save his mother knew he had had anything to do with bringing on the dire calamity that had befallen the kingdom.

Then some of the people proposed: "Let us go immediately to our king, and ask him to make a law that the vine shall stop growing ere it ruin us forever."

But when they had eaten and hewed their way to the palace, they found the king had gone to count his soldiers; and while he was gone the vine came galloping along, and an enormous melon grew and blocked up the palace gate. So they had to help the king and his guards force their way through to the hall of audience.

When they all were in, and the king had wiped the melon-juice off his robes and crown, and was fairly seated on his throne, surrounded by his guards and courtiers, the trumpets sounded, drums beat, banners waved, and the people fell on their knees and said:

"O mighty king! We, thy liege subjects, have come to tell thee of the ruin and desolation this fearful vine maketh in all thy great kingdom, and to entreat thy majesty to enact a law forbidding it to grow any more, and commanding it to wither away."

"Alas!" answered the troubled king, "what can I do? No law of mine can stop this awful thing. It is an enchanted vine sent to torment us. Hear me, my people! Proclaim it, ye my heralds! I pledge my kingly word to give up my crown and kingdom, and change places with any one of my subjects who will wither and instantly sweep away this direful vine. I, your king, am as helpless as a child to stop it."

And the king, who was a good old man, shed tears for the misery of his people, and commanded the queen and all the court to dress themselves in mourning and fast night and day.

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The people got home as best they could, and each fell to thinking how he could stop the vine and so be king. Even Nimble Jim heard of this. So, every night, he watched, hoping to see the elfin queen. At last she came, as before, on her moonbeam footpath, saying: "Hello, Nimble Jim! How are your melons by this time?"

But he was in no mood to be facetious now. He only said, humbly:

"May it please your majesty, what can I do to stop the growth of this horrible vine, and instantly sweep it from the face of the earth? Help me, I beg your gracious majesty!"—and Jim knelt before her.

"Ha, ha! Nimble Jim don't seem to like melons! I told you you'd be sorry," laughed the little elfin queen. "I suppose you still want to be as rich as the king? Or perhaps you would like to be the king himself?" said she, tauntingly.

"Of course I would, your majesty," said Jim, "if the vine can only be stopped."

"You are a very good cobbler, Nimble Jim," she answered, "and since you mended my shoe so nicely, and as the king has promised to exchange with any one who will wither and destroy the vine, and as you might as well be king as another (and as you need a good lesson," said she to herself), "I give you the means to do it all!"

And the tiny queen pulled off the mended shoe, and cried: "Here, you silly boy! Take this and run to the palace. Once there, you need touch but a tendril with this magic shoe, and the vine will wither and disappear, and the crown and kingdom will be yours. I wish you joy of both. Good-bye! You will learn contentment yet, poor Jim, I hope," she added, as he ran out of hearing, with the precious little shoe in his hand.

Leaving his poor mother behind, for he had forgotten all about her during these days, Jim set off for the palace. It was a long, hard journey, on account of the melon-vines, that not only blocked the road, but even chased him. Many a narrow escape had he from being crushed to death in the embrace of some young tendril that would shoot out, wriggling and writhing toward him like a great green serpent.

At length, he arrived at the palace gate, which in old times was marble, but now was only a hole that had been cut through a melon.

"Halt! Who goes there!" shouted a sentinel, thrusting his spear in front of Jim's panting breast.

"It's only Nimble Jim, the Cobbler. I want to see the king," said the boy.

"Be off, you fellow!" shouted the sentry. "Our noble king don't hob-nob with cobblers! Be off, I say, or——" And he shook his spear at our hero ominously.

“Hold, there!” shouted the king himself, straining out of a window to look between the melon-leaves. “Hold, I say! What do you want, young cobbler?”

“I want your crown and kingdom, sire,” boldly answered Jim. “I’ve heard of the new law, and I’ll stop the melon-vine.”

“Let him pass, guards,” shouted the king; “and send him hither.”

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A little page dressed in black led Jim to the throne-room. The king and his court no longer blazed in gold and jewels. Black covered everybody and everything, even the golden throne itself, and grief and dismay were on all faces.

Then said the king, in a hollow tone: "What know you of this vine? Speak!"

And Jim, tremblingly, told the whole story.

"Wicked boy!" groaned the king. "You well deserve punishment for the ruin you have brought on the land. But I have passed my royal word, and you shall try to destroy the vine. If you succeed, bad as you are, you then will be the king and I the cobbler. But if you fail, you shall be put where you shall have nothing but melons to eat for the rest of your days. Guards, take him away!"

That night, before the king and queen and all the assembled court, when the moon was fairly risen, Nimble Jim touched with the toe of the magic shoe the end of a tendril that was running rapidly up a tower.

In an instant, every vestige of the vine vanished throughout all the palace grounds; and in the morning the people all over the country shouted for joy and cried with one voice: "Let us all go up to the coronation, for to-day we have a new king who has delivered us from the horrible vine."

And on they came, in hordes, till the capital was full and the country about the palace was one vast camp, while throughout the kingdom not a trace of the vine was to be seen.

Then the nobles and prelates prepared for the coronation. It was magnificent. They girt Jim with the sword of state, clothed him in the imperial robes, placed the scepter in his hand, and, as the golden crown descended upon his head, all the people shouted:

"Hail, King Nimblejumble, our deliverer! Long live the king!"

[Illustration: MAKING AN ENTRANCE FOR THE KING THROUGH THE MELON IN FRONT OF THE PALACE GATE.]

And the silly boy was happy.

Meanwhile, the poor, faithful old king, who cheerfully had given up all for his people, was hammering and stitching and digging away on Jim's cobbler-bench off in the village; and Jim's mother, whom the naughty boy, in his strange elevation, had forgotten all about, tenderly cared for the humbled old monarch.

Before long, the elfin queen saw how patient the old king and Jim's mother were, and how badly Nimble Jim was behaving now he was king, for he was given up to all sorts of

wickedness and tyranny, was fast becoming hated by every one, and himself was beginning to see that he was not nearly so happy as he had been while he was a cobbler.

Jim was really good at heart, only his unreasonable discontent with his lot had got him into all this misery. At last, he began to repent, and, one moonlight night when he was walking alone on the palace terrace, he said:

“I wish I could see that little elfin queen, and I would ask her to let me go back home again.”

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"Well, here I am!" said the silvery voice; and, sitting on a moonbeam beside him, there she was. "Tired of being king, Jim?" she asked.

"Yes, your majesty, indeed I am," he replied.

"Want any more melons, Jim?" said she, laughing.

"No, no, no!" groaned Jim. "No more!"

"How is your mother, Jim?" asked her majesty.

"Alas! I don't know,"—and he hung his head in shame.

"Are you ready to go and see her, Jim?" she asked, gently. "And will you be contented now?"

"Yes, yes!" was his eager reply.

Now, the old king had been mending shoes all day, and was at this moment resting in the cottage porch, when, suddenly, he was whisked away on a cloud and landed in his palace again. His crown was popped on his head, and the scepter thrust in his hand, while his old chamberlain tenderly tucked him up in bed.

At the same instant, another cloud brought back Nimble Jim to his bench and his faithful mother, who at once made him some oat-meal porridge without a murmur or word of reproach.

"There!" said the elfin queen to herself. "That boy is cured of his silly notions."

"Mother, I think I don't care much for melons. I wont plant any more," said Jim next morning.

"I don't like 'em myself, lad," said the mother. "I'd a deal rather you'd stick to the bench, like your auld father."

"I will, mother dear," answered Nimble Jim. And he is mending shoes there to this day, as happy as happy can be.

* * * * *

[Illustration]

"Oh! I'm my mamma's lady-girl
And I must sit quite still;
It would not do to jump and whirl,



And get my hair all out of curl,
And rumple up my frill.
No, I'm my mamma's lady-girl,
So I must sit quite still."

* * * * *

A BUDGET OF HOME-MADE CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

HINTS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS, LITTLE AND BIG.[1]

[Footnote 1: The present paper will enable our young friends to make over seventy different articles for Christmas gifts. While a few familiar things may be found among them, a great majority of the objects are entirely novel, and are here described for the first time. All who may wish for still further hints in regard to home-made Christmas presents will find very many useful suggestions in the paper "One Hundred Christmas Presents, and How to Make Them," published in ST. NICHOLAS for December, 1875—Vol. III.]

[Illustration: W]

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Who is it that every year invents the thousand-and-one new and pretty things which hang on Christmas-trees, and stuff the toes of Christmas stockings? Who is it that has so wise and watchful an eye for the capacities of little people, and the tastes of bigger ones, providing for each, planning for tiny purses with almost nothing in them, as well as for fat wallets stuffed with bank-bills, and suggesting something which can be made, accepted and enjoyed by everybody, large and small, all the wide world over? Who can it be that possesses this inexhaustible fertility of invention and kindness of heart? No ordinary human being, you may be sure. Not Father Santa Claus! He has enough to do with distributing the presents after they are made; besides, fancy-work is not in a man's line,—not even a saint's! But what so likely as that he should have a mate, and that it is to her we are indebted for all this? What an immense work-basket Mother Santa Claus's must be! What a glancing thimble and swift needle and thread! Can't you imagine her throwing aside her scissors and spool-bag to help the dear saint "tackle up" and load the sledge? And who knows but she sits behind as he drives over the roofs of the universe on the blessed eve, and holds the reins while Santa Claus dispenses to favored chimneys the innumerable pretty things which he and she have chuckled over together months and months before the rest of us knew anything about them?

This is not a fact. It can't be proved in any way, for none of us knows anything about the Santa Clauses or their abode. There is no telegraphing, or writing to the selectmen of their town to inquire about them; they haven't even a post-office address. But admitting it to be a fiction, it is surely a pleasant one; so, as the children say, "Let's play that it is true," and proceed to see what Mother Santa Claus has in her basket for us this year. We will first pull out some easy things for the benefit of little beginners who are not yet up to all the tricks of the needle; then some a little harder for the more advanced class; and, at bottom of all, big girls not afraid to dive will find plenty of elaborate designs suited to their taste and powers.

Here, to begin with, is something nice for papa's pocket:

A POSTAGE-STAMP HOLDER.

Cut two pieces of perforated board, or of stiff morocco, two inches long by one and a half wide, and stitch them together, leaving one end open. If you choose the board, a little border in cat-stitch or feather-stitch should be worked before putting the pieces together, and, if you like, an initial in the middle of one side. If the morocco is chosen, an initial in colored silk will be pretty, and the edges should be bound with narrow ribbon, and over-handed together.

Cut two other pieces of the material a quarter of an inch smaller than the first. Bind the morocco with ribbon. Make a fastening at one end with a ribbon loop; place the stamps between the two, and slip the little envelope thus filled into the outer case, the open end

down. It fits so snugly that it will not fall out in the pocket, and is easily drawn forth by means of the loop when papa wants to get at his stamps.

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[Illustration: A POSTAGE-STAMP HOLDER.]

A letter-case for papa's other pocket: This can be made either of morocco, oiled silk, or rubber cloth. Cut an envelope-shaped piece, about an inch larger all round than an ordinary letter envelope. Bind the edges, work an initial on one side, and for a fastening use a loop of elastic braid.

SAND-BAGS FOR WINDOWS.

These are capital presents for grandmamas whose windows rattle in winter weather and let cold air in between the sashes. You must measure the window, and cut in stout cotton cloth a bag just as long as the sash is wide, and about four inches across. Stitch this all round, leaving one end open, and stuff it firmly with fine, dry sand. Sew up the open end, and slip the bag into an outer case of bright scarlet flannel, made just a trifle larger than the inner one, so that it may go in easily. Lay the sand-bag over the crack between the two sashes, and on cold nights, when you are asleep, grandmamma will rejoice in the little giver of such a comfortable bulwark against the wind.

RACK FOR TOOTH-BRUSHES, IN RUSTIC-WORK.

This is very simple, but it is pretty as well. Cut two straight spruce twigs, each having two or three little branches projecting upward at an angle of forty-five degrees. These twigs must be as much alike in shape as possible. Place them six inches apart; lay two cross-twigs across, as you see them in the picture, and tie the corners with fine wire, or fasten them with tiny pins. Two diagonal braces will add to the strength of the rack. Hang it to the wall above the wash-stand by a wire or ribbon. The tooth-brushes rest on the parallel branches.

[Illustration: A RACK FOR TOOTH-BRUSHES.]

For further particulars concerning spruce-wood work, see ST. NICHOLAS, Vol. III., pp. 114 and 115.

MINIATURE HANGING-SHELVES.

[Illustration: MINIATURE HANGING-SHELVES.]

Boys who have learned to use their pocket-knives skillfully may make a very pretty set of hanging-shelves by taking three bits of thin wood (the sides of a cigar-box, for instance), well smoothed and oiled, boring a hole in each corner, and suspending them with cords, run in, and knotted underneath each shelf as in the picture. The wood

should be about eight inches long by three wide, and the shelves, small as they are, will be found convenient for holding many little articles.

PAPER-CUTTERS.

Another idea for these graduates of the knife is this falchion-shaped paper-cutter. It can be made of any sort of hard-wood, neatly cut out, rubbed smooth with sand-paper, and oiled or varnished. It has the advantage that the materials cost almost nothing. Suggestions for more elaborate articles in wood will be given further on.

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[Illustration: A FALCHION-SHAPED PAPER-CUTTER.]

A WALL LETTER-HOLDER.

This is something which quite a little boy could make. Cut out three pieces of thin wood, a foot long by six inches wide; smooth and sand-paper two of them, bore a hole in each corner and in the middle of one side, and fasten them together with fine wire, cord, ribbon, or the small brass pins which are used for holding manuscripts. The pieces should be held a little apart. Cut one end of the third piece into some ornamental shape, glue it firmly to the back of one of the others, and suspend it from the wall by a hole bored in the top. It will be found a useful thing to hold letters or pamphlets. A clever boy could make this much handsomer by cutting a pattern over the front, or an initial, or monogram, or name in the middle. The wood should be oiled or shellacked.

[Illustration: A WALL LETTER-HOLDER FOR PAPA.]

SHOE-CASES.

These cases are meant to take the place of paper when shoes are to be wrapped up to go in a trunk. They are made of brown crash, bound with red worsted braid. One end is pointed so as to turn over and button down, or the top has strings over the braid to tie the mouth up. There should be three or four made at a time, as each holds but one pair of shoes; and you will find that mamma or your unmarried aunts will like them very much.

[Illustration: A SHOE-CASE FOR TRAVELING.]

SKATE-BAGS.

A nice present for a skating boy—and what boy does not skate?—is a bag made much after the pattern of the shoe-case just described, only larger and wider, and of stouter material. Water-proof cloth or cassimere is best. Sew it very strongly, and attach a string of wide braid, or a strong elastic strap, that the bag may be swung over the shoulders. A big initial letter cut out in red flannel and button-holed on will make a pretty effect.

A SCALLOP-SHELL ALBUM.

Young folks who are fortunate enough to have a pair of good-sized scallop-shells (picked up, perhaps, at the sea-side during the last summer vacation), can make a very pretty little autograph album in this way:



[Illustration: A SCALLOP-SHELL ALBUM.]

Take a pair of well-mated scallop-shells. Clean them with brush and soap. When dry, paint them with the white of egg to bring out the colors, and let them dry again. Now insert between the shells a dozen or more pages of writing-paper, cut of the same shape and size as the shells, and very neatly scalloped around the edges. Then secure the whole loosely, as shown in the picture, by means of a narrow ribbon passed through two holes previously bored in the shells. Of course, holes also must be pierced in the sheets of paper to correspond with those in the shells.

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A LITTLE NUN.

This droll figure is cut out in black and white paper. Fastened at the end of a wide ribbon, it would make an odd and pretty book-mark. The black paper should be dull black, though the glossy will answer if no other can be procured. Fig. 1 of the diagrams is cut in white, a rosary and cross being put in with pen and ink, and is folded in the middle by the dotted lines, the head and arms being afterward folded over, as indicated. Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are cut in black and pasted into place, leaving a narrow white border to the bonnet, a mite of white band at the end of the sleeve, and a suggestion of snowy stocking above the shoe. Fig. 6, cut double, forms a book, which can be pasted to look as if held in the hand.

[Illustration: A LITTLE NUN.]

BEAN-BAG CASES.

Are there any of you who do not know the game of bean-bags? It is capital exercise for rainy days, besides being very good fun, and we would advise all of you who are not familiar with it to make a set at once. Usually, there are four bags to a set, but any number of persons from two to eight can play at bean-bags. Each player holds two, flinging to his opponent the one in his right hand, and rapidly shifting the one in his left to the right, so as to leave the left hand free to catch the bag which is thrown at him. A set of these bags would be a nice present for some of you little girls to make for your small brothers; and there are various ways of ornamenting the bags gayly and prettily. The real bags must first be made of stout ticking, over-handed strongly all round, and filled (not too full) with white baking-beans. Over these are drawn covers of flannel, blue or scarlet, and you can work an initial in white letters or braid on each, or make each of the four bags of a different color—yellow, blue, red, green; anything but black, which is hard to follow with the eye, or white, which soils too soon to be desirable.

[Illustration: DIAGRAMS FOR MAKING THE LITTLE NUN.]

BABY'S SHOES IN CASHMERE.

Babies who can't walk are particularly hard on their shoes! We once heard of one who "wore out" nine pairs in two months! In these circumstances, it seems very desirable to have a home shoe-maker, and not have to frequent the shops too often; so we will tell you of an easy kind, which almost any little sister can make. You must take an old morocco shoe which fits, and cut out the shape in paper, first the sole, and then the upper. Then cut the same shape in merino or cashmere, line the little sole with Canton flannel or silk, and bind it with very narrow ribbon. Line and bind the upper in the same way, and feather-stitch round the top and down both sides of the opening in front; sew

on two ends of ribbon to tie round the ankle, and the shoe is done. It will look very pretty on baby's pink foot, and he will thank you for your gift in his own way, by kicking his toes joyfully, and getting the shoes into his mouth as soon as possible.

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A HEMLOCK PILLOW.

It is rather late in the year to make these pillows, but you can try them for next Christmas. They must be prepared for beforehand by gathering and drying a quantity of the needles of the hemlock, the fine ones from the ends of the young shrubs being the best. Make a large square bag of cotton, stuff it full of the needles, and inclose it in an outer case of soft thick silk or woolen stuff. The one from which we take our description had “Reve du foret” embroidered on it in dull yellow floss, and we don’t believe any one could help dreaming of the forest who laid a cheek on the pillow and smelled the mingled spice and sweetness of its aromatic contents.

SACHETS FOR LINEN-CLOSETS.

If you have any old-fashioned lavender growing in your garden, you can easily make a delightful sachet for mamma to lay among her sheets and pillow-cases in the linen-closet, by cutting a square bag of tarletane or Swiss muslin, made as tastefully as you please, and stuffing it full of the flowers. Another delightful scent is the *mellilotte*, or sweet clover, which grows wild in many parts of the country, and has, when dried, a fragrance like that of the tonquin-bean, only more delicate.

TISSUE-PAPER MATS.

[Illustration: A TISSUE-PAPER MAT.]

We like to be able to tell you about these mats, for they cost almost nothing at all, and are so simple that any little boy or girl can make them. All the material needed for them is three sheets of tissue-paper,—a light shade, a medium shade, and a dark shade, or, if you like, they can also be made of one solid color, but are not quite so pretty then. Cut a piece of each color nine inches square, fold it across, and then across again, so as to form a small square, and then fold from point to point. Lay on it a pattern, like the first diagram on next page, and cut the tissue paper according to the lines of the pattern. Opening the paper, you will find it a circle, with the edge pointed in scallops. Now take a common hair-pin, bend its points over that they may not tear the paper, slip it in turn over each point, as shown in the diagram, and draw it down, *crinkling* the paper into a sort of double scallop. (The second diagram on next page will explain this process.) Treat your three rounds in this way, lay them over each other like a pile of plates, stick a small pin in the middle to hold them, set a goblet upon them, and gently arrange the crinkled edges about its base, so as to give a full ruffled effect, like the petals of a dahlia, although less stiff and regular. These mats are exceedingly pretty.

[Illustration: DIAGRAM FOR PAPER MAT, SHOWING MODE OF FOLDING AND SHAPING.]

[Illustration: DIAGRAM SHOWING THE MANNER OF CRIMPING EACH SCALLOP OF THE PAPER MAT OVER A HAIR-PIN.]

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A WORK BASKET IN VANILLA GRASS.

If any of you live where the sweet-scented vanilla grass grows plentifully, you can make a delicious little basket by drying the long wiry blades, braiding them in strands of three, tying the ends firmly together to make a long braid, and coiling and sewing as in straw plaiting. Two circles the size of a dessert plate should be prepared, one for the bottom of the basket, and the other for the top of the lid (the latter a trifle the larger). Then draw the braid tighter, and form a rim to each about two inches deep. The lid, which is separate, fits over the bottom, and the scent of the grass will impart itself to everything kept in the basket.

So much for the dear little people. Our next dip into Mother Santa Claus's basket brings out a big handful for girls (and boys) who are a trifle older,—say from twelve to fifteen.

HAIR-PIN HOLDERS.

On the next page is a picture of the hair-pin holder when finished; and above it you will find a diagram of it when cut out and not yet put in shape. It is cut, as you will observe, in one piece. The material is perforated card-board, either white or "silver." The dotted lines show where to fold it.

A, A and B, B are lapped outside the end pieces, D, D, and held in place by stitches of worsted, long below and very short above, where the sides join. A little border is worked in worsted at top and bottom before the sides are joined. The inside is stuffed with curled hair, and topped with a little cover crocheted or knit in worsted—plain ribbing or the tufted crochet, just as you prefer. A cord and a small worsted tassel at either end complete it, and it is a convenient little thing to hang or stand on mamma's or sister's toilet-table. It will be an easy matter to enlarge the pattern, if this hair-pin holder would be too small.

[Illustration: PATTERN OF HAIR-PIN HOLDER.]

[Illustration: A HAIR-PIN HOLDER.]

[Illustration: END OF HAIR-PIN HOLDER WHEN FOLDED.]

A CRIB-BLANKET FOR BABY.

The prettiest and simplest crib-blanket which we have seen of late, was made of thick white flannel, a yard wide, and a yard and a quarter long. Across each end were basted two rows of scarlet worsted braid, four inches apart, and between the two a row of bright yellow braid. These were cat-stitched down on both edges with black worsted, and



between them were rows of feather-stitching in blue. Above, in each corner, was a small wheel made of rows of feather-stitch—black, red, yellow and blue. Nothing could be easier to make, but the effect was extremely gay and bright, and we advise some of you who are lucky enough to “belong to a baby” to try it.

ANOTHER BABY’S BLANKET.

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For this you must buy a real blanket—one of the small ones which come for use in a baby's crib. Those with blue stripes and a narrow binding of blue silk are prettiest for the purpose. Baste a narrow strip of canvas between the stripes and the binding, and with blue saddler's silk doubled, work in cross-stitch a motto, so arranged that it can be read when the top of the blanket is folded back. If the stripe is red instead of blue, the motto must be in red silk, and it should, of course, have reference to the baby. Here are some pretty ones in various languages: "*Nun guten ruh, die augen zu*" (Now go to sleep, and shut your eyes). "*Cap-a-pie*" (From head to foot). "*Ad ogni ucello, suo nido e bello*" (To every bird its own nest is beautiful). And here is one in English:

"Shut little eyes, and shut in the blue;
Sleep, little baby, God loves you."

The same idea can be beautifully applied to a pair of large blankets, but this is rather a considerable gift for young people to undertake.

SUMMER BLANKETS.

A pair of thin summer blankets, of the kind which are scarcely heavier than flannel, can be made very pretty by button-holing them all round loosely with double zephyr wool in large scallops, and working three large initials in the middle of the top end.

A WORK-BASKET FOR "SISTER."

For this, you must buy a straw basket, flat in shape, and without a handle. It can be round, square, oval, or eight-sided, just as you prefer. You must also buy a yard of silk or cashmere in some pretty color. Line the whole basket, first of all cutting the shape of the bottom exactly, and fastening the lining down with deft stitches, which shall show neither inside nor out. Make four little pockets of the stuff (six if the basket is large), draw their tops up with elastic cord, and fasten them round the sides at equal distances. These are to hold spools of silk, tapes, hooks-and-eyes, and such small wares, which are always getting into disorder in a pocketless basket. Between two of the pockets on one side, suspend a small square pincushion, and on the other a flat needle-book hung by a loop of ribbon. At the opposite ends, between the pockets, fasten an emery bag and a sheath of morocco bound with ribbon to hold a pair of scissors. Finish the top last of all with a quilling of ribbon, and you have as dainty and complete a gift as any younger sister can wish to make, or any older one receive. It will cost time and pains, but is pretty and useful enough to repay both.

A FANCY WHEELBARROW.

This cannot be made easily by any boy or girl who is not already acquainted with fancy wood-sawing, and to such the illustration gives all the hint that will be needed. We would simply suggest that the body of this barrow is about six inches long, that it is lined with crimson silk, and that standing upon a dressing-bureau, writing-table, or mantel-shelf, it makes a very pretty receiver of cards or knick-knacks. Many beautiful Christmas gifts can be made by boys or girls owning one of the little bracket-saws, which, with books of directions, can now be bought in almost any hardware shop.

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[Illustration: A FANCY WHEELBARROW.]

For further particulars on wood-carving, see illustrated articles in ST. NICHOLAS, Vol. I., pp. 84, 215, 346, 592.

A SET OF TEA-NAPKINS.

There hardly could be a nicer gift for a girl to make for her mother or married sister than a set of tea-napkins, with a large initial letter in white, or white and red, embroidered on each. The doily should be folded in four, and the letter out-lined in lead pencil in the corner of one of the quarters. If inked very black on paper, and held dry to the window behind the linen, the initial is easily traced. The pattern is then run and "stuffed" with heavy working-cotton, and the letter embroidered in finer cotton. Another nice gift is a long fringed towel, with three very large letters in white, or blue, or crimson, worked half-way between the middle and the side edge. Folded over lengthwise, it is a convenient thing to lay on a bureau-top or the front of a sideboard, and the large colored letters make it ornamental as well. Patterns of initials can be bought in any fancy shop. If desired, they can be bought already worked, requiring only to be transferred to the napkin.

NAPKIN-BANDS.

Any of you who have mastered cross-stitch, and learned to follow a pattern, will find these bands easy enough to make. Their use is to fasten a napkin round a child's neck at dinner, and take the place of that disobliging "pin," which is never at hand when wanted. You must cut a strip of Java canvas, two inches wide by a foot long; overcast the edges, and work on it some easy little vine in worsted, or a Grecian pattern, or, if you like, a short motto, such as "More haste, worse speed." Line the strip with silk, turn in the edges, overhand them, and finish the ends with two of those gilt clasps which are used to loop up ladies' dresses.

A RUSTIC VASE.

[Illustration]

It is very easy to get the material out of which this vase is made. You need only go to your wood-pile, or, if you have none, to the wood-pile of a neighbor. Choose a round stick four inches in diameter and eight or ten inches long, with a smooth bark. If you find the stick, and it is too long, you can easily saw off an end. Now comes the difficult part of the work: The inside of the stick must be scooped out to within four inches of the bottom. The easiest way of accomplishing this will be to send it to a turning-mill if there is one at hand; if not, patience and a jack-knife will in the end prevail. Next, with a little



oil-color, paint a pretty design on the bark, if you can,—trailing-arbutus, partridge berry, sprays of linnea,—any wood thing which can be supposed to cluster naturally round a stump. Set the stump in a flower-pot saucer, filled with earth, and planted with mosses and tiny

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ferns; fit a footless wine or champagne glass, or a plain cup, into the hollow end, and, with a bunch of grasses and wild flowers, or autumn leaves, you have a really exquisite vase, prettier than any formal article bought in a shop, and costing little more than time and patience, with a touch of that rare thing—taste! which, after all, is not so very rare as some people imagine. Any friend will prize such a vase of your own making.

A TABLE-COVER.

A really charming cover for a small table can be made in this way: Cut a square—or oblong, as the case may be—of that loosely woven linen which is used for glass-towels, making it about four inches larger all round than the table it is meant to fit. Pale yellow or brown is the best color to select. Ravel the edges into a fringe two inches deep; then, beginning two inches within the edge, draw the linen threads all round in a band an inch and three-quarters wide. Lace the plain space thus left with dark-red ribbon of the same width, woven in and out in regular spaces, and at each corner tie the ribbon in a graceful knot with drooping ends.

ANOTHER TABLE-COVER.

This cover is made of pale-brown Turkish toweling. Cut a piece of the size to suit your table, and baste all round it, first a row of scarlet worsted braid, then of olive, then of yellow, leaving spaces each an inch and a half wide between the rows. Cat-stitch the braids down on both edges with saddlers' silk, and feather-stitch between them in silks, choosing colors which harmonize, and turning the whole into a wide stripe brilliant and soft at the same time. The choice and placing of the colors will be excellent practice for your eye, and after a little while you will be able to tell, as soon as a couple of inches are done, if you are putting the right tint into the right place. It is infinitely more interesting to feel your way thus through a piece of work than to follow any set pattern, however pretty, and it is far more cultivating to the taste.

A PAPER TRANSPARENCY.

Take a piece of white, or tinted, or silver paper, exactly ten and a half inches square. Fold it double diagonally. Fold it double again. Fold it double once more.

You will now have a triangular-shaped form of eight thicknesses. Now lay this folded piece on a pine table, or on a smooth piece of pine board. Next, lay evenly over it, so that it will fit exactly, the "pattern of transparency," or an exact tracing from it. When so placed, secure them firmly to the board by pins driven in at each corner. Now, with a very sharp pen-knife follow and cut *through to the board* the lines of the pattern, so as to



cut out all the portions that show black in the design. When this is all done, pull out the pins, open your folded paper, and you will have a square form beautifully figured in open-work. It should be laid between two sheets of white paper and carefully pressed with a hot iron, and then it can be lined with black or fancy tissue paper, and hung against a pane in the window as a “transparency;” or you may use it as a picture-frame, inserting an engraving or photograph in the center.

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The original, from which our pattern is taken, was cut during the late war by a young Union soldier while in Libby prison.

[Illustration: PATTERN OF PAPER TRANSPARENCY.]

SHAWL-BAGS.

These bags are capital things to save a shawl from the dust of a journey, and, if of good size, can be made to serve a useful purpose by packing into them dressing materials, *etc.*, for which there is not room in your hand-bag. The best material for them is stout brown Holland. Cut two round end-pieces eight inches in diameter and a piece half a yard wide by twenty-four inches long. Stitch these together, leaving the straight seam open nearly all the way across, and bind its edges and the edges of the end-pieces with worsted braid (maroon or dark brown), put on with a machine. Close the opening with five buttons and button-holes. Bind with braid a band of the Holland two inches wide, and fasten it over the button-holed side, leaving a large loop in the middle to carry the bag by.

By way of ornament you may embroider three large letters in single-stitch on the side, using worsted of the color of the braid, or may put a pattern down either side of the opening and round the ends in braiding, or a braided medallion with initials in the center.

A JAPANESE BASKET FOR GRANDMOTHER.

You will never guess what the top of this droll little basket is made of, unless we tell you. It is one of those Japanese cuffs of brown straw which can be bought nowadays for a small price at any of the Japanese shops. You may embroider a little pattern over it—diagonally, if you wish to make it look very Japanese-y; line it with silk or satin, and fasten a small bag of the same material to the bottom, drawn up with a ribbon bow or a tassel. A band of wide ribbon is sewed to the top. Grandmamma will find this just the thing to hang on her arm for holding her knitting-ball, or the knitting itself if she wishes to lay it aside. This sort of basket also is useful as a “catch-all” when hung at the side of a dressing-bureau.

[Illustration: JAPANESE HANGING-BASKET OF STRAW AND SILK]

A CATCH-ALL, MADE FROM A SINGLE SQUARE.

This is very pretty, and very easily made. Take a piece of silver (or gold) perforated paper, eight inches square, and ornament it with worsted or silk, as in the diagram, all in one direction. To make the cornucopia, it is only necessary to join any two edges (as A and B) by first binding each with ribbon and then sewing them together. Line with silk,

and put box-plaiting at the top. A worsted tassel might be put at the top (in front) as well as at the bottom, and a loop at C.

[Illustration: DIAGRAM OF PATTERN TO BE WORKED ON PERFORATED PAPER FOR A CATCH-ALL.]

If silver paper is used, the trimmings would better be all red. All blue would look well with gold paper. But the colors may be varied according to taste. If your friend is a brunette, you will find that he or she will be most pleased with the red, while a blonde will prefer blue.

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[Illustration: A CATCH-ALL MADE OF PERFORATED PAPER.]

A WALL-POCKET OF SPLITS.

Splits, or cigar-lighters as they are sometimes called, are to be had at any of the fancy shops. They are an inch wide and about seven inches long, and come in various shades of brown and straw color, and their flexibility makes it easy to weave them in and out like basket-work. For the wall-pocket you must weave two squares, each containing six splits each way, but one made larger than the other, as seen in the picture. A few stitches in cotton of the same color will hold the strips in place. Line the smaller of the squares with silk, and lay it across the face of the other in such a way that the four points shall make a diamond, touching the middle of each side of the square. Fasten it to the wall by two of the splits crossed and united by a bow of ribbons, and fill the pocket with dried autumn leaves and ferns gracefully arranged.

[Illustration: WALL-POCKET OF SPLITS.]

SILHOUETTE LIKENESSES.

This is rather a Christmas game than a present, but will answer well for either; and young folks can get much fun out of an evening spent in “taking” each other. Each in turn must stand so as to cast a sharp profile shadow on the wall, to which is previously pinned, white side out, a large sheet of paper, known as silhouette paper, black on one side and white on the other. Somebody draws the outline of this shadow *exactly* with a pencil; it is then cut out and pasted neatly, black side up, on a sheet of white paper. Good and expressive likenesses are often secured, and droll ones *very* often. Try it, some of you, in the long evenings which are coming.

[Illustration: DIAGRAM OF WALL-POCKET.]

A LEAF PEN-WIPER.

Your pattern for this must be a beech-leaf again,—a *long* one this time,—or you may trace the shape from the illustration. Outline the shape as before, and from the model thus secured cut six leaves in flannel—two green, two brown, and two red, or red, white and blue, or any combination you like. Snip the edge of each leaf into very tiny points, and chain-stitch veins upon it with gold-colored floss. Attach these leaves together by the upper ends, arranging under them three triply pointed leaves of black broadcloth or silk to receive the ink, and finish the top with a small bow of ribbon.

[Illustration: A LEAF PEN-WIPER.]

A BIRDS'-NEST PEN-WIPER.

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Girls are always trying to find something which they can make to delight their papas, and a gay little pen-wiper with fresh uninked leaves rarely comes amiss to a man who likes an orderly writing-table. Here is a pretty one which is easily made. For the pattern you may borrow a moderately large beech-leaf from the nearest tree (or botanical work); lay it down on paper, pencil the outline and cut it out neatly. Repeat this six or eight times in black cloth or velvet, and sew the leaves round a small oval or circle of black cloth. Knit and ravel out a quantity of yellow worsted or floss silk, and with it construct a nest in the center of the oval, putting a hen into the nest. This hen may be made of canton flannel, stuffed with cotton-wool and painted in water color, with a comb of red flannel, two black beads for eyes, and a tuft of feathers by way of tail. But better still and much easier, buy one of the droll little Japanese chicks which can be had at the shops now for twenty or twenty-five cents, and fasten it in the middle of the nest. Three plain circles of cloth are fastened underneath for wiping the pens.

JAPANESE PEN-WIPER.

[Illustration: A JAPANESE PEN-WIPER.]

A nice little pen-wiper can be made by cutting three circles of black cloth, snipping the edges or button-holing them with colored silk, and standing in the middle one of the droll little Japanese birds just mentioned. Of course it should be secured firmly at the feet. There are long-legged birds and short-legged ones. A tiny stork is very pretty.

BLEACHED GRASSES.

Some of you who have been pressing autumn leaves for winter use may like to hear of a new way of bleaching grasses to mix with them. The process is exceedingly simple. Take a few of the grasses in your hand at a time, dip them into a pan of water, shake gently, dip into a pan of sifted flour, and again shake gently. All the superfluous flour will fall off, but enough will remain to make the grasses snowy-white. When dry it is perfectly firm, and you would never guess what process produced the effect. A bunch of these white grasses in a coral-red basket is a vivid object.

Colored grasses, to our thinking, are not half so pretty as the same grasses when left in their own soft natural browns and yellows. Still, as some people like them, we will just mention that the same process can be used for them as for the white grass, by mixing with small portions of flour, a little dry paint powder, vermilion, green, etc. A bunch of the deep red mixed with the bleached grass has a gay and uncommon effect.

A NUBE IN TWO COLORS.

A novelty in knitting is a nube in Shetland wool of two colors—pink or crimson or blue with white. The skeins are opened, and the two strands, laid side by side, are wound double in a large ball. The nube is then knit in the usual way with large needles and common garter-stitch, and is very fine.



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LAMP SHADES.

Plain white porcelain lamp-shades, such as are used on the German student-lamps, look well when decorated with wreaths of autumn leaves put on with mucilage. We read lately in the *Tribune* that leaves treated with extract of chlorophyll became transparent. This would be a fine experiment for some of you to try, and a garland of the transparent leaves would be much more beautiful around a shade than the ordinary dried ones.

There are other styles of lamp-shades that can be made with little difficulty, for instance: A very pretty shade is easily formed by cutting in thin drawing-board fine scalloped sections, which, tied together with narrow ribbon, take the form of a shade. Leaves are glued to the under side of these, and a lining of thin tissue-paper is pasted on to hold them in place. Still another is made in the same way, with doubled sections of card-board, between each pair of which is laid a steel engraving or wood-cut, or an unmounted photograph. The pictures are invisible till the lamp is lighted: then they gleam forth with something of the soft glow of a porcelain transparency.

A GLOVE-BOX.

In any of the fancy shops you can now buy the slender frames of silvered tin on which these boxes are made. Cut out double pieces of pale-tinted silk to fit the top, bottom, sides and ends, and quilt each separately with an interlining of cotton batting, on which sachet-powder has been lightly sprinkled. Slip the pieces between the double rods of the frame, sew over and over, and finish with a plaited satin ribbon all round, adding a neat little loop and bow to lift the lid.

The small tin boxes in which fancy biscuits are sold can be utilized for glove-boxes, covered as you choose on the outside, and lined with wadded silk.

ANOTHER GLOVE-BOX.

This box can be made in very stiff card-board, but tin is better if you have the pieces which form its shape cut by the tinman, and punched with holes in rows an inch and a half apart. If you use card-board, you must punch your own holes, measuring the places for them with rule and pencil. In either case, you will need the same number of pieces and of the same size, namely: two strips one foot long and five inches wide, two strips one foot long and three inches wide, and two strips five inches long and three inches wide. Cover each piece with a layer of cotton wadding, sprinkled with sachet powder, and a layer of silk or satin of any color you prefer. Then catch the silk firmly down through the holes in the tin, making long stitches on the wrong side, and small cross-stitches on the right, so as to form neat regular tufts. A very tiny button sewed in each depression has a neat effect. When the inside of the box is thus tufted, baste the

pieces together, cover the outside with black or dark silk or satin, embroidered or ornamented in any way your fancy may dictate, overhand the edges daintily, and neatly finish with a small cord. Square boxes made in the same way are pretty for pocket-handkerchiefs.

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[Illustration: SILK GLOVE-BOX.]

[Illustration: DIAGRAM SHOWING THE MANNER OF TUFTING THE LINING OF SILK GLOVE-BOX.]

A COAL-SCUTTLE PIN-CUSHION.

This droll little scuttle is made of black enamel cloth, cut according to the diagrams on next page. Fig. 1 is cut double and folded over at G. The two sides marked B and E in Fig. 1 are bound with black galloon; also the two sides marked with the same letters in Fig. 2.

[Illustration: COAL-SCUTTLE PINCUSHION AND NEEDLE BOOK.]

Before binding over, cast a bit of wire around the top and one around the bottom of the scuttle, and bend each into its proper shape. Figs. 3 and 4 are bound all round, and sewed over and over to the places indicated. Wrap two bits of wire, one four inches long and the other an inch and a quarter, with black worsted, and insert them through little holes made for the purpose to serve as the handles of the scuttle; stuff the inside firmly with hair or cotton-wool, cover the top with flannel, cut after Fig. 4, and button-hole the edges down all round with worsted of the color of the flannel. If you like to add a needle-book you can do so by cutting three leaves of differently colored flannels, after the shape of Fig. 4, snipping the edges into points, or button-holing them, and fastening the leaves to the back of the scuttle above the pincushion.

[Illustration: DIAGRAMS OF COAL-SCUTTLE PINCUSHION AND NEEDLE-BOOK. Fig. 1.—Pattern of Coal-Scuttle Pinchusion. Fig. 2.—Part of Pattern of Coal-Scuttle Pinchusion. Fig. 3.—Bottom of Coal-Scuttle. Fig. 4.—Top of Coal-Scuttle.]

A BIT OF PLAIN WORK.

There are notable little sempstresses even in these days of machines ("and I am thankful to know that there are," says Mother Santa Claus) who set their stitches as swiftly and as precisely as ever their grandmothers did before them, and have the same liking for what used to be called "white seam." To such we would suggest, what a nice and useful Christmas present would be a beautifully made under-garment. It need not of necessity be a shirt, though in old days no girl was considered educated who could not finish one all by herself, from cutting out to the last button-hole; but an apron or petticoat or dressing-jacket or night-gown, over which little fingers had labored deftly and lovingly, would, it seems to us, be a most wonderful and delightful novelty for mamma or grandmamma to find on the Christmas-tree this year. A set of handkerchiefs nicely hemmed and marked (girls used to cross-stitch the marks in their own hair!), or a



soft flannel petticoat, cat-stitched at the seams, scalloped with coarse working cotton,—which grows whiter with washing, instead of yellowing like silk,—with three pretty initials on the waistband, would be other capital ideas. Try them.

WORK APRONS.

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The great convenience of these aprons is that the work can be rolled up in them and laid aside for use. They are made of brown Holland trimmed with black or blue or crimson worsted braid. Little loops of doubled braid ornament the edge, and are held in place by a plain row of the braid stitched on above them. The lower and largest pocket should be made full and drawn up with a cord at top, so as to hold rolls of pieces, worsteds and patterns. The little pockets are for spools of silk and thread, tapes, buttons, and so on.

[Illustration: DIAGRAM OF WORK APRON.]

A LEAF NEEDLE-BOOK.

For this needle-book you will need the following materials: One-eighth of a yard of crimson or green velvet, one-eighth of a yard of lining silk to match, one-eighth of a yard of fine white flannel, two skeins of white silk floss, a bit of Bristol-board, and a half yard of narrow ribbon.

Cut in the Bristol-board a couple of leaf-shaped pieces like the illustration. Cover each with the velvet, turning in the edges neatly, line with the silk, and button-hole both together all round with white floss. Stitch the veins in the leaves with the floss, held tightly, so as to depress the lines a little. Cut three leaves of flannel in the same shape, button-hole the edges, lay them between the leaves, and fasten all together at top with a bow of ribbon. A tiny loop and button should be attached to the point to hold the needle-book together.

[Illustration: PATTERN OF LEAF NEEDLE-BOOK.]

[Illustration: PAD OF LEAF NEEDLE-BOOK.]

BOOK-MARK.

A large lace-like cross hanging from the end of a wide ribbon makes a handsome and appropriate mark for a big bible or prayer-book. The materials cost almost nothing, all that is required being a bit of perforated card-board, a sharp penknife, and—patience. Trace the form of the cross on the card-board, and outline the pattern on one side in pencil. You will observe that the one given as illustration is made up of small forms many times repeated, and this is the case with all patterns used for this purpose. The easiest way to outline it regularly is to do a square of eight holes at a time, marking the places to be cut, and leaving the uncut places white. When all is marked, place on a smooth board and cut, following the markings exactly with your knife. The work cannot be hurried: it must be done slowly and very carefully if you hope to succeed.

* * * * *

And now we will turn out the more difficult things from the bottom of the basket, and you big, clever boys and girls who can do what you like with your fingers and knives and needles and paint-brushes, can take your pick from them.

AUTUMN-LEAF WORK.

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If you have an old work-box, or desk, or table-top, or screen, which has grown shabby, and which you would like to renew, we can tell you how to do so. First, you must take those generous friends, the woods, into your counsel. Gather and press every bright, perfect leaf and spray which comes in your way this autumn, and every graceful bit of vine, and a quantity of small brown and gold-colored ferns, and those white feathery ones which have blanched in the deep shadows. These ready, paint your box, or whatever it is, with solid black, let it dry, rub it smooth with fine sand-paper, and repeat the process three times. Then glue the leaves and ferns on, irregularly scattered, or in regular bouquets and wreaths, as suits your fancy. Apply a coat of isinglass, dissolved in water, to the whole surface, and when that is dry, three coats of copal varnish, allowing each to dry before the next is put on. The effect is very handsome. And, even without painting the objects black, this same style of leaf and fern-work can be applied to earthen vases, wooden boxes, trays and saucers, for card-receivers. For these, you may get some good hints from the illustrations on subsequent pages. The same illustrations will apply to the "novelties in fern-work" given further on.

A WINDOW TRANSPARENCY.

Another pretty use for autumn leaves is a transparency for a window. Arrange a group of the leaves upon a pane of glass, lay another pane of same size over these, and glue the edges together, first with a strip of stout muslin, and then with narrow red ribbon, leaving a loop at each upper corner to hang it up by. The deep leaf colors seen against the light are delightful.

SIDE-LIGHT TRANSPARENCIES.

Any of you who happen to live in a house which has, like many old houses, a narrow side-light on either side of its front-door, and a row of panes across the top, can make a pretty effect by preparing a series of these transparencies to fit the door-glasses, and fastening them on by driving a stout tack into the sashes so as to support the four corners of each pane. The transparencies could be prepared secretly and put into place overnight, or on Christmas morning, before any one is up, so as to give mother a pleasant surprise as she comes downstairs.

A FRAME OF AUTUMN LEAVES.

Procure an oblong bit of tin, eight inches by ten, or ten inches by twelve, and have a large oval cut out in the middle. Paint the tin with two coats of black, glue a small group of leaves in each corner, with a wire spray or tendril to connect them, varnish with two coats of copal, and put a small picture behind the oval.

A FRAME OF MAIDEN-HAIR.

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Cut a pasteboard frame three inches wide of the size you need, and sew thickly all over it little sprays of maiden-hair ferns, pressed and dried. It is fastened to the wall with a pin at each corner, and of course does not support a glass. The effect of the light fern shapes against the wall is very delicate and graceful, and unsubstantial as it may seem, the frame lasts a long time, especially if, when the maiden-hair first begins to curl, the whole is taken down and re-pressed for two or three days under a heavy book.

[Illustration: VASE (AUTUMN-LEAF WORK).]

NOVELTIES IN FERN-WORK.

We hope some of you have collected a good supply of ferns of the different colors,—deep brown, yellow, green and white,—for by means of a new process you can make something really beautiful with them. It requires deft fingers and good eyes, but with practice and patience any of you could manage it. Supposing it to be a table-top which you wish to ornament, you proceed as follows: Paint the wood all over with black or very dark brown; let it dry, and rub it smooth with pumice. Next varnish. And here comes the point of the process. *While the varnish is wet*, lay your ferns down upon it, following a design which you have arranged clearly in your head, or marked beforehand on a sheet of paper. A pin's point will aid you to move and place the fragile stems, which must not be much handled, and must lie perfectly flat, with no little projecting points to mar the effect, which when done should be like mosaic-work. As soon as the pattern is in place, varnish again immediately. The ferns, thus inclosed in a double wall of varnish, will keep their places perfectly. Next day, when all is dry, varnish once more. Small articles of white holly-wood decorated in this way are very pretty, and a thin china plate with an overlaying of these varnished ferns becomes a beautiful and ornamental card-receiver.

[Illustration: CARD-RECEIVER (AUTUMN-LEAF WORK).]

A SHOE-CHAIR.

An old cane-seated chair will answer perfectly to make this, provided the frame-work is strong and good. Cut away the cane and insert in its place a stout bag of twilled linen, the size of the seat and about ten inches deep. Around this bag sew eight pockets, each large enough for a pair of shoes. The round pocket left in the middle will serve to hold stockings. Have a bit of thin wood cut to fit the seat of the chair; fasten on this a cushion covered with cretonne, with a deep frill all around (or a narrow frill, provided you prefer to fasten the deep ruffle around the chair itself, as shown in the picture), and a little loop in front by which the seat can be raised like the lid of a box, when the shoes are wanted. This chair is really a most convenient piece of furniture for a bedroom.

[Illustration: A SHOE-CHAIR, WITH COVER (OR SEAT) REMOVED.]

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SCRAP-BAGS IN TURKISH TOWELING.

These are convenient little affairs. Hung on the gas-fixture beside a looking-glass, or on a hook above the work-table, they will be found just the things to catch odds and ends, such as hair, burnt matches, ravelings and shreds of cloth, which are always accumulating, and for which many city bedrooms afford no receptacle. The materials needed are three-quarters of a yard of pale-brown Turkish toweling, six yards of red worsted braid, four steel rings (to hold the strings), one-eighth of a yard each of blue, white, and scarlet cashmere, a skein each of blue, red, green, yellow, and black worsted, and a small red tassel in chenille or silk.

Cut four pieces of the toweling, twelve inches long and six and a half wide, and shape them according to diagram.

Bind each around with braid. Cut out a shape in cashmere of the three colors laid one over the other, and button-hole it on with worsted, contrasting the shades in as gay and marked a manner as possible. In the design given, A is white cashmere, B red, and C blue. A is button-holed with green, B with black, and C with yellow. B is chain-stitched in blue and white lines, C feather-stitched in white and yellow. The daisy-like flower above is white, with a yellow center and a green stem, and the long lines of stitching on either side are in red and black. Some of these bags are very pretty.

This bag could be simplified by using no cashmere, and feather-stitching each quarter diagonally across with alternate black, red, and yellow lines.

[Illustration: PATTERN OF EACH OF THE FOUR SIDES OF SCRAP-BAG.]

[Illustration: SCRAP-BAG IN TURKISH TOWELING.]

ANOTHER SCRAP-BAG.

The upper part of this bag is made of silver perforated paper. Buy a strip a foot long and six inches wide, and embroider it all over in alternate lines of cross and single stitching, using single zephyr worsted, blue or rose-colored. Cut a piece of stiff cardboard of exactly the same size, and line it with pink or blue silk to match the worsted. Sew the two ends together to form a circle, lay the silver paper smoothly over it, stitch down, and trim both edges with plaited satin ribbon three-quarters of an inch wide.

This is the top of your bag. The bottom is crocheted in worsted by the ordinary long stitch, and sewed to the silver-paper top piece under the satin ribbon. A worsted tassel finishes the lower end.

ARTISTIC EMBROIDERY.

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Just here a word to the girls about embroidery. In old days, when embroidery was the chief occupation of noble dames and demoiselles, the needle was used as a paint-brush might be, to make a picture of some real thing or some ideal occurrence. For instance: the Bayeux tapestry, worked in the eleventh century by Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, and her ladies, is a continuous series of pictures, two hundred and fourteen feet long by about two feet wide, which represent scenes in the invasion and conquest of England. Old as it is, the colors are still undimmed and brilliant. Even so lately as the last century, ladies designed their own patterns, and embroidered court dresses and trimmings with flowers and birds copied from nature. But for many years back fancy-work has degenerated into the following of set models, without exercising any “fancy” of one’s own at all. Now the old method is come into fashion again, and it means so much more, and is so vastly more interesting than copying a cut-and-dried pattern from a shop, that we long to set you all to trying your hands at it. For example, if you want a cushion with a group of daisies, gather a handful of fresh ones,—take a bit of linen or china crape, or fine crash or pongee, and, with green and white and gray and gold-colored silks, make a picture of the daisies as they look to you, not using any particular kind of stitch, but employing long ones or short ones, or loose or tight ones, just as comes most easily in giving the effect you want to get. This is much nicer than counting the stitches on a paper pattern and a bit of canvas, and when done, produces a much better effect. Even in winter, a real flower or a fern-spray, by way of model, can always be found in the flower-shops or greenhouses. Practice will stimulate invention and suggest all sorts of devices and ideas. Bits of pretty stuffs will catch your eye as adaptable for use, and oddly tinted silks (the old, faded colors often work in better than fresh ones), patterns on fans, on rice paper, on Japanese pictures—all sorts of things—will serve as material for your fancy. And when your work is done it will be *original*, and, as such, more valuable and interesting than any shop model, however beautiful in itself, can possibly be.

[Illustration: ANOTHER SCRAP-BAG (SILVER PERFORATED PAPER AND CROCHET-WORK).]

[Illustration: PAPER-CUTTER (NOVELTIES IN FERN-WORK).]

ORIENTAL WORK.

Very gay and quaint effects are produced with this work, which is an adaptation of the well-known Eastern embroideries. Its ground-work is plain cashmere or flannel, red, black or blue, on which small fantastically shaped figures in variously colored velvets or cashmeres are laid and button-holed down with floss silks. All sorts of forms are employed for these figures—stars, crescents, circles, trefoils, shields, palm-leaves, griffins, imps; and little wheels and comets in feather-stitch

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and cat-stitch are inserted between, to add to the oddity of the whole. These forms can be bought at a low price in almost any fancy shop. A good deal of ingenuity and taste can be shown in arranging and blending the figures richly and brilliantly, without making them too bright and glaring. Table-covers in this work should have falls of deep points, pinked on the edges. Smaller points of white cashmere are sometimes inserted between the deep ones, and similarly decorated. Bright little tassels are swung between the points by twisted silk cords. The tassels are made of strips of scarlet and white flannel, cut *almost* across, in narrow fringes, rolled into shape, and confined by a tiny heading of flannel embroidered with silk. Sofa-pillows in this Oriental work are bright and effective, also wall-pockets and brackets—in fact, it can be applied in many ways. The bracket shapes must be cut in wood, and topped with flannel, the embroidered piece hanging across the front like a miniature drapery.

BEDSIDE RUGS.

The prettiest bedside rug which we ever saw was made in part of a snow-white lamb's-wool mat. This was laid in the center of a stout burlap, which projected six inches beyond the fleece all around, and was bordered with a band of embroidery on canvas six inches wide, the whole being lined with flannel and finished with a cord and a heavy tassel at each corner. A simpler rug is made of brown burlap, with a pattern in cross-stitch, worked in double zephyr worsteds of gay colors. Initials, or a motto, can be embroidered in the middle. The burlap can be fringed out around the edges for a finish.

[Illustration: VASE, PAINTED BLACK AND ORNAMENTED WITH FERNS (AUTUMN-LEAF WORK).]

A RAG RUG.

An effective rug can be made in this way: Cut long inch-wide strips of cloths, flannels, and various kinds of material (widening the strip, however, in proportion as the fabric is thinner). Sew the ends together so as to make one very long strip, which, for convenience' sake, can be loosely wound up in a ball. Then, with a very large wooden crochet-needle, you crochet a circle, a square, or oblong mat of this rag-strip, just as with cotton or worsted. It makes a strong, durable, and, with bright and tasteful colors, a very pretty rug.

A SCREEN.

A folding clothes-horse with two leaves, such as is used in laundries, makes the foundation for this screen. The wood is painted solid black, and covered inside and out



with very yellow unbleached cotton, stretched tightly over the frame, and held down by black upholstery braid fastened on with gilt nails. A design in flowers, leaves, birds, double circles, crescents, and parallel bars, to imitate the Japanese style of decoration, is painted in oil colors on the cotton, and a motto on the wood along the top. If the

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motto is arranged to read backward, the foreign effect of the whole will be enhanced. We have seen a striking screen of this sort made by a little girl who, as she could not paint in oil colors, decorated the surface with figures of various kinds cut from Japanese picture-papers, such as are now sold for from ten to twenty cents in the Japanese goods shops. Her figures were so well pasted and arranged, that the screen was one of the prettiest things in the bedroom.

Screens covered with pictures cut from magazines and illustrated newspapers are very much liked by boys and girls, and by some of their elders.

A COUVRE-PIED.

This is a large oblong in loosely knitted double zephyr wools, and is made double, dark brown on one side, for instance, and pale blue on the other. The two are united with a border in open crochet of the brown, laced through with light blue ribbon, which is finished at each corner with a loosely tied bow and ends. The *couvre-pied*, as the name indicates, is meant to cover the feet of a person who lies on a sofa, and is an excellent present to make to an elderly or invalid friend.

TILE OR CHINA PAINTING.

Don't be frightened at the word, dears. China-painting is high art sometimes, and intricate and difficult work often, but it is quite possible to produce pretty effects without knowing a great deal about either china or painting. Neither are the materials of necessity expensive. All that you need, to begin with, are a few half tubes of china or mineral paints, which cost about as much as oil colors, four or five camel's-hair brushes, a palette-knife, a small phial of oil-of-lavender, and another of oil-of-turpentine, a plain glazed china cup or plate or tile to work on, and either a china palette or another plate on which to rub the paints. For colors, black, capuchine red, rose-pink, yellow, blue, green and brown are an ample assortment for a novice and for purposes of practice. We would advise only two tubes, one of black and one of rose pink, which are colors that do not betray your confidence when it comes to baking. For the chief difficulty in china-painting is that to be permanent the work must be "fired,"—that is, fused by a great heat in a furnace,—and it requires a great deal of experience to learn what the different tints are likely to do under this test. Some colors—yellow, for instance—eat up, so to speak, the colors laid over them. Others change tint. Pinks and some of the greens grow more intense; white cannot be trusted, and mixing one paint with another, as in oils, can only be done safely by experts. It is well, therefore, to begin with two simple colors, and you will be surprised to see how much may be done with them. (See "Hollenberry Cup," in ST. NICHOLAS for May, 1877, page 458.) A cup of transparent



white china, the handle painted black, a Japanese-looking bough with black foliage and pink blossoms thrown over it, and a little motto, has a really charming effect. But be sure to put on the pink very pale, and the black, not in a hard, solid streak, but delicately, to suggest shading from dark to light, or the result of the baking will be disappointment.

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[Illustration: WOODEN BOX, ORNAMENTED WITH FERNS (AUTUMN-LEAF WORK).]

The method of preparing the colors is to squeeze a very little paint from each tube upon your palette or plate; take a tiny drop of oil-of-lavender on the palette-knife, and with it rub the paint smooth. It should be thinned just enough to work smoothly; every drop of oil added after that is a disadvantage. Use a separate brush for each color, and wash them thoroughly with soap and hot water before putting them aside. The painting should be set away where no dust can come to it, and it will dry rapidly in forty-eight hours or less. Elaborate work often requires repainting after baking, the process being repeated several times; but for simpler designs one baking is usually enough. There are bakeries in Boston, New York, and others of our large cities, to which china can be sent, the price of baking being about ten cents for each article.

[Illustration: TABLE-TOP (NOVELTIES IN FERN-WORK)]

OTHER MODES OF DECORATING CHINA.

The picture-books which are to be found at the Japanese stores nowadays suggest numberless excellent designs for china decorating. So do the "Walter Crane Fairy-tales." A plain olive or cream-colored tile with a pattern in bamboo-boughs and little birds, a milk-jug in gray with leaves and a motto in black, a set of tiny butter-plates with initials and a flower-spray on each, are easy things to attempt and very effective when done. Pie-dishes can be ornamented with a long, sketchy branch of blossoms or a flight of swallows across the bottom, and we have seen those small dishes of Nancy ware, in which eggs are first poached and then served on table, made very pretty by a painting on each of a chicken, done in soft browns and reds, with a little line to frame it in and run down along the handle. What we have mentioned here are only suggestions; a little patience and practice will soon help you to other patterns of your own, and we can't help hoping that some of you will be tempted to try your hands at this delightful art.

DRAWING AND PAINTING ON WOOD.

Articles in plain white wood can be bought almost anywhere nowadays. Pen-trays, letter-racks, easels, paper-knives, photograph-frames, watch-cases, needle-books, portfolios, glove-boxes, fans, silk-winders—there is no end to the variety which can be had, and had at a very moderate price. Now, any girl or boy among you with a paint-box and a little taste for drawing, can make a really pretty gift by decorating some one of these wooden things, either in color or with pen drawings in brown or black. The pattern need by no means be elaborate. A wreath of ivy simply out-lined in sepia or india-ink, or a group of figures sketched with the same, produces a very pleasing and harmonious effect. "Prout's Brown," a sort of fluent ink of a burnt-umber

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tint, will be found excellent for drawing purposes. For designs, our own ST. NICHOLAS will furnish excellent examples. Scarcely a number but holds something which a clever artist can adapt to his purpose. The "Miss Muffett" series, for example, or the silhouettes, or the sea-side sketches, or the ornamental borders and leaf-and-flower headings. Look over your back numbers, and you will see how rich they are in subjects for copies.

Here is a suggestion for such of you as live by the sea, and who know something about drawing. Search for clam-shells on the beach, and select the whitest and most perfectly formed. Separate the two shells, cleanse them thoroughly, and make on the smooth pearly lining of each a little drawing in sepia. It will serve as a receiver to stand on a lady's toilet and hold rings and trinkets, or it can be used as an ash-holder by a smoking gentleman, or to contain pens on a writing-table.

A SHOE-CHAIR MADE OF A BARREL.

Another shoe-chair as nice as that pictured on page 56 can be made out of a barrel by any girl who has a father or big brother to help her a little with the carpentering. The barrel is cut as in Fig. 1 below, so as to form a back and a low front. The back is stuffed a little, and covered with chintz nearly down to the floor. The front has a deep frill tacked on all around the chair. Four blocks are nailed inside the barrel to support a round of wood, stuffed and cushioned with the same chintz, to serve as a seat.

A straight shoe-bag, with eight pockets, is made in the same chintz, and tacked firmly all around the inside. A loop of the chintz serves to raise the seat. Four castors screwed to the bottom of the barrel will be an improvement, as the chair without them cannot easily be moved about. About five yards of chintz will be required for the covering; or you might use the merino of an old dress.

[Illustration: 1. SHOWS MANNER OF CUTTING BARREL. 2. BARREL SHOE-CHAIR COMPLETED. 3. INTERIOR OF BARREL SHOE-CHAIR. 4. DIAGRAM SHOWING MODE OF MAKING POCKETS FOR BARREL SHOE-CHAIR.]

A MUSLIN TIDY.

Three-quarters of a yard of clear French muslin will be needed for this. Lay a large dinner-plate down on the muslin, draw the circle made by its edge with a pencil, cut out, and lightly whip it round, pulling the thread a little to keep the circle perfect. Measure the circle, and cut a straight muslin ruffle, five inches wide and a little less than twice as long as the measure. Roll one edge finely, and overhand on a plain lace footing an inch

and a half wide. Whip the other edge, and sew it round the circle, graduating the fullness equally.

[Illustration: A MUSLIN TIDY TRIMMED WITH LACE FOOTING.]

Baste a bit of lace footing three-quarters of an inch wide in the middle of the circle, giving it the form of a bow-knot with two ends. The lace must be bent and folded into the form, but not cut. Run the edges with embroidery cotton, and button-hole all round. Then, with sharp scissors, cut away the muslin underneath, leaving the bow-knot transparent on a thicker ground. Dry-flute the ruffle. This little affair is very dainty and odd, one of the prettiest things which we have seen lately.

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AN ILLUMINATED BORDER FOR A PHOTOGRAPH.

St. Nicholas has given us of late such precise directions for the process of illuminating in color,[2] that it is not needful to repeat them; but we should like to suggest an idea to those of you who have begun to practice the art. This is to illuminate a border or “mount” around a favorite photograph. The picture must first be pasted on a large sheet of tinted card-board, pale cream or gray being the best tints to select. You then measure the spaces for your frame, which should be square if the picture is oval or round, and outline them lightly in lead-pencil. Next you sketch and paint your pattern, —flowers, leaves, birds, butterflies, or a set pattern, as you prefer,—putting the designs thickly together; and, lastly, you fill all the blank spaces in with gold paint, leaving the pattern in colors on a gilded ground. The outer edge of the frame should be broken into little scallops or trefoils in gold, and the card-board should be large enough to leave a space of at least three inches between the illuminated border and the frame, which should be a wide band of dull gilding or pale-colored wood, with a tiny line of black to relieve it. The ornament should, if possible, chord in some way with the picture. Thus a photograph of a Madonna might have the annunciation-lilies and passion-flowers on the gold ground.

[Footnote 2: SEE ST. NICHOLAS, Vol. IV., page 379.]

A BOOK OF TEXTS.

Another choice thing which can be done by a skillful illuminator is a small book, containing a few favorite texts, chosen by some friend. Half-a-dozen will be enough. Each text occupies a separate page, and is carefully lettered in red or black, with decorated initials, and a border in colors. A great deal of taste can be shown in the arrangement of these borders, which should be appropriate to the text they surround. A title-page is added, and the book is bound in some quaint way. A cover of parchment or white vellum, illuminated also, can be made very beautiful.

A CARTE-DE-VISITE RECEIVER.

For this you must procure from the tin-man a strip of tin three times as long as it is wide —say six inches by eighteen—with each end shaped to a point, as indicated in the picture. Measure off two bits of card-board of exactly the same size and shape; cover one with silk or muslin for a back, and the other with Java canvas, cloth, or velvet, embroidered with a monogram in the upper point, and a little pattern or motto in the lower. Lay the double coverings one on each side of the tin, and cross the outside one with narrow ribbons, arranged as in the picture. Overhand firmly all around; finish the top with a plaited ribbon and a little bow and loop to hang it by, and the bottom with a bullion fringe of the color of the ribbon.

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[Illustration: CARTE-DE-VISITE RECEIVER.]

A PAIR OF BELLOWS.

There seems no end to the pretty devices which proficient in painting can accomplish. We saw not long since a pair of wooden bellows which had been decorated with a painting of a tiny owl sitting on a bough, and the motto "Blow, blow, thou bitter wind." Why should not some of you try your hands at something similar? Wood fires, thank heaven, are much more common than they used to be, and most of you must know a cozy chimney corner where a pretty pair of bellows would be valued.

A DOOR-PANEL.

A great bunch of field-flowers, or fruit-boughs, or Virginia-creeper, painted in water-paints on the panel of an ordinary door, is another nice thing for you young artists to attempt. Perhaps you will object that a picture on a door can hardly be called a Christmas present; but we don't know.

Anything which loving fingers can make, and loving hearts enjoy, is a gift worthy of Christmas or any other time.

A SACHET IN WATER-COLORS.

Another dainty idea for you who can paint is a small perfume-case of white or pale-colored silk or satin, on which is painted a bunch of flowers or a little motto. The flowers must be small ones, such as forget-me-nots or purple and white violets. A great deal of white paint—body color, as it is called—should be mixed with the color, to make it thick enough not to soak and stain the silk along the edges of the pattern. Some people paint the whole design in solid white, let it dry, and then put on the color over the white. Others mix a little ox-gall with the paint.

DECORATED CANDLES.

The large wax or composition candles, of a firm texture, are best for purposes of decoration. Water-color paints can be used, or those powders which come for coloring wax flowers. In either case it will be necessary to use a little ox-gall to give the paint consistency. A band of solid tint—crimson, black, blue or gold—is usually put around the middle of the candle, with a pattern in flowers or small bright points above and below. Spirals of blue forget-me-nots all over the candle are pretty, or sprays of leaves and berries set in a regular pattern. These gay candles are considered ornamental for a



writing-table, and look well in the brass candlesticks which are so much used just now, though we confess to a preference for unornamented candles of one solid tint.

A RUSTIC JARDINIÈRE.

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Boys and girls who live in the country hardly know how lucky they are, or what mines of materials for clever handiwork lie close by them in the fruitful, generous woods. What with cones and leaves and moss and lichens and bark and fungi and twigs and ferns, these great green store-houses beat all the fancy shops for variety and beauty, and their "stock" is given away without money or price to all who choose to take. Most of you know something of the infinite variety of things which can be made out of these wood treasures, though nobody knows, or can know, *all*. Now, we want to tell you of a new thing, not at all difficult to make, and which would be a lovely surprise for some one this coming Christmas.

It is a rustic jardiniere, or flower-pot. The first step toward making it is to find a small stump about ten inches high, and as odd and twisted in shape as possible. It should have a base broader than its top, and three or four little branches projecting from its sides. Carry this treasure home, brush off any dirt which may cling to it, and ornament it with mosses and lichens, glued on to look as natural as possible. Make three small cornucopias of pasteboard; cover them also with mosses and lichens, and fasten them to the stump between the forks of the branches, using small brads or tacks to keep them firm. Stuff the cornucopias with dry moss, and arrange in each a bouquet of grasses, autumn leaves, and dried ferns, dipping the end of each stem in flour paste, to make it secure in its place. Sprays of blackberry-vine or michella, and the satin-white pods of the old-fashioned "honesty," make an effective addition. When done, we have a delightful winter-garden, which will keep its beauty through the months of snow and sleet, and brighten any room it stands in. Nor is its use over when winter ends, for, inserting small glass phials in the cornucopias, fresh flowers can be kept in them as in a vase, and the grays and browns of the lichened wood set off their hues far better than any gay vase could.

ANOTHER JARDINIERE.

Another rustic flower-holder can be made by selecting three knotty twigs, two and a half feet long and about an inch in diameter, and nailing them together in the form of a tripod, one half serving as a base, the other to hold a small flower-pot or a goblet whose foot has been broken off. The lower half should be strengthened with cross pieces nailed on, and both halves with twists of wild grape-vine or green briar, wired at their crossings to hold them firmly in place. When the frame is ready, melt together half a pound of bees'-wax, a quarter of a pound of rosin, and enough powdered burnt-umber to give a dark brown color; and pour the mixture on boiling hot. It will give the wood a rich tint. Fill the pot with sand, place over the sand a layer of green moss well pulled apart, and in that arrange a bouquet of dried leaves, ferns and grasses, or, if it is summer-time, wild flowers and vines.

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* * * * *

Now, dear fancy-workers, little and big, surely Mother Santa Claus has furnished you with ideas enough to keep you busy for more Christmases than one. Just one thing more, and that is the manner in which the presents shall be given. Nothing can be droller than to hang up one's stockings, and nothing prettier or more full of meaning than a Christmas-tree. But for some of you who may like to make a novelty in these time-honored ways, we will just mention that it is good fun to make a "Christmas-pie" in an enormous tin dish-pan, with a make-believe crust of yellow cartridge paper, ornamented with swirls and flourishes of the same, held down with pins, and have it served on Christmas Eve, full of pretty things and sugar-plums, jokes and jolly little rhymes fastened to the parcels. The cutting should be done beforehand, and hidden by the swirls of paper; but the carver can pretend to use his knife and fork, and spooning out the packages will insure a merry time for all at table. And one more suggestion. Little articles, wrapped in white paper, can be put inside cakes, baked and iced, and thus furnish another amusing surprise for the "pie" or the Christmas-tree.

* * * * *

We are indebted to Mrs. L. B. Goodall, Mrs. M. E. Stockton, Mrs. Tolles, Miss Annie M. Phoebus, Miss M. Meeker, and Miss M. H. D., for designs and suggestions in aid of this article; and to the "Ladies' Floral Cabinet" for some valuable hints on "Leaf-work."

* * * * *

LITTLE TWEET.

There were once some nice little birds who lived together in a great big cage. This cage was not at all like the bird-cages we generally see. It was called an aviary, and it was as large as a room. It had small trees and bushes growing in it, so that the birds could fly about among the green leaves and settle on the branches. There were little houses where the birds might make their nests and bring up their young ones, and there was everything else that the people who owned this big cage thought their little birds would want. It had wires all around it to keep the birds from flying away.

One of the tamest and prettiest of the birds who lived in this place was called little Tweet, because, whenever she saw any of the family coming near the cage she would fly up close to the wires and say, "Tweet! Tweet!" which meant "Good-morning! how do you do?" But they thought it was only her pretty way of asking for something to eat; and as she said "Tweet" so much, they gave her that for a name.

One day there was a boy who came to visit the family who owned the birds, and very soon he went to see the big cage. He had never seen anything like it before. He had

never been so close to birds that were sitting on trees or hopping about among the branches. If the birds at home were as tame as these, he could knock over lots of them, he thought.

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There was one that seemed tamer than any of the rest. It came up close to him and said: "Tweet! Tweet!"

The boy got a little stick and pushed it through the wires at little Tweet, and struck her. Poor little Tweet was frightened and hurt. She flew up to a branch of the tree and sat there, feeling very badly. When the boy found he could not reach her any more with his stick, he went away.

Tweet sat on the branch a long time. The other birds saw she was sick, and came and asked how she felt. Some of them carried nice seeds to her in their bills. But little Tweet could not eat anything. She ached all over, and sat very quietly with her head down on her breast.

[Illustration: "THE OTHER BIRDS BRING SEEDS TO POOR TWEET."]

She sat on that branch nearly all day. She had a little baby-bird, who was in a nest in one of the small houses, but the other birds said she need not go and feed it if she did not wish to move about. They would take it something to eat.

But, toward night, she heard her baby cry, and then she thought she must go to it. So she slowly flew over to her house; and her baby, who was in a little nest against the wall, was very glad to see her.

In the morning, two of the birds came to the house to see how little Tweet was, and found her lying on the floor, dead. The little baby-bird was looking out of its nest, wondering what it all meant. How sorry those two birds were when they found that their good little friend Tweet was really dead!

"Poor Tweet!" said one of them, "She was the gentlest and best of us all. And that poor little dear in the nest there, what will become of it?"

"Become of it!" replied the other bird, who was sitting by poor Tweet, "Become of it! Why, it shall never want for anything. I shall take it for my own, and I will be a kind mother to it, for the sake of poor little Tweet."

Now, do you not think that there were good, kind birds in that big cage? But what do you think of the boy?

[Illustration: "I WILL BE A KIND MOTHER TO IT, FOR THE SAKE OF POOR LITTLE TWEET."]

[Illustration]

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

Hurrah for the new volume!—Volume V., I believe it is to be called. That reminds me of the names of Japanese children, hundreds of years ago. Instead of being known by the Japanese for Tom, Henry, or John, it was No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and so on, through a whole family of little folks.

Once you had an article^[1] on Japanese Games by a native of Japan, Ichy Zo Hattori. Well, this name, as you will all admit, is a fine-sounding appellative enough, but in English it means simply No. 1 Hattori.

[Footnote 1: See ST. NICHOLAS for January, 1874.]

So, welcome to the lovely new child, No. 5 St. Nicholas!—and that he may grow to be a brave, bright volume, beautiful to look at and useful to this and many a generation of little folks, is your Jack's earnest wish.

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Of one thing the little fellow may be sure,—Jack and the Deacon, and the dear, blessed Little School-ma'am, will stand by him to the end. And so will you, my chicks, Jack verily believes. He'll be a good friend to you, bringing you any amount of fun, and telling you more good things every month than you'll remember in a thousand years.

Now we'll take up our next subject.

AN ARTIFICIAL HORSE THAT CAN GO.

Well, well! The birds must be joking, for who ever heard of a bird telling a deliberate lie? And yet it *may* be true. There have been artificial men,—manikins, automata, or whatever they are called,—so why shouldn't there be artificial horses?

Come to think of it, it was not the birds who told me about them. It was a letter; and “artificial horses” the letter said, as plainly as could be. It told how a fine specimen had just been exhibited in the capital of Prussia. The thing must look like a horse, too, for it is a hobby between two high wheels (the rider sits on the saddle), and it travels about as rapidly as a trotting horse. As I understand it, the rider moves his legs to make the machine go, and yet it isn't a bicycle. It goes over stony roads, turns corners, and, for aught Jack knows, rears and kicks like any ordinary charger—that is, when it's out of order.

I should like to see one among the boys of the red school-house. How they would make it go!

A LETTER FROM DEACON GREEN.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: I wish some of the boys and girls who think they never have any chance to read could know a little fellow of my acquaintance, named George. He is fourteen years old and employed as errand boy in a business house in New York. All day long he runs, runs,—up-town, down-town, across town,—until you would suppose that his little legs would be worn out. But, always on the alert as he is, and ready to do his duty whether tired or not, he still keeps constantly before his mind the idea of self-improvement, in business and out. Through a friend he has of late been able to procure books from the Mercantile Library. Although his time during the day, as I have said, is wholly taken up with his duties, yet he managed, during the evenings of last fall and winter (in five months), to read twelve books, some of them quite long ones and some of them in two volumes, all selected with his friend's assistance. From the list, I fancy the little fellow had an eye to enjoyment as well as profit, for they are not all what are called instructive books, although every one of them is a good book for a boy to read, and George tells me he enjoyed them all heartily. As many of your youngsters, friend Jack, may like to know just what books the little fellow has read, I will give you the

list that he wrote out at my request. It does not seem a very long list, perhaps, but I think very few hard-working

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boys in New York have read more than George in the same space of time. Here is the list:

“Robinson Crusoe;” “Benjamin Franklin,” 2 vols.; “Life of Napoleon,” 2 vols.; “Schoolmaster Stories;” “Hans Brinker;” “Swiss Family Robinson;” “Dickens’s Child’s History of England;” “Kenilworth;” “The Scottish Chiefs;” “The Boy Emigrants;” “Sparks’ Life of Washington;” “Glaisher’s Aerial Navigation.”

This letter, dear Jack, is sent, not by way of puffing George, but as a sort of spur to studious boys and girls who may follow his example, if somebody puts them up to it.—Yours truly,

SILAS GREEN.

* * * * *

“SEE HOW I HELP!”

One of Jack’s good friends, L.W.J. sends you this new fable:

“See how I help!” said a little mouse
To the reapers that reaped the grain,
As he nibbled away, by the door of his house,
With all of his might and main.

“See how I help!” he went on with his talk;
But they laid all the wide field low
Before he had finished a single stalk
Of the golden, glittering row.

As the mouse ran into his hole, he said:
“Indeed, I cannot deny,
Although an idea I had in my head,
Those fellows work better than I.”

* * * * *

AMONG THE CRANBERRY BOGS.

New Jersey, 1877.



DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: You would not think, from their names, that cranberry bogs are pleasant places, but I enjoyed very much a visit to one last year in the fall. Seen merely from the road, a bog doesn't show very well, for the leaves are small, and the vines are crowded in heavy masses; but, when you get near, the white and red berries look pretty among the dark-green leaves. The meadow is chequered with little canals by means of which the whole surface is flooded in winter-time, so as to protect the vines from the ill effects of frosts and thaws. In the spring, the water is drawn off at low tide through the flood-gates. When the cranberry-pickers are at work, they make a curious sight, for there are people of all ages, odd dresses, and both sexes among them, and often a tottering old man may be seen working beside a small child. The little ones can be trusted to gather cranberries, for the fruit is not easily crushed in handling. Where cranberries grow thickly, one can almost fill one's hand at a grasp. The overseer's one-roomed shanty, where he cooks, eats and sleeps, is on a knoll, and near it are the barrels in which the berries are packed, after they have been sorted according to size and quality.

Picking cranberries may be pleasant enough in fine weather, but it must be miserable work on a cold, drizzly day.

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I hope this short account will be news to some of your chicks, of whom I am one, dear Jack; and I remain yours truly,

H. S.

* * * * *

MORE CRYSTALLIZED HORSES.

Piermont, N. H.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: You ask in the March number of the St. Nicholas if any of us have seen crystallized horses "with our own eyes." We (Willie and I) have seen them many times; so has everybody else who lives here; that is, we have seen something very much like it, though we do not call it the same. When the thermometer is from thirty to thirty-six degrees below zero, horses and oxen are all covered with a white frost, so you cannot tell a black horse or ox from a white one; nor can you tell young men from old ones. Their whiskers, eyebrows and eyelashes, are all perfectly white. I've often had my ears frost-bitten in going to the school-house, which is only about as far as two blocks in a city.

When we see these sights, Jack Frost cannot paint his delicate pictures on the windows, for a thick white frost covers them all over, or rubs them out.

We like the St. Nicholas very much, and even our little sister, Mary, likes to look at the pictures, and she said that she wished she could see Jack-in-the-Pulpit. We intend to introduce her next summer to some of your relations that live by the big brook. We live about one hundred miles north-west of Concord, in the Connecticut valley, about half a mile from the Connecticut River. I am thirteen years old.—Good-bye,

E. A. M.

* * * * *

A TURTLE CART.

DEAR JACK: Looking over the fence into my neighbor's yard last summer, I saw what seemed to be a Liliputian load of hay in a tiny cart, going along the path. Whatever power drew it, was hidden from my sight; but the motion of the cart made me half expect to see a yoke of tiny oxen turn the corner. In a few moments, a small turtle appeared in sight, plodding leisurely along and drawing behind him the cart I had seen, which was very small and light. I was assured by my little neighbor that the turtle liked the business very much; but, belonging to the S. P. C. A., I felt obliged to know the facts. I found that the turtle had his liberty nearly all the time, and a pond of water



especially for his use; and that, when the haying season should end, he would be turned out to pasture in his native bog for the rest of the year. It was a very comical sight, and, knowing my little friend's tenderness of heart, I was sure the turtle would receive nothing but kindness at his hands. The shell was not pierced, but the queer trotter was attached to the cart by means of a harness made of tape, allowing him free movement of the head, legs, and tail. If any of your boys should decide to follow my little friend's example, I trust that they will be as gentle as he in the treatment of their turtles.—Yours truly,

E. F. L.

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* * * * *

ANOTHER TURTLE STORY.

DEAR JACK: One day, Rob and I (he's my brother) heard sister Welthy screaming awfully. We were playing in the barn, but of course we rushed out as hard as we could to save her life, if possible. We did not know where she was, but the screams grew louder as we neared the house.

At last we found her near the side-door—and what do you think was the matter?

Why, she was screaming at a turtle!

[Illustration:] A CORNER IN TURTLES.

You don't know how funny it did seem. But we captured the dreadful monster (?) and comforted her as well as we could.

Now, Jack, as you and the Little Schoolma'am can do everything, wont you please get ST. NICHOLAS to show us a picture of this scene? I do believe Sis would laugh as hard as any of us if she could see it.—Yours affectionately,

NED G. P.

* * * * *

HALF SWEET, HALF SOUR.

The birds tell me that in a certain country grows an apple one half of which is sweet and the other half sour. I don't think I should like that sort of apple. The sweet side might do very well, as far as it went; but if you happened to bite on the other side,—ugh!

I like things that are good all through, so that I can be sure how to take them. Don't you?

* * * * *

OUR MUSIC PAGE

CAN A LITTLE CHILD, LIKE ME?

A THANKSGIVING HYMN.



Words by MARY MAPES DODGE.

Music by WM. K. BASSFORD.

[Music:

Key: Bb Major (Bb, Eb); Time: 2/4; Range: F — D (F, G, A, Bb, C, D)

['F', 'Bb', etc. indicate notes having a quarter-note value;
'.' extends a note; '___' includes the notes in a quarter-note
value; '0' indicates a rest.]

—
{ F Bb Bb Bb | Bb A A . | A G A G | G .FF . |

—
{ F Bb Bb Bb | Bb A A . | C A F CBb | A G F . |

—
{ G G C Bb | Bb .AA . | Bb Bb D C | Bb .AA . |

—
{ Bb . F .F | A . G . |

—
{ C . G .G | Bb . A . |

{ Bb . D D | D . G C | Bb . A . | Bb . 0 . || }

1. Can a little child like me,
Thank the Father fittingly?
Yes, oh yes! be good and true.
Patient, kind in all you do;
Love the Lord and do your part,
Learn to say with all your heart:
Father, we thank Thee!
Father, we thank Thee!
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!

2. For the fruit upon the tree,
For the birds that sing of Thee,
For the earth in beauty drest,
Father, mother and the rest,
For thy precious, loving care,
For Thy bounty ev'rywhere,
Father, we thank Thee!
Father, we thank Thee!
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!

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Music and words copyrighted, 1877, by Wm. K. Bassford

* * * * *

"THE BABY'S OPERA" AND WALTER CRANE.

Of the many great artists of England, Walter Crane is accounted among the ablest and most gifted. As a painter on the canvas he stands high with critics; and in this country he is most widely known by his designs of colored picture-books for children. This is what one critic says of him in this regard: "Walter Crane has every charm. His design is rich, original, and full of discovery. His drawing is at once manly and sweet, and his color is as delightful as a garden of roses in June. And with these accomplishments he comes full-handed to the children,—and to their parents and lovers too!—and makes us all rich with a pleasure none of us ever knew as children, and never could have looked to know."

After this, it is very discouraging to learn, from a letter of Mr. Crane's to the Editor of SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY, that one may be deceived in buying Mr. Crane's books. This is particularly the case with "The Baby's Opera." So now we tell the readers of ST. NICHOLAS that every true copy of "The Baby's Opera" bears on its title-page the name of Messrs. George Routledge & Sons, the publishers, as well as Mr. Crane's, and that of the engraver and printer, Mr. Edmund Evans. To a purchaser, it would matter little that there were two editions of a work as long as the unauthorized one was exactly like the original; but Mr. Crane says that "the pirated edition grossly misrepresents his drawings, both in style and coloring; that the arrangement of the pages is different; and that the full-page colored plates are complete travesties, and very coarse ones, of the originals." And it does not at all improve the false copy that it is to be bought for less than the true one costs. It would be bad enough merely to deprive Mr. Crane of the profits of selling an exact imitation of his book, but it is far worse to put a *bad* sham before the people as the work of a true artist. This not only lessens his gains, but also takes away from his good name, besides spoiling the taste of the youngsters.

* * * * *

THE LETTER-BOX.

GIRLS AND BOYS: You will all be very sorry, we know, to learn that the beginning of Miss Alcott's serial story, "Under the Lilacs," has been postponed to the December number; but in place of it, we print this month the capital short story of "Mollie's Boyhood," which, we feel sure, will go far toward repaying you for the disappointment. We must ask you to wait a month longer for the opening chapters of the serial, and we

mean to give you then a much longer installment of it than could have been printed in the present issue. Meanwhile, you will find that the splendid article on Christmas Gifts, which occupies twenty-two

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pages of this number, contains novelties, hints, plates, and directions enough to keep your minds so busy planning, and your hands so busily at work, during the next few weeks, that the December ST. NICHOLAS will come before you think of expecting it, and perhaps before you have half finished your pretty gifts.

* * * * *

DEAR LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM: Please will you tell me if it is warm or cold, and if it is dark or light, in the places between the stars?—Yours affectionately,

CONSTANCE DURIVAGE.

The Little Schoolma'am respectfully hands over this question to other little schoolma'ams.

* * * * *

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I make so many of the "Thistle-Puffs" spoken of in the September number that I thought I would let you know how I fix mine. After I get the thistles I cut off all the green excepting a little at the bottom; then I pull out all the purple, and leave them out in the sun till they are perfectly round white balls. They are very pretty in hats. Please put me down as a Bird-defender.—Your constant reader,

ALICE GERTRUDE BENEDICT.

* * * * *

Exmouth, England, August 27th.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have read the story of the "Blue-Coat Boy," and like it. I am in England, and almost every day see a Blue-Coat boy pass our house. I think he looks like the picture in the ST. NICHOLAS. I should not like to wear the long coat, because I couldn't run in it; and I should think he would get a sunstroke, without a hat, if he ever goes to the beach. Aunt Fanny is like my mamma; she never asks for the right thing at the shops. I like the ST. NICHOLAS, and wish another one would come. My aunty gave it to me for a Christmas present for a whole year.—Your friend,

BENEDICT CROWELL.

* * * * *

We are very glad to see the interest which our readers have taken in the subject of "School-luncheons." Many boys and girls have sent in letters, thanking us for the article

in our September number, and filled with sage bits of experience. We should like to acknowledge these separately, and print some of them, but can do no more here than express our thanks to our young correspondents, one and all, for their kind and hearty words.

It will interest them all to know, however, that the article has attracted attention, and aroused enthusiasm among the older people too,—their fathers and mothers, and teachers, and even their favorite writers. For here, among the many letters it has brought us, is one that is peculiarly welcome. Our readers will have little difficulty in guessing who the writer is:

August 26th.

DEAR LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM: Being much interested, as well as amused, by the luncheon article in ST. NICHOLAS for September, I should like to add one more to the list of odd luncheons.

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A pretty little dish of boiled rice, with a cake of molasses, or preserve of some sort, in the middle. This, fitted into a basket, and covered with a plate, goes safely, and, with the addition of a napkin and two spoons, makes a simple meal for hungry children. It may find favor in the eyes, or rather mouths, of the young readers of ST. NICHOLAS, not only because it is good, but because it was the favorite lunch once upon a time of two little girls who are now pretty well known as "Meg and Jo March." It may be well to add that these young persons never had dyspepsia in their lives,—pie and pickles, cake and candy being unknown "goodies" to them.

With best wishes for the success of this much-needed reform in school-children's diet, I am, yours truly,

L.M.A.

* * * * *

THE MOONS OF MARS.

Since Professor Proctor wrote the paper entitled "Mars, the Planet of War," published in this number, there has been made, in relation to its subject, a discovery that the scientists say will rank among the most brilliant achievements of astronomy.

A great difference once thought to exist between Mars and the other planets was that he had no moons; but during the night of the 16th of August, Professor Hall, of the U.S. Naval Observatory at Washington, D.C., actually saw through his telescope that Mars has a moon. On the 18th of August another was seen, smaller than the first and nearer to the planet. The larger satellite is believed to be not more than ten miles in diameter: it is less than 12,000 miles distant from its primary, and its period of revolution about it is 30 hours 14 minutes. The distance of the smaller moon is 3,300 miles, and its period 7 hours 38 minutes. There is no doubt that these newly found celestial bodies are the smallest known.

From measurements made by Professor Hall, it is found, with a near approach to certainty, that the mass of Mars is equal to 1-3,090,000th part of the mass of the sun. This result was arrived at after only ten minutes of calculation, and is believed to be more nearly accurate than that obtained by M. Le Verrier, the great French astronomer, from observations continued through a century and after several years of laborious calculation by a corps of computers. This wonderful difference in the expenditure of time and labor is due to the vigilance of Professor Hall and to the admirable qualities of his instrument, the great twenty-six inch refracting telescope made by Alvan Clark & Sons.

* * * * *

Oakland, Cal.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I do not wish to make you any trouble, but I would like it very much if you could find room in some number to give a good explanation of the great war in Europe. I can't understand it in the newspaper, but I am pretty sure you can make it plain and simple enough for all of your young readers.—Yours truly,

NEB.

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The Turco-Russian war is partly a conflict of religions and partly one of politics. The Turks came into Europe as the religious emissaries of the Mohammedan religion. In all the provinces of Turkey in Europe which they conquered, the Christians of the Greek, Armenian and Catholic churches were the victims of a bitter persecution. The Czar of Russia is the head of the Greek church. He has made repeated wars in defense of the children of his faith. There have been many wars and long sieges which, like the present, were said to be only in defense of the faith of the Greek church—a crusade and a holy war,

But if “Neb” will only look at the map of Russia, he will see, if he will study climate a little, that the vast empire of Russia has one thing lacking. It has no good outlet to the Atlantic Ocean, no power upon the seas. The Baltic Sea is closed half the year by ice. The great wheat trade of Russia concentrates at Odessa, on the Black Sea, and to get her grain to market she must pass through the Turkish lanes of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Russia is a prisoner as to access to the Mediterranean, and so to the Atlantic, and so to the world at large. If she is at war, she cannot float her fleets. If she is at peace, she cannot sell her grain without going roundabout through her neighbors’ lots. Turkey stands the tollman at the turnpike-gate, controlling and usurping the highway of all nations.

Maps are fascinating reading. “Neb” must not think that religious faith ever occasioned a war. Russia sincerely desires the protection of Greek Christians in Roumania and Bulgaria in Europe, and Armenia in Asia, but she wants also to send her ships free to the winds through from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Look at the map once more, “Neb,” and see how much of a great country, fertile, strong, and industrious, is closed and shut against the outer world by the absolute Turkish control of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

* * * * *

Indianapolis, 1877.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have taken every number of your splendid magazine, and I will now try to do my share to entertain the others.

My papa was a soldier in the great civil war, and I was born in camp just after the close of the war, and am now nearly twelve years old.

General Sherman, who made the great “march to the sea,” wrote me a letter, which is very much too good for one boy alone, so I send it to you to publish, so that other children may have the benefit of it too.—Your reader,

BERNIE M.

“Head-quarters Army of the United States,
“Washington, D.C., April 21, 1877.

“MASTER BERNIE M.
“Indianapolis:

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"I have received the handsome photograph sent me, and recognize the features of a fine young lad, who has before him every opportunity to grow up a man of fine physique, with a mind cultivated to meet whatever vicissitudes and opportunities the future may present. Many boys in reading history have a feeling of regret that their lives had not fallen in some former period, replete with events of stirring interest, such as our Revolutionary War, or that in Mexico, or even the Civil War, wherein they feel that they might have played a conspicuous part. "Don't you make this mistake. The next hundred years will present more opportunities for distinction than the past, for our country now contains only forty millions of people, which will probably double every thirty-three years, so that if you live to three score years and ten you will be a citizen of a republic of two hundred millions of people. Now, all changes are attended by conflict of mind or of arms, and you may rest easy that there will be plenty for you to do, and plenty of honor and fame if you want them. The true rule of life is to prepare in advance, so as to be ready for the opportunity when it presents itself.

"I surely hope you will grow in strength and knowledge, and do a full man's share in building up the future of this country, which your fathers have prepared for you.

"Truly your friend,
"W.T. SHERMAN, General."

* * * * *

No doubt many of our readers have read some of the poems of Charles and Mary Lamb, and all who have will be interested in the following news concerning one of their books. In 1809 they published a little volume of "Poetry for Children," but only a few copies were printed, and these were soon out of print, so that the book has long been considered lost to the world. It was recently discovered, however, that the little book had been reprinted in Boston in 1812, and the only two copies of this edition known to exist in this country have lately come into possession of Messrs. Scribner, Armstrong & Co., who intend to republish the volume this fall. The book contains many delightful little poems for boys and girls, prettily rhymed, and full of the quaint humor and conceits which mark the other writings of the authors. We should like to print several of them, but have only room for these:

THE YOUNG LETTER-WRITER.

Dear Sir, Dear Madam, or Dear Friend,
With ease are written at the top;
When these two happy words are penn'd,
A youthful writer oft will stop,



And bite his pen, and lift his eyes,
As if he thinks to find in air
The wish'd-for following words, or tries
To fix his thoughts by fixed stare.

But haply all in vain—the next
Two words may be so long before
They'll come, the writer, sore perplexed,
Gives in despair the matter o'er;



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And when maturer age he sees
With ready pen so swift inditing,
With envy he beholds the ease
Of long-accustom'd letter-writing.

Courage, young friend, the time may be,
When you attain maturer age,
Some young as you are now may see
You with like ease glide down a page.

Ev'n then, when you, to years a debtor,
In varied phrase your meanings wrap,
The welcom'st words in all your letter
May be those two kind words at top.

CRUMBS TO THE BIRDS.

A bird appears a thoughtless thing,
He's ever living on the wing,
And keeps up such a carolling,
That little else to do but sing
A man would guess had he.

No doubt he has his little cares,
And very hard he often fares;
The which so patiently he bears,
That, listening to those cheerful airs,
Who knows but he may be

In want of his next meal of seeds?
I think for *that* his sweet song pleads;
If so, his pretty art succeeds.
I'll scatter there among the weeds
All the small crumbs I see.

* * * * *

We very seldom take up a book only to break the tenth commandment; but Bayard Taylor's recent volume, "The Boys of Other Countries," published by the Putnams, always has that effect upon us, for we wish that every one of the stories in it had been written for ST. NICHOLAS. The best thing we can say to our boys and girls, of a book so well described by its title, is that it contains "Jon of Iceland," which originally



appeared in this magazine, and that each of the stories is as good in its way as “Jon” itself.

* * * * *

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The initials name a noted philosopher, and the finals an eminent astronomer.

1. A narrow arm of the sea.
2. A beautiful flower.
3. A tree, usually growing in moist land.
4. A small marine animal.
5. A river in the United States.
6. A cone-bearing tree.
7. A tract of land, surrounded by water.
8. A metal.

ISOLA.

BROKEN WORDS.

Find a word to fill the single blank, and divide it into smaller words (without transposing any letters) to fill the other blanks. Thus: Such *forages* have gone on in that forest *for* *ages*.

1. You must not think the whole were — because he — —.
2. One of this boy's minor — is his constant climbing — —.
3. When I gave him a pledge, the toper said with a — look, “You — — — —.”
6. The alder was pictured against the —, every branch, leaf, and — — standing out clearly.

B.

PICTORIAL NUMERICAL, REBUS.

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Find the sum expressed in each horizontal row, and add together the four numbers thus found, to form the complete sum expressed by the rebus.

[Illustration]

HOURLASS PUZZLE.

1. Unceasing. 2. Of little worth. 3. Habitation. 4. Ancient. 5. A vowel. 6. Devoured. 7. To muse. 8. A maker of arms. 9. Small flat fish. The centrals read downward name the act of unfolding.

GEORGE CHINN.

BEHEADINGS AND CURTAILINGS.

1. Curtail a disgrace, and leave an imposture. Behead, and leave one of Noah's sons. Curtail, and leave an exclamation denoting surprise, joy, or grief. Behead again, and leave a vowel.

2. Curtail a color, and leave a very small part. Behead, and leave a verb signifying "to strike." Behead again, and leave a pronoun. Curtail, and leave a simple, personal pronoun.

3. Curtail a beautiful marine production, and leave a girl's name. Behead, and leave an ancient coin. Curtail, and leave a conjunction. Behead, and leave a consonant.

4. Behead a part of the body, and leave a kind of tree. Curtail, and leave an article used in toilets. Behead, and leave a preposition. Curtail, and leave a pronoun.

5. Curtail a sweet juice collected by bees, and leave a stone for sharpening razors. Behead, and leave a number. Curtail, and leave a preposition. Curtail, and leave an invocation.

N.T.M.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

After handing a mug of 9, 2, 3 to the man who was at the 7, 4, 5 of the 1, 6, 8, Frank resumed reading the life of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

ISOLA.



EASY DIAMOND PUZZLE.

1. In dwelling but not in house. 2. A Spanish poem. 3. A girl's name. 4. A precious stone. 5. A term in English law. 6. An insect. 7. In bird but not in beast.

O'B.

CHARADE.

I.

Out on the hill-side, bleak and bare,
In winter's chill and summer's glare,
Down by the ocean's rugged shore,
Where the restless billows toss and roar,
Deep in gloomy caves and mines,
Where mists are foul and the sun ne'er shines,
Man studies my first and second well,
To learn what story they have to tell.

II.

Go to the depths of the fathomless sea,
Go where the dew-drop shines on the lea,
Go where are gathered in lands afar,
The treasures of earth for the rich bazaar,
Go to the crowded ball-room, where
All that is lovely, and young, and fair,
Charms the soul with beauty and grace,
And my third shall meet you face to face.

III.

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When war's red hand was raised to slay,
And front to front great armies lay,
Then, oft in the silent midnight camp,
When naught was heard but the sentry's tramp,
As he patiently paced his lonely round,
My whole was sought, and yet when found,
It sent full many a warrior brave
To his last long rest, in a soldier's grave.

E.J.A.

PUZZLE BOUQUET.

1. A cunning animal and a covering for the hand. 2. A voracious bird of prey and a useless plant. 3. A pipe and a flower. 4. A sweetmeat and a bunch of hair. 5. A noun meaning a quick breaking and a winged serpent. 6. A stone fence and the blossom of a plant. 7. Fragrant and a vegetable. 8. An entertainment of dancing and a boy's nickname. 9. Vapor frozen in flakes, and to let fall. 10. To enter into the conjugal state, and a precious metal.

GEORGE CHINN.

TRANSPOSITIONS.

Fill the first blank with a certain word, and then, by transposing the final letter to the place of the initial, form a word to fill the second blank. Example: In the *halls* of her ancestors she *shall* tread without fear.

1. There is not on — a person of larger —. 2. On the banks of the — the traveler — alone. 3. As the thought of her kindness — up in my heart, it causes it to — with gratitude. 4. It was with no — intent that — destroyed his first will. 5. I noticed on the — of the pond quantities of —.

B.

LETTER ANAGRAMS.

Write a line in each case describing the position of the letters toward each other, and transpose the letters used in this description to make a word which will answer the definition given. Thus:



R. } A part of the day. *Ans.* R. on M. (transposed) Morn.
M. }

1. { L. } A kind of bird.
 { P. }
2. S. R. Parts of a house.
3. S. T. A piece of furniture.
4. { L. } To pillage.
 { P. }
5. { Et. } Not rhythmical.
 { Ic. }

H.H.D.

HIDDEN DRESS GOODS.

1. Seizing the rascal I compelled him to give up the money. 2. Aunt Nell is fond of singing Hamburg. 3. Belle Prescott only failed once last year. 4. Eveline never learned to control herself. 5. Where is Towser, Gertie? 6. I met Homer in Oregon. 7. Where did you find such a queer fossil, Kenneth? 8. Tom Thumb is a tiny specimen of humanity. 9. Did Erasmus Lincoln lose all his property by the fire?

PICTORIAL, PROVERB-ACROSTIC.

Arrange the words represented by the numbered pictures in their order. The initials and finals (reading down the former and continuing down the latter) form a familiar proverb, the sentiment of which is suggested by the central picture.

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[Illustration]

* * * * *

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN OCTOBER NUMBER.

DOUBLE DIAMOND PUZZLE.—M

G A S
M A P L E
S L Y
E
S
N U T
S U G A R
T A R
R

SQUARE-WORD.—Midas, Ivory, Donor, Arose, Syten.

CHARADE.—Dilapidated. NUMERICAL ENIGMA.—Handsome.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC—Centennial Exposition.—ClovE, EsseX,
NaP, TallyhO, EpiglottiS, Neroll, NahanT, Ittal, ArnO,
LemoN.

RIDDLE.—Linest, Inlets, Enlist, Tinsel, Silent, Listen.

DIAGONAL PUZZLE.—Grand, Prate.

G L A R E
C R A T E
P L A T E
C R A N E
P L A I D

COMBINATION PUZZLE.—P—rive—T

E—pod—E
A—lid—A
C—ape—S
E—lop—E

EASY DIAMOND PUZZLE.—I, Asa, Isola, Ale, A.

PUZZLE.—Gondola.



ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN SEPTEMBER NUMBER were received previous to September 18, from—Emma Elliott, Brainerd P. Emery, Allie Bertram, Sarah D. Oakley, “Camille and Leonie,” “Tip,” “Yankee,” J.W. Myers, George G. Champlin, Alice M. Mason, Maria Peckham, Florence E. Hyde, Minnie Warner, B. O’Hara, “Green Mountain Boy,” John Hinkley, Florence Wilcox, “Bessie and Sue,” Julia Kirene Ladd, Grace Austin Smith, Arthur C. Smith, George Herbert White, William A. Crocker, Jr, Georgiana Mead, A.G.D., James Iredell, Lizzie and Anna, Agnes E. Kennedy, Anna E. Mathewson, C.S. Riche, Edith McKeever, Nessie E. Stevens, Carrie Lawson, Charles G. Todd, Ella and Kittie Blanke, W. Creighton Spencer, W. Irving Spencer, Edith Heard, M.W.C., Mary C. Warren, Lena and Annie, Annie Streckewald, Hattie Peck, Jennie Passmore, George J. Fiske.

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