

**St. Nicholas Magazine for Boys and Girls,
Vol. 5, January 1878, No. 3**

Mary Mapes Dodge and Various



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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ST. NICHOLAS
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**TWO WAYS OF CARRYING
THE MAIL.**
[See Letter-Box.]

ST. NICHOLAS.

VOL. V.

JANUARY, 1878.

No. 3.

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THE RAVENS AND THE ANGELS.

(A Story of the Middle Ages.)

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CHRONICLES OF THE SCHÖNBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

I.

In those old days, in that old city, they called the cathedral—and they thought it—the house of God. The cathedral was the Father's house for all, and therefore it was loved and honored, and enriched with lavish treasures of wealth and work, beyond any other father's house.

The cathedral was the Father's house, and, therefore, close to its gates might nestle the poor dwellings of the poor,—too poor to find a shelter anywhere besides; because the central life and joy of the house of God was the suffering, self-sacrificing Son of Man; and dearer to Him, now and forever, as when He was on earth, was the feeblest and most fallen human creature He had redeemed than the most glorious heavenly constellation of the universe He had made.

And so it happened that when Berthold, the stone-carver, died, Magdalis, his young wife, and her two children, then scarcely more than babes, Gottlieb and little Lenichen, were suffered to make their home in the little wooden shed which had once sheltered a hermit, and which nestled into the recess close to the great western gate of the minster.

Thus, while inside from the lofty aisles pealed forth, night and day, the anthems of the choir, close outside, night and day, rose also, even more surely to God, the sighs of a sorrowful woman and the cries of little children whom all her toil could hardly supply with bread. Because, He hears the feeblest wail of want, though it comes not from a dove or even from a harmless sparrow, but a young raven. And He does not heed the sweetest anthem of the fullest choir, if it is a mere pomp of sound. Because, while the best love of His meanest creatures is precious to Him, the second-

best of His loftiest creatures is intolerable to Him. He heeds the shining of the drops of dew and the rustling of the blades of grass. But from creatures who can love he cannot accept the mere outside offering of creatures which can only make a pleasant sound.

All this, or such as this, the young mother Magdalis taught her babes as they could bear it.

For they needed such lessons.

The troubles of the world pressed on them very early, in the shape little children can understand—little hands and feet nipped with frost, hunger and darkness and cold.

Not that the citizens of that city were hypocrites, singing the praises of God, whilst they let His dear Lazaruses vainly crave at His gates for their crumbs.

But Magdalis was very tender and timid, and a little proud; proud not for herself, but for her husband and his babes. And she was also feeble in health. She was an orphan herself, and she had married, against the will of her kindred in a far-off city, the young stone-carver, whose genius they did not appreciate, whose labor and skill had made life so rich and bright to them while he lived, and whose early death had left them all so desolate.

For his dear sake, she would not complain. For herself it had been easier to die, and for his babes she would not bring the shame of beggary on them. Better for them to enter into this life maimed of strength, she thought, by meager food, than tainted with the taint of beggary.

Rather, she thought, would their father himself have seen them go hungry to bed than deserve that the fingers of other children should be pointed scornfully at them as "the little beggars by the church door," the door of the church in which she gloried to think there were stones of his carving.

So she toiled on, carving for sale little devotional symbols—crosses, and reliquaries, and lilies and lambs—with the skill she had learnt from him, and teaching the little ones, as best she could, to love and work and suffer. Teaching them only, perhaps, not quite enough to hope. For the lamp of hope burnt low in her own heart, and therefore her patience, not being

enough the patience of hope, lacked something of sweetness. It never broke downward into murmurs, but it too seldom soared upward into praise.

So it happened that one frosty night, about Christmas-tide, little Gottlieb lay awake, very hungry, on the ledge of the wall, covered with straw, which served him for a bed.

It had once been the hermit's bed. And very narrow Gottlieb thought it must have been for the hermit, for more than once he had been in peril of falling over the side, in his restless tossings. He supposed the hermit was too good to be restless, or perhaps too good for the dear angels to think it good for him to be hungry, as they evidently did think it good for Gottlieb and Lenichen, or they would be not good angels at all, not even as kind as the ravens which took the bread to Elijah when they were told. For the dear Heavenly Father had certainly told the angels always to take care of little children.

The more Gottlieb lay awake and tossed and thought, the further off the angels seemed.

For, all the time, under the pillow lay one precious crust of bread, the last in the house until his mother should buy the loaf to-morrow.

He had saved it from his supper in an impulse of generous pity for his little sister, who so often awoke, crying with hunger, and woke his poor mother, and would not let her go to sleep again.

He had thought how sweet it would be, when Lenichen awoke the next morning, to appear suddenly, as the angels do, at the side of the bed where she lay beside her mother, and say:

"Dear Lenichen! See, God has sent you this bit of bread as a Christmas gift."

For the next day was Christmas Eve.

This little plan made Gottlieb so happy that at first it felt as good to him as eating the bread.

But the happy thought, unhappily, did not long content the hungry animal part of him, which craved, in spite of him, to be filled; and, as the night

went on, he was sorely tempted to eat the precious crust—his very own crust—himself.

"Perhaps it was ambitious of me, after all," he said to himself, "to want to seem like a blessed angel, a messenger of God, to Lenichen. Perhaps, too, it would not be true. Because, after all, it would not be exactly God who sent the crust, but only me."

And with the suggestion, the little hands which had often involuntarily felt for the crust, brought it to the hungry little mouth.

But at that moment it opportunely happened that his mother made a little moan in her sleep, which half awakened Lenichen, who murmured, sleepily, "Little mother, mother, bread!"

Whereupon, Gottlieb blushed at his own ungenerous intention, and resolutely pushed back the crust under the pillow. And then he thought it must certainly have been the devil who had tempted him to eat, and he tried to pray.

He prayed the "Our Father" quite through, kneeling up softly in bed, and lingering fondly, but not very hopefully, on the "Give us our daily bread."

And then again he fell into rather melancholy reflections how very often he had prayed that same prayer and been hungry, and into distracting speculations how the daily bread could come, until at last he ventured to add this bit of his own to his prayers:

"Dear, holy Lord Jesus, you were once a little child, and know what it feels like. If Lenichen and I are not good enough for you to send us bread by the blessed angels, do send us some by the poor ravens. We would not mind at all, if they came from you, and were your ravens, and brought us real bread. And if it is wrong to ask, please not to be displeased, because I am such a little child, and I don't know better, and I want to go to sleep!"

Then Gottlieb lay down again, and turned his face to the wall, where he knew the picture of the Infant Jesus was, and forgot his troubles and fell asleep.

The next morning he was awaked, as so often, by Lenichen's little bleat; and he rose triumphantly, and took his crust to her bedside.

Lenichen greeted him with a wistful little smile, and put up her face for a kiss; but her reception of the crust was somewhat disappointing.

She wailed a little because it was "hard and dry," and when Gottlieb moistened it with a few drops of water, she took it too much, he felt, as a mere common meal, a thing of course, and her natural right.

He had expected that, in some way, the hungry hours it had cost him would have been kneaded into it, and made it a kind of heavenly manna for her.

To him it had meant hunger, and heroism, and sleepless hours of endurance. It seemed strange that to Lenichen it should seem nothing more than a hard, dry, common crust.

But to the mother it was much more.

She understood all; and, because she understood so much, she said little.

She only smiled, and said he looked more than ever like his father; and as he sat musing rather sadly while she was dressing, and Lenichen had fallen asleep again, she pointed to the little peaceful sleeping face, the flaxen hair curling over the dimpled arm, and she said:

"That is thy thanks—just that the little one is happy. The dear Heavenly Father cares more, I think, for such thanks than for any other; just to see the flowers grow, just to hear the birds sing to their nestlings, just to see His creatures good and happy, because of His gifts. Those are about the best thanks for Him and for us."

But Gottlieb looked up inquiringly.

"Yet He likes us to say 'Thank you,' too? Did you not say all the Church services, all the beautiful cathedral itself, is just the people's 'Thank you' to God? Are we not going to church just to say 'Thank you,' to-day?"

"Yes, darling," she said. "But the 'thank you' we *mean* to say is worth little unless it is just the blossom and fragrance of the love and content always in the heart. God cares infinitely for our loving Him, and loves us to thank

Him if we do. He does not care at all for the thanks without the love, or without the content."

And as she spoke these words, Mother Magdalis was preaching a little sermon to herself also, which made her eyes moisten and shine.

So she took courage, and contrived to persuade the children and herself that the bread-and-water breakfast that Christmas Eve morning had something quite festive about it.

And when they had finished with a grace which Gottlieb sang, and Lenichen lisped after him, she told him to take the little sister on his knee and sing through his songs and hymns, while she arrayed herself in the few remnants of holiday dress left her.

And as she cleaned and arranged the tiny room, her heart was lighter than it had been for a long time.

"I ought to be happy," she said to herself, "with music enough in my little nest to fill a church."

When Gottlieb had finished his songs, and was beginning them over again, there was a knock at the door, and the face of old Hans, the dwarf, appeared at the door, as he half opened it.

"A good Christmas to thee and thy babes, Mother Magdalis! Thy son is born indeed with a golden spoon in his mouth," croaked old Hans in his hoarse, guttural voice.

The words grated on Magdalis. Crooked Hans' jokes were apt to be as crooked as his temper and his poor limbs, and to give much dissatisfaction, hitting on just the sore points no one wanted to be touched.

She felt tempted to answer sharply, but the sweet Christmas music had got into her heart, and she only said, with tears starting to her eyes:

"If he was, neighbor, all the gold was lost and buried long ago."

"Not a bit of it!" rejoined Hans. "Didn't I hear the gold ring this very instant? The lad has gold in his mouth, I say! Give him to me, and you shall see it before night."

She looked up reproachfully, the tears fairly falling at what she thought such a cruel mockery from Hans, who knew her poverty, and had never had from her or hers the rough words he was too used to from every one.

"The golden days are over for me," was all she said.

"Nay! They have yet to begin," he replied. "Your Berthold left more debtors than you know, Frau Magdalis. And old Hans is one of them. And Hans never forgets a debt, black or white. Let the lad come with me, I say. I know the choir-master at the cathedral. And I know he wants a fine high treble just such as thy Gottlieb's, and will give anything for it. For if he does not find one, the Cistercians at the new convent will draw away all the people, and we shall have no money for the new organ. They have a young Italian, who sings like an angel, there; and the young archduchess is an Italian, and is wild about music, and lavishes her gifts wherever she finds it good."

Magdalis looked perplexed and troubled.

"To sell the child's voice seems like selling part of himself, neighbor," she said at length; "and to sell God's praises seems like selling one's own soul."

"Well, well! Those are thy proud burgher notions," said Hans, a little nettled. "If the Heavenly Father pleases to give thee and the little ones a few crumbs for singing His matins and evensong, it is no more than He does for the robins, or, for that matter, for the very ravens, such as me, that croak to Him with the best voice they have."

At these words, Gottlieb, who had been listening very attentively, gently set little Lenichen down, and, drawing close to Hans, put his little hand confidingly in his.

"I will go with neighbor Hans, mother!" he said, decisively. "The dear Lord himself has sent him."

"Thou speakest like a prophet," said the mother, smiling tenderly at his oracular manner, "a prophet and a king in one. Hast thou had a vision? Is thy will indeed the law of the land?"

"Yes, mother," he said, coloring, "the dear Lord Jesus has made it quite plain. I asked Him, if we were not good enough for Him to send us an

angel, to send us one of His ravens, and He has sent us Hans!"

Hans laughed, but not the grim, hoarse laugh which was habitual to him, and which people compared to the croaking of a raven; it was a hearty, open laugh, like a child's, and he said:

"Let God's raven lead thee, then, my lad, and the mother shall see if we don't bring back the bread and meat."

"I did not ask for meat," said Gottlieb, gravely, "only for bread."

"The good God is wont to give more than we either desire or deserve," croaked Hans, "when He sets about giving at all."

II.

There was no time to be lost.

The services of the day would soon begin, and Hans had set his heart on Gottlieb's singing that very day in the cathedral.

The choir-master's eyes sparkled as he listened to the boy; but he was an austere man, and would not utter a word to make the child think himself of value.

"Not bad raw material," he said, "but very raw. I suppose thou hast never before sung a note to any one who understood music?"

"Only for the mother and the little sister," the child replied in a low, humbled tone, beginning to fear the raven would bring no bread after all, "and sometimes in the litanies and the processions."

"Sing no more for babes and nurses, and still less among the beggars in the street-processions," pronounced the master, severely. "It strains and vulgarizes the tone. And, with training, I don't know but that, after all, we might make something of thee—in time, in time."

Gottlieb's anxiety mastered his timidity, and he ventured to say:

"Gracious lord! if it is a long time, how can we all wait? I thought it would be to-day! The mother wants the bread to-day."

Something in the child's earnest face touched the master, and he said, more gently:

"I did not say you might not *begin* to-day. You must begin this hour, this moment. Too much time has been lost already."

And at once he set about the first lesson, scolding and growling about the child setting his teeth like a dog, and mincing his words like a fine lady, till poor Gottlieb's hopes more than once sank very low.

But, at the end of a quarter of an hour's practice, the artist in the choir-master entirely overcame the diplomatist.

He behaved like a madman. He took the child in his arms and hugged him, like a friendly bear; he set him on the table and made him sing one phrase again and again, walking round and round him, and rubbing his hands and laughing with delight; and, finally, he seized him and bore him in triumph to the kitchen, and said to his housekeeper:

"Ursula, bring out the finest goose and the best preserves and puddings you have. We must feast the whole choir, and, may be, the dean and chapter. The archduke and the young archduchess will be here at Easter. But we shall be ready for them. Those beggarly Cistercians haven't a chance. The lad has the voice of an angel, and the ear—the ear—well, an ear as good as my own."

"The child may well have the voice of an angel," scolded old Ursula; "he is like to be among the angels soon enough."

For the hope, and the fear, and the joy had quite overcome the child, enfeebled as he was by meager fare; his lips were quite pale, and his cheeks.

Moreover, the last order of the choir-master had not been quite re-assuring to him. The fat goose and the puddings were good, indeed; but he would have preferred his mother and Lenichen being feasted in his honor, rather than the choir and the chapter.

And besides, though little more than seven years old, he was too much of a boy quite to enjoy his position on the master's shoulder. He felt it too

babyish to be altogether honorable to the protector of Lenichen and incipient bread-winner of the family. And, therefore, he was relieved when he found himself once more safely on the ground.

But when Ursula set before him a huge plate of bread and meat, his manly composure all but gave way. It was more of an approach to a feast than any meal he had ever participated in, and he was nearly choked with repressed tears of gratitude.

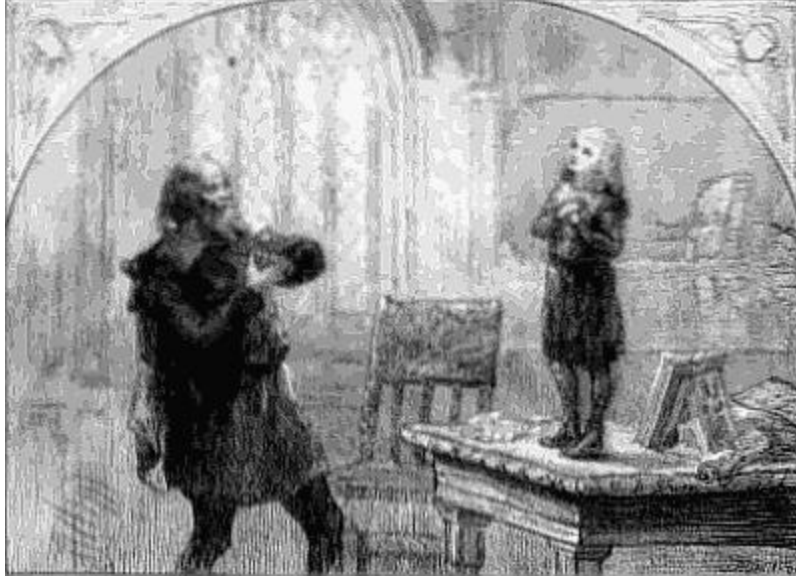
It was so evident *now* that Hans was altogether an orthodox and accredited raven!

At first, as the child sat mute and wondering before the repast, with a beautiful look of joy and prayer in his blue eyes, Ursula thought he was saying his grace, and respected his devotion. But as the moments passed on, and still he did not attempt to eat, she became impatient.

"There is a time for everything," she murmured, at length. "That will do for thy grace! Now quick to the food! Thou canst finish the grace, if thou wilt, in music, in the church by and by."

But then the child took courage, and said:

"The ravens—that is, the good God—surely do not mean all this for me. Dear, gracious lady, let me run with the plate to the mother and Lenichen; and I will be back again in two minutes, and sing all day, if the master likes."



**THE CHOIR-MASTER IS DELIGHTED
WITH HIS NEW PUPIL.**

Ursula was much moved at the child's filial love, and also at his politeness.

"The little one has discrimination," she said to herself. "One can see he is of a good stock. He recognizes that I am no peasant, but the daughter of a good burgher house."

And, in spite of the remonstrances of her master, she insisted on giving the lad his way.

"I will accompany him, myself," said she.

And, without further delay or parley, she walked off, under the very eyes of the master, with the boy, and also with a considerable portion of his own dinner, in addition to the plate she had already set before Gottlieb.

A very joyful and miraculous intervention it seemed to Mother Magdalis when Gottlieb re-entered the hermit's cell, under the stately convoy of the choir-master's housekeeper, and with food enough to feed the frugal little household for a week.

The two women greeted each other ceremoniously and courteously, as became two German housewives of good burgher stock.

"The little lad has manners worthy of a burgo-master," said Ursula. "We shall see him with the gold chain and the fur robes yet,—his mother a proud woman."

With which somewhat worldly benediction, she left the little family to themselves, conjuring Gottlieb to return in less than an hour, for the master was not always as manageable as this morning.

And when they were alone, Gottlieb was not ashamed to hide his tears on his mother's heart.

"See, darling mother!" he said, "the dear Savior did send the raven! Perhaps, one day, He will make us good enough for Him to send the angels."

Then the simple family all knelt down and thanked God from their hearts, and Gottlieb added one especial bit of his own of praise and prayer for his kind Hans, of whom, on account of his grim face and rough voice, he had stood in some dread.

"Forgive me, dear Lord Jesus," he said, "that I did not know how good he was!"

And when they had eaten their hasty Christmas feast, and the mother was smoothing his hair and making the best of his poor garments, Gottlieb said, looking up gravely in her face:

"Who knows, mother, if Hans is only a raven now, that the good God may not make him, his very self, the angel?"

"Perhaps God is making Hans into the angel even now," replied the mother.

And she remembered for a long time the angelic look of love and devotion in the child's eyes.

For she knew very well the cathedral choir was no angelic host.

She knew she was not welcoming her boy that morning to a haven, but launching him on a voyage of many perils. But she knew, also, that it is only by such perils, and through such voyages, that men, that saints, are made.

(To be continued.)

HOW THE PONY WAS TAKEN.

By C. W.

One morning, last August, Jimmie Wood was sitting on the gate-post making a willow whistle, when a remarkable wagon, drawn by a lean, gray horse, came up over the hill. The wagon looked like a big black box with a window in it. In front was a man driving, and this man seemed rather peculiar too. He had a long, pointed mustache and very curly hair. He was not a cigar and candy peddler, nor a patent medicine man, nor a machine agent, for Jim could recognize any of these in a minute. The curly-haired man stopped directly in front of the gate.

"Good morning," said he.

"Morning," answered Jim, shutting up his knife.

"My name's Leatherbee," continued the curly-haired man.

"Is it?" said Jim, unconcernedly, and then slid off the gate-post and started for the house.

"Hi boy!"

Jim turned quickly.

"Ask your pa whether he wouldn't like to have his house took!" called out the stranger.

Jim nodded, and went across the grass-plot meditating upon what the man meant by proposing to take the house. His father was in the sitting-room writing a letter.

"Papa," said Jim, leaning up against the table, "there's a man out there in the road that wants to take the house."

"Wants to take the house!" exclaimed Mr. Wood, making a blot in his astonishment.

"Yes," continued Jim, "and he has the funniest-looking wagon you ever saw in your life."

"Ah!" said Mr. Wood, "I understand now; he wants to take some photographs, I suppose. Well, tell him I don't want any," and Mr. Wood went on with his letter, while Jim proceeded across the front yard again. He noticed his pony over in the orchard. A thought struck him, and he wheeled around and went back in the sitting-room again in some haste.

"Papa," said he, "can't I have the pony taken?"

"She wont stand still long enough," answered Mr. Wood, sealing up his letter.

"But, papa, can't the man try?" pleaded Jim.

Mr. Wood thought for a minute. Then said:

"Yes. He may try."

Jim galloped across the front yard in a second.

"Well?" said the curly-haired man, raising his eyebrows.

"Papa doesn't want the house taken," said Jim, with some dignity. "But can you take my pony over there in the orchard?"

The man looked at Baby, who was calmly crunching harvest apples under the trees.

"Purty little beast," he said, getting out of his wagon and leading his horse up to the fence.

"Can you take her?" asked Jim again, anxiously.

"Course I kin," answered Mr. Leatherbee. He then tied his horse to the fence and lifted his apparatus out of the wagon, and arranged it in the orchard. The pony immediately kicked up her heels and trotted off to a far-away corner. Mr. Wood came out of the house and talked to the photographer, while Jim, after chasing around for some time trying to catch the pony, went to the stable and put a quart of oats in a measure. As soon as Baby spied that round, yellow box under Jim's arm, she trotted up to him with a gentle

neigh. He caught her by the fore-top and led her to where Mr. Leatherbee was standing.

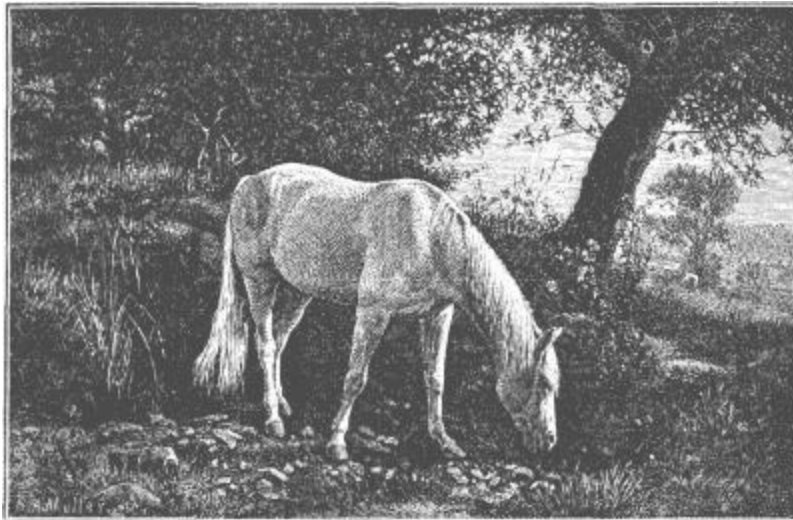
"Jest put her there," said he, pointing to a place under a big tree. Jim led her to the place and held her while Mr. Leatherbee made all his arrangements.

"Now we're ready," said he.

Baby looked pleased at this announcement, but waved her tail wildly.

Mr. Wood smiled.

"Tell Baby to keep perfectly quiet," said he to Jim, "and ask her to lower her chin a little, cast a pleasant expression around her eyes, and breathe gently."



"THE PONY STOOD QUIETLY EATING."

Mr. Leatherbee laughed at this. So did Jim; for it was exactly what the photographer always told him when he had his picture taken.

The pony thought this all very pleasant, but she wanted the oats, and, consequently, was trying to thrust her nose through Jim's back in her efforts to get at the measure.

The photographer looked despairing.

"Here, I'll fix it," said Mr. Wood, stepping up to the pony. "No, Jim, stand back; Mr. Leatherbee, are you ready?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Leatherbee, with one hand on the velvet that covered his camera.

Mr. Wood poured the oats on the ground and let go of the pony's head. For a while Baby grabbed the oats up in great haste, but finally she stood with her nose to the ground quietly eating. Mr. Leatherbee drew away the velvet from the camera, and looked at his watch for some breathless minutes. Then he slipped the velvet on again, and said:

"That's all right."

Jim drew a long sigh.

"Will it be good, do you think?" he asked, anxiously.

"Not a doubt of it," said Mr. Leatherbee, in such a cheerful tone that Jim immediately made up his mind that the pony should have an extra quart of oats all winter for her fine behavior. He expected the picture would be done right away, but Mr. Leatherbee said he would have to send the plates to Poughkeepsie to his partner, and the pictures would come soon by the mail. Mr. Leatherbee then put all his apparatus in his wagon again, and jogged on as he had come.

For the next four days Jimmie went to the post-office about every two hours.

"Expectin' a love-letter?" said old Mr. Halloway, the postmaster. At this all the loafers who were sitting on the counter laughed loudly. Jim made up his mind that Mr. Halloway was a very unpleasant old gentleman, and vowed all sorts of threats against him. His revengeful plans melted away, however, when Mr. Halloway handed him a big envelope, and said: "Here, Bub, yer letter's come."

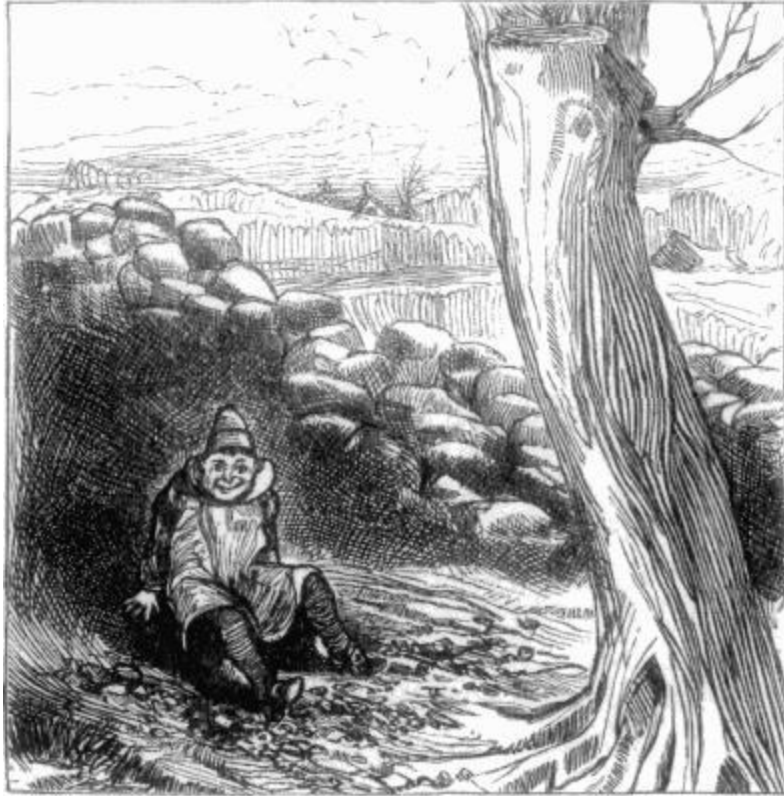
Jim tore it open, and six photographs dropped out all alike, all representing Baby eating under a tree. He privately showed one to her that afternoon. She evidently thought it very handsome, for she delicately chewed it up out of Jim's hand, to his great amazement. He says nothing about this when telling how the pony's picture was taken.

MERRY MIKE.

BY FLETA FORRESTER.



Merry Mike, from his door, bounded out to his play,
With his head in his hat, on a blustering day;
When the wind, of a sudden, came frolicking down,
And lifted Mike's hat from his little round crown.
"He-he!" said Mike, and he said "Ho-ho!
Do you call that funny, I'd like to know?"



Then he made up his mind to return to the house,
But the merry wind pushed itself under his blouse;
And it roared and it roared, as he puffed and he ran,
Till it just knocked over this queer little man.
"Ho-ho!" said Mike, and he said "He-he!
I'll get up again, Old Wind, you'll see!"



Then the wind, with a flurry of bluster and racket,
Went crowding and crowding right under his jacket;
And it lifted him off from his two little feet,
And it carried him bodily over the street.
Mike laughed "He-he!" and he laughed "Ho-ho!"
Do you call this flying, I'd like to know?"



But the wind with its antics was plainly not through,
For fiercer and fiercer and fiercer it blew,
Till making one effort of fury intense
It carried Mike neatly right over a fence.
Mike said "Ho-ho!" and "He-he!" together,
"Do you think I am naught but a little hen's-feather?"



He met there a somewhat discouraged old cow,
That had blown thither too, though she failed to see how;
And he smiled and said, "Make yourself easy, my friend—
Only keep your mind quiet, and things'll soon mend!"
And he laughed "He-he!" and he laughed "Ho-ho!"
The wind is just playing, old cow, you know!"



As he scampered off home, what above should he see
But the roof of a shed, that had lodged in a tree;
So he laughed and he laughed, till his sides they did ache,
For he said, "This is better nor wedding nor wake!"
And he roared "Ho-ho!" and he roared "He-he!"
For he was as tickled as tickled could be.



"That boy," say the terrified folks of the town,
"He would laugh just the same if the sky tumbled down!"
"Indeed, an' I would," fancied Mike, with a grin,
"For I might get a piece with a lot of stars in!"
And he chuckled "He-he!" and he chuckled "Ho-ho!"
The very idea delighted him so!



His father complained to the priest, "Now, I say,
Mike never stops laughing, by night or by day!"
"Let him laugh," spoke the priest; "he will change by and by,
And 't is better to laugh than to grumble or cry!
It's the way with the lad; let him laugh, if he like;
And be glad you've a son that's as merry as Mike!"

AN AGREEABLE GUEST.

BY SUSAN A. BROWN.

The longest visit that we read of in modern days was one which Dr. Isaac Watts made at Lord Abney's in the Isle of Wight. He went to spend a fortnight, but they made him so happy that he remained a beloved and honored guest for *forty years*.

Few of us would care to make so long a visit as that, but it might be worth the while for us all to try and learn the secret of making ourselves agreeable and welcome guests. To have "a nice time" when one is visiting is delightful, but to leave behind us a pleasant impression is worth a great deal more.

An agreeable guest is a title which any one may be proud to deserve. A great many people, with the best intentions and the kindest hearts, never receive it, simply because they have never considered the subject, and really do not know how to make their stay in another person's home a pleasure instead of an inconvenience. If you are one of these thoughtless ones, you may be sure that, although your friends are glad to see you happy, and may enjoy your visit on that account, your departure will be followed with a sigh of relief, as the family settle down to their usual occupations, saying, if not thinking, that they are glad the visit is over.

A great many different qualities and habits go to make up the character of one whom people are always glad to see, and these last must be proved while we are young, if we expect to wear them gracefully. A young person whose presence in the house is an inconvenience and a weariness at fifteen, is seldom a welcome visitor in after-life.

The two most important characteristics of a guest are tact and observation, and these will lead you to notice and do just what will give pleasure to your friends in their different opinions and ways of living. Apply in its best sense the maxim—"When you are in Rome, do as the Romans do."

Unless you have some good reason for not doing so, let your friends know the day, and, if possible, the hour when you expect to arrive. Surprises are very well in their way, but there are few households in which it is quite convenient to have a friend drop in without warning for a protracted visit. If they know that you are coming, they will have the pleasure of preparing for you and looking forward to your arrival, and you will not feel that you are disturbing any previous arrangements which they have made for the day.

Let your friends know, if possible, soon after you arrive, about how long you mean to stay with them, as they might not like to ask the question, and would still find it convenient to know whether your visit is to have a duration of three days or three weeks. Take with you some work that you have already begun, or some book that you are reading, that you may be agreeably employed when your hostess is engaged with her own affairs, and not be sitting about idle, as if waiting to be entertained, when her time is necessarily taken up with something else. Make her feel that, for a small part at least of every day, no one needs to have any responsibility about amusing you.

A lady who is charming as a guest and as a hostess once said to me: "I never take a nap in the afternoon when I am at home, but I do when I am visiting, because I know what a relief it has sometimes been to me to have company lie down for a little while, after dinner."

Try, without being too familiar, to make yourself so much like one of the family that no one shall feel you to be in the way; and, at the same time, be observant of those small courtesies and kindnesses which all together make up what the world agrees to call good manners.

Regulate your hours of rising and retiring by the customs of the house. Do not keep your friends sitting up until later than usual, and do not be roaming about the house an hour or two before breakfast. If you choose to rise at an early hour, remain in your own room until near breakfast-time, unless you are very sure that your presence in the parlor will not be unwelcome. Write in large letters, in a prominent place in your mind, "BE PUNCTUAL." A visitor has no excuse for keeping a whole family waiting, and it is unpardonable negligence not to be prompt at the table. Here is a place to test good manners, and any manifestation of ill-breeding here will be

noticed and remembered. Do not be too ready to express your likes and dislikes for the various dishes before you. The wife of a certain United States Senator once visiting acquaintances at some distance from her native wilds, made a lasting impression upon the family by remarking at the breakfast-table that "she should starve before she would eat mush," and that she "never heard of cooking mutton before she came East."

If you are tempted to go to the other extreme, and sacrifice truth to politeness, read Mrs. Opie's "Tale of Potted Sprats," and you will not be likely to be insincere again.

It is well to remember that some things which seem of very little importance to you may make an unpleasant impression upon others, in consequence of a difference in early training. The other day two young ladies were heard discussing a gentleman who had a great many pleasant qualities. "Yes," said one, "he *is* very handsome, but he *does* eat pie with his knife." Take care that no trifle of that kind is recalled when people are speaking of you.

Keep your own room in order, and do not scatter your belongings all over the house. If your friends are orderly, it will annoy them to see your things out of place; and if they are not, their own disorder will be enough without adding yours.

Make up your mind to be entertained with what is designed to entertain you. If your friends invite you to join them in an excursion, express your pleasure and readiness to go, and do not act as though you were conferring a favor instead of receiving one. No visitors are so wearisome as those who do not meet half way whatever proposals are made for their pleasure. Be contented to amuse yourself quietly in the house, or to join in any outside gayeties to which you are invited, and show by your manner that you enjoy both.

If games are proposed, do not say that you will not play, or "would rather look on;" but join with the rest, and do the best you can. Never let a foolish feeling of pride, lest you should not make so good an appearance as the others, prevent your trying.

If you are not skillful, you will at least show that you are good-natured, and that you do not think yourself modest when you are only proud.

If you have any skill in head or fingers, you will never have a better time to use it than when you are visiting; only, whatever you do, do well, and do not urge your offers of assistance after you see that it is not really desired. Mrs. Poyser, who is one of George Eliot's best characters, says: "Folks as have no mind to be o' use have allays the luck to be out o' the road when there's anything to be done." If you do not find any place to be useful, you may be tolerably sure that it is your own fault.

I heard a gentleman say of a young lady whose small affectations were undergoing a sharp criticism, "Well, whatever you may say of her, she is certainly more ready to make herself useful than any other young lady who visits here. If I lose my glasses, or mislay the newspaper, or want a stitch taken, she is always ready." And I shall never forget the impression which a young lady made upon me, as I saw her sit idly rocking backward and forward, complacently surveying the young friends she was visiting as they were hurrying to finish peeling a basket of peaches.

While visiting, remember that you meet many who are strangers to you, and do not seem to you especially attractive, but who may still be dear and valued friends of the family; and be cautious about making criticisms upon them. Be friendly and cordial toward those whom you meet, and try to show that you are ready to like them. Whatever peculiarities you may observe, either in the family or its guests, which strike you as amusing, be careful that you do not sin against the law of love, by repeating little things, to their disadvantage, which you have found out while you were admitted to the sanctuary of the home.

Do not ask questions which people would rather not answer, and be careful not to speak of anything which will bring up painful recollections, or be likely to cause unpleasant forebodings. The old proverb expresses this in few words: "Never mention a rope in the family of a man who has been hanged."

If your own home is in any way better and handsomer than your friends', do not say anything which may seem like making invidious comparisons, or

allow them to see that you miss any of the conveniences to which you have been accustomed.

Be careful about making any unnecessary work for others, and do not ask even the servants to do for you anything which you ought to do for yourself. The family had their time filled up before you came, and, do what you will, you are an extra one, and will make some difference.

Provide yourself, before you leave home, with whatever small supplies you are likely to need, so that you need not be borrowing ink, pens, paper, envelopes, postage-stamps, etc.

It may seem unnecessary to speak of the need of taking due care of the property of others, but having just seen a young lady leaning forward with both elbows upon the open pages of a handsome volume which was resting upon her knees, I venture to suggest that you do not leave any marred wall, or defaced book, or ink-stains, or mark of a wet tumbler, to remind your friends of your visit long after it has ended.

Do not forget, when you go away, to express your appreciation of the kindness which has been shown you, and when you reach home inform your friends by letter of your safe arrival.

If you follow faithfully these few suggestions, you will probably be invited to go again; and if you do not thank ST. NICHOLAS for telling you these plain truths, perhaps the friends whom you visit will be duly grateful.

NEW-YEAR CARD.

(Drawn by Miss L. GREENAWAY.)



**I send my serving-maiden
With New-Year letter laden.**

HOW KITTY GOT HER NEW HAT.

By E. P. W.

It was all because of Polly, and this was the way of it.

Ma had gone 'cross lots to Aunt Mari's, to stay till milking-time, to see the new things Aunt Mari had brought from Boston, and Polly and I were alone at home. Polly is our hired help, and she is Irish, and has got red hair, but she's as good as gold; and I am Kitty, my Pa's little chatterbox.

Polly was in the buttery, washing the dinner-dishes, and I was on the kitchen floor, playing with Queen Victoria, our old yellow cat, trying to teach her to stand on her hind-legs and beg, like Johnny Dane's dog. But Vic was cross, and wouldn't learn; and when I boxed her ears, she scratched me on my chin, and bounced over my shoulder, and was off to the barn in less than no time.

You needn't suppose I cried, because I didn't, for I shall be ten years old next July. I don't ever cry any more; only when I have the earache, and then I can't help it. Except the other day when Tom stepped on my Rachel Tryphena, and jammed her forehead in, I did. But Tom's going to buy her a new head with the money he gets from selling Jake Lawrence some of his guinea-hen's eggs, so I don't mind about that now. I was just thinking how much better I should feel if I'd had a chance to pull old Vic's tail, when Polly called, "What yer doin', honey!" and said if I would come and wipe the plates for her, that by and by, when she had "set the sponge" for tomorrow's baking, she would take her sewing and sit under the maple-tree, and tell me a story.

I like Polly's stories, and I like wiping dishes, too, sometimes—and I can do them first-rate, if I'm *not* but nine years old, and never let one drop, neither! So Polly gave me a towel, and we both wiped with all our might and main, and 'most as quick as you can say Jack Robinson, we had them piled in shining rows on the kitchen dresser. Then I did twelve and a half rows on

the suspenders I was knitting for Pa's birthday, while Polly finished the rest of her work.

About four o'clock it was all done, and the table set for supper, and everything; so Polly got her needle and thread, and the pink calico she was making into an apron, and we went out through the front entry.

As we were passing the closet door, I saw Pa's new green umbrella, that he had bought when he was in town the day before, hanging inside, and I thought it would be a good thing for us to carry it out with us, because the sun was so piping hot that afternoon; so I asked Polly if we mightn't. She said, "To be shure, darlint," and reached it down for me.

You know our big maple-tree grows close by the front gate, and stretches its branches all around, across the fence and into the road; and it's always cool under it, no matter how hot the sun shines everywhere else. Polly settled herself on the bench at the foot of the tree, and I climbed up and sat on the gate-post, where I could see along the road as far as the turning by Deacon Stiles's, and clear to the five-acre lot, where Tom and Jed were hoeing corn.

Then Polly sewed, and told a story about a beautiful maiden in a lonely tower, and an old banshee that went about nights, howling, and knocking at folks' windows.

And she talked about when she was a little girl in Ireland, and how she and her sisters and Pat Maloney used to wade together in the river, that wasn't so very much bigger than our "crick."

And then she folded her hands on her work, and gazed away into the lower meadow, where we could spy a spot of white moving against the green, that was Pat's shirt, with Pat inside of it, mowing, and began to tell what a fine "b'y" Pat was (Aunt Mari's Pat is the one), and how he had raked and scraped and gone without things ever since he had been in America, so as to save enough money to buy a snug little home over here for his old mother, and get her everything she wants before she dies.

But just as Polly was saying that *she* was laying by her money, too, and that when the old woman had come she had promised to go and live with them, all at once I heard an awful racket, and looked toward the road, and oh cricky! what do you think I saw? Tearing round Deacon Stiles's corner,

lickety-split, was a span of horses and a buggy, with the reins dragging in the dust, and the buggy spinning from one side of the road to the other, and in it was a lady with great wide-open eyes, and a face as white as a sheet, clutching a little girl in her arms like death!

I knew right off that it was the lady who was staying at Judge Gillis's, in the village, because I had seen her and her little girl in meeting, Sunday; but my heart flew into my throat and almost choked me, and at first I couldn't speak a word. Then I screamed, "Polly! *Polly!*"

Polly jumped as if she was shot—for, if you will believe it, she had been so busy thinking of Pat that she hadn't heard a sound—and got to the gate in two leaps, scattering her spools and scissors and pieces of pink calico on the grass. When she saw the horses, she stood stock-still for a minute, and stared with all her eyes. Then she gave a screech like a wild Indian, and stooped and grabbed Pa's umbrella from where I had thrown it on the ground, and rushing into the middle of the road, she opened and shut it as fast as she could work her arms, and shouted as loud as she could yell!

At that the horses slacked up a bit. The road is pretty narrow, and they didn't seem to know how to get past the frightful-looking creature that was blocking their way of a sudden, with a big green thing flippety-flopping before her.

Anyhow, they went slower and slower, till they got to the beginning of our fence, when they tried to turn. Then Polly dropped the umbrella, and ran and caught them by the bridles, and brought them to a dead stop.

They were shaking from top to toe, and their glossy black breasts were streaked and spotted with foam. Polly stroked and patted their necks, and said, "Be aisy now, me b'ys—be aisy!" and led them to the hitching-post and made them fast. Then she lifted out the little girl, whose beautiful sky-blue hat was all smashed in at the crown, and taking the poor lady in her arms as tender as though she was a baby, sat her on the bench under the maple. The lady lay back so white and still that I thought she was going to faint, like Miss Clarissa Lovett, that boarded with us last summer, did once, because of Tom's putting a mouse in her work-box.

Polly was dreadfully scart, and fanned her with a breadth of her new apron.

"Run, darlint," said she to me, "run for yer life and fetch a dipper of water!"



"RUSHING INTO THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD, SHE RAPIDLY OPENED AND SHUT THE UMBRELLA."

But the lady smiled, and said: "No, don't, my dear. I shall be better presently."

And sure enough she was, and in a little while she let Polly help her to the house; and when she had drunk a tumbler of water, and had lain on the sitting-room lounge for a spell, she appeared as smart as ever.

The horses were some new ones of Judge Gillis's, she said, and were very skittish. The judge was going to drive her to Mrs. Colonel Givens's, a mile beyond the village; but as he was stepping into the buggy he noticed there was no whip, so he went to the barn to get one. While he was gone, the horses shied at something and started "two-forty."

"And, you good, noble girl, but for you we certainly should have been killed," she ended, squeezing Polly's hand.

Polly grew as red as fire, and said she "must be after a-seein' about supper."

At that moment Ma came in the kitchen-way, and, hearing voices in the sitting-room, walked in, very much surprised, because the sitting-room was generally kept shut, on account of the flies and the new window-shades.

She was more surprised on hearing what had been going on, and said the lady must stay to supper, and that afterward Pa would drive her into the village. And she blew the horn for Tom, and told him to saddle Jerry and ride to Judge Gillis's and say to the folks that the lady and little girl were all right, and at our house, and that Pa would bring them home after supper.

Then Ma hurried to the pantry to open some of her best preserve-jars, and Polly to the barn to milk the cows, and I was left to entertain the lady.

I couldn't think how to, exactly, and I thought it wouldn't do for her to talk, being still so pale; so I laid the photograph-album on the corner of the table nearest to her, and asked her little girl if she didn't want to go to the barn and see my four cunning little Maltese kittens.

"Yes, I would, dear," said the lady. "Go with the little girl."

So she put her hand in mine, and we scampered down the hill to the barn as tight as we could go.

We were not very long getting acquainted when we were alone together, and the little girl talked as much as I did.

I asked her what her name was, and she said, "Jessie."

"That's a real pretty name," said I. "Mine's Kitty."

"Why, is it?" said she. "I've got a cousin Kitty. But she isn't near as nice as *you* are."

And with that we both laughed, and felt as if we had lived next door to each other all our lives.

I showed her the four kittens, and she said they were perfectly lovely, but liked most the one with a white breast and a sweet dot of a white nose. I told her she might have it for hers as quick as it was old enough to leave its mother. But she has never sent for it since. I guess she must have forgotten.

When she had seen the guinea-pigs, and Tom's rabbits, and fed them all they would eat, we clambered into the hay-mow, and had a fine time playing on the hay, till the supper-horn blew.

There was no end of goodies for supper, but Jessie's Ma didn't eat scarcely a thing. But she drank two tumblers of Daisy's milk, and said she hadn't tasted anything so delicious in a year. But Jessie and I could eat, and Tom too,—after he had spilt a cup of tea and a pitcher of water, and knocked a piece of pie under the table. He said, when Jessie and her Ma had gone, that the lady's black eyes "discombobolated" him so that he had more than half a mind to dive under the table himself.

Soon as we were through supper, Pa brought up the horses (which Tom had driven to the barn, and watered and fed), for it was growing late, and the lady wanted to be home before dark. I put on Jessie's hat for her, and tried to straighten the crown, and pin on the long white feather, that was broken in two in the middle.

"It's 'most spoilt," I said. "Isn't it a pity?"

"Poh! I don't care," said Jessie. "I've got three more at home, prettier'n this."

"Why-e-e-e! " said I. "Truly honest?"

"Why, yes!" said Jessie. "How many've you?"

"Just a horrid old Leghorn!" said I. "And it's been pressed over and over, and the trimmings washed, and I can't bear it!"

And I was telling her about the chip jockey hat that Sally Carroll's aunt bought her for a birthday present, when the buggy came to the door.

"Come, say good-bye to the little girl, my love," said the lady, smiling down at me.

Jessie threw her arms around my neck and whispered that I was the best girl she ever knew, and that she should write me a letter when she got to Boston, and hopped in.

The lady shook hands with Ma, and thanked her for being so kind, and then turned to Polly and said, softly:

"You good Polly, I *must* do something for you. Wont you let me?"—and put her hand in her pocket.

I never saw Polly so mad but once before, and that was when Tom chucked Queen Victoria into the churn, because she wouldn't let him have but a quarter of an apple-pie to take to school. I mean Polly wouldn't. She walked into the buttery, and banged the door behind her as hard as ever she could.

The lady didn't say anything, but her cheeks were rather pink, and she bent and kissed me as if to hide them. Then Pa helped her into the buggy, and they drove away.

The next week, Jed went to the grist-mill, the other end of the village, with some buckwheat to be ground, and, calling at the post-office coming home, he found an express-box from Boston, with "Miss Mary Ann Murphy, Redfield, Massachusetts," printed on it in large black letters. He knew that was Polly's name, he said; and never having heard tell of but one Mary Ann Murphy in these parts, he hoisted it into the wagon.

Polly was washing by the kitchen-door as he rattled in at the gate.

"Hullo, there!" he sang out. "Here's a box that's a-wantin' Miss Mary Ann Murphy!"

"Git along wid yer nonsinse!" Polly said, scrubbing at one of Tom's blue gingham shirts. For Jed is such a fellow for fooling that you never can be sure when to believe him, and Polly thought it was a box of starch, or else of soap, that Ma had ordered from the grocery, and that Jed was only trying to get her to come and lug it into the house for him, so he could drive straight on to the barn.

Ma had set me to picking currants for jelly that morning, and I was getting over the vegetable-garden fence with a heaping pail on each arm when Jed spoke. In a minute, one pail was this side of the fence, and one was rolling along the path the other side, and I was in the wagon, reading the big black letters!

"Oh, Polly, 't *is*!" I hollered. "True's you live and breathe, a box from Boston! Oh, hurry up!"

Polly stopped short in "The Wearing of the Green," that she had commenced to sing at the top of her voice, and whirled about, her mouth and eyes as round as three pepper-box covers.

"Heh!" said she.

"An express-box for Polly, Jed?" called Ma, sticking her head from the kitchen-window. "You don't say so! Fetch it right in here." And Ma whisked the clothes-basket from before the door.

Jed threw the lines on Jerry's back, and shouldered me and the box, and dumped us both on the kitchen-floor.

"There you be, marm!" he said. "Want I should open it? Them nails appear to be driv' in pretty tight." For Jed was on tenter-hooks to know what was in it.

"No, I guess not," said Ma. "I'm afraid Jerry wont stand. Polly and I can open it."

"Oh, bless your soul and body, marm, he'll stand!" said Jed. "Best hoss I ever see fer that."

But Ma wouldn't hear to his losing the time; so Jed had to make himself scarce, looking mournfuller than when his grandmother died last spring.

"Come, here's the hatchet, Polly! Be a little spry!" Ma said. For Polly stood with her arms akimbo, and didn't budge an inch.

"Shure, an' who sint it?" she asked. And that was the only word she had spoken.

"Why, I don't know," said Ma. "But I can imagine. Can't you?"

Polly marched to her tub, her head high in the air.

"I wont tech the ould thing!" said she.

"Then I will for you," said Ma, and had it open in a jiffey.

Underneath the cover was a piece of paper, with this written on it:

Will Polly please accept these few articles in token that she forgives me for having justly offended her by offering *pay* for a service which *can never be paid for*?

MRS. E. G. EDSON.

When she heard that, Polly wasn't quite so riled. She said Jessie's Ma was a *rare* lady, anyway, and she might as well see what she had sent. So, wiping her hands on her apron, she planted herself in the door-way, while Ma went to work to empty the box.

First, there were six calico dress-patterns,—one purple, sprinkled with little black rings, and another pink, with a criggly vine running through it, and a black-striped white one, and the rest mixed colors.

Then beneath were three more dresses, of some sheeny stuff,—*alapaca*, Ma called it,—black, purple and brown, that took every inch of dander out of Polly. She wiped her hands extra clean, and came and twisted them this way and that, and crinkled them and smoothed them, and puckered the ends into folds, and laying them across the ironing-table, backed toward the wall with her head cocked sideways, and her eyes squinted together like Mr. Green's, the portrait-painter, when he looks at pictures.

"Shure, the Quane 'u'd be proud to wear thim!" she said; and said she should have the purple for a wedding-gown.

Then, besides, there was a red and black plaid shawl, and a whole piece of white muslin, such as you buy by the yard mostly, and a work-box, with cases of scissors and needles, and spools of thread and sewing-silk. And last was a bandbox tied with string, and that, Ma said, Polly must open.



**"I LOOKED IN ONE OF POLLY'S
BRIGHT MILK-PANS."**

So Polly pulled a pin from her belt and pattered at the knot till I 'most had a fit. For Ma wont ever have a string cut; she says it is a sinful waste. I thought it never would untie. Polly's fingers were all thumbs, and twice she dropped the pin. But it did—all knots do if you pick at them long enough—and in the box was a splendiferous bonnet, with green ribbon bows and three pink roses.

"Well, I declare!" said Ma. "What more can you want, Polly?"

Polly put the bandbox on the floor, and the bonnet on her head, and started for the sitting-room looking-glass.

"Sakes alive! Here's another!" Ma said, and held up by one of its bows the sweetest little hat you ever laid eyes on! It was light straw, trimmed with black velvet and blue silk, and had white daisies fastened to the velvet. Pinned to one of the streamers was a slip of paper, and on it was written, "For Kitty."

I just squealed! It was all I could do! To think of that beautiful little hat being for *me*, Kitty Hazel! Why, I never counted on having anything half so fine, unless I got to be the Grand Mogul, or something of that sort!

"The lady is very kind, I'm sure," said Ma, seeming as pleased as could be. "Try it on, child. You can squeal afterward." And she set it on my head.

I ran and looked in one of Polly's bright milk-pans that were sunning outside the door, and I hardly knew myself!

"Aint you smart!" said I, nodding to the girl in the pan. She smiled and nodded back, and looked so jolly that I came near turning a summer-set, new hat and all!

I wore it to meeting the next Sunday, with my new blue cambric; and I tell you what it is—it's enough sight easier to be good in an old hat than it is in a new one! I tried not to feel stuck-up, and I kept saying to myself: "Kitty Hazel, you're the same girl that sat here last Sunday, with an old Leghorn on. *You* aint any different!"

But it wasn't much use; for whenever I'd raise my eyes there was Phil Gillis smiling at me from the judge's pew, and opposite were Dave and Aggie Stebbins, staring as though they had never seen the like of me before, and every now and then old Deacon Pettengil, who sits in front of us, would turn and peer at me through his green spectacles so funny that once I nearly giggled.

This all happened last summer, but my hat is as pretty now as it ever was. Ma says she should have supposed the blue would have faded some by this time—blue is such a poor color to wear; but it hasn't a bit. When it does, I shall take it off, and have it for a sash for Rachel Tryphena, and the hat will be 'most as nice as it is now.

KITTY HAZEL.

N.B.—I asked Polly how she thought of the umbrella. She said that when she was visiting her sister, that works for a dress-maker in Boston, she saw a picture of an old lady who was chased by a mad bull, and just as the bull was coming at her like sixty, the old lady turned and opened her umbrella square in his face. Polly said she always thought it was so cute of the old

lady, and had meant to do the same when a mad bull chased *her*, if she had an umbrella with her. She said it all popped into her head when she saw the horses.

THE STORK AND THE CRANE: A FABLE.

BY HOWARD PYLE.

A Stork and a Crane once frequented the same marsh. The Stork was a quiet, dignified individual, with a philosophical countenance. One would never have thought, from his deeply reflective look, of the number of frogs and pollywogs, eels and small fish, that had disappeared in his meditative mouth. For the Stork was like many another philosopher, and in spite of his supernaturally wise external appearance, inside he was just as selfish, and just as voracious, as all the rest of his kind.

Although he never mentioned the subject, he was secretly very proud to recall the former grandeur of his ancestors, one of whom, in old Greek days, had been a famous king over the frogs, eels, and snakes, in a Spartan marsh.

The Crane was a lively little fellow, and not at all philosophical. He ate his dinner without moralizing over it, and felt thankful when he had enough. He had not a particle of aristocratic blood in his veins, and, in consequence, rather ridiculed the possession of that indescribable material by the Stork. Ridicule as he would, however, he was really secretly proud of his acquaintance with the other, and used to say to his friends and relatives sometimes:

"There is no one in the world that more despises pretentiousness than myself. One only too frequently hears an animal boast of its aristocratic acquaintances. *I* never do that. Now, there is John Stork, of one of our highest families, and although I am not only on friendly but intimate terms with him, and even have been invited to call upon his estimable family, and make the acquaintance of Miss Stork (I have never had an opportunity to do so yet), one never hears *me* boast of his friendship and intimacy."

To tell the truth, the conversations he held with the philosophical Stork were frequently so deep, that he found himself floundering beyond his depth. For instance, "Do you always stand upon one leg?" said he, one day.

The Stork reflected so long over this question that the Crane thought he had gone to sleep. Finally, however, the philosopher said:

"No; I do not. I always stand upon the other."

The Crane meditated for a space over this, but as it was completely beyond his comprehension, he gave the matter up and changed the subject. His respect for the Stork's wisdom was vastly increased by such conversations, for one often takes for wisdom what one cannot understand.

These two friends, however, did not always dwell together in perfect amity. The Stork was so proud that he frequently galled his humbler companion, and bitter disputes often arose. It was under the influence of such a feeling that the Crane burst forth one day:

"And what are you that you should boast? You have blue blood in your veins, indeed! Perhaps it is that blue blood that makes you so sluggish and stupid."

The Stork meditated a long while over this speech; finally, he said:

"When you accuse me of sluggishness and stupidity you judge by external appearances, and, consequently, by deductive logic. Beside, you do not take collateral matter into the case from which you draw your inference. You have never seen me when my physical energies have been aroused, consequently, your conclusion is both hollow and baseless—Q. E. D."

The Crane was rather taken aback by this speech, and, not comprehending it, he felt somewhat humbled. At length he said:

"I am no philosopher, but as they say 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating of it,' I am willing at any time to run a foot-race with you, and so prove who is the more agile."

"I do not know," answered the Stork, meditatively, "whether my family would altogether approve of my entering into the lists with such a vulgar creature as yourself." Here he shut one eye, and looked reflectively with the other at a frog that sat on a tussock near by. "Still, I recollect that one of my ancestors proved his valor upon a turbulent duckling once, so I see no logical reason why I should not compete with you."

And so the matter was settled.

All was hubbub and excitement among the birds when the coming race was announced. The racecourse was so constructed that the larger birds stood upon one side, and the smaller birds and animals upon the other. This was so arranged, chiefly at the request of a deputy of frogs, because, at a mass meeting once, an albatross had eaten twenty-seven of these animals in a fit of absent-mindedness, as he said. Still the frogs desired to prevent the recurrence of so painful a scene.



"THE STORK WAS AHEAD!"

The Cassowary was chosen director of the race, chiefly because he was a famous traveler as well as a pedestrian himself, and so was a judge of such matters. He was the same of whom the Gander, the poet-laureate, had written the poem commencing—

"It was a noble cassowary,
On the plains of Timbuctoo,
That gobbled up a missionary
Body, bones, and hymn-book too."

All were assembled. The champions stood neck to neck, while the spectators looked on, breathless with excitement.

"Go!" cried the Cassowary, and they went.

For a long time they continued neck and neck, and the excitement rose to fever heat. At this juncture a mouse attempted to cross the racecourse, and was instantly devoured by an owl, who acted as police of the course. At

length the two racers re-appeared coming toward the grand stand,—that is, the place where the Cassowary stood with the signal-gun or, rather, pistol. The shouts and cries became more agitated and violent; there was no doubt about it,—*the Stork was ahead!* It was in vain that the gallant little Crane strained every sinew; the Stork came into the stand a good three lengths ahead of his adversary. Bang! went the pistol, and the Stork had won. His adherents crowded around him cheering vociferously, and raising him aloft upon their shoulders above the crowd. Even the Cassowary came forward and shook hands with him.

"Recollect, hereafter," said the successful Stork to the poor Crane, who stood dejectedly to one side, "not to scorn and undervalue qualities in any one, because they are not flaunted in the eyes of the world."

The Crane's adherents maintained that it was a foul start, while the Stork's friends answered that when two birds ran a race, it could not well be anything else.

The frogs, the mice, and most of the small birds, were divided among the successful betters; and, altogether, it was a day of rejoicing, except to the frogs, the mice, and most of the small birds.

WINTER FIRE-FLIES.

BY MRS. W. N. CLARKE.

One by one appearing
In their lower sky,
Come a host uncouth
Like the stars on high,
Flashing lights uncertain,
Ever changing place,—
Tricksy constellations
That we cannot trace!

Throbbing through the elm-tree
Little heart of fire!—
One in lonely longing
Rises ever higher;
Flits across the darkness,
Like a shooting star,
While the changeless heavens
Calmly shine afar.

When the flames are lighting
All the chimney dark,
When the green wood hisses,
And the birchen bark
In the blaze doth redden,
Glow and snap and curl,
Fire-flies, freed from prison,
Merrily dance and whirl.

Children on the hearth-stone,
Peering up the flue,
See a mimic welkin,

Lights that twinkle through,
Sparks that flash and flicker,
Little short-lived stars,
On the sooty darkness
Glowing red as Mars!

Eager eyes a-watching
Fain would have them pause.
Catch these fire-flies—can you?—
In a web of gauze!
Ever upward flying
Toward the chimney's crown—
Up to meet the snow-flakes
As they flutter down!

THE ARMS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY SUSAN ARCHER WEISS.

My young readers have doubtless often observed upon familiar objects, such as books, china and steelware, etc., the device of a lion and a horse (sometimes represented as a unicorn) supporting between them a shield, surmounted by a crown. On the shield are certain divisions called "quarterings," in one of which you will observe two lions and a horse. Attached to the whole is the motto, *Dieu et mon droit*,—French words, whose meaning is, "God and my right."

If you inquire, you will be told that this device is the "coat-of-arms" of Great Britain,—as the eagle, shield and olive branch is that of the United States,—and that all articles thus marked are of British manufacture.

In old times the national symbol of England was the rose, of Scotland the thistle, of Ireland the shamrock, or clover. When England claimed Ireland and Scotland, these three were united on the British royal shield, as we find them in the time of Queen Elizabeth. On a victory over France, the symbol of France, a unicorn, was also added, the unicorn wearing a chain, to denote the subjection of France to England. This explains the nursery rhyme which you have no doubt often heard—

"The lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown;
The lion whipped the unicorn all around the town."

The sovereignty of Great Britain is by law hereditary, but sometimes there are disputes and wars for possession of the crown, and it passes into a new family. Thus some of the kings and queens of Great Britain have belonged to the family of Plantagenet, others to that of Tudor, and still others to the Stuarts. George the First of England was of a family named Guelph, and all the sovereigns of Great Britain succeeding him, down to Queen Victoria, have been of this family and name.

When a new sovereign succeeds to the crown, he has a right to place his own family coat-of-arms on the royal shield of Great Britain. George the First did this. The two lions and the white horse, which you see on one of the quarterings, is the coat-of-arms of the Guelphs, who were dukes of Brunswick and Hanover in Germany. It is therefore called the arms of the House of Brunswick, and it is about this that I now design to tell you.

In order to begin at the beginning, we must go far back into past ages—almost to the time when our Savior was upon earth. At that period the whole northern portion of Europe was inhabited by wild and barbarous tribes who had never heard of Christ, but were Pagans and worshiped imaginary gods, of whom Woden was chief. Among these races were the Saxons, a fair-haired, fair-complexioned people, of great size and strength, who inhabited that portion of country now known as north Germany. They have never been permanently driven out of this country, which is to this day occupied by their descendants, the Germans. This latter name signifies a "war-like people."

Now, according to the pagan belief, the god Woden had a favorite white or light-gray horse, created by magic art, and upon which he bestowed the power of assisting and protecting warriors. This horse was regarded as sacred, and shared in the worship given to Woden. The pagan priests had no temples; the art of building was unknown to them; but, instead, their religious ceremonies were performed in thick groves of oak which were set apart for the purpose. In these gloomy woods the priests reared beautiful white horses, which no man was ever permitted to mount, and which, being from their birth solemnly dedicated to Woden, were believed to be gifted by him with the power of foretelling events by means of certain signs and motions. Before going into battle these sacred steeds were consulted, and occasionally one was sacrificed to Woden or to his white horse, and the bloody head was then mounted upon a pole, and borne aloft in the van of the Saxon army, they believing that it possessed the power of vanquishing the enemy and protecting themselves. We read in history that when the great emperor, Charlemagne, conquered the northern countries, one of the Saxon leaders, named Wittikind, refused to submit to him, and that, in consequence, many bloody battles were fought, wherein the Saxons bore in their van a tall pole surmounted by a wooden horse's head. This was their ensign; and when they afterward became more civilized, they retained the

same emblem,—a white horse painted upon a black ground,—which remains to this day the standard or banner of the little kingdom of Saxony.

In the year 861,—just about one thousand years ago,—Bruno, the son of a Saxon king, founded a city in Saxony which he called after himself, Brunonis Vicus, now known as Brunswick. He retained as the standard of Brunswick the white horse of Saxony, and thus it remained until the end of the three succeeding centuries. About that time the reigning prince of Brunswick was a certain Henry Guelph, a leader in the Crusades, noted for his strength and daring, which acquired for him the title of "Henry the Lion." This prince refused to own allegiance to the great Emperor of Germany, Frederic Barbarossa. He declared himself independent, and as a token of defiance set up a great stone lion in Brunswick, and had the same symbol placed upon his standard, two lions supporting a shield beneath the white horse.

Thus you now know the origin of the Brunswick coat-of-arms. But how came the banner of a small German country to be adopted on the arms of Great Britain? This I will now explain.

About the year 1650, the then reigning Duke of Brunswick, afterward also Elector of Hanover, married the granddaughter of King James the First of England. Their eldest son was named George Louis. When, on the death of Queen Anne, the English were in want of a successor, they looked about among those nearest of kin to the royal family, and decided to choose this great-grandson of King James I. Thus it was that George Louis Guelph—a Saxon-German—came to be King George the First of England, and this was how the "lion-and-horse" arms of Brunswick and Hanover came to be also part of the arms of Great Britain. His successors were George the Second, George the Third (against whose rule the American colonies rebelled), George the Fourth, William, and lastly Victoria, the present queen, who is granddaughter to George the Third. Thus you understand how Queen Victoria is descended from the princes of Brunswick,—how she happens to be of German instead of English blood,—and why her name is Guelph.

Now, whenever you look upon "The lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown," you will reflect how strange it is that this great and enlightened Christian nation should bear on its proud standard a symbol of pagan

superstition. You will think of the bold Crusader, Henry the Lion; of Wittikind, the brave Saxon duke who, after a twenty years' resistance, was finally conquered and baptized into Christianity; of the wild, half-clad Saxons, with their bloody horse-head ensign; of the Druid priests, who sacrificed human beings as well as white horses; and so, far back to the god Woden himself, who was probably merely some great hero or warrior who lived in a period so remote that we have no record of it in history.

And yet, while you are wondering at England and her relic of Woden-worship, shall I tell you that here, in America, we too possess relics of this very pagan god to which some people accord a superstitious regard? Look on the threshold, or above the door of some cottage or cabin, and you will see nailed there a common horse-shoe as a protection against evil. Examine your grown-up sister's watch-chain, and you will find attached to it a tiny gold horse-shoe, studded with diamond nail-heads, which some friend has given her as a "charm" to secure "good luck." These are simply remnants of the old pagan Woden-worship which we inherit from our English ancestors, who are partly descended from the Saxons, as you have probably learned from your school history. And the word Wednesday is a corruption of Woden's-Day, a name given by our Saxon ancestors to the fourth day of the week in honor of their god.

When I was recently in Germany, I noticed upon the gable-end of every cottage and farm-house in Brunswick and Hanover a curious ornament, consisting of two horses' heads, roughly carved in wood, mounted upon poles, and placed above the entrance-doors, in the form of a cross. This was first done by order of Wittikind, who, upon professing Christianity, changed the pagan symbols above the doors of dwellings to the sign of Christianity—the cross. The ignorant peasants do not know the origin of the custom, but will tell you that the crossed-heads are placed there "to keep out evil spirits, and to bring good luck to the house."



**ENTRANCE GATE TO THE
OLD CASTLE OF THE
DUKES OF BRUNSWICK.**

I saw in Brunswick the great stone lion which Henry Guelph placed there seven hundred years ago; and in Hanover, the old palace in which George the First was born, with the lion and the horse above the entrance. Once, too, in the Hartz mountains, I visited a grand-looking ancient castle of the old dukes of Brunswick, in which was born the wife of George the Second of England. It stood on the summit of a lofty precipice, up which we had to climb; then crossing a deep moat by a narrow bridge, we entered through a great arched gate-way, surmounted by the Brunswick coat-of-arms, cut in the stone wall. The moat was dry, and ivy and tall trees growing in it far below, thrust the tips of their branches over the walls. I stopped and took a sketch of the old gate-way, which I here present my young readers.

UNDER THE LILACS.

BY LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

CHAPTER IV.

HIS STORY.

"I ran away from a circus," began Ben, but got no further, for Bab and Betty gave a simultaneous bounce of delight, and both cried out at once—

"We've been to one! It was splendid!"

"You wouldn't think so if you knew as much about it as I do," answered Ben, with a sudden frown and wriggle, as if he still felt the smart of the blows he had received. "We don't call it splendid; do we, Sancho?" he added, making a queer noise, which caused the poodle to growl and bang the floor irefully with his tail, as he lay close to his master's feet, getting acquainted with the new shoes they wore.

"How came you there?" asked Mrs. Moss, rather disturbed at the news.

"Why, my father was the 'Wild Hunter of the Plains.' Didn't you ever see or hear of him?" said Ben, as if surprised at her ignorance.

"Bless your heart, child, I haven't been to a circus this ten years, and I'm sure I don't remember what or who I saw then," answered Mrs. Moss, amused, yet touched by the son's evident admiration for his father.

"Didn't *you* see him?" demanded Ben, turning to the little girls.

"We saw Indians and tumbling men, and the Bounding Brothers of Borneo, and a clown and monkeys, and a little mite of a pony with blue eyes. Was he any of them?" answered Betty, innocently.

"Pooh! he didn't belong to that lot. He always rode two, four, six, eight horses to oncet, and I used to ride with him till I got too big. *My* father was A No. 1, and didn't do anything but break horses and ride 'em," said Ben, with as much pride as if his parent had been a President.

"Is he dead?" asked Mrs. Moss.

"I don't know. Wish I did," and poor Ben gave a gulp as if something rose in his throat and choked him.

"Tell us all about it, dear, and may be we can find out where he is," said Ma, leaning forward to pat the shiny dark head that was suddenly bent over the dog.

"Yes, ma'am, I will, thank y'," and with an effort the boy steadied his voice and plunged into the middle of his story.

"Father was always good to me, and I liked bein' with him after granny died. I lived with her till I was seven, then father took me, and I was trained for a rider. You jest oughter have seen me when I was a little feller all in white tights, and a gold belt, and pink riggin', standin' on father's shoulder, or hangin' on to old General's tail, and him gallopin' full pelt, or father ridin' three horses with me on *his* head wavin' flags, and every one clappin' like fun."

"Oh, weren't you scared to pieces?" asked Betty, quaking at the mere thought.

"Not a bit. I liked it."

"So should I!" cried Bab, enthusiastically.

"Then I drove the four ponies in the little chariot, when we paraded," continued Ben, and I sat on the great ball up top of the grand car drawn by Hannibal and Nero. But I *didn't* like that, 'cause it was awful high and shaky, and the sun was hot, and the trees slapped my face, and my legs ached holdin' on."

"What's hanny bells and neroes?" demanded Betty.

"Big elephants. Father never let 'em put me up there, and they didn't darst till he was gone; then I had to, else they'd 'a' thrashed me."

"Didn't any one take your part?" asked Mrs. Moss.

"Yes'm, 'most all the ladies did; they were very good to me, 'specially 'Melia. She vowed she wouldn't go on in the Tunnymunt act if they didn't stop knockin' me round when I wouldn't help old Buck with the bears. So they had to stop it, 'cause she led first rate, and none of the other ladies rode half as well as 'Melia."

"Bears! oh, do tell about them!" exclaimed Bab, in great excitement, for at the only circus she had seen the animals were her delight.

"Buck had five of 'em, cross old fellers, and he showed 'em off. I played with 'em once, jest for fun, and he thought it would make a hit to have me show off instead of him. But they had a way of clawin' and huggin' that wasn't nice, and you couldn't never tell whether they were good-natured or ready to bite your head off. Buck was all over scars where they'd scratched and bit him, and I wasn't going to do it, and I didn't have to, owin' to Miss St. John's standin' by me like a good one."

"Who *was* Miss St. John?" asked Mrs. Moss, rather confused by the sudden introduction of new names and people.

"Why, she was 'Melia,—Mrs. Smithers, the ring-master's wife. His name wasn't Montgomery any more'n hers was St. John. They all change 'em to something fine on the bills, you know. Father used to be Señor Jose Montebello, and I was Master Adolphus Bloomsbury after I stopped bein' a flying Coopid and a Infant Progidy."

Mrs. Moss leaned back in her chair to laugh at that, greatly to the surprise of the little girls, who were much impressed with the elegance of these high-sounding names.

"Go on with your story, Ben, and tell why you ran away and what became of your Pa," she said, composing herself to listen, really interested in the child.

"Well, you see, father had a quarrel with old Smithers and went off sudden last fall, just before the tenting season was over. He told me he was goin' to a great ridin' school in New York, and when he was fixed he'd send for me. I was to stay in the museum and help Pedro with the trick business. He was a nice man and I liked him, and 'Melia was good to see to me, and I didn't mind for awhile. But father didn't send for me, and I began to have horrid times. If it hadn't been for 'Melia and Sancho I would have cut away long before I did."

"What did you have to do?"

"Lots of things, for times was dull and I was smart. Smithers said so, anyway, and I had to tumble up lively when he gave the word. I didn't mind doin' tricks or showing off Sancho, for father trained him and he always did well with me. But they wanted me to drink gin to keep me small, and I wouldn't, 'cause father didn't like that kind of thing. I used to ride tip-top, and that just suited me till I got a fall and hurt my back; but I had to go on all the same, though I ached dreadful, and used to tumble off, I was so dizzy and weak."

"What a brute that man must have been! Why didn't 'Melia put a stop to it?" asked Mrs. Moss, indignantly.

"She died, ma'am, and then there was no one left but Sanch, so I run away."

Then Ben fell to patting his dog again, to hide the tears he could not keep from coming at the thought of the kind friend he had lost.

"What did you mean to do?"

"Find father; but I couldn't, for he wasn't at the ridin' school, and they told me he had gone out West to buy mustangs for a man who wanted a lot. So then I was in a fix, for I couldn't go to father, didn't know jest where he was, and I wouldn't sneak back to Smithers to be abused. Tried to make 'em take me at the ridin' school, but they didn't want a boy, and I traveled along and tried to get work. But I'd have starved if it hadn't been for Sanch. I left him tied up when I ran off, for fear they'd say I stole him. He's a very valuable dog, ma'am, the best trick dog I ever see, and they'd want him back more than they would me. He belongs to father, and I hated to leave him, but I did. I hooked it one dark night, and never thought I'd see him ag'in. Next

mornin' I was eatin' breakfast in a barn miles away and dreadful lonesome, when he came tearin' in, all mud and wet, with a great piece of rope draggin'. He'd gnawed it, and came after me and wouldn't go back or be lost; and I'll never leave him again; will I, dear old feller?"

Sancho had listened to this portion of the tale with intense interest, and when Ben spoke to him he stood straight up, put both paws on the boy's shoulders, licked his face with a world of dumb affection in his yellow eyes, and gave a little whine which said as plainly as words—

"Cheer up, little master; fathers may vanish and friends die, but *I* never will desert you."

Ben hugged him close and smiled over his curly, white head, at the little girls who clapped their hands at the pleasing tableau, and then went to pat and fondle the good creature, assuring him that they entirely forgave the theft of the cake and the new dinner-pail. Inspired by these endearments and certain private signals given by Ben, Sancho suddenly burst away to perform all his best antics with unusual grace and dexterity.

Bab and Betty danced about the room with rapture, while Mrs. Moss declared she was almost afraid to have such a wonderfully intelligent animal in the house. Praises of his dog pleased Ben more than praises of himself, and when the confusion had subsided he entertained his audience with a lively account of Sancho's cleverness, fidelity, and the various adventures in which he had nobly borne his part.

While he talked Mrs. Moss was making up her mind about him, and when he came to an end of his dog's perfections, she said, gravely:

"If I can find something for you to do, would you like to stay here awhile?"

"Oh yes, ma'am, I'd be glad to!" answered Ben, eagerly; for the place seemed home-like already, and the good woman almost as motherly as the departed Mrs. Smithers.

"Well, I'll step over to the Judge's to-morrow to see what he says. Shouldn't wonder if he'd take you for a chore-boy, if you are as smart as you say. He always has one in the summer, and I haven't seen any round yet. Can you drive cows?"

"Hope so;" and Ben gave a shrug, as if it was a very unnecessary question to put to a person who had driven four calico ponies in a gilded chariot.

"It mayn't be as lively as riding elephants and playing with bears, but it is respectable, and I guess you'll be happier switching Brindle and Buttercup than being switched yourself," said Mrs. Moss, shaking her head at him with a smile.

"I guess I will, ma'am," answered Ben, with sudden meekness, remembering the trials from which he had escaped.

Very soon after this, he was sent off for a good night's sleep in the back bedroom, with Sancho to watch over him. But both found it difficult to slumber till the racket overhead subsided, for Bab insisted on playing she was a bear and devouring poor Betty in spite of her wails, till their mother came up and put an end to it by threatening to send Ben and his dog away in the morning if the girls "didn't behave and be as still as mice."

This they solemnly promised, and they were soon dreaming of gilded cars and moldy coaches, run-away boys and dinner-pails, dancing dogs and twirling tea-cups.



BEN AT THE WELL.

CHAPTER V.

BEN GETS A PLACE.

When Ben awoke next morning, he looked about him for a moment half bewildered, because there was neither a canvas tent, a barn roof, nor the blue sky above him, but a neat white ceiling, where several flies buzzed sociably together, while from without came, not the tramping of horses, the twitter of swallows, or the chirp of early birds, but the comfortable cackle of hens and the sound of two little voices chanting the multiplication table.

Sancho sat at the open window watching the old cat wash her face, and trying to imitate her with his great ruffled paw, so awkwardly that Ben laughed, and Sanch, to hide his confusion at being caught, made one bound

from chair to bed and licked his master's face so energetically that the boy dived under the bedclothes to escape from the rough tongue.

A rap on the floor from below made both jump up, and in ten minutes a shiny-faced lad and a lively dog went racing down-stairs—one to say, "Good-morning, ma'am," the other to wag his tail faster than ever tail wagged before, for ham frizzled on the stove, and Sancho was fond of it.

"Did you rest well?" asked Mrs. Moss, nodding at him, fork in hand.

"Guess I did! Never saw such a bed. I'm used to hay and a horse-blanket, and lately nothing but sky for a cover and grass for my feather bed," laughed Ben, grateful for present comforts and making light of past hardships.

"Clean, sweet corn-husks aint bad for young bones, even if they haven't got more flesh on them than yours have," answered Mrs. Moss, giving the smooth head a motherly stroke as she went by.

"Fat aint allowed in our profession, ma'am. The thinner the better for tight-ropes and tumblin'; likewise bareback-ridin' and spry jugglin'. Muscle's the thing, and there you are."

Ben stretched out a wiry little arm with a clenched fist at the end of it, as if he were a young Hercules ready to play ball with the stove if she gave him leave. Glad to see him in such good spirits, she pointed to the well outside, saying pleasantly:

"Well, then, just try your muscle by bringing in some fresh water."

Ben caught up a pail and ran off, ready to be useful; but while he waited for the bucket to fill down among the mossy stones, he looked about him, well pleased with all he saw,—the small brown house with a pretty curl of smoke rising from its chimney, the little sisters sitting in the sunshine, green hills and newly planted fields far and near, a brook dancing through the orchard, birds singing in the elm avenue, and all the world as fresh and lovely as early summer could make it.

"Don't you think it's pretty nice here?" asked Bab, as his eye came back to them after a long look, which seemed to take in everything, brightening as it

roved.

"Just the nicest place that ever was. Only needs a horse round somewhere to be complete," answered Ben, as the long well-sweep came up with a dripping bucket at one end, an old grind-stone at the other.

"The Judge has three, but he's so fussy about them he wont even let us pull a few hairs out of old Major's tail to make rings of," said Betty, shutting her arithmetic, with an injured expression.

"Mike lets *me* ride the white one to water when the Judge isn't 'round. It's such fun to go jouncing down the lane and back. I do love horses!" cried Bab, bobbing up and down on the blue bench to imitate the motion of white Jenny.

"I guess you are a plucky sort of a girl," and Ben gave her an approving look as he went by, taking care to slop a little water on Mrs. Puss, who stood curling her whiskers and humping up her back at Sancho.

"Come to breakfast!" called Mrs. Moss, and for about twenty minutes little was said as mush and milk vanished in a way that would have astonished even Jack the Giant-killer with his leather bag.

"Now, girls, fly round and get your chores done up; Ben, you go chop me some kindlings; and I'll make things tidy. Then we can all start off at once," said Mrs. Moss, as the last mouthful vanished, and Sancho licked his lips over the savory scraps that fell to his share.

Ben fell to chopping so vigorously that chips flew wildly all about the shed, Bab rattled the cups into her dish-pan with dangerous haste, and Betty raised a cloud of dust "sweeping-up," while mother seemed to be everywhere at once. Even Sanch, feeling that his fate was at stake, endeavored to help in his own somewhat erratic way,—now frisking about Ben at the risk of getting his tail chopped off, then trotting away to poke his inquisitive nose into every closet and room whither he followed Mrs. Moss in her "flying round" evolutions; next dragging off the mat so Betty could brush the door-steps, or inspecting Bab's dish-washing by standing on his hind-legs to survey the table with a critical air. When they drove him out he was not the least offended, but gayly barked Puss up a tree, chased all the

hens over the fence, and carefully interred an old shoe in the garden, where the remains of a mutton-bone were already buried.

By the time the others were ready, he had worked off his superfluous spirits and trotted behind the party like a well-behaved dog accustomed to go out walking with ladies. At the cross-roads they separated, the little girls running on to school, while Mrs. Moss and Ben went up to the Squire's big house on the hill.

"Don't you be scared, child. I'll make it all right about your running away; and if the Squire gives you a job, just thank him for it, and do your best to be steady and industrious; then you'll get on, I haven't a doubt," she whispered, ringing the bell at a side-door on which the word "Allen" shone in bright letters.

"Come in!" called a gruff voice, and feeling very much as if he were going to have a tooth out, Ben meekly followed the good woman, who put on her pleasantest smile, anxious to make the best possible impression.

A white-headed old gentleman sat reading a paper, and peered over his glasses at the new-comers with a pair of sharp eyes, saying in a testy tone, which would have rather daunted any one who did not know what a kind heart he had under his capacious waistcoat:

"Good-morning, ma'am! What's the matter now? Young tramp been stealing your chickens?"

"Oh dear no, sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Moss, as if shocked at the idea. Then, in a few words, she told Ben's story, unconsciously making his wrongs and destitution so pathetic by her looks and tones, that the Squire could not help being interested, and even Ben pitied himself as if he was somebody else.

"Now then, boy, what can you do?" asked the old gentleman, with an approving nod to Mrs. Moss as she finished, and such a keen glance from under his bushy brows that Ben felt as if he was perfectly transparent.

"Most anything, sir, to get my livin'."

"Can you weed?"

"Never did, but I can learn, sir."

"Pull up all the beets and leave the pigweed, hey? Can you pick strawberries?"

"Never tried anything but eatin' 'em, sir."

"Not likely to forget that part of the job. Can you ride a horse to plow?"

"Guess I could, sir!"—and Ben's eyes began to sparkle, for he dearly loved the noble animals who had been his dearest friends lately.

"No antics allowed. My horse is a fine fellow, and I'm very particular about him."

The Squire spoke soberly, but there was a twinkle in his eye, and Mrs. Moss tried not to smile, for the Squire's horse was a joke all over the town, being about twenty years old, and having a peculiar gait of his own, lifting his fore-feet very high; with a great show of speed, though never going out of a jog-trot. The boys used to say he galloped before and walked behind, and made all sorts of fun of the big, Roman-nosed beast who allowed no liberties to be taken with him.

"I'm too fond of horses to hurt 'em, sir. As for riding, I aint afraid of anything on four legs. The King of Morocco used to kick and bite like fun, but I could manage him first-rate."

"Then you'd be able to drive cows to pasture, perhaps?"

"I've driven elephants and camels, ostriches and grizzly bears, and mules, and six yellow ponies all to onct. May be I could manage cows if I tried hard," answered Ben, endeavoring to be meek and respectful when scorn filled his soul at the idea of not being able to drive a cow.

The Squire liked him all the better for the droll mixture of indignation and amusement betrayed by the fire in his eyes and the sly smile round his lips; and being rather tickled by Ben's list of animals, he answered, gravely:

"We don't raise elephants and camels much round here. Bears used to be plenty, but folks got tired of them. Mules are numerous, but we have the two-legged kind, and as a general thing prefer Shanghae fowls to ostriches."



THE VISIT TO THE SQUIRE.

He got no farther, for Ben laughed out so infectiously that both the others joined him, and somehow that jolly laugh seemed to settle matters better than words. As they stopped, the Squire tapped on the window behind him, saying, with an attempt at the former gruffness:

"We'll try you on cows awhile. My man will show you where to drive them, and give you some odd jobs through the day. I'll see what you are good for, and send you word to-night. Mrs. Moss, the boy can sleep at your house, can't he?"

"Yes, indeed, sir. He can go on doing it, and come up to his work just as well as not. I can see to him then, and he wont be a care to any one," said Mrs. Moss, heartily.

"I'll make inquiries concerning your father, boy; meantime mind what you are about, and have a good report to give when he comes for you," returned the Squire, with a warning wag of a stern fore-finger.

"Thank y', sir. I will, sir. Father'll come just as soon as he can, if he isn't sick or lost," murmured Ben, inwardly thanking his stars that he had not done anything to make him quake before that awful finger, and resolving that he never would.

Here a red-headed Irishman came to the door, and stood eying the boy with small favor while the Squire gave his orders.

"Pat, this lad wants work. He's to take the cows and go for them. Give him any light jobs you have, and let me know if he's good for anything."

"Yis, your honor. Come out o' this, b'y, till I show ye the bastes," responded Pat; and, with a hasty good-bye to Mrs. Moss, Ben followed his new leader, sorely tempted to play some naughty trick upon him in return for his ungracious reception.

But in a moment he forgot that Pat existed, for in the yard stood the Duke of Wellington, so named in honor of his Roman nose. If Ben had known anything about Shakspeare he would have cried, "A horse, a horse!—my kingdom for a horse!" for the feeling was in his heart, and he ran up to the stately animal without a fear. Duke put back his ears and swished his tail as if displeased for a moment; but Ben looked straight in his eyes, gave a scientific stroke to the iron-gray nose, and uttered a chirrup which made the ears prick up as if recognizing a familiar sound.

"He'll nip ye, if ye go botherin' that way. L'ave him alone, and attend to the cattle as his honor tould ye," commanded Pat, who made a great show of respect toward Duke in public, and kicked him brutally in private.

"I aint afraid! You wont hurt me, will you, old feller? See there now!—he knows I'm a friend, and takes to me right off," said Ben, with an arm around Duke's neck, and his own cheek confidingly laid against the animal's, for the intelligent eyes spoke to him as plainly as the little whinny which he understood and accepted as a welcome.

The Squire saw it all from the open window, and suspecting from Pat's face that trouble was brewing, called out:

"Let the lad harness Duke, if he can. I'm going out directly, and he may as well try that as anything."

Ben was delighted, and proved himself so brisk and handy that the roomy chaise stood at the door in a surprisingly short time, with a smiling little ostler at Duke's head when the Judge came out.

His affection for the horse pleased the old gentleman, and his neat way of harnessing suited as well; but Ben got no praise except a nod and a brief "All right, boy," as the equipage went creaking and jogging away.

Four sleek cows filed out of the barn-yard when Pat opened the gate, and Ben drove them down the road to a distant pasture where the early grass awaited their eager cropping. By the school they went, and the boy looked pityingly at the black, brown and yellow heads bobbing past the windows as a class went up to recite, for it seemed a hard thing to the liberty-loving lad to be shut up there so many hours on a morning like that.

But a little breeze that was playing truant round the steps did Ben a service without knowing it, for a sudden puff blew a torn leaf to his feet, and seeing a picture he took it up. It evidently had fallen from some ill-used history, for the picture showed some queer ships at anchor, some oddly dressed men just landing, and a crowd of Indians dancing about on the shore. Ben spelt out all he could about these interesting personages, but could not discover what it meant, because ink evidently had deluged the page, to the new reader's great disappointment.

"I'll ask the girls; may be they will know," said Ben to himself as, after looking vainly for more stray leaves, he trudged on, enjoying the bobolink's song, the warm sunshine, and a comfortable sense of friendliness and safety, which soon set him to whistling as gayly as any blackbird in the meadow.

CHAPTER VI.

A CIRCULATING LIBRARY.

After supper that night, Bab and Betty sat in the old porch playing with Josephus and Belinda, and discussing the events of the day, for the appearance of the strange boy and his dog had been a most exciting occurrence in their quiet lives. They had seen nothing of him since morning, as he took his meals at the Squire's, and was at work with Pat in a distant field when the children passed. Sancho had stuck closely to his master, evidently rather bewildered by the new order of things, and bound to see that no harm happened to Ben.

"I wish they'd come. It's sun-down, and I heard the cows mooing, so I know they have gone home," said Betty, impatiently; for she regarded the new comer in the light of an entertaining book, and wished to read on as fast as possible.

"I'm going to learn the signs he makes when he wants Sancho to dance; then we can have fun with him whenever we like. He's the dearest dog I ever saw" answered Bab, who was fonder of animals than her sister.

"Ma said—Ow, what's that!" cried Betty, with a start as something bumped against the gate outside, and in a moment Ben's head peeped over the top as he swung himself up to the iron arch, in the middle of which was the empty lantern frame.

"Please to locate, gentlemen; please to locate. The performance is about to begin with the great Flyin' Coopid act, in which Master Bloomsbury has appeared before the crowned heads of Europe. Pronounced by all beholders the most remarkable youthful progidy agoin'. Hooray! here we are!"

Having rattled off the familiar speech in Mr. Smithers's elegant manner, Ben began to cut up such capers that even a party of dignified hens, going down the avenue to bed, paused to look on with clucks of astonishment, evidently fancying that salt had set him to fluttering and tumbling as it did them. Never had the old gate beheld such antics, though it had seen gay doings in its time; for of all the boys who had climbed over it, not one had ever stood on his head upon each of the big balls which ornamented the posts, hung by his heels from the arch, gone round and round like a wheel with the bar for an axis, played a tattoo with his toes while holding on by his chin, walked about the wall on his hands, or closed the entertainment by festooning himself in an airy posture over the side of the lantern frame, and kissing his hand to the audience, as a well-bred Cupid is supposed to do on making his bow.

The little girls clapped and stamped enthusiastically, while Sancho, who had been calmly surveying the show, barked his approval as he leaped up to snap at Ben's feet.

"Come down and tell what you did up at the Squire's. Was he cross? Did you have to work hard? Do you like it?" asked Bab, when the noise had

subsided.

"It's cooler up here," answered Ben, composing himself in the frame, and fanning his hot face with a green spray broken from the tall bushes rustling odorously all about him. "I did all sorts of jobs. The old gentleman wasn't cross; he gave me a dime, and I like him first-rate. But I just *hate* "Carrots"; he swears at a feller, and fired a stick of wood at me. Guess I'll pay him off when I get a chance."

Fumbling in his pocket to show the bright dime, he found the torn page, and remembered the thirst for information which had seized him in the morning.

"Look here, tell me about this, will you? What are these chaps up to? The ink has spoilt all but the picture and this bit of reading. I want to know what it means. Take it to 'em, Sanch."

The dog caught the leaf as it fluttered to the ground, and carrying it carefully in his mouth, deposited it at the feet of the little girls, seating himself before them with an air of deep interest. Bab and Betty picked it up and read it aloud in unison, while Ben leaned from his perch to listen and learn.

"When day dawned land was visible. A pleasant land it was. There were gay flowers, and tall trees with leaves and fruit such as they had never seen before. On the shore were unclad, copper-colored men, gazing with wonder at the Spanish ships. They took them for great birds, the white sails for their wings, and the Spaniards for superior beings brought down from heaven on their backs."

"Why, that's Columbus finding San Salvador. Don't you know about *him*?" demanded Bab, as if she were one of the "superior beings," and intimately acquainted with the immortal Christopher.

"No, I don't. Who was he anyway? I s'pose that's him paddlin' ahead; but which of the Injuns is Sam Salvindoor?" asked Ben, rather ashamed of his ignorance, but bent on finding out now he had begun.

"My gracious! twelve years old and not know your Quackenbos," laughed Bab, much amused, but rather glad to find that she could teach the "whirligig boy" something, for she considered him a remarkable creature.

"I don't care a bit for your quackin' boss, whoever he is. Tell about this fine feller with the ships; I like *him*," persisted Ben.

So Bab, with frequent interruptions and hints from Betty, told the wonderful tale in a simple way, which made it easy to understand, for she liked history, and had a lively tongue of her own.

"I'd like to read some more. Would my ten cents buy a book?" asked Ben, anxious to learn a little since Bab laughed at him.

"No, indeed! I'll lend you mine when I'm not using it, and tell you all about it," promised Bab, forgetting that she did not know "all about it" herself yet.

"I don't have any time only evenings, and then may be you'll want it," begun Ben, in whom the inky page had roused a strong curiosity.

"I do get my history in the evening, but you could have it mornings, before school."

"I shall have to go off early, so there wont be any chance. Yes, there will,— I'll tell you how to do it: Let me read while I drive up the cows. Squire likes 'em to eat slow along the road, so's to keep the grass short and save mowin'. Pat said so, and I could do history instead of loafin' round!" cried Ben, full of this bright idea.

"How will I get my book back in time to recite?" asked Bab, prudently.

"Oh, I'll leave it on the window-sill, or put it inside the door as I go back. I'll be real careful, and just as soon as I earn enough, I'll buy you a new one and take the old one. Will you?"

"Yes; but I'll tell you a nicer way to do. Don't put the book on the window, 'cause teacher will see you; or inside the door, 'cause some one may steal it. You put it in my cubby-house, right at the corner of the wall nearest the big maple. You'll find a cunning place between the roots that stick up under the flat stone. That's my closet, and I keep things there. It's the best cubby of all, and we take turns to have it."

"I'll find it, and that'll be a first-rate place," said Ben, much gratified.

"I could put my reading-book in sometimes, if you'd like it. There's lots of pretty stories in it and pictures," proposed Betty, rather timidly, for she wanted to share the benevolent project, but had little to offer, not being as good a scholar as bright Bab.

"I'd like a 'rithmetic better. I read tip-top, but I aint much on 'rithmetic; so, if you can spare yours, I might take a look at it. Now I'm going to earn wages, I ought to know about addin' 'em up, and so on," said Ben, with the air of a Vanderbilt oppressed with the care of millions.

"I'll teach you that. Betty doesn't know much about sums. But she spells splendidly, and is always at the head of her class. Teacher is real proud of her, 'cause she never misses, and spells hard, fussy words, like *chi-rog-ra-phy* and *bron-chi-tis* as easy as anything."

Bab quite beamed with sisterly pride, and Betty smoothed down her apron with modest satisfaction, for Bab seldom praised her, and she liked it very much.

"I never went to school, so that's the reason I aint smart. I can write, though, better'n some of the boys up at school. I saw lots of names on the shed door. See here now," and scrambling down, Ben pulled out a cherished bit of chalk and flourished off ten letters of the alphabet, one on each of the dark stone slabs that paved the walk.

"Those are beautiful! I can't make such curly ones. Who taught you to do it?" asked Bab, as she and Betty walked up and down admiring them.

"Horse blankets," answered Ben, soberly.

"What!" cried both girls, stopping to stare.

"Our horses all had their names on their blankets, and I used to copy 'em. The wagons had signs, and I learned to read that way after father taught me my letters off the red and yellow posters. First word I knew was lion, 'cause I was always goin' to see old Jubal in his cage. Father was real proud when I read it right off. I can draw one, too."

Ben proceeded to depict an animal intended to represent his lost friend; but Jubal would not have recognized his portrait, since it looked much more

like Sancho than the king of the forest. The children admired it immensely, however, and Ben gave them a lesson in natural history which was so interesting that it kept them busy and happy till bedtime; for the boy described what he had seen in such lively language, and illustrated in such a droll way, it was no wonder they were charmed.

(To be continued.)

MUSIC ON ALL FOURS.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

A Pussy-cat and a Black-and-Tan
Were shut in a room together,
And, after a season of quiet, began
To talk of the change in the weather,
And new spring fashions, and after that
They had a sort of musical chat.
Said Puss: "To me it is quite absurd—
But tastes and opinions vary;
And some have declared that no beast or bird
Can sing like the small canary,—
Who, if it be true as I've heard it told,
Is really worth more than its weight in gold!"

Said the Black-and-Tan, with a pensive smile:
"I've wanted to call attention
To this bit of scandal for quite a while,
And, if not amiss, to mention
That my daily allowance of bark and w(h)ine
Has greatly improved this voice of mine."
"It has," said Puss, with a comic grin;
"The words of truth you have spoken;
A name for ourselves we must strive to win
At once, now the ice is broken;
For one or two doses of catnip tea
Have had a wondrous effect on me!

"'Twas only the other night I strayed
Where a silvery moonbeam slanted,
And gave such a beautiful serenade
You'd have thought the place enchanted.
It roused the neighborhood to a pitch
Of praise, or envy—I can't tell which."
Said the Black-and-Tan, "Why shouldn't we try
To sing a duet together?"
Said the Puss, "I see no reason why
We can't; and we'll show them whether
To birds and bipeds alone belong
The gift of singing a pleasing song!"



THE DUET.

They sang—and they sang; but oh, my dears!
If you had been anywhere near them,
You'd have shut your eyes and stopped your ears,
And wished that you couldn't hear them.
'Twas a brilliant effort, upon my word,
And nearly killed the canary-bird.
The Pussy-cat and the Black-and-Tan
With the music were so delighted,
They will give a concert as soon as they can,
And perhaps we may be invited.
"Bow-wow!" "Miaow!" I'm sorry, you know,
I've another engagement—and cannot go!

A LETTER TO AMERICAN BOYS.

BY GEORGE MACDONALD.

My dear Cousins: Shall I really be talking to you as I sit here in my study with the river Thames now flowing, now ebbing, past my window? I am uttering no word, I am only writing; and you are not listening, not reading, for it will be a long time ere what I am now thinking shall reach you over the millions of waves that swell and sink between us. And yet I shall in very truth be talking to you.

In like manner, with divine differences, God began to talk to us ages before we were born: I will not say before we began to be, for, in a sense, that very moment God thought of us we began to exist, for what God thinks of, *is*. We have been lying for ages in his heart without knowing it. But now we have begun to know it. We are here, with a great beginning, and before us an end so great that there is no end to it. But we must take heed, for, else, the very greatness will turn to confusion and terror.

Shall I explain what made me begin my letter to you just this way?—I was sitting in my room, as I am now, thinking what I should say to you. And as I sat thinking after something worth saying and fit to say, my room spoke to me,—that is, out of its condition and appearance came a thought into my mind. And that you may understand how it came, and how it was what it was, I will first show you what my room at this moment is like. For the thought had nothing to do with the sun outside, or the shining river, or the white-sailed boats, neither with the high wind that is tossing the rosy hawthorn-bloom before my windows, or with the magnolia trained up the wall and looking in at one of them: it had to do only with the inside of the room.

It is a rather long room. The greater part has its walls filled with books, and I am sitting at one end quite surrounded by them. But when I lift my eyes, I look to the other end, and into the heart of a stage for acting upon, filling all the width and a third part of the length of the room. It is surrounded with curtains, but those in front of it are withdrawn, and there the space of it lies before me, a bare, empty hollow of green and blue and red, which to-morrow evening will be filled with group after group of moving, talking, shining, acting men and women, boys and girls. It looked to me like a human heart, waiting to be filled with the scenes of its own story,—with this difference, that the heart itself will determine of what sort those groups shall be. Then there grew up in my mind the following little parable, which, to those who do

not care to understand it, will be dark,—but to those who desire to know its meaning, may give light:

There was once a wise man to whom was granted the power to send forth his thoughts in shapes that other people could see. And, as he walked abroad in the world, he came upon some whom his wisdom might serve. One day, having, in a street of the city where he dwelt, rescued from danger a boy about ten years of age, he went with him to his mother, and begged that he might take him to his house for a week. When they heard his name, the parents willingly let their son go with him. And he taught him many things, and the boy loved and trusted him.

When the boy was asleep in bed, the wise man would go to his room at midnight, and lay his ear to his ear, and hearken to his dreams. Then he would stand and spread out his arms over him and look up. And the boy would smile, and his sleep was the deeper.

Once, just an hour after the sage had thus visited him, the boy woke, and found himself alone in the middle of the night. He could not get to sleep again, and grew so restless that he rose and went down the stair. The moon shone in at every western window, and his way was "now in glimmer and now in gloom." On the first landing he saw a door wide open, which he had never seen open till now. It was the door of the wizard's room. Within, all was bright with moonlight, and the boy first peeped, then stepped in, and peered timidly about him.

The farther end of the room was hidden by a curtain stretched quite across it, and, curious to see what was behind, he approached it. But ere he reached it, the curtain slowly divided in the midst and, drawn back to each side, revealed a place with just light enough in it from the moonshine to show that it was a dungeon. In the middle of it, upon the floor, sat a prisoner, with fetters to his feet, and manacles to his hands; an iron collar was round his neck, and a chain from the collar had its last link in an iron staple deep fixed in the stone floor. His head was sunk on his bosom, and he sat abject and despairing.

"What a wicked man he must be!" thought the boy, and was turning to run away in terror, when the man lifted his head, and his look caught and held him. For he saw a pale, worn, fierce countenance, which, somehow, through all the added years, and all the dirt that defiled it, he recognized as his own. For a moment the prisoner gazed at him mournfully; then a wild passion of rage and despair seized him; he dragged and tore at his chains, raved and shrieked, and dashed himself on the ground like one mad with imprisonment. For a time he lay exhausted, then half rose and sat as before, gazing helplessly upon the ground.

By and by a spider came creeping along the bar of his fetters. He put out his hand, and, with the manacle on his wrist, crushed it, and smiled. Instantly through the gloom came a strong, clear, yet strangely sweet voice—and the very sweetness had in it something that made the boy think of fire. And the voice said:

"So! in the midst of misery, thou takest delight in destruction! Is it not well thou art chained? If thou wast free, thou wouldst in time destroy the world. Tame thy wild beast, or sit there till I tame him."

The prisoner peered and stared through the dusk, but could see no one; he fell into another fit of furious raving, but not a hair-breadth would one link of chain yield to his wildest endeavor.

"Oh, my mother!" he cried, as he sank again into the grave of exhaustion.

"Thy mother is gone from thee," said the voice, "outworn by thine evil ways. Thou didst choose to have thyself and not thy mother, and there thou hast thyself, and she is gone. I only am left to care for thee—not with kisses and sweet words, but with a dungeon. Unawares to thyself thou hast forged thine own chains, and riveted them upon thy limbs. Not Hercules could free thee or himself from such imprisonment."

The man burst out weeping, and cried with sobs:

"What then am I to do, for the burden of them is intolerable?"

"What I will tell thee," said the voice; "for so shall thy chains fall from thee."

"I will do it," said the man.

"Thy prison is foul," said the voice.

"It is," answered the prisoner.

"Cleanse it, then."

"How can I cleanse it when I cannot move?"

"Cannot move! Thy hands were upon thy face a moment gone—and now they are upon the floor! Near one of those hands lies a dead mouse; yonder is an open window. Cast the dead thing out into the furnace of life, that it may speedily make an end thereof."

With sudden obedient resolve the prisoner made the endeavor to reach it. The chain pulled the collar hard, and the manacle wrenched his wrist; but he caught the dead thing by the tail, and with a fierce effort threw it; out of the window it flew and fell—and the air of his dungeon seemed already clearer.

After a silence, came the voice again:

"Behind thee lies a broom," it said; "reach forth and take it, and sweep around thee as far as thy chains will yield thee scope."

The man obeyed, and, as he swept, at every stroke he reached farther. At length,—how it came he could not tell, for his chains hung heavy upon him still,—he found himself sweeping the very foot of the walls.

A moment more, and he stood at the open window, looking out into the world. A dove perched upon the window-sill, and walked inquiringly in; he caught it in his hands, and looked how to close the window, that he might secure its company. Then came the voice:

"Wilt thou, a prisoner, make of thyself a jailer?"

He opened his hands, and the dove darted into the sunlight. There it fluttered and flashed for a moment, like a bird of snow; then re-entered, and flew into his very hands. He stroked and kissed it. The bird went and came, and was his companion.

Still, his chains hung about him, and he sighed and groaned under their weight.

"Set thee down," said the voice, "and polish thine irons."

He obeyed, rubbing link against link busily with his hands. And thus he labored—as it seemed to the boy in the vision—day after day, until at last every portion within his reach, of fetter, and chain, and collar, glittered with brightness.

"Go to the window," then said the voice, "and lay thee down in the sunshine."

He went and lay down, and fell asleep. When he awoke, he began to raise himself heavily; but, lo! the sun had melted all the burnished parts of his bonds, the rest dropped from him, and he sprung to his feet. For very joy of lightness, he ran about the room like a frolicking child. Then said the voice once more:

"Now carve thee out of the wall the figure of a man, as perfect as thou canst think and make it."

"Alas!" said the prisoner to himself, "I know not how to carve or fashion the image of anything."

But as he said it, he turned with a sigh to find among the fragments of his fetters what piece of iron might best serve him for a chisel. To work he set, and many and weary were the hours he wrought, for his attempts appeared to him nothing better than those of a child, and again and ever again as he carved, he had to change his purpose, and cut away what he had carved; for the thing he wrought would not

conform itself to the thing he thought, and it seemed he made no progress in the task that was set him. But he did not know that it was because his thought was not good enough to give strength and skill to his hand,—that it seemed too good for his hand to follow.

One night he wrought hard by the glimmer of his wretched lamp, until, overwearied, he fell fast asleep, and slept like one dead. When he awoke, lo! a man of light, lovely and grand, who stood where he had been so wearily carving the unresponsive stone! He rose and drew nigh. Behold, it was an opening in the wall, through which his freedom shone! The man of light was the door into the universe. And he darted through the wall.

As he vanished from his sight, the boy felt the wind of the morning lave his forehead; but with the prisoner vanished the vision; he was alone, with the moon shining through the windows. Too solemn to be afraid, he crept back to his bed, and fell fast asleep.

In the morning, he knew there had come to him what he now took for a strange dream, but he remembered little of it, and thought less about it, and the same day the wizard took him home.

His mother was out when he arrived, and he had not been in five minutes before it began to rain. It was holiday-time, and there were no lessons, and the school-room looked dismal as a new street. He had not a single companion, and the rain came down with slow persistence. He tried to read, but could not find any enjoyment in it. His thoughts grew more and more gloomy, until at last his very soul was disquieted within him. When his mother came home and sought him in the school-room, she found him lying on the floor, sullen and unkind. Although he knew her step as she entered, he never looked up; and when she spoke to him, he answered like one aggrieved.

"I am sorry you are unhappy," said his mother, sweetly. "I did not know you were to be home to-day. Come with me to my room."

He answered his mother insolently:

"I don't want to go with you. I only want to be left alone."

His mother turned away, and, without another word, left the room.

The cat came in, went up to him purring, and rubbed herself against him. He gave her such a blow that she flew out again, in angry fright, with her back high above her head. And the rain rained faster, and the wind began to blow, and the misery

settled down upon his soul like lead. At last he wept with his face on the floor, quite overmastered by the most contemptible of all passions—self-pity.

Again the voice of his mother came to him. The wizard had in the meantime come to see her, and had just left her.

"Get up, my boy," she said, in a more commanding tone than he had ever heard from her before.

With her words the vision returned upon him, clear, and plain, and strong. He started in terror, almost expecting to hear the chains rattle about him.

"Get up, and make the room tidy. See how you have thrown the books about!" said his mother.

He dared not disobey her. He sprung to his feet, and as he reduced the little chaos around him to order, first calmness descended, and then shame arose. As he fulfilled her word, his mother stood and looked on. The moment he had finished, he ran to her, threw his arms about her neck, burst into honest, worthy tears, and cried:

"Mother!"

Then, after a while, he sobbed out:

"I am sorry I was so cross and rude to my mother."

She kissed him, and put her arms around him, and with his mind's eye he saw the flap of the white dove's wing. She took him by the hand and led him to the window. The sun was shining, and a grand rainbow stood against the black curtain of the receding cataract.

"Come, my child," she said; "we will go out together."

It was long years ere the boy understood *all* the meanings of the vision. I doubt if he understands them all yet. But he will one day. And I can say no more for the wisest of the readers, or for the writer himself, of this parable.

The Father of all the boys on earth and in heaven be with the boys of America! and when they grow up, may they and the men of England understand, and love, and help each other! Amen! Your friend,

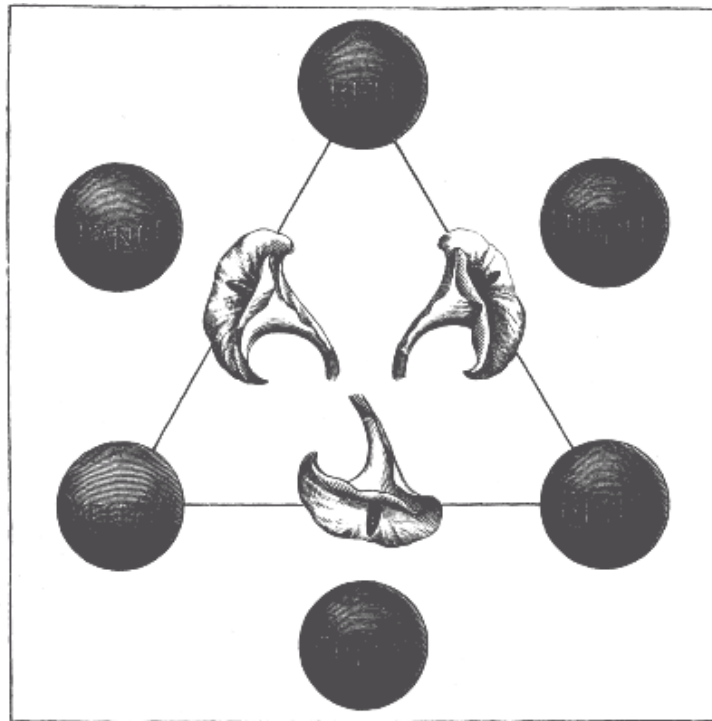
GEORGE MACDONALD.

ANNIE AND THE BALLS.

(A Story for the Kindergarten Children.)

BY H. E. H.

Little Annie had been quite ill, and her mamma thought best to keep her at home from the Kindergarten; but she was now almost well again, and had been promised she should return to her little companions in two more days. Two days seems a long time to a little girl, and Annie seemed so sadly to miss all the pretty amusements of the Kindergarten, that mamma tried to think what she could do to interest her. At last a very bright thought came into her head, and she ran into the hall and whispered it to papa, who was just putting on his hat and coat to go out.



The colored balls

He came back very soon, and brought Annie a box with the Kindergarten colored balls in it.

"Oh!" she cried, "now I can play Kindergarten with my dolls, for they are really growing up quite ignorant, especially Arabella Louisa, who asked me, only

yesterday, to cut her apple into three halves."

All the little stools in the house were soon collected and brought to the nursery, where they were placed in true Kindergarten fashion, and the dolls seated on them with heels together and toes turned out. Rosie was there with her beautiful golden curls, her bright blue eyes, and arms and hands which would move quite as Alice could move her own. Then there were four younger children, and even old Peggy—the rag-baby—was made to sit up very stiff and straight with the aid of a little string, and the lesson began.

Annie took out the yellow ball and asked the babies to point out something in the room the same color. Rosie managed, with a little help from her teacher, to raise her kid arm and point with her dainty finger to the canary-bird.

"Point to something round like the ball," said little Annie, and Arabella Louisa made herself very cross-eyed looking down at her gold beads, but was too bashful to speak. Next Annie brought out the purple ball and laid it down. Then the red and green ones came out, and, lastly, the orange and blue. Now the teacher began to look very dull, even duller than her scholars; her eyelids began to droop, and she spoke very slowly, and said: "Children,—can—you—count—the—balls?" but not hearing any answer, she looked up and found they had all disappeared, and that she was no longer in the nursery. Before her was a beautiful green field dotted all over with buttercups and daisies. After she had stepped around carefully on the soft grass and smelt the flowers, she heard some one call her name, and, looking up, she saw a beautiful castle standing quite alone by itself in the air, while a little fairy in a yellow, gauzy dress beckoned her to come up.

"Oh!" thought Annie, "how I should like to go and make her a pretty courtesy, but I have no wings and cannot fly!"

The kind fairy seeing the sad look on the little girl's face, cried out: "Wait a minute till we get our fairy pipe."

Annie could but wonder of what use a pipe would be, but she had been taught to be patient and wait until things were explained to her; so she stood very quiet, and soon saw the fairy in yellow come floating down to the earth. Behind her came another little creature all in red, and still behind her a third in a beautiful blue dress. Between them they carried a long pipe, much like the one Roger, the gardener, smoked; and when they were in front of the little girl they began to blow through it very hard, and Annie soon found herself inside a a large soap-bubble, and felt that she was gently floating upward in her fairy balloon. When she reached the castle she touched the thin wall with her fingers and it melted away, and left her standing in Fairy Land!

Her three companions—the fairy in yellow, the one in red, and the one in blue—crowded around her, and cried "Welcome!" three times. Then they made a place for three more, who tried to smile and say "Welcome!" also, but could only look very sad and wipe a tiny tear from their little eyes.

Now, Annie was a kind little girl, and she asked them in her gentlest voice what made them sad, and they all replied: "Oh, we want some dresses so badly; these are only our little skirts made out of cobwebs."

"What color do you want?" said Annie.

"Well," said the first, "*I* want one of green, like the beautiful grass and the leaves of the trees."

"Ah!" sighed Annie, "if I could *only* remember how our teacher told us to make green, but I am afraid I have forgotten."

Away ran one of the fairies, and soon came back with a little white cap, which she placed upon Annie's head, saying: "This is our thinking-cap," and as soon as it touched the child's brown curls, she cried: "I've thought! If you mix yellow and blue together it will make green; but how can we do it?"

"Oh, *we* know!" all the six cried together, and they brought a lily filled with dew, and the fairy with the yellow dress and the one with the blue dress dipped their little skirts in it, and they stirred the dew around with a tiny wand, and took out a lovely green robe, which was put on the fairy who had chosen that color, and she began to smile very sweetly.

Now, the next one stepped up, and said: "*I* want a dress of purple like the beautiful sweet violets which grow in our little gardens."

As Annie still had the thinking-cap on, she quickly told them that red and blue must be mixed together, and another lily was brought and the red and blue dresses dipped in it; and after some stirring, out came a beautiful purple frock, and the fairy who had chosen this smiled even more sweetly than the other one.

Now, Annie turned to the last one and asked her what color she wanted, and she replied: "*I* want a dress of orange."

"I do not need the cap this time," said Annie, "for I remember that red and yellow will make orange."

So a third lily was brought by the fairies, and when the red and yellow dresses were dipped in it, out came one of an orange color, and the fairy who put this on really laughed aloud. Then taking hold of hands, all the little things began to dance gayly

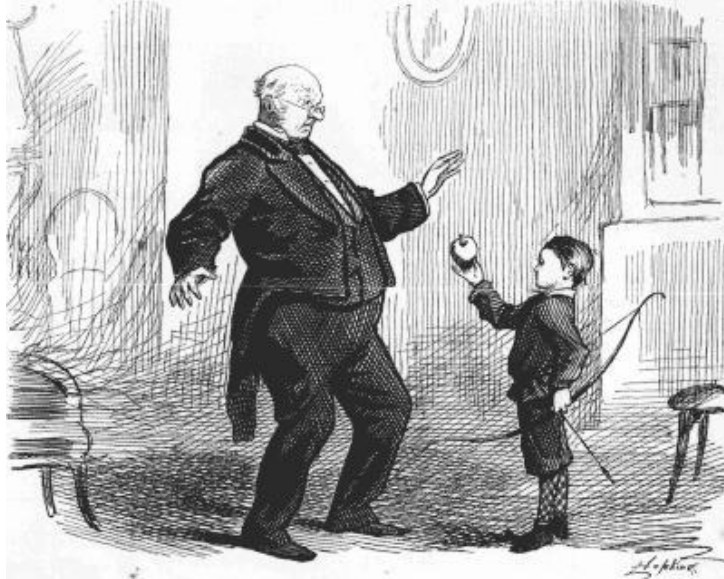
around Annie, who was quite tired from her long journey, and had asked permission to lie on the soft bed of moss.

She noticed that wherever the red fairy went the green one followed close behind. The blue fairy and the one with the orange dress kept close together with their arms around each other, and the yellow and purple fairies kissed, and seemed to say such very pretty things of each other that Annie thought they must be the *complementary* colors that she had heard her mother talk about. Just now it grew quite dark, and as Annie looked up at the clouds she felt a rain-drop on her cheek, and looking at her companions she saw that every drop clung to their clothing, and looked like beautiful diamonds and pearls. The shower lasted only a little while, and then the sun came out, and the fairies all called out: "Good-by, kind Lady Annie, we are wanted now away up in the sky!" and they floated up one above the other, and stretched themselves out quite long, and arched their bodies very gracefully; and as Annie turned her face away from where the sun was setting, she saw in the opposite direction a beautiful rainbow, and she knew why the fairies had been called away.

"Annie! Annie!!"

"Why, that is my name," thought the little girl; and she gave a jump and opened her eyes, and can you believe me, she was back in the nursery, the balls were lying on the floor just as she had left them, and the dolls were all staring at her with their round glass eyes.

A MODERN WILLIAM TELL.



"HERE, GRANDPA, LET'S PLAY WILLIAM TELL. I'LL BE MR. TELL, AND YOU MAY PLAY
YOU'RE MY SON,
AND STAND OVER THERE BY THE MIRROR WHILE I SHOOT THIS APPLE OFF YOUR HEAD."

THE KING AND THE THREE TRAVELERS.

BY ARLO BATES.

Three travelers, who had been found asleep in the royal park, were once brought before King Jollimon. In answer to inquiries, they said that they were story-tellers, who earned their living by relating those tales and legends of which the inhabitants of Jolliland are so extravagantly fond.

"If that be so," said the king, "and if you can tell stories worth hearing, you are indeed welcome. The court story-teller has just been banished for presuming to tell the same story twice, and his place is unfilled. It would be a right royal idea to have three story-tellers instead of one."

So the three travelers, after having been refreshed with food and drink, were bidden to seat themselves at the august feet of King Jollimon, that they might prove their power to please the royal fancy by strange and unheard tales.

They were all old and withered; and the first had a crooked back, the second a crooked nose, and the third a crooked mouth. He of the crooked back began, and told the tale of

THE RAVEN MAIDEN.

There once lived a young and accomplished prince called Orca. His father was king over all the country and the neighboring provinces, and Orca was his only heir.

The prince was a daring hunter, and went often to the royal forests, sometimes in company with the lords of the court, but oftener alone. For it so happened that the gamekeeper had a young daughter, Sipelie, who was as fair as the morning, and as modest as she was fair; and the prince, having seen her, of course fell over head and ears in love with her, forgetting all differences of wealth and station. As for Sipelie, having no mother to tell her better, although she took good care to wait a modest while before showing it, she gave away her whole heart to him. Nor was this so much to be wondered at, for Orca was every inch a prince, and a fine, manly fellow beside. And so I warrant there was billing and cooing enough at the gamekeeper's lodge, for when the prince came the gamekeeper kept discreetly in the background, and Sipelie had no brothers or sisters to be in the way.



THE CROOKED-BACKED TRAVELER TELLS A STORY TO THE KING.

But the course of true love is never without its rapids, and it was not long before Orca's visits to Sipelie began to be talked about among the nobles. So at last the news came to the ears of the Lady Ildea, the prime minister's daughter, who hoped to win Prince Orca herself. The Lady Ildea's temper was certainly none of the best, nor was her beauty at all to be compared with that of the gamekeeper's daughter. She had long laid siege to the heart of the prince, and she was now convinced that it was only on account of the peasant maiden that she made so little progress.

The Lady Ildea was not unskilled in magic, and by consultation with divers not very respectable spirits, she found means to transform the beautiful Sipelie into a raven. Thus it happened that when the prince went as usual to visit his beloved, he found the cottage empty, and no living thing in sight but a raven, which croaked dolorously from a neighboring tree. When the gamekeeper appeared, in answer to Prince Orca's eager questions, he could only say that his daughter was missing. Together, the two men searched the whole night for the lost maiden; but neither then, nor in any after search, could a trace of Sipelie be discovered.

It is needless to speak of the gamekeeper's grief, or the prince's despair. Both refused to be comforted, and the unhappy prince became so pale and thin that it was pitiful to see.

In all his grief and anguish, the Lady Ildea showed a deep sympathy, encouraging him to tell her all his woes, and if she could not comfort him, she at least wept for him, and that was something.

And so it went on until the prince was taken violently ill. The wise men gathered about his bed, and at last concluded, after many long and tedious days of consultation, that his sickness was caused by an evil influence, which they ascribed to a raven that had been noticed fluttering continually about the palace windows. They farther announced that the prince could only be cured by the juice of certain wild herbs, which were exceedingly rare, and which only grew in wild and dangerous places in the mountains. Messengers were dispatched throughout the whole country in search of the precious herbs, but the third day a bundle of the plants was found on the ledge of the prince's window. No one knew whence they came, nor did any one notice that the raven sat on a distant tree, and watched until the herbs were taken in, but then flew silently away, to return no more.

The prince now rapidly recovered, and was soon able to go again into the open air. The lady Ildea had been most attentive throughout his illness, and on the first day on which he went to the hunt, she rode by his side. She was outwardly calm enough, but inwardly she was not at all at ease. Only one day remained of the duration of the magic spell which ensnared Sipelie, and Prince Orca had not yet forgotten the peasant maiden, or bound himself to Ildea. As they followed the hounds through the pleasant forest, the sharp eyes of the lady espied a raven fluttering along from branch to branch, always keeping near the prince.

She pointed it out to her companion, saying, "Do you see the bird of ill omen? It is the same which brought you illness. Now is your time to destroy it."

Prince Orca raised his bow, but lowered it again, for something within stayed his hand, and he said: "Let the poor blackamoor live. I have been too near death myself to feel like harming it."

"If you do not care for yourself," said Lady Ildea, "others do. It might bring you harm again." And with unerring aim she sent an arrow flying through the air. The raven fell, uttering a last mournful cry. But Lady Ildea was not satisfied. Hastily dismounting, she ran through the grass to where the bird lay, and found the body of the maiden Sipelie, pierced to the heart, and covered with blood. Horror-struck, she turned away, but at that instant she trod upon an adder, which suddenly darted its fangs into her foot, inflicting a mortal wound.

"And served her right," quoth King Jollimon, as the crooked-backed man ended. "The prince is left to bury the dead, I suppose. Well, I've heard worse tales, I'm sorry to say; but I generally hear better ones. What have you to tell?" he added, nodding to the man with the crooked nose.

"Mine is a fable, and very instructive," said he; "And the moral——"

"Moral me no morals," interrupted King Jollimon. "Tell your fable, if you please; but I'll draw my own moral as mild as I please."

Thus admonished, he of the crooked nose told the tale of

THE WISE CAT.

A certain cat set out to seek his fortune, and traveled through the whole world. At last he came to a country where a cat had never been seen before. The inhabitants were at first frightened by the strange monster, but having observed Puss killing the mice with which the country was overrun, they plucked up courage, and approaching him, requested that he should follow them before the king. Puss complied willingly enough, and the end of the matter was that he was installed rat-catcher to the king, and a large salary bestowed upon him. The faithfulness with which Puss discharged his duties raised him high in the royal regard, and a circumstance soon occurred which advanced him still further. The king took his naps by an open window, and had a plate of cherries placed beside him that he might eat them when he awoke. A crow from the neighboring forest constantly stole the fruit, nor had all the efforts of the king's servants succeeded in destroying the bird. The cat, however, concealed himself in the window-hangings, and pounced upon the unlucky marauder, and broke his neck. The king was full of gratitude, and ordered that Puss's salary be increased. Soon after, a bear came and ravaged the king's flocks. His majesty commanded Puss to kill him. "I can only do what I am able," pleaded the cat; but the king insisted. While Puss was coming, Bruin attacked the store of a swarm of bees, and was stung to death. "You have done as I knew you would, my dear cat," said the king, and would listen to no explanations. The cat received the Order of the Royal Shoe-string.

Next an elephant came and ravaged the crops. The king sent the cat to attack him. "Alas! I can only do what I am able," again pleaded the cat, but there was no moving the king. While the cat was coming, the elephant fell into a pit and was killed.

"You have done as I knew you would," said the king once more; and the cat received the Order of the Royal Penknife, and the care of the Royal Shoe-brush.

A great army marched to subdue the kingdom. The king gave himself no uneasiness. "Have we not the cat here?" he asked. "My dear, go and put these troublesome fellows to flight."

"Alas! your majesty," said the unfortunate cat, "I can but do as I am able, and luck will turn at last;" but the king was stubborn as ever. And while the cat was coming, a band of the enemy fell upon him and destroyed him; and they overthrew all the kingdom. The king was taken prisoner and compelled to feed cats all his life. "That ungrateful cat!" he continually exclaimed.

"And do you call that a fable?" asked King Jollimon. "I should have let you tell the moral, that there might have been some good to it. Come, you fellow," he said to the crooked-mouthed man, "speak quickly. I long to hear another tale, that I may forget this."

And this tale was that of

HANS AND PETER.

Hans and Peter met one fine morning on the way to market. Hans was large and stout; the world always went easily with him; he troubled himself as little as possible about the cares of life, and seemed to grow plumper every day.

Peter, on the other hand, was thin and slim. He was continually worrying himself about some trifle, and his face grew more and more care-worn every day.

"Good morrow, friend Peter," said plump Hans, in a hearty tone of cheer.

"Good-day, neighbor!" answered Peter, solemnly.

"Why are you so downcast?" asked Hans.

"Downcast! Have you no troubles," retorted Peter, "that you cannot understand why people look downcast?"

"I?" said jovial Hans. "I've only one trouble in the world, and that does not trouble me. My wife complains because I have become so stout."

"Happy man!" exclaimed Peter. "My friends complain because I am so thin."

"My friends say it makes me move too slowly," said Hans.

"My wife upbraids me," returned Peter, "because I move so very quickly."

"Suppose we change bodies!" said they both in a breath. And they changed.

Again, in a few months, Hans and Peter met one fine morning; and Hans was again large and stout, while Peter had become thin and slim.

"What have you done to my body?" asked Hans.

"What have you done to my body?" asked Peter.

"I was puzzled at first," said Hans, "to know whether I was Hans or Peter; but it soon came right."

"At first," returned Peter, "I knew not whether I was Peter or Hans, but as you say, it soon came right."

"Then the difference," remarked Hans, "is not *my* body."

"Nor *my* body," put in Peter.

"But," said they both, "ourselves!"

"Worse and worse," said King Jollimon, at the conclusion of the remarkable legend. "If there were four of you, I shudder to think what a bad story the fourth one would tell!"

"It is because we did not know your majesty's taste," said the man with the crooked back. "If you would hear us once more, we should please you better."

"I have heard enough," said the king; but upon second thought he consented that they should try again.

And first the crooked-backed man told the tale of

THE EGG-SHELL.

A boy once met a magician, who gave him an egg-shell, telling him to place it in his mouth, but on no account to break it. The boy was as foolish as boys usually are, so he instantly obeyed him, without at all stopping to think what the consequences might be. Immediately his head swelled up like an enormous balloon, so that the wind nearly blew him away. He managed to catch hold of a post and save himself from this fate, and a crowd began to gather around his head. His body was quite out of sight underneath, and only the huge head was to be seen.

As everybody stood staring at the wonderful sight, a fly lit on the boy's cheek. He could not reach it himself, for his arms would not reach a tenth part of the way to his chin; so he asked one of the bystanders to kill the troublesome insect. The boy's voice was so smothered by the egg-shell that it was long before he could make himself understood; but at last the man got an idea of what was wanted, and aimed a severe blow at the fly. The insect flew away unharmed, but the boy started so suddenly that he bit the egg-shell in two, and his head collapsed to its natural size. So there was a little boy in the middle of the place, holding on by a post, and a crowd of people looking at him from a distance.

"What a disappointment!" said the boy's mother. "He was fast becoming remarkable! But then, what a sum his hats would have cost! After all, it is best as it is."

"And besides," added a neighbor, "how could you have got at him to punish him?"

"To be sure!" answered the mother.

"This is better than the first, because it is shorter," said the king; and the man with a crooked nose began the story of

THE CROOKED-NOSED PHILOSOPHER.

"There was once a man," he said, "with a nose so long that it reached half way round his head, and thus the point was continually behind him. This not unnaturally caused him a great deal of trouble, but in the end was the means of his good fortune, as you shall hear. For once, as he sat reading, he felt something on the end of his nose, and turning round his head he saw a fly sitting on the point of it."

"Saw a fly on the point!" interrupted King Jollimon. "What do you take me for, that you thus try to impose such stories on me? Can a man see what is behind him?"

"Certainly, if he turns round," answered the traveler, quite unmoved.

"If he turns round!" repeated the king, in a rage, "can one see the back of his head? I have turned round, but I never could see my back."

"That is because your majesty always looks away from it," replied the other. "If you would turn round and look toward the back of your head, you would undoubtedly see it."

"Do you presume to dispute with me?" screamed his majesty, getting very red in the face. He felt sure he was right, but he could not answer the traveler's argument. "Do you presume to dispute with me?" he repeated. "Get out of my sight, and if one of you three vagabonds, with your trumpery stories, is found in all the kingdom of Jolliland by sunset to-morrow, I'll have every man of you beheaded three times over. A man see his back, indeed!"

And thus it happened that the tale of "The Crooked-Nosed Philosopher" was never concluded, which was the greater pity, since, if the end was like the beginning, it must have been a very marvelous tale.

SOMETHING IN THE OLD CLOTHES LINE.

BY PAUL FORT.

When I look at pictures of people of old times, I often think what a curious thing it is that the only apparent difference between them and the people of the present day is to be seen in their clothes.

If we could take a dozen or so of ancient Greeks and Romans; some gentlemen and ladies of the middle ages; a party of our great-grandfathers and mothers, and some nice people who are now living in the next street, and were to dress all the women in calico frocks and sun-bonnets, and all the men in linen coats and trousers and broad straw hats, with their hair cut short; and were then to jumble them all up together, and make them keep their tongues quiet, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for a committee, unacquainted with any of the party, to pick out the ancients, the middle-agers, or the moderns.

Lady Jane Grey, or Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, or Helen of Troy, would not look unlike the other women in sun-bonnets and calico frocks; and while there would be a greater difference in the men, whose nationality might show more strongly, Christopher Columbus, Nero, and Marco Bozzaris would be pretty much the same kind of fellows as the other men of the party.

It is certainly a fact that there are a great many more points of strong resemblance between the people of past ages and ourselves than most of us suppose. It is often very surprising, when reading of the domestic life of the past, to see how precisely similar, in some respects, it was to our own. And, as I have said, the people looked, with the exception of their clothes, very much as we do—meaning by "we" the people of the present day, all over the world.

In 1876, at the Centennial Exposition, I saw a marble bust—life size—which was a portrait of a lady of ancient Rome. There was only the head and neck, the hair was dressed very plainly, and it was astonishing how well that bust would have answered for the portrait of a lady of Thirty-fourth street, New York, or the wife of a gentleman in Springfield, Ohio. The head and face were just such a head and face as I had often seen, and the countenance even seemed familiar to me.

But dress makes all the difference in the world. Had I met that lady attired in her flowing Roman garments, with her golden head-dress and her sandaled feet, I should have had no thought of Thirty-fourth street, or Springfield, Ohio.

And so down the whole line of ages you can tell, pretty nearly, when a man or a woman lived, if you can but get an idea of his or her clothes.

The next thing which strikes most of us when looking at the pictures of old-time people, is a feeling of wonder how they ever could have been willing to make such scarecrows of themselves.

To be sure, we are willing to admire the flowing robes of Greece and Rome, although we feel quite sure that our style of dress is much more sensible, and we have an admiration for a soldier clad in armor, as well as for the noblemen and gentry who figured, some hundreds of years ago, in their splendid velvets and laces, their feathers and cocked hats, and their diamond-hilted swords.

But, as a rule, the garments of our ancestors appear very ridiculous to us. If we did not have good reasons for belief to the contrary, we should be very apt to consider them a set of fools.

It even seems a little wonderful that people should be able to invent such curious fashions of dressing themselves.

Think, for instance, of the wife of Jean Van Eyck, a celebrated old Dutch painter, who was willing to dress her hair so that she looked like a cat, and, moreover, had her portrait taken in that style, so that future generations might see what a guy she was!

Yes, the picture painted over five hundred years ago hangs to-day in the Academy of Bruges, and the staidest little Belgians laugh when they look at it. You may see it yourselves some day, but, if not, you can at least enjoy this excellent copy, which has been engraved for ST. NICHOLAS from a photograph of the painting. If you look at her face, you will see that in feature she is very much like an ordinary woman of the present day. There is nothing at all distinctive about her countenance. As far as that is concerned, she might just as well have lived now as at any other time.

But if she were to appear in an ordinary evening company dressed in the style in which you see her in the picture, the difference between her and the other ladies would be very striking, to say the least.



**THE WOMAN WHO LOOKED
LIKE A CAT.**

The curious methods of dress in olden times were so many, and were of such infinite variety, that I cannot even allude to them in a little article like this; but you cannot look at very many pictures of the people of by-gone days without seeing some costume which will appear quite funny, if not absolutely absurd.

You need not go very far back either. What could be queerer than the high coat-collars of some of your great-grandfathers, which came up under their ears, while their throats were wrapped in fold after fold of long cravats—or else encircled by a hard, stiff stock,—and the hind-buttons of their coats were away up in the middle of their backs!

But perhaps your great-grandmothers, with the waists of their gowns just under their arms, with their funny long mittens and their great calash bonnets, were just as queer as their husbands.

Now the question comes very naturally to us: Why did these people, as well as the people who came before them, dress in such ridiculous fashions? We know that many of them were very sensible folk, who knew how to do many things as well as we can do them, and some things a great deal better. Mentally and physically the most of them are not surpassed by the people who live now. Then why did not they know enough to dress sensibly and becomingly as we do?

In reply to this I will say that your great-grandfather and your great-grandmother, unless they belonged to some religious sect which regulated the clothes of its members, would have dressed exactly as your father and mother now do, if it had been the fashion in their day.

And if you had seen their portraits, dressed in clothes of the present day (which, had those old people worn them, would have been out of fashion long before you were born), you would have thought they looked perfectly ridiculous.

The truth of the matter is, that with a great many of us the attractive and desirable qualities of clothes depend entirely upon their relations to the current styles or fashions. We think everything unbecoming and ugly excepting those styles; and no matter how absurd the present fashion may be, there are not ten persons out of a thousand who, when they become used to them, do not admire them and follow them to the extent of their ability.

There are few of you who are not old enough to remember fashions of dress, which at one time you and every one else considered very stylish and becoming, and which now would make a perfect fright of any one who would be bold enough to wear them.

Indeed, were a fine lady to make her appearance in the streets of one of our large cities dressed in the hoops and wide skirts in which she was so fashionable and attractive a few years ago, the street boys would hoot her, and she might walk about all day without meeting a single person who would think that there was anything whatever to be said in favor of such a costume.

Of course, some fashions are uglier and more absurd than others, and it is not strange that we wonder how sensible people could have endured them; but if these very styles were to become fashionable again, most of us would adopt them.

If, in a few years, it should become the fashion for ladies to dress their hair like that of the good wife of Jean Van Eyck, I feel quite certain that nearly all the fashionable ladies you know would go about looking very much like cats. This may seem a libelous assertion; but if you will keep a watch on the fashions, I think you will find I am correct, provided the Van Eyck style comes up.

TOMMY'S DREAM; OR, THE GEOGRAPHY DEMON.

BY LAURA E. RICHARDS.

I HATE my geography lesson!
It's nothing but nonsense and names;
To bother me so every morning,
It's really the greatest of shames.
The brooks, they flow into the rivers,
And the rivers flow into the sea;
I hope, for my part, they enjoy it,
But what does it matter to me?
Of late, even more I've disliked it,
And more disagreeable it seems,
Ever since the sad evening last winter,
When I had that most frightful of dreams.
I thought that a great horrid monster
Stood suddenly there in my room—
A frightful Geography Demon,
Enveloped in darkness and gloom;
His body and head like a mountain,
A volcano on top for a hat;
His arms and his legs were like rivers,
With a brook round his neck for cravat.
He laid on my poor trembling shoulder
His fingers, cold, clammy and long;
And fixing his red eyes upon me,
He roared forth this horrible song:
"Come! come! rise and come
Away to the banks of the Muskingum!
It flows o'er the plains of Timbuctoo,
With the peak of Teneriffe just in view.
And the cataracts leap in the pale moonshine,
As they dance o'er the cliffs of Brandywine.
"Flee! flee! rise and flee
Away to the banks of the Tombigbee!

We'll pass by Alaska's flowery strand,
Where the emerald towers of Pekin stand;
We'll pass them by, and will rest awhile
On Michillimackinac's tropic isle;
While the apes of Barbary frisk around,
And the parrots crow with a lovely sound.
"Hie! hie! rise and hie
Away to the banks of the Yang-tze-ki!
There the giant mountains of Oshkosh stand,
And the icebergs gleam through the falling sand;
ts on the palm-tree high,
And the cannibals feast on bad-boy pie.
"Go! go! rise and go
Away to the banks of the Hoang-ho
There the Chickasaw sachem makes his tea,
And the kettle boils and waits for thee.
We'll smite thee, ho! and we'll lay thee low,
On the beautiful banks of the Hoang-ho!"
These terrible words were still sounding
 Like trumpets and drums through my head,
When the monster clutched tighter my shoulder,
 And dragged me half out of the bed.
In terror, I clung to the bed-post;
 But the faithless bed-post, it broke.
I screamed out aloud in my anguish,
 And suddenly—well, I awoke.
He was gone. But I cannot forget him,
 The fearful Geography Sprite.
He has my first thought in the morning,
 He has my last shudder at night.
Do you blame me for hating my lesson?
 Is it strange that it frightful should seem?
Or that I more and more should abhor it
 Since I had that most horrible dream?

THE TOWER MOUNTAIN

BY GUSTAVUS FRANKENSTEIN.

II.

When I reached the crowd of monkeys who were making such a noise and were evidently in such trouble, I soon saw what was the matter. A very large monkey had his claws fastened in the back of a much smaller one, and was biting him in the shoulder—the little fellow shrieking, and the others dreadfully excited, yet hesitating to come to the rescue.

What are monkeys compared to a man? I rushed in, seized the ruffian by the throat, which loosened his hold upon the weaker party, and hurling him with all my force against the ground, broke his ugly skull upon the rock on which it struck.

Then, such a yell of delight as went up from that motley monkey crew! It was simply indescribable. This was immediately followed by an immense amount of jabbering, as they gathered in little groups, no doubt discussing the merits of the action and the valor of the hero. Doubtless the monkey I had slain was a great tyrant over the others, by reason of his superior size and strength, and they were congratulating one another upon their deliverance from his hated rule.

His last victim—poor little fellow!—I raised from the ground, washed his wounds, and, gathering some plantain-leaves, placed them carefully over the lacerated flesh, and bound them on snugly and firmly with strips of palm-leaf.

The little creature looked at me very affectionately, evincing by his expression the deepest gratitude.

As he was in a very sad plight indeed, I nursed and petted him until quite late in the afternoon, his companions not far off observing my movements with great interest. At last I said to the wounded monkey:

"Now, little fellow, go your way in peace. Take care of yourself, and you will get well. Good-bye!"

I took my basket and started up the hill. Occasionally I looked back to see what he was doing, and each time his gaze was fixed on me; and when I had entirely lost

sight of him, I began to regret that I had not taken him with me and cared for him until he should get well.

Pippity, as I returned, was overjoyed to see me. He had certainly grown anxious at my long absence.

"Pippity," I said, "I shall not go down again into the valley for a long time. We have had cocoa-nuts enough lately; let us enjoy that which is around us."

But, after a couple of months had passed away, knowing that Pippity was very fond of the cocoa-nuts (and I, too, liked very much the milk they contained), I determined to go and get some more.

I was getting the nuts down from the trees as best I could, when, all at once, I was surprised at their falling around me fast and thick, and on looking up, there was a little monkey throwing them down! At first, I thought he was throwing them at me; but he stopped when he saw me looking up, and I went on gathering and putting them in the basket. Not one of them that had been thrown down had hit me, so I concluded that the monkey had no evil design, but that, on the contrary, he was trying to do me a good turn.

"That's a pretty good sort of monkey," I thought, "and I wouldn't mind meeting him any time I come down. He has saved me to-day considerable trouble."

Then, up the mountain I went, and got back home quite early, which seemed to surprise Pippity not a little.

The next time I went down, the same thing happened again; and so on for a number of times.

Once, after taking up my basket and starting for home, I noticed a little monkey (I thought it was the very one that had so kindly thrown me the cocoa-nuts) following me at some distance. The next trip I made, this occurred again, and this time the monkey kept following me nearer and nearer, until, finally, I heard at my heels a slight squeal, and on looking around there was the little creature.

"Why, monkey!" I exclaimed, "what in the world do you want?"

He stood there, trembling somewhat, I thought; but quickly he leaped on my back, and put his arms around my neck. I was a little frightened, at first; but, taking hold of his hands, I gently loosened his hold and brought him around in front of me, when, holding him out to view, I saw a scar on his shoulder.

"Oh! it's you, is it?" I cried. "Then it's you who have been throwing me the cocoa-nuts all this time. It's plain you haven't forgotten a favor." I set him on the ground.

"Go, join your comrades, and, whenever you feel disposed to throw me cocoa-nuts, I shall always accept the kindness as a very great favor."

But monkey wouldn't go and join his comrades, and persisted in following me. I did not want to speak unkind words or use harsh measures toward him, although I tried everything I could think of to induce him to leave me; but all my efforts to get rid of him failed. He followed me home.

Pippity was a little surprised to see two individuals instead of one approaching, and eyed the stranger with much curiosity.

After we had partaken of refreshments, I addressed our guest in the following words:

"Monkey, since you have followed me, and seem inclined to join our society, I shall not object to your remaining, provided you behave yourself properly; and I have no doubt that my worthy friend to whom I have had the high honor of introducing you, will heartily second me in any effort looking toward your comfort and general well-being. You may make this your home, if it so pleases you. If you want to leave us to-morrow, go. If you would like to remain with us until death shall us three part, you are welcome."

I was curious to see how Pippity would treat the new-comer. It was to be expected that he would show some signs of jealousy, but his was a noble nature, and scorned to descend to such mean conduct. He and the monkey were almost immediately on the best of terms, at which I was much pleased, for I would not for a moment have endured any quarreling in my household.

When our cocoa-nuts were nearly all gone, I went down for some more. It was not long after this that, one fine day, the monkey was missing. Neither did he come back the next day. About noon, I said to Pippity:

"Pippity, we have but few cocoa-nuts left. To-morrow I shall go down and get another supply; and who knows but I may meet our friend the monkey? Although he was at any time at liberty to leave us if he liked, yet I confess I have a desire to know what has become of him. Perhaps some accident has befallen him."

While I was yet speaking, a cocoa-nut rolled into our house.

"Why, what's that?" I exclaimed; and, looking out, there was the little monkey, just without the entrance, in the very act of throwing a cocoa-nut into the cavern! Going toward him, I saw him catch one thrown to him by another monkey.

Now, here was a most singular performance, and one which certainly demanded investigation. Where did the second monkey get *his* cocoa-nut? I went toward him,

and found that he caught a cocoa-nut thrown to him by a third monkey about fifteen feet beyond him.

As the nuts kept coming all the time, the sight was highly interesting.

To ascertain the true state of the case I went farther; found a fourth monkey, then a fifth, then a sixth; and as I proceeded I left one monkey only to find another farther on, all about fifteen feet one from the other, some perched on rocks, some on trees, forming a zigzag line down the mountain, all busily catching and throwing the cocoa-nuts in the most remarkably systematic fashion, There must have been sixty monkeys or more engaged in this delightful occupation.

I went back and found a large pile of the fruit in our house; and thinking we had enough for a long time to come, I would have liked to be able to make our little monkey understand that we wanted no more. The parrot had learned to discover my wishes very well, but with the monkey I supposed it would be a matter of some difficulty to make him comprehend me. He seemed to divine my thoughts, however, or else his own good sense came to his aid, for, almost immediately, he gave a little shriek, which the next monkey took up, and which went along the line until the sounds died away in the distance. After this a few more nuts rolled into the house, then the throwing and catching ceased, and the monkeys which had been in sight disappeared, with the exception of our little friend, who sprang, all elasticity and animation, into our domicile.

"Now, come, my little friend, sit up and have something to eat," I said. "You must be hungry after the expenditure of so much energy. We had given you up for lost; but now, after this evidence of your good-will toward us, we are satisfied that you really intend to remain with us."

I wished the monkey was able to relate to us how he managed to assemble so many of his friends, and to get them to act with such perfect accord; and how, in the first place, he could make them understand what he wished them to do. Of course, not being able to talk, he could give us no explanation of how the thing was brought about. I could therefore only form an opinion in the matter, which was as follows:

Our little friend was undoubtedly a great favorite with his fellows, and although he was as gentle as a kitten he was not without power, and his companions were ever ready to serve him out of sheer good-will. When, therefore, after he had been rescued from the ferocious monkey, his appreciation of a kind action naturally enkindled in him a desire to return the favor in some way, he threw me the cocoa-nuts from the trees; and, although I believe that from the first he felt an ardent desire to be near his benefactor, his natural modesty prevented his thrusting himself upon me without considerable preliminary skirmishing. His fellow monkeys, keenly

sensible of his noble qualities, and happy in having got rid of the odious despot who had so long oppressed them, were only too glad to aid him in any reasonable and honorable project which might benefit the hero who had slain their hated ruler. But by what queer signs and by what sort of jabbering our little monkey had made his wishes known to his companions, only he and they knew.

I now took occasion to tell our four-handed friend that he must have a name.

"'Grilly' you shall be called," I said; "and, although you cannot utter our names, common politeness requires that you be informed of them. There is Pippity, the parrot, and here am I, Frank, the man."

As Pippity was a good scholar, while Grilly yet remained uneducated, it was a source of grief to me that the monkey continued in his deplorable ignorance in the midst of such enlightened society.

What was to be done?

Talk he could not. There was not the slightest use in making any effort in that direction, because nature had failed to furnish him with the organs needed for speaking articulately.

I had noticed frequently, when going down into the valley, a certain rock which fell in pieces by splitting off in smooth plates; and another kind which lay scattered about in small fragments that would make marks like chalk-marks. This substance was of a reddish color, and, on the purplish surface of the thin slabs of the harder rock, it made very clear, distinct lines.

On one of these slabs I wrote the alphabet in large letters, and began by teaching Pippity his A B C's. The next step was to instruct Grilly how to hold the pencil. Taking his hand in mine, I guided it in making the letters. He was rather slow at first in comprehending the science or acquiring the knack of tracing the letters; but continued application will accomplish wonders even with a monkey; and in a few weeks' time Grilly would make any letter at command. I got Pippity to call out the alphabet while Grilly wrote. Thus they taught each other—Pippity addressing the monkey's ear, and Grilly appealing to the parrot's eye.

After they were thus well grounded in the alphabet, I made them spell short and familiar words. I would spell the words to Pippity, and he would repeat them in a loud, clear voice to Grilly, whose province of course it was to write them in a bold, legible hand, whilst the parrot kept his eye sharply on the writing; and if, perchance, the monkey should make a mistake, it was expected of him to call out immediately—"Error!"

As Pippity had a great many phrases and a vast number of nouns at command, and began pretty rapidly to comprehend the science of English orthography, he was soon able to give out the words to Grilly without my help; though he did make some funny mistakes, for which, however, the poor bird was in no way responsible, but which made me laugh at him nevertheless.



TEACHING GRILLY TO WRITE.

It may seem strange to some that a monkey could be taught to write. With such persons I will hold no argument. All I have to say is: Get a monkey, and try it.

Grilly as well as Pippity became in course of time quite a fine scholar, and he, too, learned the names of the plants and many other objects which we found in our dominions. The two agreed very well, and the one furnished what the other lacked. The parrot could talk but not write; the monkey could write but not talk.

But it occurs to me that two such extraordinary characters deserve description.

First come, first served. The external appearance of Pippity was gorgeous in the extreme. His wings, green, red-spotted, were tipped with golden yellow, while the most delicate flush of iridescent colors suffused his back, neck and breast; his toes in pairs, two forward and two back, like those of all other parrots; a bill and tongue exactly formed for speech; eyes in observation keen; and a bearing dignified and commanding.

Grilly, of course, had not so gay an exterior; yet he had a handsome clothing of soft, fine hair; a gentle, intelligent eye; a head exceedingly well formed, round and full, with prominent forehead; handsome moustache and full stylish whiskers; an expression winning and full of animation; a carriage elegant and graceful; and, withal, he was astonishingly expert with tail and hands and feet.

The time now coursed smoothly and happily along, Pippity entertaining us with his lively prattle, and Grilly, full of his antics and his learning, affording a never-failing fund of amusement. Nor did he ever omit, when the supply of cocoa-nuts was about exhausted, to go down and assemble his tribe, who forthwith took their places up the height, passed the nuts one to another, and, when they deemed we had enough, dispersed to their own wild homes of sylvan shade.

One day Grilly was amusing himself turning over some stones that lay in a little heap in one corner of our vast chamber. I had always thought it strange that they were the only loose stones to be found either in the cavern or in the neighborhood, but had never troubled myself any further about them. Seeing Grilly busy with them, I thought I would join him in his work or sport, and in a little time we had the pile reduced to the floor. There, I saw, was a square slab, having on it certain characters and a drawing of a serpent held firmly in the talons of a condor. These symbols excited my curiosity not a little, and I noticed that the stone, which was about three feet square, was loosely resting in its place. I managed to pry it up, and found a dark cavity beneath. It was nearly square, but of its depth I could not judge, owing to the darkness. To satisfy myself on this point, I got a very long stem of one of those gigantic grasses that grow in the tropics, and, letting it down, found the hole to be about forty feet deep. I felt a great desire to descend into this pit, but dared not venture for fear of the foul and deadly air that might have to be encountered below. Such things as matches, of course, we had not, nor any fire whatever. I therefore delayed the experiment for several days, with the expectation that the air would improve considerably in that time. Then, by bracing my hands and feet against the sides, I descended slowly, and found the air good enough to breathe freely, which emboldened me to go to the bottom. There was just light enough to perceive that on one side was an opening about six feet in height, and somewhat more than a foot in width; and I could see rough steps leading down a slight descent. I followed them cautiously, until I came to a level place, which I found to be a passage about three feet wide and higher than I could reach.

It was so dark here that I could no longer see, when, feeling the rock on either side, I came to a place where there was a recess about three feet above the floor of the passage. Raising myself into this recess, I found it to be about four feet in height. This led back a considerable distance,—how far I never discovered,—and as I was groping about, being obliged to stoop all the time, I stumbled over something that

rolled and rattled like a bone. I felt for it, and found it to be one, and with it were a number of others. As far as I could judge in the darkness, they were the skeleton of a human being.

How came these there? Was this a tomb?

I felt about for more relics, going hither and thither in the earnestness of quest, but found no more.

I had now been in this dungeon upward of an hour, and felt inclined to return as speedily as possible to the daylight. I searched for the place where I had got up from the narrow passage. I groped this way and that; and this had to be done with precaution, for who could tell where I might not step off suddenly and fall to some great depth? Yet I could find nothing that promised to lead me to the passage by which I had come.

Where was I? What was I to do? Remaining still would never do; to keep moving, moving, was the only course to pursue. I had, I knew not how, emerged from that low-roofed recess, and stood now in what seemed to be a vast chamber where there were neither sides nor roof. I hallooed that I might hear the echo from its walls, and perhaps in that way find them. I was startled, almost frightened, at the solemn mocking sounds that reverberated through the lonely cavern. I grew fearful of my own voice.

At last I sank down exhausted, and slept. I awoke, and groped about once more. This occurred again and again. How often I lay down to sleep I cannot tell. Sometimes I thought of the skeleton I had stumbled over, and wondered if my bones, too, would here find their resting-place. Then I thought of the grand, lofty mountain overhead. What a stupendous monument! But what would I not have given for deliverance from it!

(To be continued.)



**THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT BY OUR
JAPANESE ARTIST**

HOW TO MAKE AN ICE-BOAT.

BY J. H. HUBBARD.

The sport of sailing on the ice has within a few years attracted considerable attention on our northern rivers and lakes, and seems likely to increase. It is an amusement well adapted to big boys, being exciting, requiring skill, and certainly not more dangerous than skating. It is even more fascinating than yachting, without the danger which always attends the latter pursuit. A small ice-boat that a boy can build will sail ten to twenty miles an hour with a good wind. Some large ones, strange as it may seem, can sail, with a wind on the beam, actually faster than the wind which is blowing. This fact is attested by the highest scientific authorities.

Having seen some unsuccessful attempts at ice-boats by boys in various places, I propose to tell you how to build one, at a small expense, that will sail well, and give you a great deal of sport.

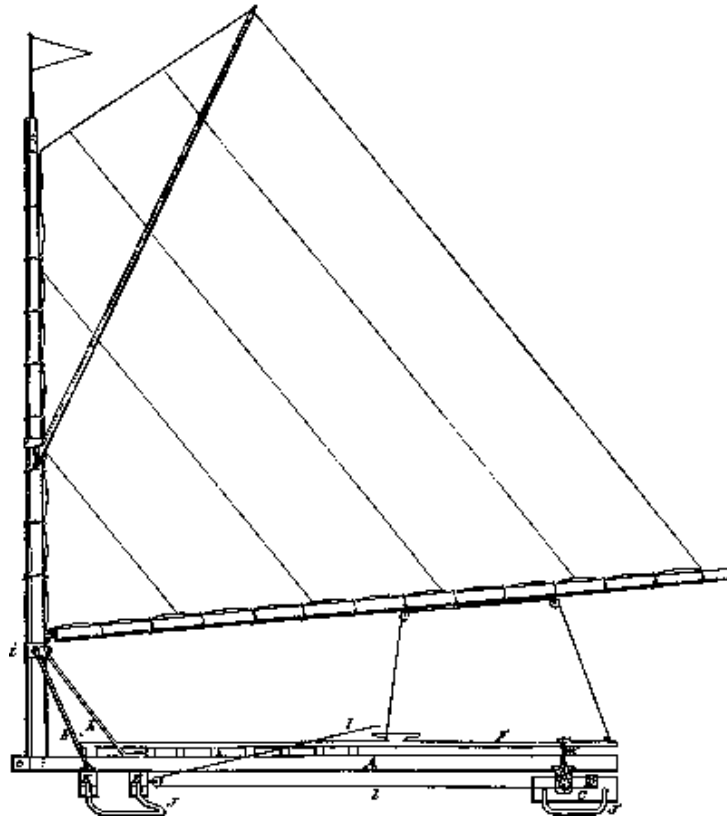


FIG. 1.

The directions and measurements here given are the result of careful experiments and some failures. Fig. 1 is an elevation, Fig. 2 a ground-plan of the frame, and Fig. 3 a section of a runner. Get a spruce plank, A, 12 feet long, 6 inches wide, 2 inches thick. This is the backbone of the structure. Cut near one end of it a hole two inches square to receive the foot of the mast.

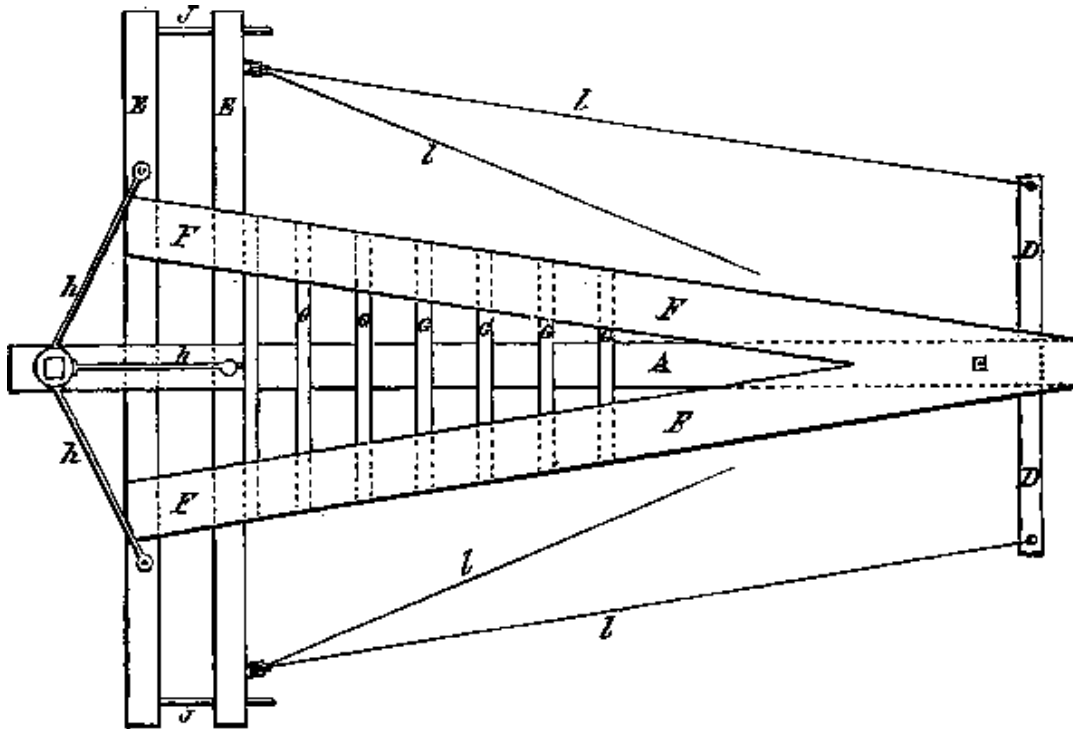


Fig. 2.

Take two oak cross-bars, E E, 8 feet long, 4 inches deep, 2 inches thick. The cross-bars are bolted to A, one foot apart, the forward one a foot from mast-hole. This distance is best.

Next get one oak plank, C, 16 inches long, 3-1/2 inches deep, 2 inches thick.

The hard-wood piece, D, is for tiller, 4 feet long, 2 inches wide, 1 inch thick. This is to be set into the top of plank C, and fastened there with screws. To each end of it is attached a rope, which runs over a sheave fastened to the cross-bar, C D, and the ropes, *l l*, constitute the steering apparatus. Two boards, F F, each 11 feet long, 8 inches wide, 7/8-inch thick, are planed, and the edges matched together, at the stern. They are nailed to the plank, A, and the cross-bars, E E, as shown in Fig. 2. Four blocks, each 3 inches thick, must be put under them where they lie over the cross-bars. A board a foot long, 7/8-inch thick, must also be put under F F at the stern.

Six slats, G G, as long as may be needed, 2 inches wide, 7/8-inch thick, are nailed over A, and under F F.

The mast is a natural spruce stick, 13 feet long, shaved down to 3-1/2 inches at butt, 2-1/2 inches at the top.

The boom is 13-1/2 feet long, 2 inches thick at each end, and a little thicker in the middle. It is fastened to the mast by an iron eye, screwed into the mast, and a hook in the end of the boom. The sprit is 10 feet long, 1-1/2 inches diameter, shaved to 3/4-inch for 2 inches at each end.

The iron collar, *i*, through which the mast is inserted loosely, stands two feet above the top of plank, A. It is supported by three iron braces, *h h h*, and is bolted to the tops of them. The braces are 3/4-inch round iron, and bolted to the frame as shown.

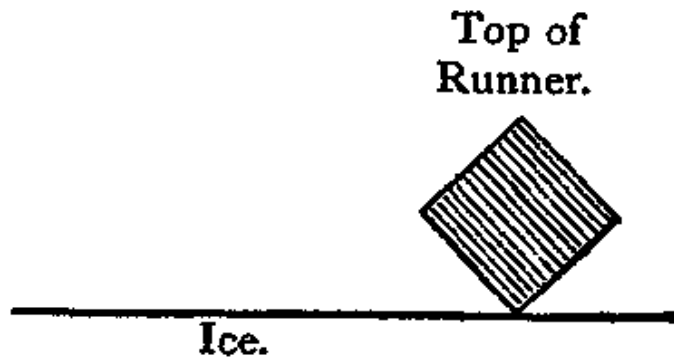


Fig. 3.

The hind-runner block, C, is fastened to A by a strong iron, *m*, as shown in Fig. 1. It allows the runner to rock up and down, and to be turned sidewise by the tiller. A must be plated with iron top and bottom where *m* goes through, that the runner may not "wobble."

The construction of the runners, J J J, must be attended to with the greatest care, as upon these, in a great measure, will depend the success of your boat. Get a square bar of cast steel, 6 feet long, cut off 22 inches for third runner, and divide the rest in halves, across. Shape two forward runners and one hind one as shown in Fig. 1. The bearing surface is a right-angled edge, as shown in Fig. 3. This sharp edge holds the ice firmly without much friction. Holes are bored two inches up into the cross-bars, near their ends, and the runners driven in and fastened with rivets. After the runners are forged, they should be finished with a file and emery paper if not perfectly smooth. The front turn must be long and gradual like a skate, two-thirds the length, however, flat on the ice. The running edges should not be too sharp. They will project 2-1/2 or three inches below the bottom of the wood.

For the sail get twenty yards, three-quarters of a yard wide, of heavy drilling. The dimensions are: Head, 5 feet; foot, 13 feet; foreleach, 10 feet; afterleach, 14-1/2 feet. Make these measurements on a floor, and mark the outlines with a chalk-line.

Cut the after-breadth first, and the others to match. Lap the breadths 1 inch. Allow an inch all around for a hem. The breadths should be basted before stitching. Put two rows of stitching where the breadths lap. Look out for puckering. Put a narrow hem clear around the sail. Then stitch a 3/8-inch rope around the hem. Make a loop at the peak to put the end of sprit into. Draw the rope tight along the boom, and fasten it through a hole in the end. Fasten the throat of sail tight to the top of the mast. Cut a number of short pieces of heavy twine, and lace the sail, at intervals of a foot, to the boom and mast. Fasten a becket or loop of rope at a suitable position on the mast, to set the heel of the sprit into. Rig main-sheet over two sheaves, as shown; it brings less strain on the boom, and clears the skipper's head in tacking. Make a good, large wooden cleat to belay it to.

The cost of materials will be about as follows:

Boards, plank and mast	\$5.00
Iron work	6.00
Twenty yards Drilling	2.75
Four single-sheave galvanized pulley-blocks at 35 c	1.40
(May be omitted by using leather straps.)	
Ropes, etc.	.85
Total	\$16.00

A boat built as above will sail nearly as close to the wind as a good cat-boat. It is managed much the same. Don't turn too short in coming about. Jibe when you like without fear of capsizing. Your boat will carry three persons in a light wind,—more if it blows fresh. Rig it neatly, and try to make a finished thing all through. Your ice-boat will then be more than a boy's plaything, and will be admired by old and young.



There once was a man with a child
Who, the neighbors said, never had smiled;
 But the father said, "See!
 Smile in this way, like me,
And then folks will know when you've smiled."

DEBBY'S CHRISTMAS.

BY ELLA A. DRINKWATER.

Most young people's Christmas commences the night before; so did Debby's. She had just settled down in Blanket street, and fallen into the sleep of tired, healthy girlhood, when she was aroused by her mother's irritable voice screaming up the stairway.

"Debby! Debby!" she called. "Get up quick and help me pick these turkeys. Your father's made up his mind to sell them dead weight, and we've got to pick them to-night, so he can take them to the hotel early in the morning. Do you *hear* me, Debby?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Debby, scrambling out of her warm nest to the square of rag carpet before her bed.

Four minutes later she felt her way down-stairs and opened the kitchen door into a room filled with steam, and the peculiar smell of scalded fowls.

"There's seven to do," her mother said, bending over the brass kettle on the stove to draw from it a dripping turkey. "Yours are all scalded. Go to work."

Debby buttoned on a large apron, seated herself with a tin pan in her lap containing a turkey, and then began quickly to pluck off its feathers, laying them to dry on a religious newspaper spread on the table beside her.

Mrs. Blanchard soon sat down at the other side of the table, and began to pick and talk as fast as fingers and tongue would allow.

What did possess Mr. Blanchard to change his mind, and give them so much extra trouble, she could not conceive; and selling them to Tate, too, when he might have made a quarter of a cent more a pound if he had let Morris have them. And then those hoop-poles! He might have made she didn't know how much if he had taken her advice, and kept them a week longer.

As for the potatoes, they had turned out so small, and the corn was so short in the ear, that the land only knew where the money to get them all something to wear was to come from. Not that *she* cared for dress, for hadn't she worn the same bonnet and shawl to church until she was ashamed to show her face there? As for the sewing society, she was a master hand at cutting and planning, and she could go as well as

not, too, now that Debby was quite old enough to take care of the baby, and get the supper ready for her father and the boys; but not a step was she going to sit next Mrs. Williams with her black silk, and Mrs. White with her handsome alpaca, although their husbands' farms were no larger than Mr. Blanchard's; and for the life of her she could not understand why *she* should not dress as well when she worked twice as hard as they did.

To all of which Debby listened with a sinking heart and great sobs in her throat, wondering why they should be such an unhappy family when every one around them appeared so glad.

Did it really make people so happy, this Christmas-day that they talked so much about in Sunday-school? That was a beautiful hymn that they sung last Sunday; she repeated one verse softly to herself while the stream of her mother's talk ran on:

"Jesus is our childhood's pattern,
Day by day, like us, he grew;
He was little, weak and helpless,
Tears and smiles, like us, he knew;
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness."

With a comforted feeling she pushed back her hair with her feathery hand, heartily wishing that all the people who ate their turkeys would be comfortable, and have clothes to wear and go to sewing societies whenever they liked.

The clock ticked loudly, the fire died away while Mrs. Blanchard enlarged upon the trials of her life, and, despite the refrain in her heart—

"And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness"—

Debby's eyes were as heavy with tears as with sleepiness when the last plump turkey lay on the table plucked of his feathers, just as the clock was striking eleven.

"Go to bed, child, and I'll clear up the mess," her mother said, when Debby sprang up and straightened herself with a long sigh. "I'm sure your father ought to give you something for keeping out of your bed so late, when he is sleeping as innocent as the baby this minute, I'll warrant."

As Debby had a way of only thinking her replies, her answer was to wash her hands at the sink and run upstairs with joyful feet, thinking, "How *splendid* it will be if he gives me some money; then I can spend it at the Fair to-morrow night."

But even rose-colored visions could not keep the weary child awake; she was not conscious of touching the pillow, and thought of nothing until the clock striking six awoke her to remember, with a thrill, that it was Christmas-day,—the day of the Fair.

But there would be no presents or merry greetings in her home, for she could not remember ever hearing either father or mother wish any of the family "Merry Christmas!" and a little candy on that day was among the dimmest pictures of her childhood.

"I'll make the fire, so that mother can sleep a little longer," she decided, lighting her candle, and beginning to dress with shivering alacrity. "And I'll be as helpful as I can all day, and perhaps father *will* give me some of the turkey money."

With shaking fingers she kindled the wood fire, and had the kettle boiling and the griddle heated for the cakes, when her mother came out of the bedroom, asking her what had wakened her so early, and telling her to dress the baby while she finished getting the breakfast ready.

Debby willingly brought the screaming baby out to the fire, where she washed and dressed him, soothing him with many motherly little airs. Sam and Jim ran downstairs to hover over the red-hot stove; the father came in, bringing the pail of milk, stamping his feet, his beard white with his frozen breath; then they all sat down to breakfast by candle-light, and no one would have supposed, from their conversation, that they had ever heard of Christmas-day.

Immediately after breakfast Mr. Blanchard hurried away to dispose of his turkeys, taking the boys with him; Mrs. Blanchard heated the brick oven preparatory to a morning's baking, and Debby flew about as busily as the bee she represented, washing dishes, making beds, peeling vegetables, and tending the baby, lightening her labor with the thought of the money her father might possibly give her.

When it was time for him to return, she determined to keep in sight, as a kind of hint that some of the money should be given to her; not that she would ask him for it,—her askings were only for favors to the boys, made in much fear and inward shrinking; but she would just wait around and remind him by her presence that she had helped pick the turkeys.

But, with no understanding of the feverish anxiety that filled the heart of the little maiden who was moving briskly about the pleasant kitchen dishing up the dinner, Mr. Blanchard threw open the door with a chuckle. "Took every one of them and paid the money down," he announced, coming to the fire. "Got more than I

expected, too, for his scales made them weigh more than ours, so I gained just thirty cents."

Debby thought that her heart stopped beating while she stood bewildered in the middle of the floor with a dish of potatoes in her hand, waiting to hear her father say that the extra money should be hers; but he merely asked if dinner were ready, and why she moved so slowly; guessed that sitting up so late made her lazy.

All her castles built of ice-cream, candy, pin-cushions, and fancy needle-books, fell to the ground with a crash as she set the dish on the table, leaving her with no appetite for dinner, not even for the first pumpkin-pie of the season.

She sat at the table absently tasting the savory pork stew, believing that no one else was ever as miserable as she, and that she should never feel like laughing again, when suddenly she remembered that she had twenty-four cents change left from the dollar that her father gave her to buy school-books, and she would—yes—she would give it to him as she was starting for the Fair, and perhaps he would say that she might keep it.

So she was all ready to laugh when Jim asked if the little boys in the big cities wore muzzles like the dog he had seen in town this morning, and when her mother asked if she would take pie, her "yes" was emphatic; for a world of trouble had rolled off her heart, and she was her hopeful self again.

After the dinner-dishes were washed, and the baby trotted away to dream-land, Debby stole up to her room to look over the dress she was to wear in the evening; as the ruffles in neck and wrists were fresh, she found there was nothing for her to do but brush it and lay it out on the bed. Still she lingered with an undefined feeling that it was Christmas-day everywhere else, and if she could only——

All the week, while seeing and hearing about the presents the school-girls were making, she had been full of vague longings to do something for some one; but she had neither money nor material, and was not at all sure how a present from her would be received by her father and mother. "Perhaps I might make a pin-ball," she thought, beginning to search through the old chest of drawers that stood at the foot of her bed.

In the lowest drawer were odds and ends that she had been collecting for years, and from one corner, carefully wrapped up, she drew a square of black cloth in which was worked in wool a bunch of rose-buds, pink, white and yellow, surrounded by their green leaves. A lady who had boarded with them the last summer had begun it for a pair of slippers, but after making two or three mistakes on it, had given it to Debby.

"I wonder if I could make it into a cushion for mother?" soliloquized Debby, turning it around in her red fingers. "Mrs. Williams said old flannel was good to stuff them with, and I can bind it with——" she leaned forward and picked among her bunch of faded ribbons. "There is nothing nice enough," she sighed; "but this green will *have* to do."



DEBBY AND THE ICE-CREAM
[SEE PAGE 227.]

Wrapping herself in a quilt she sat down on the rounded top of a hair-covered trunk, close to the frosty window, and cutting the cloth in the shape of a diamond, she sewed it together like a bag, filled it with flannel, and hurriedly stitched on the faded green ribbon as a binding.

These rosebuds were a wonderful work of art to Debby, and one of her great treasures; it would have been a "perfectly lovely cushion," she thought, if the binding had only been new and the silk with which she stitched it green instead of blue; and it was *so* delightful to make presents. Next year she would have a present for every one in the house; she wondered why she had never thought of it before.

"And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness,"

sprang from her heart to her lips, and she hummed it over and over all the three-quarters of an hour that she was at work. When the cushion was finished, she held it

out in different positions, trying to decide in which it would look best when she should present it; and then she ran down-stairs, possessed with such a variety of feelings that she could scarcely speak when she opened the kitchen door.

Her mother was ironing, with her back toward her. Debby was glad that no one else was there.

"I've made you a Christmas present, mother," she said, timidly, laying it on the ironing-board.

"So *that's* what you have been doing in the cold so long," her mother answered, without pausing in her work. "Miss Holmes was a beautiful hand with her needle, and how she did fuss over that! But you might just as well have made it some other day; I was in no hurry for it. Put it in my bureau-drawer, and come and mend these blankets your father has just brought in. He thinks that we have so little to do that we can sew for the horses right in the midst of everything."

So Debby laid the cushion away, glad that it had met with no worse reception, and sat down in a corner near the stove to mend the coarse, dirty horse-blankets. She usually disliked it exceedingly; but her little attempt at making Christmas presents had so warmed her heart, and her head was so full of the Fair, that it did not now seem so uncongenial, and she was really surprised when the last stitch was taken.

"You are almost as handy with your needle as your mother," her father said, throwing the blankets over his shoulder to carry them to the barn.

"Now spring to, child, and set the table," her mother added, "and I'll rest a few minutes, for I feel as if every bone in my body was broken."

While Debby sewed, the bright sunlight on the green field of wheat and the brown, ridged field of corn-stubble visible through the one large window, had faded quickly away; and as she paused a moment to pick some shreds off her dress and glance out at the weather, all she could see was the dim outline of the woods, the dark forms of the hills rising behind them, and the cold, black wind-clouds piled high above them all.

Tea was ready and over at last, and then Mrs. Blanchard said, while she tried to quiet the screaming baby:

"Go and get ready for the Fair, child, and I will wash the dishes. I have a dreadful sideache, and I expect this young one will cry for an hour or two. But 'every dog must have his day,' and yours will be short enough."

With the cloud on her heart that always followed her mother's gloomy sayings, Debby went slowly up to her room to array herself in her last year's blue merino.

But it was a pleasant figure to look upon that she tiptoed up to the glass to survey, and a round rosy face, with a little frown over the right eyebrow, that looked out at her with wistful eyes.

Drawing on hood and shawl, she went down-stairs and stood before her father with the money in her hand. He was seated at the table, bending over a large account-book, with Debby's frown deepened at the corner of his bushy eyebrow, and his fingers in his ears to shut out the baby's cries that reached him from the bedroom. As soon as she caught sight of what he was doing, Debby's hopes fell, for reckoning up the yearly expenses always made him cross for a week.

"Where are you off to now?" he asked, glancing up at her.

"To the Fair. The boys are there to come home with me. And here," her voice faltering, "is the change from the school-books."

"Don't stay late," he replied, turning away and dropping the precious money into his vest-pocket.

With a bursting heart, Debby stumbled out into the windy starlight and walked rapidly along the rough road, with her mittened fingers in her mouth to prevent her crying aloud.

How bitterly she wished she had never heard of the Fair! She was ashamed to go back into the house with no reason for returning, yet the thought of attending the Fair with no money to spend was torturing to her.

"There's Debby! Merry Christmas! Ride with us! Jump in, Debby!" called several voices, as a wagon full of boys and girls stopped beside her.

"I don't want to; I'd rather walk," answered Debby, swallowing her sobs.

"*Walk*, then!" replied Harry Williams, snapping his whip. "I guess you got a switch in your stocking this morning!"

Laughing thoughtlessly, the party rattled past her, leaving her crying harder than before. But a walk full of dread comes to an end some time, and Debby soon found herself at the entrance to the Fair.

Slipping in behind a group of men, she stood confused by the light and noise.

It was a grand and exciting scene to the little country maiden, this long, low room, trimmed with evergreens and flags, and illuminated by all the lamps in the neighborhood.

A table extended across each of three sides of the room. One, used for a supper-table, was filled with people eating and drinking noisily; on another was displayed the handiwork of the sewing society for the past year; and the third, which appeared the most attractive, was laden with cake, confectionery, and ice-cream.

Debby rubbed her swollen eyes, and was gazing about her in admiring astonishment, when her neighbor, Annie Williams, shouted "Merry Christmas" in her ear.

"Oh! Thank you," replied the startled Debby.

"Come and take off your things," suggested Annie. "You may put them with mine behind the apron and necktie end of the table. Mother tends that, you know."

Annie tucked the wraps carefully away, and then drew Debby through the crowd over to the stove, screened off in the corner behind the supper-table, where the good aunties of the village were heating their faces and spotting their Sunday dresses while cooking oysters and making coffee for the benefit of the church. But these ladies looked so annoyed by seeing the girls stand around the stove that Debby hurried away. Possibly they thought that the church would not be benefited by Debby's warming her fingers and toes.

Elbowing their way back, with arms clasped around each other's waist, they encountered and stepped on the toes of a big German boy, who convulsed them by pointing down at them with both forefingers, exclaiming: "See the two craz-z-z-y! See the two craz-z-z-y!" And Debby's laugh was as light-hearted as if she could buy everything in the room, and her mother had nineteen silk dresses.

"Now come and get some ice-cream," urged Annie, as they were pushed toward it. "I have had three saucers, and think it is lovely. I ought to be a judge, don't you think so?"

"Not now," said Debby, hastily. "I want to look at the needle-books your mother made."

"It's pokey over there! But I'll humor you, because it is Christmas," laughed Annie.

So they dodged under elbows, and slipped between young men and their sweethearts, until they reached the other end of the room, where Debby admired pen-holders with spiders and mice on them, cushions representing the old lady who lived in a shoe, and needle-books made like wheelbarrows, wondering if there had been anything at the Centennial more beautiful than these. But when a group of girls claimed Annie's attention, she eagerly seized the opportunity to slip away and sit on the bench behind Mrs. Williams's table.

"Tired so soon?" inquired Mrs. Williams, kindly. "But why didn't your mother come?"

"She didn't have—I don't mean—I mean she didn't speak of coming," stammered Debby, with burning cheeks.

"Never mind," replied Mrs. Williams, "you will have a good time, I know; and you must be sure to ride home with us."

Soothed by her sympathetic words, Debby almost forgot her troubles, and sat watching the moving picture with great amusement, until she espied her brothers helping Mr. Williams pass the saucers of cream.

"Oh, I hope they won't be tempted to *take* any," she thought, her heart full of a wordless prayer for them. But her anxiety was soon relieved by seeing Sam forcing his way toward her with a plate of cream.

"He gave it to me for helping," he whispered; "but you take it. Jim ate his right up."

"Eat it yourself, Sammy," she said, drawing back the hand she had stretched out for it. "I don't care so *very* much about it, because I am older, you know."

"Don't you, now, 'truly, truly, black and bluely, lay me down and cut me in twoly?'" he asked, with the air of a magistrate about to "swear" a witness.

"I would very much rather you should eat it," evaded Debby.

"Then I will," he answered, brightly, "for I *do* want it awfully."

"Eat it, then; but don't be tempted to take any," she cautioned.

"Catch me taking—I'm not a thief!" and he hastened away.

Debby was thirteen years old, but she could have cried for that ice-cream.

"Oh, *here* you are at last!" cried Annie, running up to her a few minutes afterward. "I couldn't imagine where you had got to. Now, just read my letter," placing a tiny sheet of pink paper in her hand. "That box all trimmed up at the end of the candy-table is the post-office," she explained, "and we give them five cents and ask for a letter. Just read mine."

Debby read, written in a large, clear hand:

"And shouldst thou ask my judgment of that which hath most profit in the world, For answer take thou this: The prudent penning of a letter."

"It's lovely!" was Debby's comment. "If I should have one, I wonder what it would be!"

"I'll run and get you one," volunteered Annie.

"No, no!" cried Debby, in terror. "I have no money to pay for it."

"Have you spent it all so soon?" asked Annie, curiously. "But we must go now and get our ice-cream; for, do you know, Mr. James has promised to treat all our class. So come along, for the more we eat the richer the church will grow."

"No," refused Debby, shaking off Annie's hand, "I wont do any such thing," and she shrank back into her corner.

"How queerly you act! You wont do anything I ask you," pouted Annie, turning away.

"I couldn't take it," Debby excused to herself. "I want it so much that I'd feel like a beggar in taking it from him. Annie can't understand, because she has bought it for herself, and will only eat it now for fun. I wish there was something for me to do."

Her thought was scarcely finished before it was answered by Mrs. White, in the handsome alpaca Debby's mother so admired.

"What am I to do with this child?" she asked, stopping before Mrs. Williams with a sleeping baby in her arms. "Phil wants me to go to supper with him, but what can I do?"

"I'll hold her," said Debby, eagerly. "I have a nice quiet place here."

"Much obliged, I'm sure," answered Mrs. White, placing the baby carefully in her arms.

With something to take care of, Debby grew so comfortable that when Mrs. White returned from supper she begged to keep the baby longer.

"Every one is so busy here that I'd like to have something to do, too," she said, arranging a paper so as to shade the baby's eyes from the light, remembering with a throb of gratitude the oranges Mrs. White sent her when she was sick last fall.

"If you don't really care to run about, it would be a great favor to me," returned Mrs. White, "for there are so many people here that I shall not see again for a year, and I want to speak to them all. But a baby is not the most convenient article to carry in a crowd."

The handsome alpaca disappeared, and Debby kept her guard for an hour, watching the young people who visited the post-office or joked over the neckties and aprons.

"Here's an industrious young lady who has had no supper," declared a bald-headed old gentleman, stopping before her with a large bell in his hand.

"I've had my supper," quickly answered Debby.

"I don't remember counting you at the table," he replied, wiping the perspiration from his forehead as he passed on, loudly ringing the bell.

"I didn't tell a story," sighed Debby, "for I've had my supper; but I'd like people to think I'd had it here. It looks so nice to sit at the table," she added, catching a glimpse of Annie's blue ribbons as she sat at the table next her brother.

"How thoughtless I *have* been!" cried Mrs. White, returning in a fluster. "I forgot all about you; you must be tired to death."

"Only a little tired," said Debby, "and I am so glad to do anything for you."

"Well, you must come and see me," invited Mrs. White, with her mouth full of pins, as she rolled the baby into a large shawl, "and perhaps I can find something for you to read."

But when Debby stood up she felt more stiff and tired than she had acknowledged, and, fearing that she had stayed too late, she hurried on her wraps, and with much persuasion induced her brothers to go home with her.

"It wouldn't do us any good to stay and see the auction," she reasoned, closing the door upon the noisy scene with a heart lighter than when she had entered it. "Now let us see how fast we can trot home in the moonlight."

Giving a hand to each of the boys, they walked swiftly toward the little red farmhouse, where, although their parents had retired, a lamp and a bright fire awaited them.

The kitchen seemed very quiet after the hubbub they had left, with the clock on the stroke of nine and the cat asleep in the wood-box.

There were three pieces of pumpkin-pie on the table, left as a lunch for them, and these they ate, talking in whispers; and then Debby unfastened the boys' neckties, and followed them upstairs, too tired and sleepy to be very glad or very sorry about anything.

But as she snuggled down under the blankets, with the "merry din" still ringing in her ears, she thought:

"I have not made much Christmas for any one to-day, but, when I'm grown-up, *wont*
I make Merry Christmas for little girls!"



THE COOLEST MAN IN RUSSIA.

(*An Old Soldier's Reminiscence.*)

BY DAVID KER.



I've seen many a brave man in my time, sure enough," said old Ivan Starikoff, removing his short pipe to puff out a volume of smoke from beneath his long white moustache. "Many and many a one have I seen; for, thank Heaven, the children of holy Russia are never wanting in *that* way; but all of them put together wouldn't make one such man as our old colonel, Count Pavel Petrovitch^[1] Severin. It wasn't only that he faced danger like a man,—all the others did that,—but he never seemed to know that there *was* any danger at all. It was as good as a reinforcement of ten battalions to have him among us in the thick of a fight, and to see his grand, tall figure drawn up to its full height, and his firm face and keen gray eye turned straight upon the smoke of the enemy's line, as if defying them to hurt him. And when the very earth was shaking with the cannonade, and balls were flying thick as hail, and the hot, stifling smoke closed us in like the shadow of death, with a flash and a roar breaking through it every now

and then, and the whole air filled with the rush of the shot, like the wind sweeping through a forest in autumn,—then Petrovitch would light a cigarette and hum a snatch of a song, as coolly as if he were at a dinner-party in the English Club at Moscow. And it really seemed as if the bullets ran away from *him*, instead of his running from them; for he never got hit. But if he saw any of us beginning to waver, he would call out cheerily: 'Never fear, lads—remember what the song says!' For in those days we had an old camp-song that we were fond of singing, and the chorus of it was this:

"Then fear not swords that brightly shine,
Nor towers that grimly frown;

For God shall march before our line,
And tread our foemen down.'

"He said this so often, that at last he got the nickname among us of 'Ne-Boisya' (Don't fear), and he deserved it, if ever man did yet. Why, Father Nikolai Pavlovitch himself (the Emperor Nicholas) gave him the Cross of St. George^[2] with his own hand (the St. George from the emperor's own hand—think of that!) at the siege of Varna, in the year '28. You see, our battery had been terribly cut up by the Turkish fire, so at last there were only about half a dozen of us left on our feet. It was as hot work as I ever was in,—shot pelting, earth-works crumbling, gabions crashing, guns and gun-carriages tumbling over together, men falling on every side like leaves, till, all at once, a shot went slap through our flag-staff, and down came the colors!

"Quick as lightning, Pavel Petrovitch was up on the parapet, caught the flag as it fell, and *held* it, right in the face of all the Turkish guns, while I and another man spliced the pole with our belts. You may think how the unbelievers let fly at him when they saw him standing there on the top of the breastwork, just as if he'd been set up for a mark; and all at once I saw one fellow (an Albanian by his dress, and you know what deadly shots *they* are) creep along to the very angle of the wall, and take steady aim at him!

"I made a spring to drag the colonel down (I was his servant, you know, and whoever hurt him hurt *me*); but before I could reach him I saw the flash of the Albanian's piece, and Pavel Petrovitch's cap went spinning into the air, with a hole right through it just above the forehead. And what do you think the colonel did? Why, he just snapped his fingers at the fellow, and called out to him, in some jibber-jabber tongue only fit to talk to a Turk in:

"'Can't you aim better than that, you fool? If *I* were your officer, I'd give you thirty lashes for wasting the government ammunition!'

"Well, as I said, he got the St. George, and of course everybody congratulated him, and there was a great shaking of hands, and giving of good wishes, and drinking his health in *mavro tchai*,—that's a horrid mess of eggs, and scraped cheese, and sour milk, and Moldavian wine, which these Danube fellows have the impudence to call 'black tea,' as if it was anything like the good old tea that we Russians drink at home! (I've always thought, for my part, that tea ought to grow in Russia; for it's a shame that those Chinese idolaters should have such grand stuff all to themselves.)

"Well, just in the height of the talk, Pavel Petrovitch takes the cross off his neck, and holds it out in his hand—just so—and says:

"Well, gentlemen, you say I'm the coolest man in the regiment, but perhaps everybody wouldn't agree with you. Now, just to show that I want nothing but fair play, if I ever meet my match in that way, I'll give him this cross of mine!"

"Now, among the officers who stood around him was a young fellow who had lately joined—a quiet, modest lad, quite a boy to look at, with light curly hair, and a face as smooth as any lady's. But when he heard what the colonel said, he looked up suddenly, and there came a flash from his clear blue eyes like the sun striking a bayonet. And then I thought to myself:

"It won't be an easy thing to match Pavel Petrovitch; but if it *can* be done, here's the man to do it!"

"I think that campaign was the hardest I ever served. Before I was enlisted, I had often heard it said that the Turks had no winter; but I had always thought that this was only a 'yarn,' though, indeed, it would be only a just judgment upon the unbelievers to lose the finest part of the whole year. But when I went down there I found it true, sure enough. Instead of a good, honest, cracking frost to freshen everything up, as our proverb says,

"Na zimni kholod
Vsiaki molod'—

(in winter's cold every one is young), it was all chill, sneaking rain, wetting us through and through, and making the hill-sides so slippery that we could hardly climb them, and turning all the low grounds into a regular lake of mud, through which it was a terrible job to drag our cannon. Many a time in after days, when I've heard spruce young cadets at home, who had never smelt powder in their lives, talking big about 'glorious war' and all that, I've said to myself, 'Aha, my fine fellows! if you had been where *I* have, marching for days and days over ankles in mud, with nothing to eat but stale black bread, so hard that you had to soak it before you could get it down; and if you'd had to drink water through which hundreds of horses had just been trampling; and to scramble up and down steep hills under a roasting sun, with your feet so swollen and sore that every step was like a knife going into you; and to lie all night in the rain, longing for the sun to rise that you might dry yourself a bit,—perhaps *then* you wouldn't talk quite so loud about "glorious war!"

"However, we drove the Turks across the Balkans at last, and got down to Yamboli, a little town at the foot of the mountains, which commands the high-road to Adrianople. And there the unbelievers made a stand, and fought right well. I *will* say that for 'em; for they knew that if Adrianople were lost, all was over. But God fought for us, and we beat them; though, indeed, with half our men sick, and our

clothes all in rags, and our arms rusted, and our powder mixed with sand by those rogues of army-contractors, it was a wonder that we could fight at all.

"Toward afternoon, just as the enemy were beginning to give way, I saw Pavel Petrovitch (who was a general by this time) looking very hard at a mortar-battery about a hundred yards to our right; and all at once he struck his knee fiercely with his hand, and shouted:

"What do the fellows mean by firing like that? They might as well pelt the Turks with potatoes! I'll soon settle them! Here, Vanya (Ivan)!"

"Away he went, I after him; and he burst into the battery like a storm, and roared out:

"Where's the blockhead who commands this battery?"

"A young officer stepped forward and saluted; and who should this be but the light-haired lad with the blue eyes, whom I had noticed that night at Varna.

"Well, you wont command it to-morrow, my fine fellow, for I'll have you turned out this very day. Do you know that not a single shell that you've thrown since I've been watching you has exploded at all?"

"With your excellency's leave," said the young fellow, respectfully, but pretty firmly too, 'the fault is none of mine. These fuses are ill-made, and will not burn down to the powder.'

"Fuses!" roared the general. 'Don't talk to *me* of fuses; I'm too old for that rubbish! Isn't it enough for you to bungle your work, but you must tell me a lie into the bargain?'

"At the word 'lie,' the young officer's face seemed to turn red-hot all in a moment, and I saw his hand clench as if he would drive his fingers through the flesh. He made one stride to the heap of bomb-shells, and, taking one up in his arms, struck a match on it.

"Now," said he, quietly, 'your excellency can judge for yourself. I'm going to light this fuse; if your excellency will please to stand by and watch it burn, you will see whether I have "lied" or not.'

"The general started, as well he might. Not that he was afraid—you may be pretty sure of *that*; but to hear this quiet, bashful lad, who looked as if he had nothing in him, coolly propose to hold a lighted shell in his arms to see if it would go off, and ask *him* to stand by and watch it, was enough to startle anybody. However, he wasn't

one to think twice about accepting a challenge; so he folded his arms and stood there like a statue. The young officer lighted the fuse, and it began to burn.

"As for me and the other men, you may fancy what *we* felt like. Of course, we couldn't run while our officers were standing their ground; but we knew that if the shell *did* go off, it would blow every man of us to bits, and it wasn't pleasant to have to stand still and wait for it. I saw the men set their teeth hard as the flame caught the fuse; and as for me, I wished with all my heart and soul that if there *were* any good fuses in the heap, this might turn out to be one of the bad ones!

"But no—it burned away merrily enough, and came down, and down, and down, nearer and nearer to the powder! The young officer never moved a muscle, but stood looking steadily at the general, and the general at him. At last, the red spark got close to the metal of the shell; and then I shut my eyes, and prayed God to receive my soul.

"Just at that moment, I heard the man next me give a quick gasp, as if he had just come up from a plunge under water; and I opened my eyes again just in time to see the fuse *out*, and the young officer letting drop the shell at the general's feet, without a word.

"For a moment, the general stood stock still, looking as if he didn't quite know whether to knock the young fellow down, or to hug him in his arms like a son; but, at last, he held out his hand to him, saying:

"Well, it's a true proverb, that every one meets his match some day; and I've met mine to-day, there's no denying it. There's the St. George for you, my boy, and right well you deserve it; for if I'm "the coolest man in the regiment," you're the coolest in all Russia!"

"And so said all the rest, when the story got abroad; and the commander-in-chief himself, the great Count Diebitsch, sent for the lad, and said a few kind words to him that made his face flush up like a young girl's. But in after days he became one of the best officers we ever had; and I've seen him, with my own eyes, complimented by the emperor himself, in presence of the whole army. And from that day forth, the whole lot of us, officers and men alike, never spoke of him by any other name but *Khladnokrovni* ('the cool-blooded one')."

NOTE.—Two other versions of this story, differing somewhat in detail, are current in the Russian army; but the one in the text is the more probable, as well as the more generally received.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Indecipherable footnote in original text.

[2] The highest Russian decoration.

SKATING

BY THEODORE WINTHROP.

[Never before printed.]

A BOUNDING gallop is good
Over wide plains;
A wild free sail is good
'Mid gales and rains;
A dashing dance is good
Broad halls along,
Clasping and whirling on
Through the gay throng.
But better than these,
When the great lakes freeze,
By the clear sharp light
Of a starry night,
O'er the ice spinning
With a long free sweep,
Cutting and ringing
Forward we keep!
On 'round and around,
With a sharp clear sound,
To fly like a fish in the sea!—
Ah, this is the sport for me!

THREE SMART LITTLE FOXES.

There were once three little foxes who lived in a hole in a bank. It was a large, comfortable hole, and these three little foxes (two of them were brothers and one was a sister) could lie down and put their heads out of the hole, and see what was going on in the neighborhood.

One afternoon one of the brother foxes slipped out by himself for a little walk, and when he came back he called the other two, and said: "Oh, come here! I will show you something, and tell you all about it."

So they all lay down close together, and looked out of the hole.

"Now then," said the brother fox who had been out, "you see that fence down there?"

"Oh yes," said his brother and sister.

"Well, on the other side of that fence is a splendid chicken-yard. I went down there and saw it myself. I peeped through the fence. And in that yard there is a row of chicken-coops, all with chickens in."

"Oh!" said the others. They began to feel hungry already.

"Yes, all with chickens in, and I heard a little girl say that the row of coops was called Pullet Row, Chicken Avenue, and that all the houses were taken. The first coop had an old hen and eleven little puffy chickens in it, and the second one held a whole lot of small chickens who were big enough to take care of themselves; and the next coop had in it an old rooster who had hurt his foot, and who had to be shut up. I think it's funny that neither mother nor father ever found out this splendid chicken-yard, so near us too! As soon as it gets to be a little dark we must go down there and get some of those chickens."

"All right," said the sister fox; "we'll go, and I'll take the first coop with the little chickens."

"And I'll take the coop with the young chickens who are big enough to take-care of themselves," said one of the brother foxes.

"I'll take the big old rooster," said the other brother fox. "I like lots of chickens when I eat any."

At the back of the hole the old Mother Fox was lying down. Her children thought she was asleep, but she was not, and she heard all that they had been talking about.

She now came forward and said: "That is certainly a very nice place that you see down there, and you, my son, were very smart, no doubt, to discover it. But when you go down there, this evening, take a look at a small house near the chicken-yard. A dog lives there—a big black and white fellow—named Bruce. He is let into the chicken-yard every night at dark. If you think that he wont see you, when you go inside, or that he can't run fast enough to catch you, it might be a very good idea for you to go down there this evening and get some chickens."



THE THREE SMART LITTLE FOXES.

The three little foxes looked at each other, and concluded that they would not go. It was a long time after that before they were heard to boast of being smarter than their father and mother.



JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

Happy 1878! Happy New Year to all Jack's little friends! And now let us begin our year's talk with something about

A GARDEN IN WINTER.

Deacon Green took a ride early last month, my dears, and he tells me of a wonderful garden which he saw from a window as he went whirling by on a railroad.

Can you guess what was growing in a garden in December?

No, it was not in a Southern State; so your guess of oranges isn't right—though they tell me that oranges do grow in winter-time in Florida.

It was a garden of Christmas-trees, set out in even rows, and looking as spruce and gay and happy as if they knew that they were almost old enough to hold a candle in each of their thousand hands, and a bright gift or token of good-will on each of their thousand arms. I fancy that the gardener who has his mind filled with the care of a garden of Christmas-trees must be a very cheery, kind-hearted fellow indeed. Don't you?

OVENS IN THE FIELDS.

In Mecklenburg, Northern Germany, as I'm told, fuel is scarce and dear: and, as the peasants are very poor, they take an odd way to save wood. It is this:

Each village has one or two large ovens in which the baking for a number of people can be done at one time. These ovens look from a little distance as if they were small hillocks, and they are built in the open fields. Why they are placed away from the village I was not told; but I would like to know. They have very much the look of underground dairy-cellars, and are built of great stones covered with turf. One or two men can go into an oven quite comfortably.

In each oven a great fire is made, to heat the stones, and when these are hot enough the fire and ashes are swept out, and the bread is put in to bake. Then a stone door is put over the mouth until it is time to take out the loaves. There is no chimney or opening, and the heat stays in well—even for some time after the bread has been taken out; so that it is no strange thing for a belated traveler to use the shelter or

warmth of one of these empty ovens on some cold and stormy night when far from his home.

So much for fire-places out-of-doors. Now for a word about

PERSIAN STOVES.

I've just heard of the queer way the Persians have of keeping themselves warm in their houses during cold weather. They place in the middle of the room a pan of burning charcoal under a sort of table or frame which holds up a large wadded quilt that reaches the floor on all sides, like a tent. This must look almost like keeping the fire warm. Then the family sit around the droll stove, with their legs and arms under the quilt; and when they wish to go to sleep, they put themselves half under the quilt, and so keep nice and warm until the morning. That's easy enough for Persians to do, because, as I'm told, they never undress at night, but just roll themselves in coverings and lie down anywhere.

Perhaps you would not find such arrangements in your homes quite as comfortable as soft beds and cozy blankets in well-warmed rooms. However, the Persian winter is not as cold as ours, I suppose.

LIGHT THROUGH METAL.

Here's an odd thing! My wise old wide-awake friend the owl tells me that a Yale College professor has found out a way to make a layer of metal so thin that it will readily show the color of a light-beam sent through it. That professor will be showing us how to see through a mill-stone next, may be.

GOOD AS AN EXPERIMENT.

Dear Jack: I have a little friend, called Jack, too, who is generally the most sweet-tempered boy I know. But one day he came to play in my rooms, as usual, for I always keep his toys there, in repair and order. He soon grew tired of them, and came to me for a story. I was busy with reading, and refused, telling him to wait until I had leisure. Then he grew impatient, and put my book down with a coaxing "*Please, Fred.*" I could not humor him then, and gently told him to stop. Then—I am sorry to say it—he became very angry, and gave me a blow in my face. Now, Jack, don't pass your sentence yet—remember, it was the first and *only* act of that kind. But guess what I did.

I stooped over him and kissed him, saying: "Is this my little boy?" He looked at me and went into a corner—ashamed and weeping. Was not that a sweet victory? I wish some little sisters or brothers would try it. You may believe me this is truth. Some future day I will tell you how I made him some toys.—Yours,

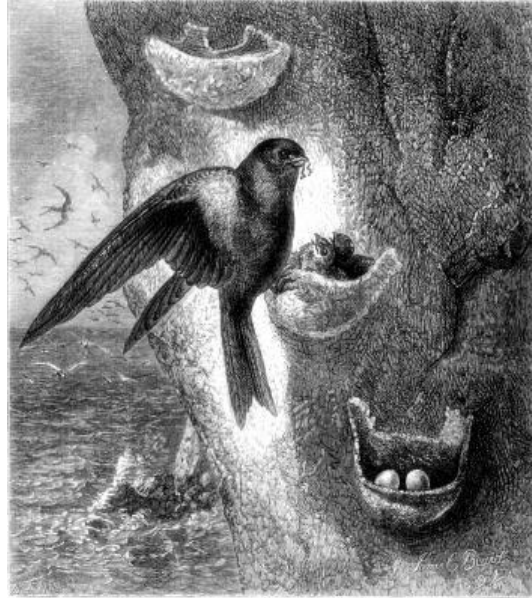
FRED.

EDIBLE NESTS.

Did you ever hear of such an article of food as bird's-nest soup? Well, this soup does not take its name from its looks, as bird's-nest pudding gets its title, but it is actually made from real birds'-nests.

In the island of Java, I'm told, there is a species of sea-swallow which makes a nest much like that of our chimney-swallow, and fastens it to the rocky walls of caves. These nests are made almost entirely of a glue-like substance, mixed with a little grass or hair and a few sticks, and they are carefully gathered and sent to China, where they are sold as food.

The nests are soaked in water until the glue becomes soft, when the sticks and straws are picked out and thrown away. The jelly which remains is then dried and preserved, to be used in making the bird's-nest soup. This is considered a great delicacy, and the nests are sold in the Chinese markets for twenty-five dollars a pound. Of course, at this price, none but rich folks can indulge in them, and they are therefore a very fashionable dish. Although they are usually made into soup, they are sometimes cooked in other ways.



JAVA SEA-SWALLOWS AND NESTS.

It's my opinion that the nest of the chimney-swallow might be used as food in the same way; for although it has more sticks and hay in it than the edible nest, there is a good deal of glue, too, and each nest might yield quite a large pot of soup. If the time shall ever come when our own country will have as many people in it as there are in China at the present time, many things little thought of now will be turned to use as articles of food. But at present there is no need of robbing the birds; so let them keep cheerful while they may, poor dears!

BIRD RAILROAD-TRAVELERS.

Now that we're talking about birds'-nests, I may as well tell you some news that has come to me all the way from East Cosham, in Hampshire, England.

On a small piece of frame-work under a third-class "smoking" carriage on the London and South-Western Railway, a water-wagtail built her nest and reared a young and thriving family of four. The train traveled regularly about forty miles a day, and the station-master at East Cosham says that, during every absence of it, the male bird kept close to the spot, awaiting with great anxiety the return of his wayfaring family.

Now, in my opinion, that water-wagtail mother made a queer choice for her home-place. But if the little ones get no other advantage from it, they are sure to be well trained. What do you think about it, my chicks?

THE LETTER-BOX.

The following is Dr. J. G. Holland's answer to his "Double Riddle," published in our last number:

La, man! I see your little game:
'Tis "la" itself in song or aria
That piercing dear Maria's name
Transforms it to *Malaria*.
And "la" itself, as all men know,
Raises the *sol* to *si* and *do*.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have made up a nice little story, and I want you to know it. It is called "Laziness."

Once upon a time there was a little boy and his name was James. He was very lazy. One day he was going out to play when his mother called him back. "James," said she, "I went up to your room to make your bed, for the maid was too busy, and your room is very disorderly. Unless you promise to keep it in order, and have it in order by next week, I will send you from home. I am very sorry to say this; but it must be said. Now you may go; that is all I wanted you for." Next week came very soon, and the room was still in disorder. The mother went up and looked in; she threw herself on her knees, and prayed that Heaven would not let her send her boy away. James went away, and his mother never saw him again.

Now, children, learn a lesson from this, and don't be driven from home by laziness.

I am eleven years old, and I want you to give my love to Jack-in-the-Pulpit and the School-mistress.

JENNIE MOORE.

THE BLIND-CLERK'S PUZZLE.

This is what the "Blind-clerk" made of the puzzling address that M. B. T. gave in a letter to Jack-in-the-Pulpit, published last month:

"Servant Girl, No. 40 Queen's parade, London."

And that turned out to be the right address, too. Another friend says that this same blind-clerk once had referred to him a letter addressed like this:

"To my uncle tom, london."

That was too much. The letter never reached "my uncle tom."

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have taken ST. NICHOLAS for several years, and like it better every year. I often read over the old numbers, and find many things that seem almost new to me. One of these was "John Spooner's Human Menagerie," in the number for April, 1875, and I have been trying to get up a "menagerie" like John's. I can make most of the wonderful living curiosities, but I do not know how to make a curtain that will "go up with a flourish." I have made one to draw sideways, but I want one to go up. Please inform me how to construct it.—Yours truly,

FRED R. MARTIN.

Here is a tolerably easy way to make a stage-curtain that will "go up with a flourish," and come down either quickly or slowly, as may be wished. It is easily kept in order, and readily repaired when damaged.

Above the stage, at the front, set up a stout cross-beam. Let the curtain be of some opaque stuff that will fold well. Fasten its upper edge firmly to the front of the cross-beam. Weight the lower edge of the curtain with a long roller some inches wider than the curtain. Sew to the curtain, on its wrong side, perpendicular rows of rings set at suitable distances apart, and in level lines across. The more rows, the more evenly will the curtain fold. Tie a strong thin cord about the roller in a line with each perpendicular row of rings, and pass each cord through its proper rings. On the bottom of the cross-beam above the several rows of rings, fasten large smooth rings to be used instead of pullies. Pass the cords up through the large rings, and gather them at one end of the beam. Then fasten the ends of the cords to a rope, taking care while doing this that the curtain is down, and hanging properly, and that all the cords are drawn equally tense. There should be a stout pin or hook at the side of the curtain, to which the rope is to be fastened when the curtain is drawn up. Take notice that the cords are of different lengths and must be free from knots. The curtain should not touch the stage, and may be kept in place by fixing the ends of the roller in iron rings or between pegs.

TWO WAYS OF CARRYING THE MAIL.

The frontispiece to this number of ST. NICHOLAS shows how the mails were carried in winter over the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada before the Union Pacific Railroad was finished (1869), and how they are carried now. In 1867, to the perils of the snow and wind and of mountain travel, were added dangers from desperadoes, white as well as red, so that mail deliveries were few and far between, and very irregular, while too often both the carriers and their packs were lost. Slow as the old way was, however, the snow sometimes makes the new way even slower. In spite of miles and miles of snow-sheds and snow-fences, and ever so many steam snow-plows, the railroad is blocked now and then until a way can be dug through huge heaps of drift. Thus, sometimes, whole days are lost on the steam road, when a man might be speeding and coasting on his queer foot-gear, over the snow-crust like the wind, to reach the destination perhaps a week ahead of the snorting snowed-up monster. However, year by year, as sheds and fences and other preventions are multiplied, railroad delays caused by snow become fewer and fewer.

Georgetown, D. C.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I was so much pleased with the little figure of a nun in the November number, that I made eight like it. I have been taking the ST. NICHOLAS ever since it came out, and think it gets

nicer every time it is published. I am not quite seven years old, but I composed all of this letter.

JOHN WM. MITCHELL.

MY VERY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We really don't know what we should do without you. We took the "Young Folks" for a great many years, and have taken you ever since you were first established.

We went, a short time ago, to see a man who swallowed swords for a profession. Now, can any of our ST. NICHOLAS friends tell us whether he really swallowed them or not, and explain how it is done? —
Your loving friends and devoted readers,

FANNIE CHANDLER,

MARY WHITE.

Painesville, Ohio.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: My children learn the names of English kings and queens, the books of the Old Testament in their order, and other matters of importance to remember, through having found and committed to memory certain rhymes containing them. I have seen several embodying the books of the New Testament, but they all have been too difficult or long for children to learn. I inclose an easy one, written for my own children which may prove useful to your large family of young folks.

W.

BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

In the New Testament we find
Matthew and Mark leading,
With St. Luke and St. John
The books next succeeding.
Acts and Romans have place
Before Corinthians and Galatians;
In them we can trace
Good news for all nations.
Ephesians and Philippians
In order are next;
Colossians, Thessalonians,
With hard names and good text.
Timothy, Titus, and Philemon
Fill up some pages,
And with Hebrews continue
The lessons of ages.
James, Peter, and John

Finish then the good story
With Jude, and Revelations
To add to its glory.

Mount Desert.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have seen a good many receipts for candy in the "Letter-Box," but not one for chocolate creams. Here is one I have tried a great many times, and it has always been successful:

Two cups of sugar to half a cup of boiling water. Put on the stove, and let it boil ten minutes. Grate a quarter of a square of Baker's chocolate. Place this on the top of a steaming-kettle; leave it there until soft. Meanwhile, take off the cream and beat it until perfectly white. Roll into little round balls, and dip them in the chocolate. Put the balls into a dish, and set them away to cool.

Hoping you will print this receipt, I remain your devoted admirer,

CAROLINE G. BLODGET.

P. S.—The sugar must be powdered.

MOLLIE.—We do not know. One always has to make sure, too, that no speck of envy lurks in the wish to have justice done.

A friend sends us the following Kindergarten song:

THE TIME TABLE



One, two, three!
Now please listen to me:
A minute is sixty seconds long;
Sixty minutes to an hour belong.
One, two, three!
Learning is easy, you see.
Four, five, six!
'Tis easy as picking up sticks.
Twenty-four hours make one long day;
Seven days in a week we say.
One, two, three!
Learning is easy, you see.
Seven, eight, nine!
Never cry or whine.
The years are only twelve months long;
There is no time for doing wrong.
One, two, three!
Learning is easy, you see.
Tick, tack, tock!
Only look at the clock.
He works away the whole day long,
And every hour he sings a song.
Ding, dong, ding!
So we'll work and sing.

A. E. L.

Elizabeth, N. J.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Would you please tell me something about the Drawing Classes of the School of Design at the Cooper Institute; and what forms have to be gone through before a pupil can enter; and how old a pupil has to be? Good-by, dear ST. NICHOLAS.—Your faithful reader,

SARAH D. O.

The "Woman's Art School" of the Cooper Union, about which Sarah D. O. makes inquiry, is for pupils between the ages of sixteen and thirty-five.

Applications for admission should be made, personally or in writing, to the Principal, Mrs. Sarah N. Carter, giving a responsible written reference as to character, fitness, etc.

The free school holds session from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. There is a "paying" class that meets three times a week in the afternoon, under the charge of the first assistant in drawing of the "Woman's Art School" and of the clerk of the school, and the general superintendence of the principal. But the "paying" class is only for those who wish to study art merely as an accomplishment.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I thought you would like to hear about a little girl who is very fond of you. She always took ST. NICHOLAS until last autumn, then the times were so hard we were unable to get it for her; so she has read and re-read the old ones. Mamma has been sick a great deal for two years, and Agnes, who is ten years old and the oldest of the family, has learned to do a great many things. She can make bread, biscuit, pies and cake,—but her chief accomplishment is toast-making. Last fall, when berries were ripe, she picked and dried some currants, raspberries and blackberries, and put them carefully away. Ever since, when any one is sick, she puts some of her berries in a cup and cooks them nicely; then she makes such a nice piece of toast, so delicate, never scorched or raw. She has no fruit-closet of delicacies to go to, but the common things she has are so nicely prepared that they become luxurious, and often make mamma think of Bayard Taylor's little rhymes about mush and milk, a couplet of which reads:

"And common things that seem most nigh,
Both purse and heart may satisfy."

Her little brother, eighteen months old, claims much of her care, and in return loves her as much as he does mamma. He calls her Tee, and misses her sadly if she is out of sight an hour.

When Agnes was three years old, she said one day:

"Papa, how I love you!"

"What makes you love him? See how homely he is," teasingly answered mamma.

The little one took a good look at papa, and throwing her arms around his neck again, she said:

"Well, he's pretty in his heart."

Mamma thinks the little girl who can be so thoughtful for ever-tired mamma, so kind to the sick, and so tender of little baby brother, must be pretty in her heart.

AGNES'S MOTHER.

Here is an enigma made by a little girl eight years of age:

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

My first is in spin, but not in weave;
My second in part, but not in leave;
My third is in rain, but not in storm;
My fourth in chilly, but not in warm;
My fifth in hen, but not in coop;
My whole is a country of Europe.

Answer: Spain.

Easton, Md.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Will you please tell me from which of Shakspeare's plays the following quotation is taken?

"Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

—Yours truly,

MARY H. WILSON.

The quotation is from "As You Like It," Act II., Scene 1.; and the whole passage reads:

"Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

The beauty is marred, and the aptness of the illustration is lost sight of, by omitting the second half of this admirable sentence; therefore we quote it entire.

"Fairfax," San Rafael, Cal.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have seen letters from San Francisco, Oakland, and other places in California, but I do not think any one has written to you from San Rafael, a beautiful little town near San Francisco.

"Fairfax" is about three miles from the town. The ride here is very pleasant, especially in winter and spring time, when the hills are green and the wild flowers are in bloom.

The house resembles the old Fairfax house in Virginia, called Greenway Court, except that this is perhaps more rambling and the other lacks our wide-spreading bay-trees. It faces the garden and orchard, and beyond these is the hill, a mine of wonder and beauty.

We all enjoy climbing that hill and looking for ferns. In some parts we hardly dare step, for fear of crushing something beautiful. We look down upon a bank of green moss, and find snowy, shell-like fungi, so delicate that we hold our breath lest they should float away. Farther on are orange-colored ones, and some shaped like callas, translucent, and in color a pale pink carnelian. Wandering on, we enter a grove of pine-trees, in the midst of which a spring is bubbling up, and the ground is covered with a carpet of ferns, mosses, and wild flowers. By the time we are ready to go home, our baskets are well filled; and then, after we get home, we have the delight of arranging the flowers and ferns, examining the fungi with the microscope, and preparing imposing baskets of specimens to send to two delightful members of the Academy of Science in San Francisco, who are making fungi a specialty in their researches.

One day last summer my brother came running into the house, saying, in a very loud whisper, "There's a deer in the creek! There's a deer in the creek!" We all rushed out in time to see Uncle George, up to his waist in water, struggling with an immense buck. The dogs were there, too, barking as loudly as they could. It was very exciting. My sympathies were entirely with the deer, who made a noble fight before he was conquered. Deer are plentiful around here. Often we are awakened by the baying of the deer-hounds, and we can see the hunting parties on their horses galloping over the hill, and the dogs running to and fro.

The boys catch a good many large fish in our creek, and my uncle once caught a ten-pound salmon-trout that was very pretty; it had two delicate pink bands running along its sides.

The hills are crimson, a little before Christmas, with a holly peculiar to California; and we have many merry excursions in a wagon that we children call our "chariot," in which we go to gather holly for our Christmas festivities.

I have written too much, and yet I would like to tell more, our days are so full of pleasant change.—
Your affectionate reader,

MAY D. BIGELOW (fifteen years old).

Answers to Puzzles in the November Number were received, previous to November 18, from Annie Longfellow, "Bess," "Isola," "Bessie and her Cousin," "Helen of Troy," W. M. B., Nessie E. Stevens, "Winnie," Florence L. Turrill, James J. Ormsbee, Annie Forbush and Emma Elliott, Grace G. Chandler, Carrie Speiden and Mary F. Speiden, F. A. G. Cameron, Fred M. Pease, Geo. J. Fiske, Geo. Herbert White, "Sidonie," Louise Gilman, Clelia Duel Mosher, Mamie L. Holbrook, Ellie Hewitt, Fannie W., "Croghan, Jr.," Anna E. Mathewson, Eddie Bryan, and Allie Bertram.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Aunt Jo's Scrap-Bag, Vol. IV. (My Girls, etc.), published by Messrs. Roberts Brothers, Boston, is the fourth book in this deservedly popular series of short stories by Miss Louisa M. Alcott. The tales are full of freshness, humor, and wholesome thought, with inimitable touches of playful fancy and tenderness such as have established Miss Alcott's loving rule over the hearts of her readers. Boys as well as girls will find plenty to enjoy in these twelve delightful scraps from Aunt Jo's bag, and,—but readers of ST. NICHOLAS need no recommendation to them of anything that Miss Alcott has written. There are some pretty illustrations to the book, and the price is one dollar.

From the same publishers we have received also: TOM, A HOME-STORY, by George L. Chaney, illustrated, \$1.25; A GREAT EMERGENCY, AND OTHER TALES, by Juliana Horatia Ewing, illustrated, \$1.25; JOLLY GOOD TIMES AT SCHOOL—ALSO SOME TIMES NOT QUITE SO JOLLY, by P. Thorne, illustrated, \$1.25.

A new book by the author of "Helen's Babies" is now to be obtained. It is called BUDGE AND TODDIE, THEIR HAPS AND MISHAPS, and is an illustrated edition of "Other People's Children." The designs are by Lucy G. Morse.

Boys will be glad to hear of a good book, EVERY-DAY EXPERIENCES AT ETON, by a present Eton boy, published by George R. Lockwood, of New York. It is a hearty and amusing story, giving, with very slight exaggeration, a faithful account of life in the English public-school at Eton.

SPENSER FOR CHILDREN, published by Chatto & Windus, of London; Scribner, Armstrong & Co., New York. A beautiful book, illustrated with several fine colored plates, and relating in simple prose the chief incidents of Spenser's great poem.

From Messrs. Baker, Pratt & Co., New York, we have LILLIPUT LAND; OR, THE CHILDREN'S PEEP-SHOW. This is a collection of serials, short stories, poems, music, and pictures, adapted to interest and instruct young folks. It is edited by the author of "Lilliput Levee." Price, \$1.25.

Messrs. Porter & Coates, Philadelphia, send us HAPPY DAYS, a very pleasant book, full of pictures, tales and verses, for boys and girls. Several of the articles are by well-known writers, and the contents, as a whole, are bright, wholesome, and entertaining.

From the American Tract Society, New York, we have received DOLLY'S NEW SHOES, AND SOME OF THE PLACES THEY WENT TO, price 30 cents, postage 2 cents; DAUGHTERS OF ARMENIA, by Mrs. S. A. Wheeler, Missionary in Turkey, price 90 cents, postage 6 cents; ALMOST A MAN, by S. Annie Frost, with illustrations by Arthur Burdett Frost, price \$1, postage 8 cents; GRACE ASHLEIGH'S LIFE-WORK, illustrated, price \$1, postage 8 cents; and DEAR OLD STORIES TOLD ONCE MORE, forty Bible stories, in large type, and with illustrations by "Faith Latimer."

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The initials read downward and the finals upward will give the names of two countries in Europe.

1. A beam of light. 2. To join. 3. To pillage. 4. An article of food. 5. What merchants write. 6. An insect.

A. R.

HOURLASS PUZZLE.

ACROSS: 1. Calls. 2. A number. 3. A consonant. 4. A river. 5. Wounds. DIAGONALS: Sharpens and transmits. CENTRAL: Interior.

CYRIL DEANE.

DECAPITATIONS.

1. Behead a kind of nut, and leave a kind of grain. 2. Behead a small stream, and leave a bird. 3. Behead another bird, and leave a gardener's implement. 4. Behead a musical instrument, and leave another musical instrument. 5. Behead a carpenter's tool, and leave a narrow passage. 6. Behead part of a wagon, and leave a part of the body. 7. Behead another part of the body, and leave a tree. 8. Behead an edible fish, and leave the defeat of an army. 9. Behead a dried fruit, and leave an ancient alphabetic letter.

ISOLA.

DIAGONAL PUZZLE.

Diagonals, from left to right, a part of the year. Seven words. Fill the blanks in the sentence with appropriate words; and written under each other in the order given, they will give the diagonal.

As —— is more abundant than —— in this season when Love —— her altar fires anew, may this joy go through the —— year, bearing you constant ——; so that, looking back at its close, you can say: "1878 —— to have been one prolonged ——."

J. R.

DOUBLE-PUZZLE.

CENTRAL SYNCOPATIONS.

1. Syncopate mad, and leave what soldiers often make. 2. Syncopate part of a house, and leave to move. 3. Syncopate speed, and leave anger. 4. Syncopate to soak, and leave a gait. 5. Syncopate a river, and leave a rank. 6. Syncopate a particle, and leave a laugh. 7. Syncopate openings, and leave farming implements. 8. Syncopate baked clay, and leave fastenings.

The letters that have been syncopated, read downward, will make two words which you must find in the following

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

1. In brook, but not in sea;
 2. In slave, but not in free;
 3. In lose, but not in find;
 4. In heed, but not in mind;
 5. In barn, but not in shed;
 6. In black, but not in red;
 7. In hill, but not in mound;
 8. In held, but not in bound.
- What's the answer?—can you say?
'Tis something boys much like to play.

CYRIL DEANE.

GEOGRAPHICAL TRANSPOSITIONS.

1. ——— a good post at ———.
2. Did you notice the carved ——— in that old cathedral door in ———?
3. ——— with pleasure from Geneva, for ———.
4. I took great ——— to witness these national games, when in ———.
5. I found ——— gold in a mine in ———.
6. I could stand ——— in the entrance to the cave in ———.
7. I have ——— interest in ——— than in any other foreign city.

B.

OMNIBUS WORD.

In a word of five letters find: 1st. An hour-glass puzzle, the central letters of which, read downward, signify to perform again; horizontally, a symbol often used in writing, a beverage, a vowel, a performance, to provide. 2d. A word-square containing a unit, a vehicle, an epoch. 3d. Words to each of which one letter may be prefixed so as to form another word: a preposition, an animal; a verb, a weed; a study, a vehicle; a part of the body, a sign of sorrow. 4th. Words to fill appropriately the blanks in each stanza below, by prefixing a letter to the first word, when found to form the second, and by prefixing a letter to the second to form the third:

I would not heed so small an ———,
When dealing with one of his ———,
Or of my temper leave a ———.
We asked him in; he sat and ———
Of the ripe fruit at such a ———,
He lowered well the heaped up ———.

H. H. D.

ACCIDENTAL HIDINGS.

In these quotations find five girls' names, without transposing any letters.

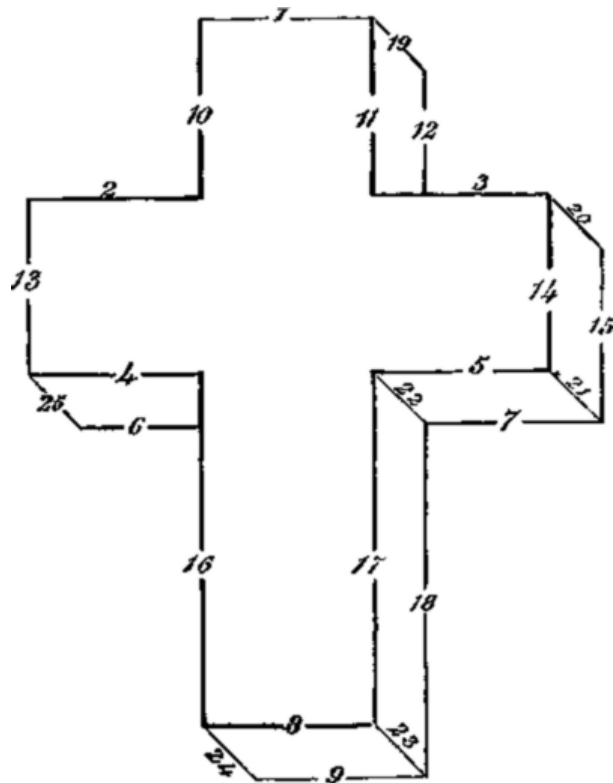
"Of such as wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign."—*Gray*.

"Where olive-leaves were twinkling in every wind that blew,
There sat beneath the pleasant shade a damsel of Peru."—*Bryant*.

"Slowly she raised her form of grace;
Her eyes no ray conceptive flung."—*Hogg*.

"Stainless worth,
Such as the sternest age of virtue saw."—*Bryant*.

PERSPECTIVE-CROSS PUZZLE.



Each of the horizontal words is formed of five letters, excepting No. 6, which has but three. Of the perpendiculars, Nos. 16, 17 and 18 have ten letters each; No. 12 has three letters; and each of the other perpendiculars has five letters. The slanting words have each three letters. Each corner letter serves for every word that radiates from or to its corner.

MEANINGS OF THE DIFFERENT WORDS.—*Horizontals*: 1, Sublime; 2, an engraving; 3, to trench; 4, occurrence; 5, a certain form of glass; 6, a kind of fish; 7, large; 8, a yard; 9, concise. *Perpendiculars*: 10, An article of dress; 11, solemn; 12, hitherto; 13, to make sure; 14, a Turkish institution; 15, to establish; 16, magical; 17, advancement; 18, tractable. *Diagonals*: 19, Sarcastic; 20, to jump; 21, did meet; 22, a wooden fastening; 23, a part of the body; 24, a hammock; 25, a girl's name.

H. H. D.

EASY SQUARE WORD.

1. An instrument for measuring time. 2. A title among the ancient Peruvians. 3. Sour. 4. To load.

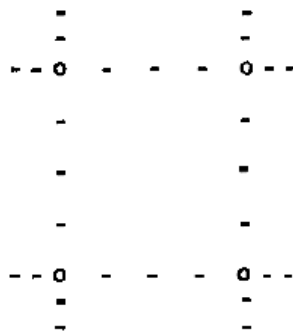
PLUTO.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

When we went to the 123456 789, the others had contrived to 123456789 us in picking nuts.

CYRIL DEANE.

FRAME PUZZLE.



Make the frame of four words of nine letters each, so that there shall be the same letter of the alphabet at each of the four corners where the words intersect. That letter being indicated (o, in this puzzle), gives the clue.

Upper horizontal line, a pigeon; lower horizontal line, a kind of grain. Left perpendicular line, without a name; right perpendicular line, without fragrance.

B.

CHARADE.

My first of Roman origin you see,
 Whose purport illustrates the century;
 Means light for blind men; restless as a sprite;
 The sailor's trust; the prelate's dear delight.
 My second heads a small but mighty band,
 Whose power pervades and elevates the land:
 Indefinite enough, yet, once defined,
 It is a thing no language leaves behind.
 My third consoles, and cheers in anguish deep,
 And oft, like great Macbeth, hath "murdered sleep."
 Dear to the maiden's heart when dry and dead,
 Its beauty and its bloom forever fled.
 Yet even then what lips its charm rehearse!
 What poets chant it in their genial verse!

My whole how soft, how silent and how fleet!
 Female, yet masculine, its aspect sweet.
 Tinted as fair as clouds that deck the sky,
 Or stainless as the snows that round us lie;
 Bright as the saffron tints of dawning light,
 Or darker than the stormy depths of night.
 A prince's bride; the treasure of a lad;
 And yet biographer it never had.
 For he who writes its life must ever use
 Volumes to celebrate each separate muse.
 Fierce, fond, and treacherous, full of songs and wails,
 The hero of a thousand fights and tales;
 The love of ladies and the scorn of men;
 The shame of England's arms. Oh guess me then!

ROSE TERRY COOKE.

WORDS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

These are a source of great amusement, whether written or acted. To illustrate the latter, you will, for instance, throw your muff under the table, and ask, "What word does that represent?" Perhaps some one will suggest "Muffin." "No—'fur-below." Tie your handkerchief tightly around the neck of some statuette—"Artichoke"—etc. In writing or speaking a sentence to illustrate a word, the most ridiculous will sometimes provoke the most mirth. We will give an illustration of one pretty far-fetched, but allowable: "Mister, please come here and make this shell stand up on edge"—"Circumstantial (Sir-come-stan'-shell)." "I encountered the doctor to-day"—("Metaphysician". With this introduction, I propose a few words for your consideration.

1. Put an extremity into a jar. 2. Young ladies from Missouri. 3. A cow's tail in fly-time. 4. That young sow cost twenty-one shillings sterling. 5. A sham head-dress. 6. Victims to corns. 7. Oxidized iron on a weapon. 8. "Where's the prisoner, Pat?" "Sure, your honor, he's taking his breakfast." 9. "Come and cut our hair." 10. Deviate, fish. 11. A goat. 12. Four.

AUNT SUE.

PICTORIAL CHRISTMAS PUZZLE.



PICTORIAL CHRISTMAS PUZZLE.

The puzzle is an Anagram Enigma, rather difficult, and meant for experienced puzzle-workers. The answer is the first line of a well-known couplet relating to Christmas.

Each of the numerals underneath the pictures represents a letter belonging to that word of the answer indicated by the numeral,—(thus, 3 indicates a letter of the third word; 7, a letter of the seventh word, etc.),—and each collection of numerals represents a word which will describe the picture above it.

To solve the puzzle, find a word to describe each picture containing as many letters as there are numerals beneath the picture. After all the seven words have been thus found, select from them and group together all the letters that in the numbering beneath the pictures are designated by the same numeral (for, as already stated, all the letters bearing the same numeral belong to that word of the answer which is indicated by the numeral), and each group of these letters must be transposed to form the word of the answer which corresponds with the numeral of the group.

Thus, the word "hay" has three letters and will describe the first picture. After words have been found to describe the other pictures, the selection must begin, and "h," the first letter of "hay," should be placed in a group with all the other letters bearing the numeral 7 in the numbering beneath the pictures; "a" should be grouped with all the other letters designated by 2, and "y" with all those designated by 3; and so on.

When all the letters have been properly separated and grouped, transpose all those letters belonging to group No. 1 into a word to form the first word of the answer; those belonging to group No. 2 into the second word of the answer, etc.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN DECEMBER NUMBER.

CHESSE PUZZLE.—Begin at the word "Bind." The stanza reads:

"Bind me, ye woodbines, in your twines;
Curl me about, ye gadding vines;
And oh, so close your circles lace,

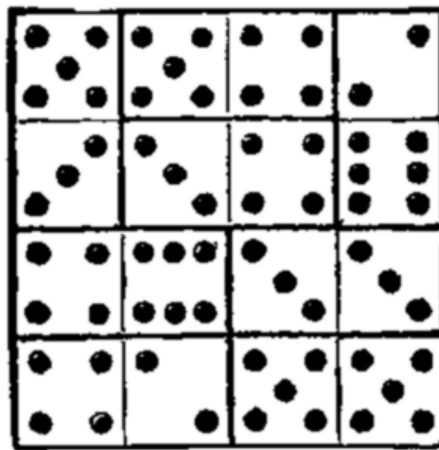
That I may never leave this place;
 But lest your fetters prove too weak,
 Ere I your silken bondage break,
 Do you, O brambles, chain me too,
 And, courteous briars, nail me through."—MARVELL.

(Quoted by Elia in essay entitled "Blakesmoor in H—— shire.")

EASY NUMERICAL ENIGMA.—Lowell. L, lo, low, owe, we, well, ell.

A PLEA FOR SANTA CLAUS.—Merry Christmas. Take the third letter from the beginning of each line, and read downward.

MAGIC DOMINO SQUARE.—The diagram shows one method of arranging the dominoes. But the puzzle can be solved by two or three other arrangements.



BROKEN WORDS.—1. Inquires—in quires. 2. Western—we stern. 3. Ashantee—a shanty.

PICTORIAL QUADRUPLE ACROSTIC.—Stalagmites, Stalactites, Natural Cave, Underground, 1. SNUfferS. 2. TANgenT. 3. ATDA. 3. LaUrEL. 4. AuRoRA. 5. GGAC. 6. MeaL RaT. 7. IOdide CuprI. 8. TrUAnT. 9 ENVelopE. 10. SpaDES. CHRISTMAS ENIGMA.—"He has more business than an English oven at Christmas."

AUTHORS' NAMES.—1. Mulock (mew, loch). 2. Edgeworth (edge worth). 3. Thackeray (T hack ray). 4. Carlyle (Carl isle). 5. Charles Reade (Charles read). 6. Ruskin (rusk inn). 7. Gaskell (gas K ell). 8. Hale. 9. Macaulay (Mac awl ay). 10. Victor Hugo (victor hug O). 11. Prescott (press cot). 12. Whitney (whit neigh). 13. Braddon (brad don). 14. Alcott (Al cot). 15. Disraeli (D Israel I). 16. Rossetti (Rose Ettie).

A RIMLESS WHEEL.—1. Parapet. 2. Manakin. 3. Fanatic. 4. Rubadub. 1a, par; 1b, pet; 2a, man; 2b, kin; 3a, fan; 3b, tic; 4a, rub; 4b, dub.

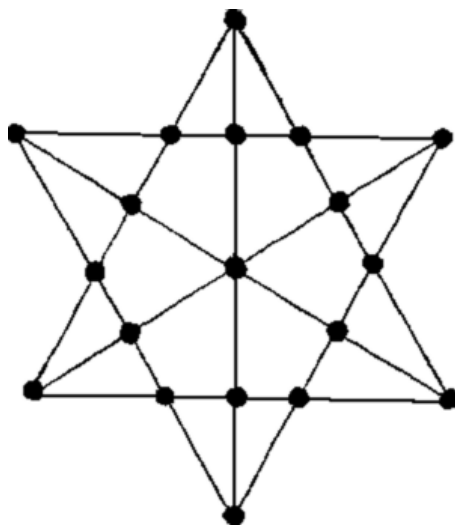
DIAGONAL PUZZLE.—Santa Claus. St. Nicholas, pAtronizes, coNfidence, conTribute, compAvable, reconCiles, immacuLate, legitimAte, miraculoUs, schoolboyS.

PROVERB PUZZLE.—"Christmas comes but once a year." Car, sabots, chimney, mouse, trace.

SEXTUPLE ACROSTIC.—Mopes, Abaft, Larva, Enter.

EASY DIAMOND PUZZLE.—R, Dog, Robin, Gig, N.

NUMERICAL ENIGMAS.—1. Winsome—win some. 2. Sailor—sail or. 3. Wind-flowers—wind flowers. 4. Whip-poor-will—whip poor Will. 5. Parents—Pa rents. 6. To-morrow—Tom or row. 7. Wellfare—Well! farewell.



ANSWER TO TREE PUZZLE IN JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.—The above diagram shows one way of arranging nineteen trees in nine straight rows and yet have five trees in each row. The lines show the rows.

For names of solvers of November puzzles, see "Letter-Box," page 236.

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