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"ONWARD WITH HER PRECIOUS BURDEN, THROUGH SHOT AND SHELL"

ST. NICHOLAS.

VOL. V. JULY, 1878. No. 9.

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THE GIRL WHO SAVED THE GENERAL.

By Charles H. Woodman.

Far down the Carolina coast lies the lovely island of St. John, where stood, one hundred years ago, a noble brick-built mansion, with lofty portico and broad piazza. Ancient live-oaks, trembling aspens, and great sycamores, lifted a bower over it to keep off the sun. Threading their way through orange-trees and beds of flowers, spacious walks played hide-and-seek around the house, coming suddenly full upon the river, or running out of sight in the deep woods.

The owner of this place was Robert Gibbes. With his beautiful young wife he kept an open hall, and drew to its doors many of the great and noble people of the times; for he was wealthy and cultured, and she had such charming manners that people loved her very presence. The great house was full at all seasons. Eight children had already come to this good couple, and seven little adopted cousins were their playmates—the orphan children of Mrs. Fenwick, sister to Mr. Gibbes. He himself was a cripple, and could not walk. In a chair which ran on wheels he was drawn daily over the pleasant paths, sometimes by the faithful black servants, sometimes by the still more devoted children, who tugged at the rope like so many frisky colts. In their careless joy he forgot his own sufferings, and would laugh heartily when they deserted him and hid, with shouts, behind the great trunks, until every tree in the park seemed to cry out "Papa!" and "Uncle Robert!" The loveliness of the spot, and the happiness of its dwellers, suited well its name of "Peaceful Retreat," by which it was known through all the country.

But in those troublous times it could not always remain "peaceful." In the spring of 1779, the British took possession of all the sea-board. General

Prevost marched up from Savannah and laid siege to Charleston. The beautiful city was about to fall into the enemy's hands; all night the men had toiled in the trenches, the women had prayed on their knees in their chambers, expecting every moment to hear the besieging cannon roar through the darkness. At daylight the next morning the housetops were thronged with anxious watchers; but as the sun came gloriously out of the sea, it shone upon deserted fields; not a tent was to be seen. Hearing that General Lincoln was hastening on with his army, Prevost had struck his tents in the night, and was retreating rapidly toward Savannah. He crossed the Stone Ferry, and fortified himself on John's Island, as the island of St. John's was often called.

For weeks now the noise of musketry and heavy guns destroyed the quiet joy at "Peaceful Retreat." The children, in the midst of play, would hear the dreadful booming, and suddenly grow still and pale. The eldest daughter, Mary Anna, was a sprightly, courageous girl of thirteen. She had the care of all the little ones, for her mother's hands were full, in managing the great estate and caring for her husband. The children never played now in the park, unless Mary was with them; and when the frightful noise came through the trees, they ran to her as chickens to a mother's wing.

After a time, the enemy determined to take possession of this beautiful place. A body of British and Hessians quietly captured the landing one midnight, and, creeping stealthily onward, filled the park and surrounded the house. At day-break, the inmates found themselves prisoners.

Then came trying days for the family. The officers took up their quarters in the mansion, allowing the family to occupy the upper story. They may have been brave soldiers, but they certainly were not gentlemen, for they did everything to annoy Mrs. Gibbes, who bore all her trouble nobly and patiently. Little Mary had entire charge of the smaller children, which was no easy task, for they were continually getting into some sort of trouble with the troops.

John's Island was less than thirty miles from Charleston, and when the American officers in the city heard that "Peaceful Retreat" had been captured by the British, they determined to rescue it from the enemy. Two

large galleys were immediately manned and equipped and sent to the plantation, with strict orders not to fire upon the mansion.

Sailing noiselessly up the Stono River, at dead of night, the vessels anchored abreast the plantation. Suddenly, out of the thick darkness burst a flame and roar, and the shot came crashing through the British encampment. The whole place was instantly in uproar. The officers in the house sprang from bed, and hastily dressed and armed. The family, rudely awakened, rushed to the windows. A cold rain was falling, and the soldiers, half-clad, were running wildly hither and thither, while the officers were frantically calling them to arms. Mary woke at the first terrible roar and fled to her mother's room. The excitable negro servants uttered most piercing shrieks. The poor little children were too frightened to scream, but clung, trembling, to Mary.

Mrs. Gibbes was in great distress. She knew not, at first, whether it was an attack by friends on the camp, or an assault on the house by the enemy. She ordered the servants to cease their wailing and dress themselves. Then her husband and the children were prepared; and, while the cannon bellowed in quick succession and the noise around the house grew louder, the father and mother consulted what was best to do. It was now evident that the attack was by their own friends, and its object was to dislodge the enemy. But Mr. Gibbes did not know that the house would not be fired on, and he advised instant flight. He was carried to his chair, and the whole household sallied forth from a back door.

The scene was terrific. The night was pitchy dark, and when, just as they stepped out, a sheet of flame belched forth from the vessels, it seemed to be almost against their faces. The roar shook the ground. The troops were too busy saving themselves to notice the fugitives, and they pushed on as rapidly as possible.

No one was sufficiently protected from the rain. Little Mary had the hardest part, for nearly all the children were in her care. The mud was deep. Some of the little ones could walk but a short distance at a time, and had to be carried—Mary having always one, sometimes two, in her arms. Several of the servants were near her, but none of them seemed to notice her or her

burdens. The last horse had been carried off that very day; there was no escape but on foot.

Suddenly, a ball came crashing by them through the trees! Then a charge of grape-shot cut the boughs overhead. They were exactly in the range of the guns! It was evident they had taken the worst direction, but there was no help for it now—it was too late to turn back. In her agony, the mother cried aloud on God to protect her family. Mary hugged closer the child in her arms, and trembled so she could hardly keep up. Another crash! The shot shrieked past them, striking the trees in every direction. The assault was fierce, the roar was incessant. The frightened family rushed on as swiftly as possible toward a friend's plantation, far back from the shore; but it was soon seen that they would not have strength to reach it, even if they were not struck down by the flying shot. The Americans were pouring their fire into these woods, thinking the enemy would seek refuge there. The wretched fugitives expected every moment to be the last. On they pushed through mud and rain and screaming shot.

Soon they found they were getting more out of range of the guns. They began to hope; yet now and then a ball tore up the trees around them, or rolled fearfully across their path. They reached one of the houses where their field-hands lived, with no one hurt; they were over a mile from the mansion, and out of range. The negroes said no shot had come that way. Unable to flee further, the family determined to stop here. As soon as they entered, Mrs. Gibbes felt her strength leaving her, and sank upon a low bed. Chilled to the bone, drenched, trembling with terror and exhaustion, the family gathered around her. She opened her eyes and looked about. She sprang up wildly.

"Oh, Mary!" she cried, "where is John?"

The little girl turned pale, and moaned: "Oh, mother! mother! *he's left*!" She broke into crying. The negroes, quickly sympathetic, began to wring their hands and wail.

"Silence!" said Mr. Gibbes, with stern but trembling voice. The tears were in his own eyes. The little child now missing was very dear to them

all, and, moreover, was deemed a sacred charge, as he was one of the orphan children of Mr. Gibbes's sister, intrusted to him on her death-bed.

The wailing ceased; there was silence, broken only by sobs, and the master asked:

"Who is willing to go back for the child?"

No one spoke. Mr. Gibbes turned to his wife for counsel. As the two talked in low tones, Mrs. Gibbes called her husband's attention to Mary, who was kneeling with clasped hands, in prayer, at the foot of the bed. In a moment, the little maid rose and came to them, saying, calmly:

"Mother, I must go back after baby."

"Oh, my child," cried the mother, in agony, "I *cannot* let you!"

"But, mother, I must," pleaded Mary. "God will care for me."

It was a fearful responsibility. The guns yet roared constantly through the darkness; the house might now be in flames; it might be filled with carnage and blood. Mrs. Gibbes turned to her husband. His face was buried in his hands. Plainly, she must decide it herself. With streaming eyes, she looked at Mary.

"Come here, my child," she called through her sobs. Mary fell upon her mother's neck. One long, passionate embrace, in which all a mother's love and devotion were poured out, and the clinging arms were opened without a word. Mary sprang up, kissed her father's forehead, and sped forth on her dangerous mission of love.

The rain had now ceased, but the night was still dark and full of terrors, for through the trees she saw the frequent flashes of the great guns. The woods were filled with the booming echoes, so that cannon seemed to be on every hand. She flew on with all speed. Soon she heard the crashing trees ahead, and knew that in a moment she would be once more face to face with death. She did not falter. Now she was again in the fierce whirlwind! All around her the shot howled and shrieked. On every side branches fell

crashing to the earth. A cannon-ball plunged into the ground close beside her, cast over her a heap of mud, and threw her down. She sprang up and pressed on with redoubled vigor. Not even *that* ball could make her turn back.

She reached the house. She ran to the room where the little child usually slept. The bed was empty! Distracted, she flew from chamber to chamber. Suddenly she remembered that this night he had been given to another nurse. Up into the third story she hurried, and, as she pushed open the door, the little fellow, sitting up in bed, cooed to her and put out his hands.

With the tears raining down her cheeks, Mary wrapped the babe warmly and started down the stairs. Out into the darkness once more; onward with her precious burden, through cannon-roar, through shot and shell! Three times she passed through this iron storm. The balls still swept the forest; the terrific booming filled the air.

With the child pressed tightly to her brave young heart, she fled on. She neither stumbled nor fell. The shot threw the dirt in her face, and showered the twigs down upon her head. But she was not struck. In safety she reached the hut, and fell exhausted across the threshold.

And the little boy thus saved by a girl's brave devotion, afterward became General Fenwick, famous in the war of 1812.

FORTY—LESS ONE.

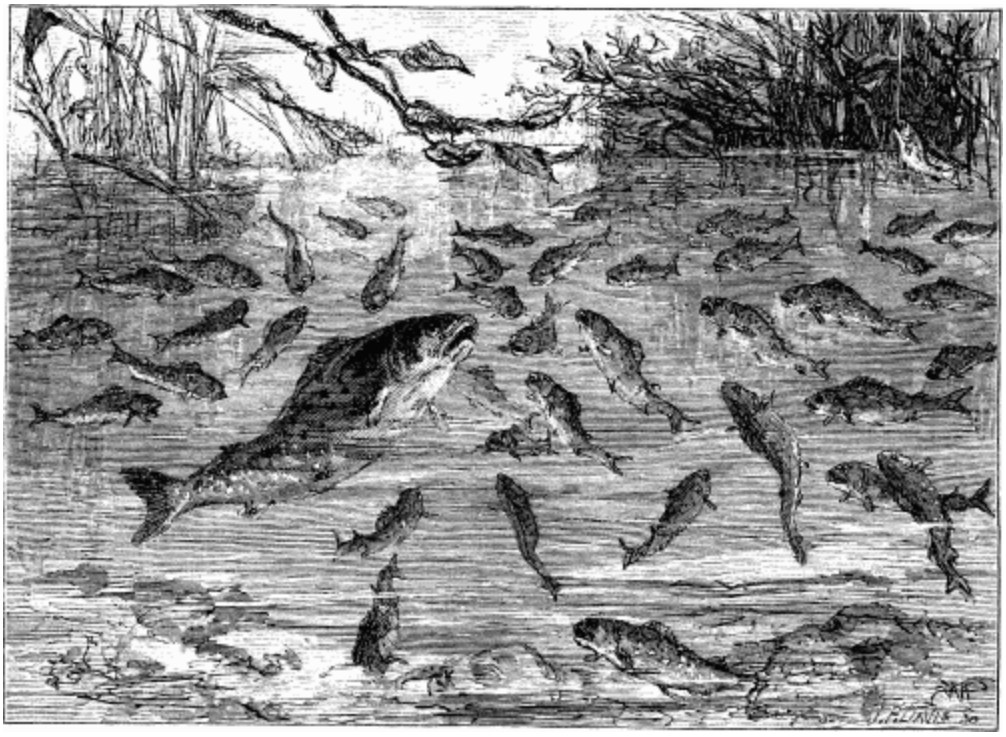
By James Richardson.

Over by the tangled thicket,
Where the level meets the hill,
Where the mealy alder-bushes
Crowd around the ruined mill,
Where the thrushes whistle early,
Where the midges love to play,
Where the nettles, tall and stinging,
Guard the vine-obstructed way,
Where the tired brooklet lingers;
In a quiet little pool,
Mistress Salmo Fontinalis[A]
Keeps a very private school.

Forty little speckled beauties
Come to learn of her, each day,
How to climb the foaming rapids,
Where the flashing sunbeams play,—
How to navigate the eddies,
How to sink and how to rise,
How to watch for passing perils,
How to leap for passing flies,—

When to play upon the surface,
When beneath the stones to hide,—
All the secrets of the water,
All brook learning, true and tried;—

"That's a good-for-nothing skipper;"
"That's a harmless yellow-bird;"
"That's the flicker of the sunshine,
When the alder-leaves are stirred;"
"That's the shadow of a cloudlet;"
"That's a squirrel come to drink;"
"That—look out for him, my darlings!—
He's a fierce and hungry mink;"
"That's the ripple on the water,
When the winds the wavelets stir;"
"That—snap quick, my little hearties!—
That's a luscious grasshopper."



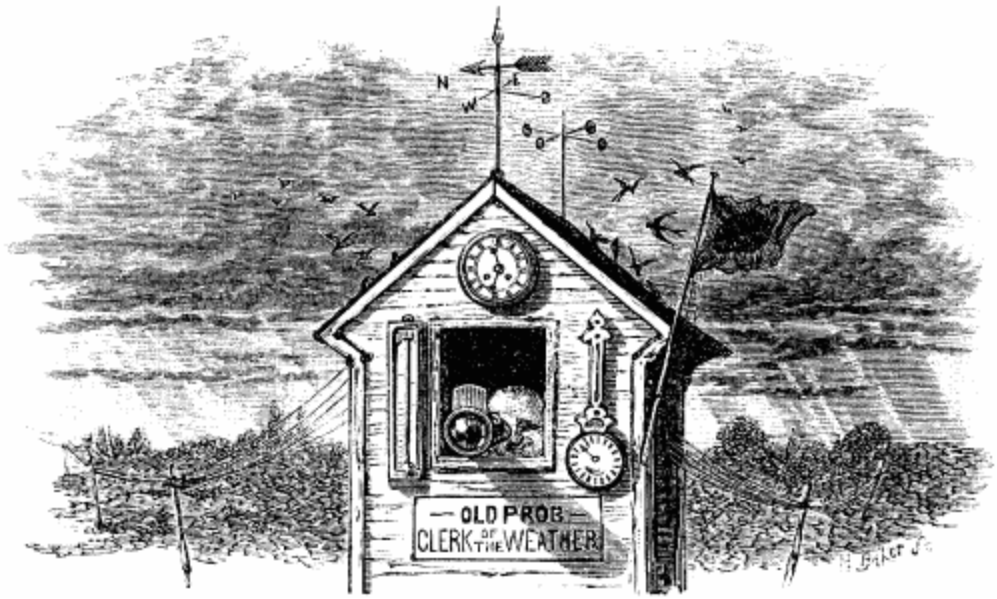
So the clever Mistress Salmo
    Gives her counsel, day by day,—
Teaching all the troutly virtues,
    All life's lessons, grave and gay.
Well she knows the flashing terror
    Of King Fisher's sudden fall!
Well she knows the lurking danger
    Of the barb'd hook, keen and small!
Well she tries to warn her pupils
    Of all evils, low and high!
But, alas! the vain young triflers
    Sometimes disobey—and die!

What was that which passed so quickly,
    With a slender shade behind?

What is that which stirs the alders
When no ripple tells of wind?
What sends Mistress Salmo darting
Underneath the stones in fear?—
Crying, "Hide yourselves, my darlings!
Our worst enemy is near!"
"I am bound to understand it,"
Says one self-proud speckle-side;
"When I see the danger's real,
Then, if need be, I can hide."

So he waits alone and watches,
Sees the shadow pass again,
Sees a fly drop on the water,—
Dashes at it, might and main.
"Missed it! Well," he says, "I never!
That's the worst jump made to-day!
Here another comes—now for it!"
Splash! He's in the air—to stay!
When the alders cease to tremble,
Silence comes and sun-glints shine,
Mistress Salmo Fontinalis
Calls the roll,—just thirty-nine!

[A] Brook-trout.


N
W
— OLD PROB —
CLERK OF THE WEATHER

HOW THE WEATHER IS FORETOLD.

By James H. Flint.

In former times, the chief herald of the weather was the almanac, which ambitiously prophesied a whole year of cold and heat, wet and dry, dividing up the kinds of weather quite impartially, if not always correctly.

But the almanac, good as it was now and then, and the weather-wise farmers, correct as sometimes they might have been, were not always able to impart exact information to the country; and they have been thrown quite into the shade of late, by one who is popularly known under the somewhat disrespectful title of "Old Prob," or "Old Probabilities." He has become the Herald of the Weather to the sailor, near the rocky, dangerous coasts; to the farmer, watching his crops, and waiting for good days to store them; to the traveler, anxious to pursue his journey under fair skies; and to the girls and boys who want to know, before they start to the woods for a picnic, what are the "probabilities" as to rain.

Every one who reads the daily paper is familiar with the "Weather Record," issued from the "War Department, office of the Chief Signal Officer," at Washington. These reports give, first, a general statement of what the weather has been, for the past twenty-four hours, all over the country, from Maine to California, and from the Lakes to the South Atlantic States; and then the "Probabilities," or "Indications," for the next twenty-four hours, over this same broad territory. The annual reports of the Chief Signal Officer show that in only comparatively few instances do these daily predictions fail of fulfillment.

The reason these prophecies are so true is a simple and yet a wonderful one. The weather itself tells the observer what it is going to do, some time in advance, and the telegraph sends the news all over the country, from the central signal office at Washington.

We shall see, presently, how the weather interprets itself to "Old Probabilities." Although it has proved such a fruitful subject of discourse in all ages, yet I am afraid many people who pass remarks upon it do not really think what the weather is made of. Let us examine its different elements.

The atmosphere has weight, just as water or any other fluid, although it seems to be perfectly bodiless. We must comprehend that the transparent, invisible air is pressing inward toward the center of the earth. This pressure varies according to the state of the weather, and the changes are indicated by an instrument called a barometer. Generally speaking, the falling of the mercury in the tube of the barometer indicates rain, and its rise heralds clear weather. Sometimes the rise is followed by cold winds, frost and ice. What these changes really indicate, however, can be determined only by comparing the barometric changes, at certain hours, in a number of places very far apart. This is done by the Signal Service. Observations are made at about one hundred and forty stations, in different portions of the country, at given hours, and the results are telegraphed at once to Washington, where our faithful "weather clerk" receives them, reasoning out from them the "probabilities" which he publishes three times in every twenty-four hours.

But the atmosphere varies not only in weight, but also in temperature. The thermometer tells us of such changes.

Besides this, the air contains a great amount of moisture, and it shows as much variation in this characteristic as in the others. For the purpose of making known the changes in the moisture of the atmosphere, an instrument has been invented called a "wet-bulb" thermometer.

We are thus enabled to ascertain the weight or pressure, the temperature, and the wetness of the air, and now it only remains for us to measure the force, and point out the direction, of the wind. This is done by the familiar

weather-vane and the anemometer. The vane shows the direction, and the anemometer is an instrument which indicates the velocity of the wind.

It is by a right understanding of all these instruments that the signal service officer is enabled to tell what the weather says of itself; for they are the pens with which the weather writes out the facts from which the officer makes up his reports for the benefit of all concerned. Thus, however wildly and blindly the storm may seem to come, it sends messengers telling just where it arose, what course it will take, and how far it will extend. But it tells its secrets to those only who pay strict attention.

The system of danger signals, adopted by the United States Government, has proved of great benefit to shipping. All along the coasts are stations, at which plainly visible signals are displayed, to warn ship-captains of approaching storms. The reports of observers at the stations are required to give all instances in which vessels have remained in port on account of official warnings given. In these cases danger was avoided, and statistics show that disasters to shipping have been considerably fewer since the introduction of the cautionary signals.

The agricultural interests of the country also have been greatly benefited by the daily bulletins sent to every farming district in the land by the Weather Department. These bulletins are made from telegraphic reports received at appointed centers of distribution, where they are at once printed, placed in envelopes, and addressed to designated post-offices in the district to be supplied. Each postmaster receiving a bulletin has the order of the Postmaster-General to display it instantly in a frame furnished for the purpose.

The bulletins reach the different offices, and are displayed in the frames, on the average, at eleven o'clock in the morning, making about ten hours from the time the report first left the chief signal officer until it appeared placarded at every center of the farming populations, and became accessible to all classes even in the most distant parts of the country.

The information given on these bulletins has been found especially valuable to those farmers who take an interest in the study of meteorology, or the science of weather, and the facts announced are so plain, that any

intelligent person may profit by them. For instance, each bulletin now announces, for its particular district, what winds in each month have been found most likely, and what least likely, to be followed by rain. Attention given to this one simple piece of information will result in increasing the gains and reducing the losses of harvesting.

Warnings of expected rises or falls in the great rivers are made with equal regularity, telegraphed, bulletined in frames, and also published by the newspapers, at the different river cities. These daily reports give the depths of water at different points in the rivers' courses, and thus make it easy for river shipping to be moored safely in anticipation of low water, when ignorance might lead to the grounding of the boats on sand-bars or mud-banks. The notices of the probable heights which freshets may reach, are followed by preparations upon the "levees" and river-banks, to guard against overflows.

The United States Signal Service is a branch of the army. No one is admitted to it who is under twenty-one years of age. Every candidate has to undergo before enlistment an examination, the chief subjects of which are spelling, legible hand-writing, proficiency in arithmetic, and the geography of the United States, physical and political.

Successful candidates are regularly enlisted in the army, as non-commissioned officers, and go through a course of very systematic instruction in military signaling and telegraphy. They are assigned afterward to different posts, where they are required to make observations and report the same by wire three times a day, to the commanding officer at Washington. These observations are made by means of the instruments I have described, and include the different appearances in the sky; and at all the stations they are made at the same hour, according to Washington time. The telegraph gives to the Herald of the Weather and his aids the advantage of hearing from all the hundred and forty-odd observers almost at the same time; and when all this information has been gathered up, studied out, and re-arranged, the same swift servant takes all over the country, again almost at one time, the ripe results of the care and watching of more than seven score persons separated by hundreds and even thousands of miles from the central office.

I should like to describe the instruments fully, but must content myself with telling you what remarkable things some of them do. The self-registering barometer, for instance, is made to actually photograph a storm; another is made to draw with a pencil, every hour, figures that show the height of the column of mercury and the condition of the atmosphere. Even the vane, or weather-cock, marks down the direction and force of the wind.

The report of the chief signal officer for the year 1876 gives some idea of the vast amount of labor performed by the service. The Herald of the Weather never rests. As he says, "The duties of this office permit little rest and less hesitation. Its action must be prompt. * * * Its orders must issue, its signals of warning be given, and its record thus made, sometimes when wisdom would delay, if possible, and subsequent information show it had delayed rightly. It is the simple duty of the office to act at each present moment as well as it can with the information at that time before it. The reports to come after can only give bases for future action, while exhibiting the right and wrong of the past." These points should be borne in mind by those who are disposed to find fault with some of the daily predictions about the weather. If these predictions do not always come true, it is for the reason given above. Each report must be made at a given hour. Sudden changes may occur immediately after a report has been issued. These changes cannot be waited for, and cannot always be foreseen. But the general accuracy of the daily reports cannot be questioned, as about eighty per cent of their predictions are known to have been verified, and the average of failure grows less.

The method of arranging, comparing, and studying out the meaning of all the different records of observations made at all the weather stations, cannot be explained in a short article. But I may add that the weather is, after all, not quite so capricious as its accusers have asserted. And it has been found that all storms have certain "habits, movements, and tracks." It is by applying these laws, and drawing conclusions from them, that the prophet of the weather is able to tell so nearly what kind of a day we shall have, and just about where and when the storm will come.

Nearly all great storms have a rotary, or cyclonical character. The little whirlwinds we often see on windy days, when the dust is caught up and

whirled around, are miniature examples of great storms which sweep around immense circles. Almost all great rain, hail, and snow storms revolve in this manner around a calm center where the mercury is low in the tube of the barometer. Sometimes two or more cyclones meet, and interfere with one another's rotary motions; and "when interferences of this description take place, we have squalls, calms (often accompanied by heavy rains), thunder-storms, great variations in the direction and force of the wind," and irregular movements of the barometer.

So then, considering all that the Herald of the Weather has to do, the care and quickness with which it must be done, and the excellent results he obtains, everybody who is at all interested in the changes of the weather ought to be grateful to him for his faithfulness and devoted attention to duty.

But why should the Government of the United States—that is to say, the people as a whole—take the trouble and bear the cost of keeping a small army of men to watch the weather all over the country, and to telegraph their observations three times a day to Washington? Why should the officials there take the trouble to compare these observations and telegraph back to each locality what weather it may expect, and what the weather will be elsewhere, so that you and I may know when to stay at home, or when to take our umbrellas with us if we go out?

Hardly. There are more important matters at stake. Most of you are old enough to know that it is unexpected weather that causes most of the trouble that the weather occasions. The farmer expects fair weather, cuts his hay or grain, and a storm comes and spoils it. He looks for rain, and lets his crop stand; the bright sun injures it, or he loses a good chance to harvest it. The ship-master expects fair weather, puts out from port, and his ship is driven back upon the shore, a wreck. He expects a storm, stays in port, and misses the fair wind that would have carried him far to sea.

Now, a very large part of these disappointments and losses may be prevented, if one only knows with reasonable certainty what sort of weather it is likely to be to-day and to-morrow; and that is just the information the Weather Herald furnishes. The great storms usually come slowly driving across the country—so slowly that the telegraph may send word of their

coming two or three days ahead. Thus the farmers may know just what they may safely undertake to do; and so may the ship-masters.

Since the farmers and seamen have learned to value the weather warnings rightly, this service saves the country every year millions and millions of dollars' worth of property, and, it may be, hundreds of lives. Often a single timely warning has prevented losses that would have amounted to more than the entire cost of the weather service from the beginning until now. And possibly the yearly saving effected by warnings of ordinary "changeable" weather, may together amount to more than those in connection with great storms.

TOO MANY BIRTHDAYS.

By Fanny M. Osborne.

The king of the island was the father, and the queen the mother, of the little princess about whom this story is told. For many generations there had been but one child born to the royal family; but goodness and beauty being hereditary, these only children were beloved by all the subjects of the realm; and although they ran a great danger of being spoiled, they never were, but remained all through their lives as simple, gentle, and unpretentious as though born to the humblest lot.

Of course, the event of the birth of one of these children had been, from time immemorial, the occasion of the greatest and most sincere rejoicing, and the enthusiasm of the people seemed even greater at each repetition of these blessed anniversaries.

In this happy island crimes were almost unknown; and so generous and confiding were the people, that they imagined all the world were as good as themselves. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the great physician Aigew came from a far distant land to attend the grandfather of the little princess on his death-bed, no one in all the island suspected that he was anything else than the best and kindest of doctors. It is true that the former court physician, now displaced by Aigew, had his doubts about his successor. But it is best not to trouble ourselves with what we cannot understand; and whether or not Aigew was as good as he pretended to be, the king and queen were altogether pleased with their new doctor. Knowing him to be wise and of great book-learning, they admitted him to the closest intimacy in their private life, consulted him upon all questions of state, and accepted his guidance and counsel as that of a superior being. It was to his

influence that the islanders owed their great birthday law, by which it was enacted that, on each recurrence of the princess's anniversary, every child in the kingdom was to be allowed his or her way, without restraint, from sunrise until sunset; and, during the day, the use of the word "no" was forbidden to all fathers and mothers and nursery-maids, from one end of the island to the other.

Everybody thought this one of the best enactments of the reign. "What a beautiful thought!" said they. "All the children in the land rejoicing with their princess! When they are grown men and women, they will always think of her with pleasure, for she will be associated with the most delightful memories of their childhood."

It certainly did seem very charming at first. But the day after was harvest-time for the great physician and his assistants, who kept flying hither and thither post-haste.

Still, every one said it was a good law. It was true the children were not quite so well next day; but then, what a fine moral effect! and what a pleasant sight it was to see them all thoroughly happy for at least one day in every year!

Now, just after the fourteenth birthday had been celebrated, Aigew was called in to see to the princess. He gave her a little medicine, which she took in the prettiest way, without jelly.

"That's a nice, good girl," said the grave doctor. "I have offered you no birthday gift as yet; but it is in my power to give you anything you wish. Say—what shall it be, sweet princess?"

"It is enough to give me your kind care," answered the princess. "Everything else I have. The best part of all to me was the enjoyment of the other children. Ah! how I wish I could have a birthday whenever I choose!"

"Even that," said the doctor, "is possible," as he took something from his bosom, smiling curiously to himself as he did so. "I give you this little casket upon two conditions," said he. "One is that you are never to mention the circumstance to a living soul; you are not even to speak of it to me. The

other I will tell you after I have explained the nature of the gift. Inside this box are eighty crystal figures; each one represents a birthday, and lies, as you see, in a separate compartment. Begin at the right hand, and whenever you wish to have a birthday, you have only to place one of these in your little mouth, and it is here."

THE DOCTOR PRESENTS THE CASKET TO THE PRINCESS.

The princess, trembling and faint from a strange perfume in the air, took the box in her hand.

"But the other condition?"

"It is merely this: that no one but yourself ever tastes the contents of the magical box. If any one should, the worst consequences would follow; and, among others, all these birthdays, with all that they have occasioned and all the presents that have been given in their honor, will pass away and become as nothing. Remember this." And he was gone.

The princess examined her singular present with the most intense interest. It looked wonderfully like a pill-box; but inside, lying in the tiniest compartments, were marvelously small and beautiful figures exactly like herself in miniature, except that, beginning at the right, each one was a little older in appearance than the one preceding.

The next morning, before the rising of the sun, the little princess lay awake, with the casket in her hand.

"Shall I? or shall I not?" said she. "I think I shall."

And the first figure from the right melted on her lips. The taste was sweet; but that was soon forgotten in her surprise at the unusual bustle which sprang up immediately in the city. Cannons were firing; the populace was shouting, "Long live the princess!" and great vans came thundering up to the entrance, laden with gifts. Yes, it was all true; she might have a birthday whenever she chose. It passed off like the fourteen that had gone before. On the morrow, another was celebrated; another, after the interval of one day; and another in a week from that; so that the whole kingdom was kept in a continual uproar of festivity.

Dr. Aigew sent to his own country for many more learned doctors and chemists. He built great laboratories, where, all day and all night, pills and draughts and mixtures (of which I hope never even to know the names) were zealously compounded. The huge chimneys sent forth black clouds of physic-laden smoke, which began to hang like a pall over the city. The fields, once yellow with corn, were now only cultivated for the production of rhubarb and senna and camomile. The children of the nation grew as yellow and bilious as Aigew himself. All the wealth of the island was pouring into the coffers of the doctor. There were no shops open but those of chemists and confectioners. No other trade had an opportunity to flourish. The country was plainly going to ruin.

THE DOCTOR SUMMONS OTHER DOCTORS AND CHEMISTS.

The old king saw but one way to save his people. He must send his daughter away. This made him very sad, for he loved her dearly, and could not bear to have her know the truth.

"What shall I do?" he asked the queen.

"It is quite plain," answered she. "Marry her."

This was easily done. The fame of her beauty and gentleness had reached other lands; and a marriage was soon arranged between the little princess and a handsome young prince, who was the son and heir of a neighboring king.

In due time, the prince with his retinue started, in much pomp and magnificence, to visit the bride; and he made such good speed, in his impatience, that he arrived in the island several days before the time appointed. Within the city gates, the cavalcade halted for a moment that the prince might rest.

"I am very weary," said he to the chamberlain. "Call the first gentleman-in-waiting, and ask him to tell the page to tell the butler to send a servant with some wine. Or, stay! I'd like to taste the national beverage, whatever it may be."

So the chamberlain told the first gentleman-in-waiting to tell the page to tell the butler to tell a servant to ask some one for the national beverage. The servant returned from a confectioner's shop, and told the butler, who told the page, who told the first gentleman-in-waiting, who told the chamberlain, that the people generally drank lemonade, but, on account of the celebration of the princess's birthday, none was to be had.

"There is some mistake!" cried the prince, who was tired and a little cross, and very thirsty; "there is some mistake! The princess's birthday will be the day after to-morrow, the date for which we were invited. Go and find out the meaning of this riddle."

Soon the chamberlain returned, bringing the confectioner with him.

"My lord," says he, "this man tells so strange a story, that I have brought him here lest you should suspect me of falsehood. He declares that he has furnished confections, creams, and fruits for the princess's birthday, forty-one distinct individual times."

"It is the truth, my lord," said the confectioner.

"It cannot be!" gasped the prince. "Make further inquiries. Tell the chamberlain to tell the gentleman-in-waiting to tell the page to tell the—ah! I am deathly faint. Forty-one, and I but twenty last month!"

Voices were heard and approaching footsteps. The chamberlain had brought six reverend men, dignitaries of the town, all of whom testified that on forty-one several occasions the birthday of the princess had been celebrated.

"It is enough! In fact, too much!" cried the prince. "We return immediately. This insult shall not pass unavenged."

So all the horses turned their heads where their tails had been; the musicians changed their tune from "See, the conquering hero comes" to "Take me home to die;" and the prince returned whence he came.

The king, his father, was not so wroth as the prince had expected.

"I have been wrong," said he. "The prince is 'O'er young to marry yet,' while I have been a widower for many years, and perhaps should marry first and set him an example. If the match proves unfortunate, I shall not have so long to endure it, from the difference in our ages. From my experience, he may learn wisdom. Yes, like a true father, I will sacrifice myself. It is I who shall marry the lady. You say she is fair and gentle, and only forty-one? I will sacrifice myself."

The other king and his court were much surprised when the news came that the prince repudiated all thoughts of the marriage, and that the father proposed to take his place as bridegroom. They were at first disposed to be indignant; but then something had to be done, or the kingdom would soon be ruined. And besides, the king was already on his way; he was known to be of a fiery temper; he had at his command a large and powerful standing army; and if he chose to make war, there was no possibility of resisting him, for the soldiers of the island had turned their swords into plowshares, and were engaged in raising senna.

DELIVERING THE PRINCE'S MESSAGE.

The princess, as you may imagine, was not pleased with this change of bridegrooms; but, used to obedience, she acquiesced in everything, and told no one of the bitter tears she nightly shed upon her pillow. She tried to be as cheerful as possible in presence of her parents, and diverted her mind by having continual birthdays.

The bridegroom king halted at the gates of the town, with great dignity. He, too, arrived on a different day from the one appointed. It was a week later, at least. Age (the king was sixty, if he was a day) travels with more care and deliberation than hot-headed youth.

While waiting for the gates to be opened, the king could not forbear smiling at the horror of the young man when told of his bride's age.

"Forty-one is not so old," thought he. "Perhaps this is the very confectioner's where they furnished the information, but could not furnish any refreshment."

Turning to an attendant, he gave the order:

"Bring me from yonder house a draught of whatever is mostly used in the city."

It was not the confectioner's house, as he supposed, to which he pointed, but one of Aigew's laboratories. His majesty's commands were carried thither; and the chemist, gray and wizen, came forth, bearing a goblet filled with a dark liquid of peculiar odor. He bowed his knee, and held it toward the king, who took it in his hand, sniffed his royal nose suspiciously, and said:

THE CHEMIST PRESENTS THE BEVERAGE TO THE KING.

"It has a disagreeable smell! What is it called?"

"Rhubarb and senna, your majesty; it is the only drink taken the day after the princess's birthday. Merry-making and feasting, when indulged in too freely, are necessarily followed by physic and fasting."

"I'll none of it," cried the king. "The princess's birthday! I thought her birthday had passed weeks ago."

"Of that I know nothing," replied the chemist. "I only know that yesterday we celebrated her seventy-second birthday. I am an old man, as

your majesty sees, and not likely to tell that which is false."

The king was purple with rage. He said but the one word "Home!" In a few moments, he and his retinue had turned their backs, and they speedily disappeared behind the hills. There was only left a cloud of dust, and an occasional strain of "The girl I left behind me," borne back upon the wind from the distance.

This last blow fell heavily on the father of the princess. He flew into a rage; he had had too much of birthdays and bridegrooms, and determined he would be a party to no more of either.

"Get you gone to a convent!" he cried to his weeping, frightened daughter. "Don apparel suitable to your years, and offend my sight no more!"

They placed upon the princess's yellow curls a beldame's cap, robed her in a plain gown of black, and made ready to take her away.

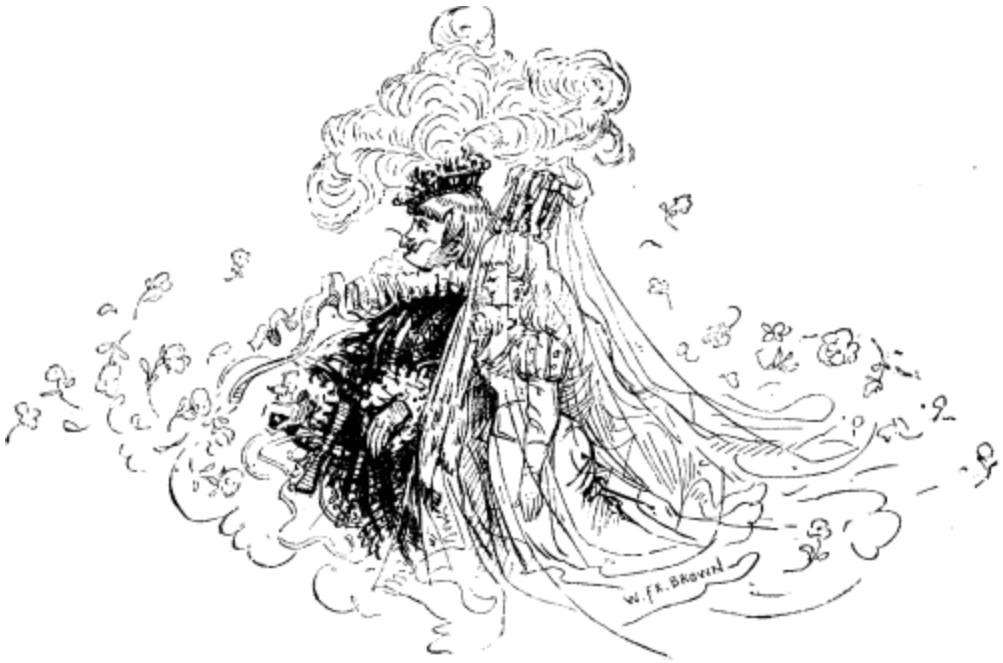
"I cannot understand," thought she, "the cause of the misfortunes that have befallen me and all the world. Can it be Dr. Aigew's casket?" She took it from her bosom.

"I fear me I shall want no birthdays in the convent," said she, sadly. "So there, little birds, take what is left."

As she strewed the sugary mites, the little birds caught them up and flew away.

A sudden earthquake convulsed the land, a violent hurricane swept over it. During these changes of nature, everything that had been affected by the unnatural birthdays returned to its former state. All remembrance even, connected with them ever so remotely, was wiped from the memory of man.

I am not sure, but I think the prince did afterward visit the island, and was much impressed by its quiet, sylvan life and the incomparable beauty of the princess; and they do say——


W. F. A. BROWN

UNDER THE LILACS

By Louisa M. Alcott.

CHAPTER XVI.

DETECTIVE THORNTON.

A few days later, Miss Celia was able to go about with her arm in a sling, pale still, and rather stiff, but so much better than any one had expected, that all agreed Mr. Paine was right in pronouncing Dr. Mills "a master hand with broken bones." Two devoted little maids waited on her, two eager pages stood ready to run her errands, and friendly neighbors sent in delicacies enough to keep these four young persons busily employed in disposing of them.

Every afternoon the great bamboo lounging chair was brought out and the interesting invalid conducted to it by stout Randa, who was head nurse, and followed by a train of shawl, cushion, foot-stool, and book bearers, who buzzed about like swarming bees round a new queen. When all were settled, the little maids sewed and the pages read aloud, with much conversation by the way; for one of the rules was, that all should listen attentively, and if any one did not understand what was read, he or she should ask to have it explained on the spot. Whoever could answer these questions was invited to do so, and at the end of the reading Miss Celia could ask any she liked, or add any explanations which seemed necessary. In this way much pleasure and profit was extracted from the tales Ben and Thorny read, and much

unexpected knowledge as well as ignorance displayed, not to mention piles of neatly hemmed towels for which Bab and Betty were paid like regular sewing-women.

So vacation was not all play, and the little girls found their picnics, berry parties, and "goin' a visitin'," all the more agreeable for the quiet hour spent with Miss Celia. Thorny had improved wonderfully, and was getting to be quite energetic, especially since his sister's accident; for while she was laid up he was the head of the house, and much enjoyed his promotion. But Ben did not seem to flourish as he had done at first. The loss of Sancho preyed upon him sadly, and the longing to go and find his dog grew into such a strong temptation that he could hardly resist it. He said little about it; but now and then a word escaped him which might have enlightened any one who chanced to be watching him. No one was, just then, so he brooded over this fancy, day by day, in silence and solitude, for there was no riding and driving now. Thorny was busy with his sister trying to show her that he remembered how good she had been to him when he was ill, and the little girls had their own affairs.

Miss Celia was the first to observe the change, having nothing to do but lie on a sofa and amuse herself by seeing others work or play. Ben was bright enough at the readings, because then he forgot his troubles; but when they were over and his various duties done, he went to his own room or sought consolation with Lita, being sober and quiet, and quite unlike the merry monkey all knew and liked so well.

"Thorny, what is the matter with Ben?" asked Miss Celia, one day, when she and her brother were alone in the "green parlor," as they called the lilac-tree walk.

"Fretting about Sanch, I suppose. I declare I wish that dog had never been born! Losing him has just spoilt Ben. Not a bit of fun left in him, and he wont have anything I offer to cheer him up."

Thorny spoke impatiently, and knit his brows over the pressed flowers he was neatly gumming into his herbal.

"I wonder if he has anything on his mind? He acts as if he was hiding a trouble he didn't dare to tell. Have you talked with him about it?" asked Miss Celia, looking as if *she* was hiding a trouble *she* did not like to tell.

"Oh, yes, I poke him up now and then, but he gets peppery, so I let him alone. May be he's longing for his old circus again. Shouldn't blame him much if he was; it isn't very lively here, and he's used to excitement, you know."

"I hope it isn't that. Do you think he would slip away without telling us, and go back to the old life again?"

"Don't believe he would. Ben isn't a bit of a sneak, that's why I like him."

"Have you ever found him sly or untrue in any way?" asked Miss Celia, lowering her voice.

"No; he's as fair and square a fellow as I ever saw. Little bit low, now and then, but he doesn't mean it, and wants to be a gentleman, only he never lived with one before, and it's all new to him. I'll get him polished up after a while."

"Oh, Thorny, there are *three* peacocks on the place, and you are the finest!" laughed Miss Celia, as her brother spoke in his most condescending way with a lift of the eyebrows very droll to see.

"And *two* donkeys, and Ben's the biggest, not to know when he is well off and be happy!" retorted the "gentleman," slapping a dried specimen on the page as if he were pounding discontented Ben.

"Come here and let me tell you something which worries me. I would not breathe it to another soul, but I feel rather helpless, and I dare say you can manage the matter better than I."

Looking much mystified, Thorny went and sat on the stool at his sister's feet, while she whispered confidentially in his ear: "I've lost some money out of my drawer, and I'm *so* afraid Ben took it."

"But it's always locked up and you keep the keys of the drawer and the little room?"

"It is gone, nevertheless, and I've had my keys safe all the time."

"But why think it is he any more than Randa, or Katy, or me?"

"Because I trust you three as I do myself. I've known the girls for years, and you have no object in taking it since all I have is yours, dear."

"And all mine is yours, of course. But, Celia, how *could* he do it? He can't pick locks, I know, for we fussed over my desk together, and had to break it after all."

"I never really thought it possible till to-day when you were playing ball and it went in at the upper window, and Ben climbed up the porch after it; you remember you said, 'If it had gone in at the garret gable you couldn't have done that so well;' and he answered, 'Yes, I could, there isn't a spout I can't shin up, or a bit of this roof I haven't been over.'"

"So he did; but there is no spout near the little room window."

"There is a tree, and such an agile boy as Ben could swing in and out easily. Now, Thorny, I *hate* to think this of him, but it has happened twice, and for his own sake I must stop it. If he is planning to run away, money is a good thing to have. And he may feel that it is his own; for you know he asked me to put his wages in the bank, and I did. He may not like to come to me for that, because he can give no good reason for wanting it. I'm so troubled I really don't know what to do."

She looked troubled, and Thorny put his arms about her as if to keep all worries but his own away from her.

"Don't you fret, Cely, dear; you leave it to me. I'll fix him—ungrateful little scamp!"

"That is not the way to begin. I'm afraid you will make him angry and hurt his feelings, and then we can do nothing."

"Bother his feelings! I shall just say, calmly and coolly: 'Now, look here, Ben, hand over the money you took out of my sister's drawer, and we'll let you off easy,' or something like that."

"It wouldn't do, Thorny; his temper would be up in a minute, and away he would go before we could find out whether he was guilty or not. I wish I knew how to manage."

"Let me think," and Thorny leaned his chin on the arm of the chair, staring hard at the knocker as if he expected the lion's mouth to open with words of counsel then and there.

"By Jove, I do believe Ben took it!" he broke out suddenly; "for when I went to his room this morning to see why he didn't come and do my boots, he shut the drawer in his bureau as quick as a flash, and looked red and queer, for I didn't knock, and sort of startled him."

"He wouldn't be likely to put stolen money there. Ben is too wise for that."

"He wouldn't *keep* it there, but he might be looking at it and pitch it in when I called. He's hardly spoken to me since, and when I asked him what his flag was at half-mast for, he wouldn't answer. Besides, you know in the reading this afternoon he didn't listen, and when you asked what he was thinking about, he colored up and muttered something about Sanch. I tell you, Celia, it looks bad—very bad," and Thorny shook his head with a wise air.

"It does, and yet we may be all wrong. Let us wait a little and give the poor boy a chance to clear himself before we speak. I'd rather lose my money than suspect him falsely."

"How much was it?"

"Eleven dollars; a one went first, and I supposed I'd miscalculated somewhere when I took some out; but when I missed a ten, I felt that I ought not to let it pass."

"Look here, sister, you just put the case into my hands and let me work it up. I wont say anything to Ben till you give the word; but I'll watch him, and now my eyes are open, it wont be easy to deceive *me*."

Thorny was evidently pleased with the new play of detective, and intended to distinguish himself in that line; but when Miss Celia asked how he meant to begin, he could only respond with a blank expression: "Don't know! You give me the keys and leave a bill or two in the drawer, and may be I can find him out somehow."

So the keys were given, and the little dressing-room where the old secretary stood was closely watched for a day or two. Ben cheered up a trifle, which looked as if he knew an eye was upon him, but otherwise he went on as usual, and Miss Celia, feeling a little guilty at even harboring a suspicion of him, was kind and patient with his moods.

Thorny was very funny in the unnecessary mystery and fuss he made; his affectation of careless indifference to Ben's movements and his clumsy attempts to watch every one of them; his dodgings up and down stairs, ostentatious clanking of keys, and the elaborate traps he set to catch his thief, such as throwing his ball in at the dressing-room window and sending Ben up the tree to get it, which he did, thereby proving beyond a doubt that he alone could have taken the money, Thorny thought. Another deep discovery was, that the old drawer was so shrunken that the lock could be pressed down by slipping a knife-blade between the hasp and socket.

"Now it is as clear as day, and you'd better let me speak," he said, full of pride as well as regret, at this triumphant success of his first attempt as a detective.

"Not yet, and you need do nothing more. I'm afraid it was a mistake of mine to let you do this; and if it has spoiled your friendship with Ben, I shall be very sorry; for I do not think he is guilty," answered Miss Celia.

"Why not?" and Thorny looked annoyed.

"I've watched also, and he doesn't act like a deceitful boy. To-day I asked him if he wanted any money, or should I put what I owe him with the rest,

and he looked me straight in the face with such honest, grateful eyes, I could not doubt him when he said: 'Keep it, please, I don't need anything here, you are all so good to me.'"

"Now, Celia, don't you be soft-hearted. He's a sly little dog, and knows my eye is on him. When *I* asked him what he saw in the dressing-room, after he brought out the ball, and looked sharply at him, he laughed, and said: 'Only a mouse,' as saucy as you please."

"Do set the trap there, I heard the mouse nibbling last night, and it kept me awake. We must have a cat or we shall be overrun."

"Well, shall I give Ben a good blowing up, or will you?" asked Thorny, scorning such poor prey as mice, and bound to prove that he was in the right.

"I'll let you know what I have decided in the morning. Be kind to Ben, meantime, or I shall feel as if I had done you harm in letting you watch him."

So it was left for that day, and by the next, Miss Celia had made up her mind to speak to Ben. She was just going down to breakfast when the sound of loud voices made her pause and listen. It came from Ben's room, where the two boys seemed to be disputing about something.

"I hope Thorny has kept his promise," she thought, and hurried through the back entry, fearing a general explosion.

Ben's chamber was at the end, and she could see and hear what was going on before she was near enough to interfere. Ben stood against his closet door looking as fierce and red as a turkey-cock; Thorny sternly confronted him, saying in an excited tone, and with a threatening gesture: "You are hiding something in there, and you can't deny it."

"I don't."

"Better not; I insist on seeing it."

"Well, you wont."

"What have you been stealing now?"

"Didn't steal it,—used to be mine,—I only took it when I wanted it."

"I know what that means. You'd better give it back or I'll make you."

"Stop!" cried a third voice, as Thorny put out his arm to clutch Ben, who looked ready to defend himself to the last gasp. "Boys, I will settle this affair. *Is* there anything hidden in the closet, Ben?" and Miss Celia came between the belligerent parties with her one hand up to part them.

Thorny fell back at once, looking half ashamed of his heat, and Ben briefly answered, with a gulp as if shame or anger made it hard to speak steadily:

"Yes'm, there is."

"Does it belong to you?"

"Yes'm, it does."

"Where did you get it?"

"Up to Squire's."

"That's a lie!" muttered Thorny to himself.

Ben's eye flashed, and his fist doubled up in spite of him, but he restrained himself out of respect to Miss Celia, who looked puzzled, as she asked another question, not quite sure how to proceed with the investigation: "Is it money, Ben?"

"No'm, it isn't."

"Then what *can* it be?"

"Meow!" answered a fourth voice from the closet, and as Ben flung open the door a gray kitten walked out, purring with satisfaction at her release.

Miss Celia fell into a chair and laughed till her eyes were full; Thorny looked foolish, and Ben folded his arms, curled up his nose, and regarded his accuser with calm defiance, while pussy sat down to wash her face as if her morning toilette had been interrupted by her sudden abduction.

"That's all very well, but it doesn't mend matters much, so you needn't laugh, Celia," began Thorny, recovering himself, and stubbornly bent on sifting the case to the bottom, now he had begun.

"Well, it would, if you'd let a feller alone. She said she wanted a cat, so I went and got the one they gave me when I was at the Squire's. I went early and took her without asking, and I had a right to," explained Ben, much aggrieved by having his surprise spoiled.

"It was very kind of you, and I'm glad to have this nice kitty. Give her some breakfast, and then we will shut her up in my room to catch the mice that plague me," said Miss Celia, picking up the little cat, and wondering how she would get her two angry boys safely down-stairs.

"The dressing-room, she means; *you* know the way, and *you* don't need keys to get in," added Thorny, with such sarcastic emphasis that Ben felt some insult was intended, and promptly resented it.

"You wont get me to climb any more trees after *your* balls, and my cat wont catch any of *your* mice, so you needn't ask me."

"Cats don't catch thieves, and they are what I'm after!"

"What do you mean by that?" fiercely demanded Ben.

"Celia has lost some money out of her drawer, and you wont let me see what's in yours; so I thought, perhaps, you'd got it!" blurted out Thorny, finding it hard to say the words, angry as he was, for the face opposite did not look like a guilty one.

For a minute, Ben did not seem to understand him, plainly as he spoke; then he turned an angry scarlet, and, with a reproachful glance at his mistress, opened the little drawer so that both could see all that it contained.

"They aint anything; but I'm fond of 'em—they are all I've got—I was afraid he'd laugh at me that time, so I wouldn't let him look—it was father's birthday, and I felt bad about him and Sanch—"

Ben's indignant voice got more and more indistinct as he stumbled on, and broke down over the last words. He did not cry, however, but threw back his little treasures as if half their sacredness was gone; and, making a

strong effort at self-control, faced around, asking of Miss Celia, with a grieved look:

"Did *you* think I'd steal anything of yours?"

"I tried not to, Ben, but what could I do? It was gone, and you the only stranger about the place."

"Wasn't there *any one* to think bad of but me?" he said, so sorrowfully that Miss Celia made up her mind on the spot that he was as innocent of the theft as the kitten now biting her buttons, no other refreshment being offered.

"Nobody, for I know my girls well. Yet, eleven dollars are gone, and I cannot imagine where or how; for both drawer and door are always locked, because my papers and valuables are in that room."

"What a lot! But how could *I* get it if it was locked up?" and Ben looked as if that question was unanswerable.

"Folks that can climb in at windows for a ball, can go the same way for money, and get it easy enough when they've only to pry open an old lock!"

Thorny's look and tone seemed to make plain to Ben all that they had been suspecting, and, being innocent, he was too perplexed and unhappy to defend himself. His eye went from one to the other, and, seeing doubt in both faces, his boyish heart sunk within him; for he could prove nothing, and his first impulse was to go away at once.

"I can't say anything, only that I *didn't* take the money. You wont believe it, so I'd better go back where I come from. *They* weren't so kind, but *they* trusted me, and knew I wouldn't steal a cent. You may keep my money, and the kitty, too; I don't want 'em," and, snatching up his hat, Ben would have gone straight away, if Thorny had not barred his passage.

"Come, now, don't be mad. Let's talk it over, and if I'm wrong I'll take it all back and ask your pardon," he said, in a friendly tone, rather scared at

the consequences of his first attempt, though as sure as ever that he was right.

"It would break my heart to have you go in that way, Ben. Stay at least till your innocence is proved, then no one can doubt what you say now."

"Don't see how it can be proved," answered Ben, appeased by her evident desire to trust him.

"We'll try as well as we know how, and the first thing we will do is to give that old secretary a good rummage from top to bottom. I've done it once, but it is just possible that the bills may have slipped out of sight. Come, now, I can't rest till I've done all I can to comfort you and convince Thorny."

Miss Celia rose as she spoke, and led the way to the dressing-room, which had no outlet except through her chamber. Still holding his hat, Ben followed with a troubled face, and Thorny brought up the rear, doggedly determined to keep his eye on "the little scamp" till the matter was satisfactorily cleared up. Miss Celia had made her proposal more to soothe the feelings of one boy and to employ the superfluous energies of the other, than in the expectation of throwing any light upon the mystery; for she was sadly puzzled by Ben's manner, and much regretted that she had let her brother meddle in the matter.

"There," she said, unlocking the door with the key Thorny reluctantly gave up to her, "this is the room and that is the drawer on the right. The lower ones have seldom been opened since we came, and hold only some of papa's old books. Those upper ones you may turn out and investigate as much as you——Bless me! here's something in your trap, Thorny!" and Miss Celia gave a little skip as she nearly trod on a long, gray tail, which hung out of the hole now filled by a plump mouse.

But her brother was intent on more serious things, and merely pushed the trap aside as he pulled out the drawer with an excited gesture, which sent it and all its contents clattering to the floor.

"Confound the old thing! It always stuck so I had to give a jerk. Now, there it is, topsy-turvy!" and Thorny looked much disgusted at his own awkwardness.

"No harm done; I left nothing of value in it. Look back there, Ben, and see if there is room for a paper to get worked over the top of the drawer. I felt quite a crack, but I don't believe it is possible for things to slip out; the place was never full enough to overflow in any way."

Miss Celia spoke to Ben, who was kneeling down to pick up the scattered papers, among which were two marked dollar bills,—Thorny's bait for the thief. Ben looked into the dusty recess, and then put in his hand, saying carelessly:

"There's nothing but a bit of red stuff."

"My old pen-wiper—Why, what's the matter?" asked Miss Celia, as Ben dropped the handful of what looked like rubbish.

"Something warm and wiggly inside of it," answered Ben, stooping to examine the contents of the little scarlet bundle. "Baby mice! Aint they funny? Look just like mites of young pigs. We'll have to kill 'em if you've caught their mammy," he said, forgetting his own trials in boyish curiosity about his "find."

Miss Celia stooped also, and gently poked the red cradle with her finger; for the tiny mice were nestling deeper into the fluff with small squeaks of alarm. Suddenly she cried out: "Boys, boys, I've found the thief! Look here, pull out these bits and see if they wont make up my lost bills."

Down went the motherless babies as four ruthless hands pulled apart their cosey nest, and there, among the nibbled fragments, appeared enough finely printed, greenish paper, to piece out parts of two bank bills. A large cypher and part of a figure one were visible, and that accounted for the ten; but though there were other bits, no figures could be found, and they were willing to take the other bill on trust.

"Now, then, *am* I a thief and a liar?" demanded Ben, pointing proudly to the tell-tale letters spread forth on the table, over which all three had been eagerly bending.

"No; I beg your pardon, and I'm very sorry that we didn't look more carefully before we spoke, then we all should have been spared this pain."

"All right, old fellow, forgive and forget. I'll never think hard of you again,—on my honor I wont."

As they spoke, Miss Celia and her brother held out their hands frankly and heartily. Ben shook both, but with a difference; for he pressed the soft one gratefully, remembering that its owner had always been good to him; but the brown paw he gripped with a vengeful squeeze that made Thorny pull it away in a hurry, exclaiming, good-naturedly, in spite of both physical and mental discomfort:

"Come, Ben, don't you bear malice; for you've got the laugh on your side, and we feel pretty small. I do, anyway; for, after my fidgets, all I've caught is a mouse!"

"And her family. I'm so relieved I'm almost sorry the poor little mother is dead—she and her babies were so happy in the old pen-wiper," said Miss Celia, hastening to speak merrily, for Ben still looked indignant, and she was much grieved at what had happened.

"A pretty expensive house," began Thorny, looking about for the interesting orphans, who had been left on the floor while their paper-hangings were examined.

No further anxiety need be felt for them, however, Kitty had come upon the scene; and as judge, jury, and prisoner, turned to find the little witnesses, they beheld the last pink mite going down Pussy's throat in one mouthful.

"I call that summary justice,—the whole family executed on the spot! Give Kit the mouse also, and let us go to breakfast. I feel as if I had found my appetite, now this worry is off my mind," said Miss Celia, laughing so

infectiously that Ben had to join in spite of himself, as she took his arm and led him away with a look which mutely asked his pardon over again.

"Rather lively for a funeral procession," said Thorny, following with the trap in his hand and Puss at his heels, adding, to comfort his pride as a detective: "Well, I said I'd catch the thief, and I have, though it is rather a small one!"

CHAPTER XVII.

BETTY'S BRAVERY.

"Celia, I've notion that we ought to give Ben something. A sort of peace-offering, you know; for he feels dreadfully hurt about our suspecting him," said Thorny, at dinner that day.

"I see he does, though he tries to seem as bright and pleasant as ever. I do not wonder, and I've been thinking what I could do to soothe his feelings. Can you suggest anything?"

"Cuff-buttons. I saw some jolly ones over at Berryville,—oxidized silver, with dogs' heads on them, yellow eyes, and all as natural as could be. Those, now, would just suit him for his go-to-meeting white shirts,—neat, appropriate, and *in memoriam*."

Miss Celia could not help laughing, it was such a boyish suggestion; but she agreed to it, thinking Thorny knew best, and hoping the yellow-eyed dogs would be as balm to Ben's wounds.

"Well, dear, you may give those, and Lita shall give the little whip with a horse's foot for a handle, if it is not gone. I saw it at the harness shop in town, and Ben admired it so much that I planned to give it to him on his birthday."

"That will tickle him immensely; and if you'd just let him put brown tops to my old boots and stick a cockade in his hat when he sits up behind the phaeton, he'd be a happy fellow!" laughed Thorny, who had discovered that one of Ben's ambitions was to be a "tip-top groom."

"No, thank you; those things are out of place in America, and would be absurd in a small country place like this. His blue suit and straw hat please me better for a boy, though a nicer little groom, in livery or out, no one could desire, and you may tell him I said so."

"I will, and he'll look as proud as Punch; for he thinks every word you say worth a dozen from any one else. But wont *you* give him something? Just some little trifle, to show that we are both eating humble pie, feeling sorry about the mouse money."

"I shall give him a set of school-books, and try to get him ready to begin when vacation is over. An education is the best present we can make him, and I want you to help me fit him to enter as well as we can. Bab and Betty, began, little dears,—lent him their books and taught all they knew; so Ben got a taste, and, with the right encouragement, would like to go on, I am sure."

"That's so like you, Celia. Always thinking of the best thing and doing it handsomely. I'll help like a house a-fire, if he will let me; but, all day, he's been as stiff as a poker, so I don't believe he forgives *me* a bit."

"He will in time, and if you are kind and patient he will be glad to have you help him; I shall make it a sort of favor to me on his part, to let you see to his lessons, now and then. It will be quite true, for I don't want you to touch your Latin or algebra till cool weather; teaching him will be play to you."

Miss Celia's last words made her brother unbend his brows, for he longed to get at his books again, and the idea of being tutor to his "man-servant" did not altogether suit him.

"I'll tool him along at a great pace, if he will only go. Geography and arithmetic shall be my share, and you may have the writing and spelling; it

gives me the fidgets to set copies and hear children make a mess of words. Shall I get the books when I buy the other things? Can I go this afternoon?"

"Yes, here is the list, Bab gave it to me. You can go if you will come home early and have your tooth filled."

Gloom fell at once upon Thorny's beaming face, and he gave such a shrill whistle that his sister jumped in her chair, as she added, persuasively:

"It wont hurt a bit, now, and the longer you leave it the worse it will be. Dr. Mann is ready at any time, and once over you will be at peace for months. Come, my hero, give your orders, and take one of the girls to support you in the trying hour. Have Bab, she will enjoy it and amuse you with her chatter."

"As if I needed girls around for such a trifle as that!" returned Thorny, with a shrug, though he groaned inwardly at the prospect before him, as most of us do on such occasions. "I wouldn't take Bab at any price; she'd only get into some scrape and upset the whole plan. Betty is the chicken for me,—a real little lady, and as nice and purry as a kitten."

"Very well; ask her mother, and take good care of her. Let her tuck her dolly in, and she will be contented anywhere. There's a fine air, and the awning is on the phaeton, so you wont feel the sun. Start about three, and drive carefully."

Betty was charmed to go, for Thorny was a sort of prince in her eyes, and to be invited to such a grand expedition was an overwhelming honor. Bab was not surprised, for, since Sancho's loss, she had felt herself in disgrace and been unusually meek; Ben let her "severely alone," which much afflicted her, for he was her great admiration, and had been pleased to express his approbation of her agility and courage so often that she was ready to attempt any fool-hardy feat to recover his regard. But vainly did she risk her neck jumping off the highest beams in the barn, trying to keep her balance standing on the donkey's back, and leaping the lodge gate at a bound; Ben vouchsafed no reward by a look, a smile, a word of commendation, and Bab felt that nothing but Sancho's return would ever restore the broken friendship.

Into faithful Betty's bosom did she pour forth her remorseful lamentations, often bursting out with the passionate exclamation, "If I could only find Sanch and give him back to Ben, I wouldn't care if I tumbled down and broke all my legs right away!" Such abandonment of woe made a deep impression on Betty, and she fell into the way of consoling her sister by cheerful prophecies and a firm belief that the organ-man would yet appear with the lost darling.

"I've got five cents of my berry money, and I'll buy you a orange if I see any," promised Betty, stopping to kiss Bab, as the phaeton came to the door, and Thorny handed in a young lady whose white frock was so stiff with starch that it crackled like paper.

"Lemons will do if oranges are gone. I like 'em to suck with lots of sugar," answered Bab, feeling that the sour sadly predominated in her cup just now.

"Don't she look sweet, the dear!" murmured Mrs. Moss, proudly surveying her youngest.

She certainly did, sitting under the fringed canopy with "Belinda," all in her best, upon her lap, as she turned to smile and nod, with a face so bright and winsome under the little blue hat, that it was no wonder mother and sister thought there never was such a perfect child as "our Betty."

Dr. Mann was busy when they arrived, but would be ready in an hour, so they did their shopping at once, having made sure of the whip as they came along. Thorny added some candy to Bab's lemon, and Belinda had a cake, which her mamma obligingly ate for her. Betty thought that Aladdin's palace could not have been more splendid than the jeweler's shop where the canine cuff-buttons were bought; but when they came to the book-store she forgot gold, silver, and precious stones, to revel in picture-books, while Thorny selected Ben's modest school outfit. Seeing her delight, and feeling particularly lavish with plenty of money in his pocket, the young gentleman completed the child's bliss by telling her to choose whichever one she liked best out of the pile of Walter Crane's toy-books lying in bewildering colors before her.

"This one; Bab always wanted to see the dreadful cupboard, and there's a picture of it here," answered Betty, clasping a gorgeous copy of "Blue-beard" to the little bosom, which still heaved with the rapture of looking at that delicious mixture of lovely Fatimas in pale azure gowns, pink Sister Annes on the turret top, crimson tyrants, and yellow brothers with forests of plumage blowing wildly from their mushroom-shaped caps.

"Very good; there you are, then. Now, come on, for the fun is over and the grind begins," said Thorny, marching away to his doom, with his tongue in his tooth and trepidation in his manly breast.

"Shall I shut my eyes and hold your head?" quavered devoted Betty, as they went up the steps so many reluctant feet had mounted before them.

"Nonsense, child, never mind me! You look out of window and amuse yourself; we shall not be long, I guess," and in went Thorny, silently hoping that the dentist had been suddenly called away, or some person with an excruciating toothache would be waiting to take ether, and so give our young man an excuse for postponing his job.

But no; Dr. Mann was quite at leisure, and, full of smiling interest, awaited his victim, laying forth his unpleasant little tools with the exasperating alacrity of his kind. Glad to be released from any share in the operation, Betty retired to the back window to be as far away as possible, and for half an hour was so absorbed in her book that poor Thorny might have groaned dismally without disturbing her.

"Done now, directly; only a trifle of polishing off and a look round," said Dr. Mann, at last, and Thorny, with a yawn that nearly rent him asunder, called out:

"Thank goodness! Pack up, Bettykin."

"I'm all ready," and, shutting her book with a start, she slipped down from the easy-chair in a great hurry.

But "looking round" took time, and before the circuit of Thorny's mouth was satisfactorily made, Betty had become absorbed by a more interesting

tale than even the immortal "Blue-beard." A noise of children's voices in the narrow alley-way behind the house attracted her attention; the long window opened directly on the yard, and the gate swung in the wind. Curious as Fatima, Betty went to look; but all she saw was a group of excited boys peeping between the bars of another gate further down.

"What's the matter?" she asked of two small girls, who stood close by her, longing but not daring to approach the scene of action.

"Boys chasing a great black cat, I believe," answered one child.

"Want to come and see?" added the other, politely extending the invitation to the stranger.

The thought of a cat in trouble would have nerved Betty to face a dozen boys, so she followed at once, meeting several lads hurrying away on some important errand, to judge from their anxious countenances.

"Hold tight, Jimmy, and let 'em peek, if they want to. He can't hurt anybody now," said one of the dusty huntsmen, who sat on the wide coping of the wall, while two others held the gate, as if a cat could only escape that way.

"You peek first, Susy, and see if it looks nice," said one little girl, boosting her friend so that she could look through the bars in the upper part of the gate.

"No; it's only an ugly old dog!" responded Susy, losing all interest at once, and descending with a bounce.

"He's mad, and Jud's gone to get his gun so we can shoot him," called out one mischievous boy, resenting the contempt expressed for their capture.

"Aint, neither!" howled another lad from his perch. "Mad dogs wont drink, and this one is lapping out of a tub of water!"

"Well, he may be, and we don't know him, and he hasn't got any muzzle on, and the police will kill him if Jud don't," answered the sanguinary youth

who had first started the chase after the poor animal, which had come limping into town, so evidently a lost dog that no one felt any hesitation in stoning him.

"We must go right home; my mother is dreadful 'fraid of mad dogs, and so is yours," said Susy; and, having satisfied their curiosity, the young ladies prudently retired.

But Betty had not had her "peep," and could not resist one look; for she had heard of these unhappy animals, and thought Bab would like to know how they looked. So she stood on tip-toe and got a good view of a dusty, brownish dog, lying on the grass close by, with his tongue hanging out while he panted, as if exhausted by fatigue and fear, for he still cast apprehensive glances at the wall which divided him from his tormentors.

THE STRANGE DOG.

"His eyes are just like Sanch's," said Betty to herself, unconscious that she spoke aloud, till she saw the creature prick up his ears and half rise, as if he had been called.

"He looks as if he knew me, but it isn't our Sancho; *he* was a lovely dog." Betty said that to the little boy peeping in beside her; but before he could make any reply, the brown beast stood straight up with an inquiring bark, while his eyes shone like topaz, and the short tail wagged excitedly.

"Why, that's just the way Sanch used to do!" cried Betty, bewildered by the familiar ways of this unfamiliar-looking dog.

As if the repetition of his name settled his own doubts, he leaped toward the gate and thrust a pink nose between the bars, with a howl of recognition as Betty's face was more clearly seen. The boys tumbled precipitately from their perches, and the little girl fell back alarmed, yet could not bear to run away and leave those imploring eyes pleading to her through the bars so eloquently.

"He acts just like our dog, but I don't see how it *can* be him. Sancho, Sancho, is it truly you?" called Betty, at her wits' end what to do.

"Bow, wow, wow!" answered the well-known bark, and the little tail did all it could to emphasize the sound, while the eyes were so full of dumb love and joy, the child could not refuse to believe that this ugly stray was their own Sancho strangely transformed.

All of a sudden, the thought rushed into her mind, "How glad Ben would be!—and Bab would feel all happy again. I *must* carry him home."

Never stopping to think of danger, and forgetting all her doubts, Betty caught the gate handle out of Jimmy's grasp, exclaiming eagerly: "He *is* our dog! Let me go in; I aint afraid."

"Not till Jud comes back; he told us we mustn't," answered the astonished Jimmy, thinking the little girl as mad as the dog.

With a confused idea that the unknown Jud had gone for a gun to shoot Sanch, Betty gave a desperate pull at the latch and ran into the yard, bent on saving her friend. That it *was* a friend there could be no further question; for, though the creature rushed at her as if about to devour her at a mouthful, it was only to roll ecstatically at her feet, lick her hands, and gaze into her face, trying to pant out the welcome which he could not utter. An older and more prudent person would have waited to make sure before venturing in; but confiding Betty knew little of the danger which she might have run; her heart spoke more quickly than her head, and, not stopping to have the truth *proved*, she took the brown dog on trust, and found it was indeed dear Sanch.

Sitting on the grass, she hugged him close, careless of tumbled hat, dusty paws on her clean frock, or a row of strange boys staring from the wall.

"Darling doggy, where have you been so long?" she cried, the great thing sprawling across her lap, as if he could not get near enough to his brave little protector. "Did they make you black and beat you, dear? Oh, Sanch, where *is* your tail—your pretty tail?"

A plaintive growl and a pathetic wag was all the answer he could make to these tender inquiries; for never would the story of his wrongs be known, and never could the glory of his doggish beauty be restored. Betty was trying to comfort him with pats and praises, when a new face appeared at the gate, and Thorny's authoritative voice called out:

"Betty Moss, what on earth are you doing in there with that dirty beast?"

"It's Sanch, it's Sanch! Oh, come and see!" shrieked Betty, flying up to lead forth her prize.

But the gate was held fast, for some one said the words, "Mad dog," and Thorny was very naturally alarmed, because he had already seen one. "Don't stay there another minute. Get up on that bench and I'll pull you over," directed Thorny, mounting the wall to rescue his charge in hot haste; for the dog did certainly behave queerly, limping hurriedly to and fro, as if anxious to escape. No wonder, when Sancho heard a voice he knew, and recognized another face, yet did not meet as kind a welcome as before.

"No, I'm not coming out till he does. It *is* Sanch, and I'm going to take him home to Ben," answered Betty, decidedly, as she wet her handkerchief in the rain water to bind up the swollen paw that had traveled many miles to rest in her little hand again.

"You're crazy, child! That is no more Ben's dog than I am."

"See if it isn't!" cried Betty, perfectly unshaken in her faith; and, recalling the words of command as well as she could, she tried to put Sancho through his little performance, as the surest proof that she was right. The poor fellow did his best, weary and footsore though he was; but when it came to

taking his tail in his mouth to waltz, he gave it up, and, dropping down, hid his face in his paws, as he always did when any of his tricks failed. The act was almost pathetic now, for one of the paws was bandaged, and his whole attitude expressed the humiliation of a broken spirit.

That touched Thorny, and, quite convinced both of the dog's sanity and identity, he sprung down from the wall with Ben's own whistle, which gladdened Sancho's longing ear as much as the boy's rough caresses comforted his homesick heart.

"Now, let's carry him right home, and surprise Ben. Wont he be pleased?" said Betty, so in earnest that she tried to lift the big brute in spite of his protesting yelps.

"You are a little trump to find him out in spite of all the horrid things that have been done to him. We must have a rope to lead him, for he's got no collar and no muzzle. He *has* got friends though, and I'd like to see any one touch him *now*. Out of the way, there, boys!" Looking as commanding as a drum-major, Thorny cleared a passage, and with one arm about his neck, Betty proudly led her treasure forth, magnanimously ignoring his late foes, and keeping his eye fixed on the faithful friend whose tender little heart had known him in spite of all disguises.

"I found him, sir," and the lad who had been most eager for the shooting, stepped forward to claim any reward that might be offered for the now valuable victim.

"I kept him safe till she came," added the jailer Jimmy, speaking for himself.

"I said he wasn't mad," cried a third, feeling that his discrimination deserved approval.

"Jud aint *my* brother," said the fourth, eager to clear his skirts from all offense.

"But all of you chased and stoned him, I suppose? You'd better look out or you'll get reported to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to

Animals."

With this awful and mysterious threat, Thorny slammed the doctor's gate in the faces of the mercenary youths, nipping their hopes in the bud, and teaching them a good lesson.

After one astonished stare, Lita accepted Sancho without demur, and they greeted one another cordially, nose to nose, instead of shaking hands. Then the dog nestled into his old place under the linen duster with a grunt of intense content, and soon fell fast asleep, quite worn out with fatigue.

No Roman conqueror bearing untold treasures with him, ever approached the Eternal City feeling richer or prouder than did Miss Betty as she rolled rapidly toward the little brown house with the captive won by her own arms. Poor Belinda was forgotten in a corner, "Blue-beard" was thrust under the cushion, and the lovely lemon was squeezed before its time by being sat upon; for all the child could think of, was Ben's delight, Bab's remorseful burden lifted off, "Ma's" surprise, and Miss Celia's pleasure. She could hardly realize the happy fact, and kept peeping under the cover to be sure that the dear dingy bunch at her feet was truly there.

"I'll tell you how we'll do it," said Thorny, breaking a long silence as Betty composed herself with an irrepressible wriggle of delight after one of these refreshing peeps. "We'll keep Sanch hidden, and smuggle him into Ben's old room at your house. Then I'll drive on to the barn, and not say a word, but send Ben to get something out of that room. You just let him in, to see what he'll do. I'll bet you a dollar he wont know his own dog."

"I don't believe I *can* keep from screaming right out when I see him, but I'll try. Oh, wont it be fun!"—and Betty clapped her hands in joyful anticipation of that exciting moment.

A nice little plan, but Master Thorny forgot the keen senses of the amiable animal snoring peacefully among his boots, and, when they stopped at the Lodge, he had barely time to say in a whisper, "Ben's coming; cover Sanch and let me get him in quick," before the dog was out of the phaeton like a bombshell, and the approaching boy went down as if

shot, for Sancho gave one leap and the two rolled over and over, with a shout and a bark of rapturous recognition.

"Who is hurt?" asked Mrs. Moss, running out with floury hands uplifted in alarm.

"Is it a bear?" cried Bab, rushing after her, egg-beater in hand, for a dancing bear was the desire of her heart.

"Sancho's found! Sancho's found!" shouted Thorny, throwing up his hat like a lunatic.

"Found, found, found!" echoed Betty, dancing wildly about as if she too had lost her little wits.

"Where? How? When? Who did it?" asked Mrs. Moss, clapping her dusty hands delightedly.

"It isn't; it's an old dirty brown thing," stammered Bab, as the dog came uppermost for a minute, and then rooted into Ben's jacket as if he smelt a woodchuck and was bound to have him out directly.

Then Thorny, with many interruptions from Betty, poured forth the wondrous tale, to which Bab and her mother listened breathlessly, while the muffins burned as black as a coal, and nobody cared a bit.

"My precious lamb, how did you dare to do such a thing?" exclaimed Mrs. Moss, hugging the small heroine with mingled admiration and alarm.

"I'd have dared, and slapped those horrid boys, too. I *wish* I'd gone!" and Bab felt that she had forever lost the chance of distinguishing herself.

"Who cut his tail off?" demanded Ben, in a menacing tone, as he came uppermost in his turn, dusty, red and breathless, but radiant.

"The wretch who stole him, I suppose; and he deserves to be hung," answered Thorny, hotly.

"If ever I catch him, I'll—I'll cut his nose off," roared Ben, with such a vengeful glare that Sanch barked fiercely, and it was well that the unknown "wretch" was not there, for it would have gone hardly with him, since even gentle Betty frowned, while Bab brandished the egg-beater menacingly, and their mother indignantly declared that "it was *too* bad!"

Relieved by this general outburst, they composed their outraged feelings; and while the returned wanderer went from one to another to receive a tender welcome from each, the story of his recovery was more calmly told. Ben listened with his eye devouring the injured dog; and when Thorny paused, he turned to the little heroine, saying solemnly, as he laid her hand with his own on Sancho's head:

"Betty Moss, I'll never forget what you did; from this minute half of Sanch is your truly own, and if I die you shall have the whole of him," and Ben sealed the precious gift with a sounding kiss on either chubby cheek.

Betty was so deeply touched by this noble bequest, that the blue eyes filled and would have overflowed if Sanch had not politely offered his tongue like a red pocket-handkerchief, and so made her laugh the drops away, while Bab set the rest off by saying, gloomily:

"I mean to play with all the mad dogs I can find; then folks will think *I'm* smart and give *me* nice things."

"Poor old Bab, I'll forgive you now, and lend you my half whenever you want it," said Ben, feeling at peace now with all mankind, including girls who tagged.

"Come and show him to Celia," begged Thorny, eager to fight his battles over again.

"Better wash him up first; he's a sight to see, poor thing," suggested Mrs. Moss, as she ran in, suddenly remembering her muffins.

"It will take a lot of washings to get that brown stuff off. See, his pretty pink skin is all stained with it. We'll bleach him out, and his curls will grow, and he'll be as good as ever—all but—"

Ben could not finish, and a general wail went up for the departed tassel that would never wave proudly in the breeze again.

"I'll buy him a new one. Now form the procession and let us go in style," said Thorny, cheerily, as he swung Betty to his shoulder and marched away whistling "Hail! the conquering hero comes," while Ben and his Bow-wow followed arm-in-arm, and Bab brought up the rear, banging on a milk-pan with the egg-beater.

(*To be continued*.)

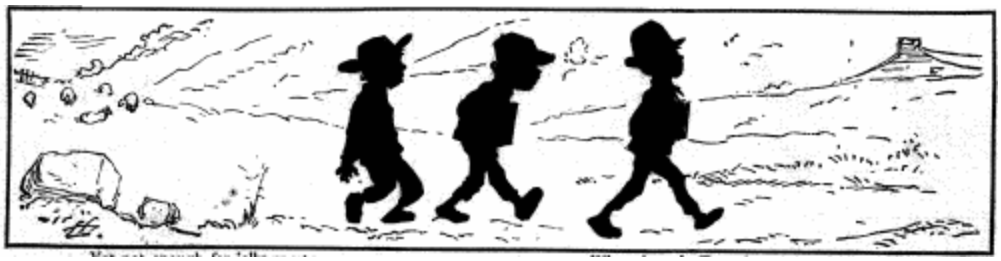
THE YANKEE BOYS THAT DIDN'T NUMBER TEN.

By W. M. Bicknell.

'Tis morning, and no boy is seen
In all the street, with play and fun.
Ah! there comes Sam along the lane,
With searching eyes, and he is one.

The road to school is lone for him;

What could a single fellow do?
But Ben appears just there away,
And he with book and slate makes two.



Yet not enough for jolly sport;
It's plain more lads there ought to be.
Why, there is Tom, 'most out of breath!
And now, together, they are three.

Then on they run and skip and frisk,
With eager looks that seek for more;
Dan trips along with joyous shout,—
Now reckon, and you'll find them four.

They spring and hurry o'er the ground,
All brave to wade or swim or dive.
"Mother, there go the boys," cries Ed;
No sooner said than there were five.

"Not half school-time," they all declare;
"No clock can cheat us with its tricks!
Upon the hill there's waiting Frank!"
Though short and small, yet he made six.

O'er hedge and rocks and field they run;
"Hello!" cries Ben, "see, there is Evan!"
And now, as they rush on, we see,
Like wonders of the world, they're seven.

As if a bird had carried word,
Like birds the boys thus congregate;
To join the rest leaped merry Will,
And, puffing, swelled the count to eight.

Time quickly flew down by the shore,
When boys and raft had fun so fine.
But hark! Too plainly now they heard
The clock! That made the doleful nine.

The crew had all put out from land,
And out put teacher, Mr. Glenn,
With swinging arm and noisy bell,—
No boy was he to make the ten!

THE BARBECUE.

(The "Tolerbul" Bad Boy again.)

By Sarah Winter Kellogg.

Marley came bolting into Aunt Silvy's cabin. This is what he usually did when things vexed him.

"It's mean!" he said, snatching off his large straw hat and wiping the perspiration from his brow.

Aunt Silvy was peeling peaches for drying—great, luscious Indian peaches, too, beet-red from down to pit.

"Seems like yer's al'ays fin'in' somethin' mean," she said, as the long peeling dropped into the pan, and she proceeded to stone the peach, which looked as though pared by machinery. "What's de matter now? Somethin' 'bout de barb'cue?"

"Yes, the committee's been 'roun' here to see what Pa'd subscribe, an' he signed for o-n-e shoat! Think how it'll look!—'Wm. Coleman, one shoat.' An' the paper's goin' all over the county; everybody'll see it,—General Bradshaw, and Mandy, and all the girls! If I couldn't give anything but a mean ole shoat, I wouldn't put my name down 'tall."

"Neber had no sich puffawmances at yer granpaw Thompson's. He uster su'scribe a heap er deaf an' dum' an'mals. I 'members one Foaf July he su'scribed,—lem me see ef I kin 'member what all he did su'scribe. Thar wus two oxes an' 'leven milk cows, an'—"

"I don't b'lieve it," Marley interrupted.

"It's de bawn troof," said Aunt Silvy, solemnly. "I 'members dar wusn't nuff cows lef' ter git milk fer de white folks' coffee nex' mawnin arter dat barb'cue. But, law, Mah'sr Mawley! dat wusn't haf' yer granpaw Thompson su'scribed. Thar wus fou'teen fat shoats, an'—lem me see how many tuckies; twenty-fou' tuckies, thutty-fou' Muscovy ducks, fawty chickuns, sebenteen geese an' ganders, an'—"

Marley gave a long whistle.

"Well, if that isn't the biggest story that ever I heard sence I was created!"

"He did so. I could prove it by yer maw, but her wus sich a little gal when it happened, her's fawgot. I 'members we all didn't hab no geese ter pick arter dat barb'cue, 'cept one ole gander; an' I 'members goin' to de hen-house, an' seein' not a sol'tary human critter lef in dat dar hen-house 'cept de ole saddle-back rooster. An', law! I fawgot de hams,—a heap er hams,—more 'n a hundud; an' de sheeps—law! I dunno how many sheeps dar wus."

"An' didn't he subscribe a team of mules an' a half-dozen negroes?" said Marley. "An' I want to know where my gran'pa got all the wagons to haul all the things to the barbecue? I reckon it would take fifty wagons to do it; I'm goin' to ask Pa."

"Law! I wouldn't go pesterin' master 'bout it. I neber say yer granpaw tuck um ter de barb'cue; I say he su'scribed um."

"Then he didn't pay what he subscribed?"

"Shucks! Mah'sr Mawley. I can't make yer un'erstan' nuffin. Yer neber did know nuffin sca'cely."

"I know why they keep the Fourth of July. You don't, do you?"

"Of cou'se! Law, chile! I's 'scended from a Rev'lution cullud genulmon what wus presunt at de fuss Foaf July dar ever wus."

Marley laughed and laughed at this till Aunt Silvy began to sulk. He couldn't afford to have her offended; he wanted her to do something for him. So he checked his laughter, and said:

"You know everybody in the county is invited to the barbecue."

"Ob cou'se. De suckit-riders gives it out at all de 'p'intments. Ev'ry pusson's 'vited, cullud pussons an' white folks. Thar'll be a heap er folks thar."

"Now, look yere, Aunt Silvy; you b'long to me, you know. You always said—"

"Yer b'longs ter me, mow like; an' yer maw b'longs ter me, too. I nussed her when she wus a baby, an' yer too. Law! I owns yer bofe."

"Well, then, I'm your boy, an' I want you to do somethin' for me."

"I'll be boun' yer does."

"I felt so 'shame 'bout Pa's one shoat, that I went out to the front gate, an' when the committee came to go away, I tole 'em I'd bring somethin' to the barbecue."

"Mussy! yer aint got nuffin ter take."

"If I had a 'coon-dog, I might catch a 'coon or a 'possum. Look yere! can't you borrow Boston's ole Rum for me?"

Boston was Aunt Silvy's husband, and belonged on another plantation, and Rum was Boston's 'coon-dog.

"Ob cou'se I kin. Bos'on's mighty good ter min' me. But, law! yer aint 'quainted wid ole Rum; yer couldn't manage him no more'n nuffin. 'Sides,

'coons an' 'possums aint good now tell arter pussimon-time. Folks ud duspise yer 'coon an' 'possum, kase they's so poo'."

"Well, what can I take? I know Pa wouldn't let you bake me anything."

"Mussy, no! Law! yer oughter seed de roas'in' an' fryin', an' all de gwyne-ons at yer granpaw Thompson's. One Foaf we all tuck—lem me see, how many cheese-cakes an' tauts wus it?"

"But what can I take?" said Marley, impatiently.

"I reckons some fresh fish would tas' tolerbul good."

"That's just it," Marley cried, springing to his feet; and he went on talking excitedly about a splendid cat-fish hole, and where he could find perch, and how he could keep them alive, etc. At length he said: "Pa says I can't go unless I take Sukey on behine me. I'd a heap rather walk than go in that poor folks' way. Mandy Bradshaw ud be sure to see us, an' she'd turn up her nose higher'n she did when I rolled the mandrake-apple to her."

"Needn't turn up *her* nose at a ha'f Thompson. I wus 'quainted wid de Bradshaws when dey wus poo' es yaller dirt,—had jis fou' ole niggers, an' dey wus mos' all womens an' childuns."

"But General Bradshaw's tolerbul rich now,—a heap richer'n Pa."

"He got rich hoss-racin'," said Aunt Silvy, contemptuously.

But Marley was thinking about the hardship that Sukey was.

"She's such a coward," he said, "in riding. She hol's on to me so hard that she pinches like sixty, an' mos' tears my clothes off. An' if the horse goes out of a walk, she hollers that she's goin' to fall off. I don't want to go pokin' up to the barbecue like it was the first time I ever was on horseback in my life. But I'll have to go that way, or with Sukey clingin' to me an' hollerin'."

"Reckon I might pussuade her ter stay to hum."

"Oh no!" Marley said, warmly. "Sukey must go; she'd be so disappointed, I'd a heap rather stan' Mandy's gigglin' than Sukey's cryin'. No; Sukey's got to go if she rides on my head."

"I'll tell yer," said Aunt Silvy. "Bos'on's got leave to tote dat little bay mule uv Patrick's over here fer me ter ride ter de barb'cue. Her name's Jinny, an' her racks tolerbul easy. I kin take Miss Sukey in my lap an' Barb'ry Allen on behine."

Marley thought this a capital plan, and went away to make his preparations for the Fourth. He brought an immense cotton-basket from the gin-loft, and nailed it against the side of the little log spring-house, after having half sunk it in the branch that flowed through the building. This is where he meant to put his fish to keep them fresh for the barbecue. Of these he felt sure, for the plantation lay along a noble "run," abounding with creatures. He captured his fish in a way not sportsman-like—by nets and night-hooks; but then there was need of expedition, for there were only two days to the Fourth. When he went to look at his lines, he always took his rifle and Rover; he might, per-chance, encounter some game. The first day he shot a red squirrel. But the next day—oh, the next day! It was late in the afternoon when he went to the run. He was about descending the bluff which overhung one of his lines, when he saw something that made his heart stand still, and then leap as though it would jump from his body. He was never so excited in his life. There, with its nostrils in the water, was a strange animal. In an instant, he knew it. Rover, too, knew it, and gave a low growl. Quickly Marley put his hand on the dog's head, and whispered, "Down, Rover, down! good fellow, down!" But the wary creature at the drink had heard something. Two antlers were suddenly flung up, and a face turned to windward. Marley, with his knee on Rover, hardly dared to breathe, yet aimed his rifle. "Down, Rover! good dog, down!" he again whispered. Then the sharp crack of the rifle broke the silence, and Marley, on his feet, strained his eager eyes through the smoke. Was that a fallen deer, or was it the shadow of cypress-knees? He and Rover went running and leaping to the spot. Yes, he had killed a fine buck with ten tines. He was a happy boy, you may believe. Here was a contribution to the barbecue worthy of the glorious day. When he had turned the animal over and over, and wondered where it came from, and how it happened to be there alone,

he left Rover to guard it, and hurried back for help to get it home. He ran every step of the way. Then, mounted on black Betts, and accompanied by Jim, he returned to the heroic spot, and there found the faithful Rover and his dead charge. The game was strapped behind Marley's saddle, and old Betts was made to go galloping back to the house. Then, after everybody had looked at the deer, and handled it in every possible way, and wondered about it, and Marley had told over and over the story of the shooting, the game was dressed and put down in the spring-house, to keep cool for the morrow, which was the Fourth.

Marley rose early the next morning, and waked Aunt Silvy by firing his rifle into her cabin. Then he saw the shoat and venison put in the wagon, and a barrel of spring-water, crowded with darting fishes. After breakfast, he dressed-up in his best clothes, and stuck two cotton-blooms—one white, the other red—in his button-hole. He did not wear these for ornaments, as the cotton-blossom, which opens white and then quickly turns crimson, is as large and coarse as a hollyhock, which it somewhat resembles; but among the planters it is considered an honor to display the first cotton-blooms.

He was early on the barbecue ground, located near a fine clear spring, about which were hung a score of gourd dippers. He found the campers already humming like a hive. There were coaches and buggies and lumber-wagons, and scores upon scores of tethered horses and mules, which had brought people to the scene; and other carriages and riding-horses were momently dashing in. Whole families came on horseback,—not infrequently three riders to a mule or horse. Streams of negroes were pouring in, usually on foot. There were well-dressed gentlemen and gay ladies, and a fair sprinkling of shabby people; and Marley wondered where they all came from. In a short time after his arrival, he caught sight of Aunt Silvy; he knew her by the faded pink satin bonnet which she had worn ever since he could remember. She had Sukey on her shoulder, and was tugging up the hill from the spring. Boston had failed to bring over "pacing Jinny" for his wife to ride, so the faithful negro had brought Sukey all the way on her shoulder. Marley was quite touched when he realized this, and he made up his mind that he'd take Sukey back behind him, if Mandy Bradshaw should giggle her head off about it. Why should he care for her mocking more than for the comfort of Aunt Silvy, his life-long friend? He went over,

and offered to escort Sukey around to see the sights, but she preferred to stay with Aunt Silvy; so he felt free to wander where he pleased. And he pleased to wander everywhere, and to see everything. He was greatly interested in all the proceedings,—the spreading of the long, long tables under the oaks and beeches; the unloading of the wagons; the clatter of dishes; the great boiling kettles down by the spring, where negroes were dressing shoats and sheep and great beeves—every animal being left whole, but split to the back-bone.

GOING TO THE BARBECUE.

Then there was a rostrum, covered with forest-boughs and decorated with wreaths and flags, where the Declaration of Independence was to be read and the oration was to be given. "Yankee Doodle" the band was playing from it when Marley strolled by, and about it were the Washington Rifles, in their pretty uniform of blue and white, waiting to open the programme by a salute and some special maneuvering.

But to Marley the most wonderful and interesting of all the sights was the barbecuing. There were long, broad ditches, floored with coals a foot deep, over which the great carcasses of hogs and bullocks were laid on spits, as on a gridiron. Beyond these trenches, great log-fires were kept blazing, that the ditches might be replenished with coals. Ever and anon, an immense iron kettle would be seen, borne between two negro men, and filled with glowing coals. Such hissing and sissing as there was above those lines of fire! What savory odors were in the air! How important and fussy the cooks at the spits! How splendid the great log-heap fires! How grand the high-mounting flames and the columns of blue smoke! Marley was in a mood to enjoy it all, for "the committee" had expressed special pleasure with his contribution; it was the only game on the ground, and they were warm in their compliments of his sportsmanship.

But after a while, Marley, in his strollings about the grounds, saw a written placard tacked to a tree. Of course he read it, and then he stood confounded by the revelation it made to him. Can't you guess what it was? An advertisement for an escaped pet deer! He knew by the description (the ten tines, the slashed ear, etc.) that it was the deer he had shot. To have shot anybody's pet deer, and to know that it was at that moment over the coals, would have been mortification enough; but it was the name at the foot of the advertisement which carried to Marley's heart the sorest dismay he had ever felt in his life. Whose deer had he killed? Guess! Why, Mandy Bradshaw's! He was so chagrined, so bitterly distressed, that he would have said he could never smile again. What was he ever to do about it? Of course, there was but one manly thing to do: confess the whole matter to General Bradshaw. But he felt sure he'd rather die than do this. He went over to where Aunt Silvy was barbecuing the deer, the most melancholy-looking boy, perhaps, that ever was at a barbecue with a cotton-bloom in his button-hole. To her he told the truth, and felt better the instant he had spoken it. But when he asked her advice, she replied:

"I don't devize nuffin. Yer granpaw Thompson uster say thar neber wus no use in devizin' nobody, kase a wise man didn't need no device, an' a fool wouldn't take no device. But ef I wus yer, I'd jis go ter Mandy an' tell her how it happen."

Marley saw that it must come to this, and wisely decided that the sooner it was done the better. So he began to hover around Mandy, lying about on the grass, sitting on stumps and logs near her, and sauntering back and forth. Finally, he saw her standing alone, her girl mate having run off after a yellow butterfly. He walked in a dizzy kind of way to her side. He said, "Howdy, Mandy?" and she answered, "Howdy?" looking at him with a question in her look.

Marley knew she was wondering what he had come for, and that he was now committed to some sort of explanation. He blushed and blushed, till it seemed to him he never could stop blushing.

"Don't be mad at me," he said, pleadingly.

"I'm not mad at you," she said.

"But you will be when I tell you. I didn't go to do it. I wouldn't have done it for the world, but I thought it was a wild deer and shot it."

"Oh! you're talkin' 'bout my deer; you shot my deer?"

"Yes," said Marley, hoarsely. He thought he was going to choke to death. "They are barbecuing it now. I never was so sorry in my life. I'll pay for it, or I'll get you another, or I'll do anything in the world you tell me to."

Mandy burst out laughing, and said: "How absurd to talk so about that deer. But you wouldn't do anything I tell you. You wouldn't go up on the rostrum there, an' stan' on your head."

"Yes, I would, if it would keep you from being mad at me," said Marley.

"Well, I'm not, mad at you. I don't care much about that deer; he used to scare me nearly to death, and Pa was going to bring him to the barbecue. You've brought him instead of Pa—that's all the difference. I shouldn't have thought you'd have told about it when you felt so badly. I reckon you're tolerbul plucky. Why don't you ever come over to see brother Bob."

"Don't know; 'cause he never asked me to, I reckon."

"I know he'd like to have you. Look yere! He's got some Roman candles he's goin' to fire off to-night; so you stop as you go home this evening. It's right on your way. Can't you?"

"I reckon so," answered Marley, his heart throbbing with pleasure.

"Look here, Marley," Mandy added, suddenly. "Don't say anything about that deer, and I wont tell; so nobody'll know anything about it."

"I must tell General Bradshaw. There he is coming this way now, to take you to 'the stand.'"

"Well, tell him, and I'll ask him not to tell."

When Marley had "owned up," the General gave him a hearty slap on the back, calling him a brave lad and a good shot, and promised Mandy never to tell as long as he lived. When Marley spoke of the antlers, etc., he was told that he should keep them.

Then they went up to "the stand," and not a boy in the assemblage felt in a better mood than Marley for applauding the patriotic music, and the old "Declaration," and Mr. Delaney's ardent oration. At every allusion to the star-spangled banner, Marley cheered; and when the orator apostrophized the national bird, perched with one talon an the Alleghany and the other on the Sierras, dipping his beak now in the Atlantic and now in the Pacific, preening his feathers with the mighty Lakes as his mirror, our Marley shouted in a patriotic transport from a stump, and threw up his cap, and threw it up till it lodged in a tree, and he could toss it no longer. He shook it down just as the marshal of the day announced that he would proceed to blow the horn for dinner, to which everybody, rich and poor, bond and free, was most cordially invited—ladies to be served first, then the gentlemen, then the colored people. They would please form by twos, and march to the tables as the band played "Hail Columbia!"

Then a great bullock's horn, decorated with our blessed colors, was raised to the marshal's lips, and he blew and blew and blew *such* blasts; and when he had ended, the multitude—especially the boys—shouted such shouts as

might have leveled the walls of another Jericho, if horn-blasts and shouts could do such things in these days.

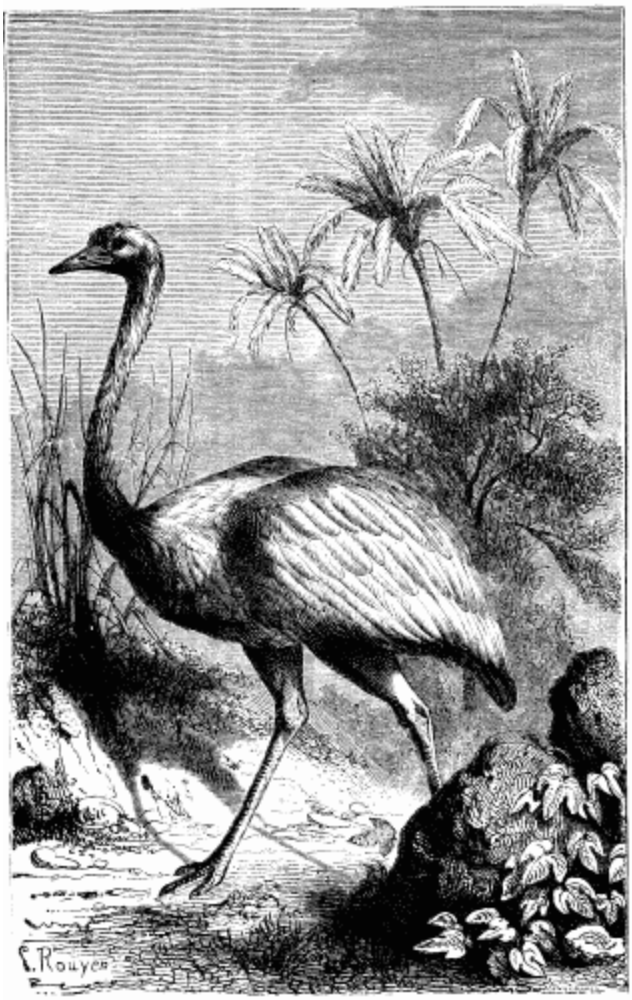
Then the people, in long, fantastic line, wound in and out among the trees to the tables in the thick shade; and Marley walked beside Mandy Bradshaw, keeping step to the spirited music, and feeling heroic enough to charge an army.

BIRDS AND THEIR FAMILIES

By Prof. W.K. Brooks.

In this paper we will talk a little about the different ways in which birds bring up their children, and will say something, too, about the young birds themselves. There is almost as great a difference in the domestic habits and customs of birds as in those of human beings.

You have all heard how the ostrich lays its eggs in the sand, where the sun can shine upon them, and keep them warm, while the parent birds are away in search of food during the middle of the day. The South American ostrich (an engraving of which is given on the next page) makes use of the warmth of the sun and sand in the same way. According to Darwin, the mother does not show the least affection for her young, but leaves the labor of hatching the eggs entirely to the father, who attends to it very faithfully, but is, of course, compelled to leave the nest occasionally in search of food, selecting the middle of the day for this purpose, as the heat of the sun is then sufficient to keep the eggs from growing cold.

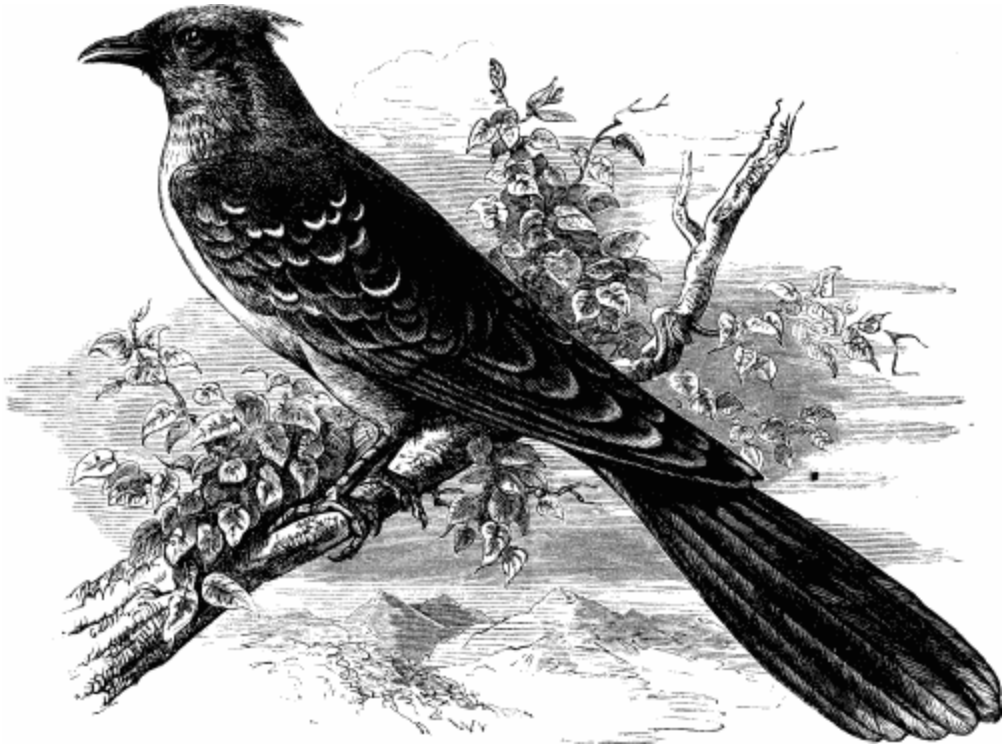


SOUTH AMERICAN OSTRICH.

I suppose most of you know that if a quantity of wet decaying leaves or straw is raked together into a large pile, and covered up with a thin layer of sand or earth, and then left exposed to the sun and rain, the heat given off by the decay of the vegetable matter forming the inside of the pile will be retained until, after a few weeks, the interior of the heap becomes so warm that, when the mound is broken open, a thick cloud of smoke and steam will rise from it. The mound-building "brush-turkey" of Australia, New Guinea, and the neighboring islands, has somehow learned this fact; and also, that the steady and equal heat generated is sufficient to hatch its eggs. So, instead of making a nest and sitting upon the eggs until they are hatched, this bird, which has very large and powerful feet, scratches up a huge pile of

decaying twigs, leaves and grass, thus making a mound often six or eight feet high, and containing enough material to load several wagons, in which the eggs are buried. The young birds are not helpless when hatched, like the young of most of our singing birds, but are quite strong and active, and able to burrow their way out of the mound, and take care of themselves immediately.

Some birds provide for their young in still another way. They neither sit and hatch their own eggs, nor provide an artificial incubator; but go quietly and drop an egg into the nest of another bird, and allow this bird to act as a nurse, hatching the egg and finding food for the young bird. The most notable example of this habit among birds is the case of the European cuckoo. This bird never builds a nest, or shows the least love or even recognition of its young. The cuckoo always selects the nest of a bird much smaller than itself, and as its eggs are much smaller than those usually laid by a bird of its size, they are no larger than those which properly belong in the nest; so that the owners do not appear to discover the deception put upon them, but treat all the eggs alike. As soon as the young cuckoo is hatched he begins to grow very fast, and as he is larger and stronger than the other nestlings, he manages to get the lion's share of the food which the old birds bring to the nest. It would seem as if robbing his foster brothers and sisters of part of their nest, of the attention and care of their parents, and of nearly all of their food, might be enough to satisfy the young cuckoo; but it is not. He wants not part, but, everything—the whole nest, all the care of the old birds, and all of the food—for himself; so, when the old birds are away, he pushes himself under one of the little nestlings, which is of course too small and weak to help itself, and throws it out of the nest to die. In this way he murders all his foster-brothers, and if any eggs are still unhatched he throws them out too. He now has all the attention of the old birds to himself, for they continue to treat him as affectionately as if he were really one of their own children, and go on bringing him food, and attending to all his wants, long after he has grown to be as large as themselves, or even larger.



THE CUCKOO.

We have two species of cuckoo in the United States, but each of them builds a nest of its own, and rears its own young, although our yellow-billed cuckoo is a very bad nest-builder, and is said often to desert its young, leaving them to starve unless other birds take pity upon them and bring them food. Most of our smaller birds are very sympathetic during the breeding season, and are ready to give food and care to any young bird which needs it, even if it is not one of their own species.

Although our American cuckoos have not, as a general thing, the bad habits of those of Europe, we have another very common bird which is hatched and brought up by strangers. Every boy who lives in the country knows the cow-bird, cow-blackbird, or cow-bunting, for it is called by all these names. It is a small bird, a little larger than the bobolink and of much the same shape. The male has a dark-brown head and a bright greenish-black back and wings, but the female is so much lighter in color that you would hardly believe that they belong to the same species. These birds are

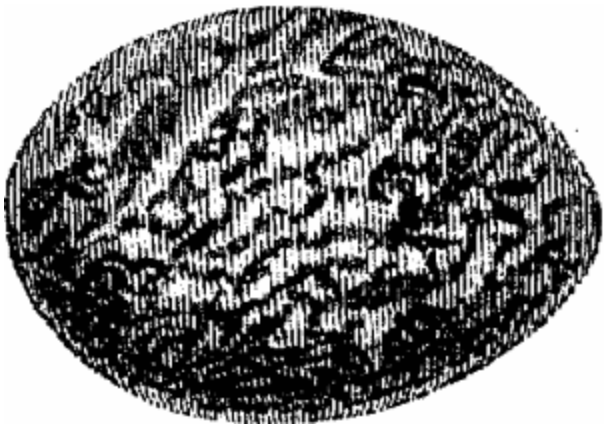
very abundant in the spring and summer, and may be seen in flocks flying and feeding in company with the red-winged blackbirds. They are often found among the cattle and sheep in the pastures and barn-yards, and they derive all of their common names from this habit. Although nearly related to the orioles, which make such wonderful nests, the cow-birds make none at all, but lay their eggs in the nests of other birds, such as the blue-bird, chipping-bird, song-sparrow, yellow-bird, and some thrushes and fly-catchers. Like the cuckoo, this bird usually chooses the nest of a bird much smaller than itself, but as its egg is not small, the deception is at once discovered, and the birds whose nest has been selected for this purpose are very much disturbed. It is necessary for the female cow-bird to find a nest in which the owners have just begun laying, for if the owners have no eggs of their own they will desert the nest, and if their own eggs are somewhat advanced before the cow-bird's egg is laid, their own young will hatch first, and the parents will then leave the nest to hunt for food, thus allowing the cow-bird's egg to become cold and die.

When the female cow-bird is ready to lay her egg, she often has great trouble in discovering a nest at just the right stage. She leaves the flock and perches upon some tree or bush, where she can have a good view of all that is going on. When she discovers a nest by watching the actions of its owners, she waits for an opportunity when both the owners are away, when she approaches it very stealthily, but quickly, keeping a very sharp watch, to be sure that she is not observed. If she finds that the nest is fit for her purpose,—that is, if the birds have laid only a part of their regular number of eggs,—she drops one of her own eggs into it, and then disappears as swiftly and quietly as she came. If she is unable to find a suitable nest in her own vicinity, she goes in search of one, examining every thicket and bush—sometimes for a long distance—until she finds one. A gentleman once followed a cow-bird along the shore of a stream for two miles before she succeeded in finding a nest which satisfied her. Occasionally, two or more cow-birds' eggs are found in the same nest. It is not known whether both of these are laid by the same bird, but it is more probable that in such a case as this two cow-birds have visited the same nest.

The egg of the cow-bird has one interesting and important peculiarity. It is necessary, as we have seen, that this should be hatched before the other

eggs; for if it were not, the old birds would stop sitting and allow it to become cold as soon as their own young were hatched. This danger, however, has been provided against, since the egg of the cow-bird needs only eight or nine days of incubation, while the eggs of those birds in whose nests it is usually found require from twelve to fifteen days. A short time after the young cow-bird is hatched, all the other eggs disappear, and they may sometimes be found on the ground, broken, at a considerable distance from the nest,—so far away that the young cow-bird could not possibly have thrown them there. The way in which they are removed from the nest is not known, as no one has yet watched closely enough to say whether the parents themselves destroy them, or whether the female cow-bird returns to the nest and removes them, to give more room for her own young when hatched.

I have already said that the smaller birds are very much disturbed and troubled when they find one of these eggs in their nest, and are very apt to desert it and go to another place if they have not yet any eggs of their own. Our common yellow-bird, however, is sometimes wise enough to find a better way out of its trouble. It values its neatly finished nest too highly to desert it, and it is not strong enough to lift the big egg and throw it over the edge, so it gathers a new supply of hay and hair, and makes a false bottom to cover up the egg. Then it makes a new lining to the nest, and lays its own eggs upon that, so that the cow-bird's egg does not receive any of the warmth from its body, and never hatches.



EGG OF COW-BIRD.

I have given you several reasons for believing that birds are able to think for themselves; but I do not see how anything could prove this more clearly than this expedient of the yellow-bird for saving its young from destruction by preventing the hatching of the cow-bird's egg.

Before leaving the subject of birds'-nests, I must say a few words about the immense number of birds which sometimes gather in one place for the purpose of raising their young. The enormous flocks of wild pigeons, which from time to time visit certain parts of the United States, have a definite portion of the woods, often several miles in extent, where they gather every night. This is called the "roost," and here they build their nests and rear their young. There are so many at these roosts that it is not always safe to go under the trees, for large branches are often broken off by the weight of the birds and their nests.

If you wish to know more about these pigeon-roosts, you will find long accounts of them in the books about birds, by those two celebrated men, Wilson and Audubon. Audubon's account of a roost which he visited in Kentucky is very interesting and well worth your reading. It is printed in the first volume of his "Ornithological Biography," and also, I believe, in the "Life of Audubon, the Naturalist."

In these books, and in the other works of Audubon and Wilson, you will also find much instructive and entertaining information in regard to all of our common birds. Most of our sea-birds are very wild, as they are much hunted by man, and on this account they build their nests and rear their young on inaccessible and uninhabited rocky islands, and the number of sea-birds which gather upon these islands during the breeding season is almost beyond belief; but the following account of Ailsa Craig, by Nathaniel P. Rodgers (the "Craig" is a rocky island on the west of Scotland), will give some idea of their abundance at such places:

> It was a naked rock, rising nine hundred and eighty feet abruptly out of the sea. A little level space projected on one side, with a small house on it. We could not conjecture the use of a habitation there. The captain

of the steamer said it was the *governor's* house. We asked him what a governor could do there.

"Take care of the birds," he replied.

"What sort of birds?" we asked him.

"Sea-fowl of all sorts," he said. "They inhabit the Craig, and ye'll may be see numbers of them. They are quite numerous, and people have been in the habit of firing to alarm the birds, to see them fly."

He ordered his boy to bring the musket. The boy returned, and said it had been left behind at Glasgow.

"Load up the swivel, then," said the captain; "it will be all the better. It will make quite a flight, ye'll find. Load her up pretty well."

The steamer meanwhile kept nearing the giant craig, which was a bare rock from summit to the sea. We saw caves in the sides of the mountain. We had got so near as to see the white birds flitting across the black entrances of the caverns like bees about a hive. With the spy-glass we could see them distinctly, and in very considerable numbers, and at length approached so that we could see them on the ledges all over the sides of the mountain.

We had passed the skirt of the Craig, and were within half a mile, or less, of its base. With the glass we could now see the entire mountain-side peopled with the sea-fowl, and could hear their whimpering, household cry, as they moved about, or nestled in domestic snugness on the ten thousand ledges. The air, too, about the precipices seemed to be alive with them. Still we had not the slightest conception of their frightful multitude. We got about against the center of the mountain when the swivel was fired, with a reverberation like the discharge of a hundred cannon, and what a sight followed! They rose up from that mountain—the countless millions and millions of sea-birds—in a universal, overwhelming cloud, that covered the whole heavens, and their cry was like the cry of an alarmed nation. Up they went,—millions upon millions,—ascending like the smoke of a furnace,—

> countless as the sands on the sea-shore,—awful, dreadful for multitude, as if the whole mountain were dissolving into life and light; and, with an unearthly kind of lament, took up their lines of flight in every direction off to sea! The sight startled the people on board the steamer, who had often witnessed it before, and for some minutes there ensued a general silence. For our own part, we were quite amazed and overawed at the spectacle. We had seen nothing like it before. We had never witnessed sublimity to be compared to that rising of sea-birds from Ailsa Craig. They were of countless varieties in kind and size, from the largest goose to the small marsh-bird, and of every conceivable variety of dismal note. Off they moved, in wild and alarmed rout, like a people going into exile; filling the air, far and wide, with their reproachful lament at the wanton cruelty which had driven them away.

This is only one of these breeding-places, but most of the rocky, inaccessible cliffs and uninhabited islands of the northern and southern shores of both continents are visited, at certain seasons, by sea-birds in equally great numbers.

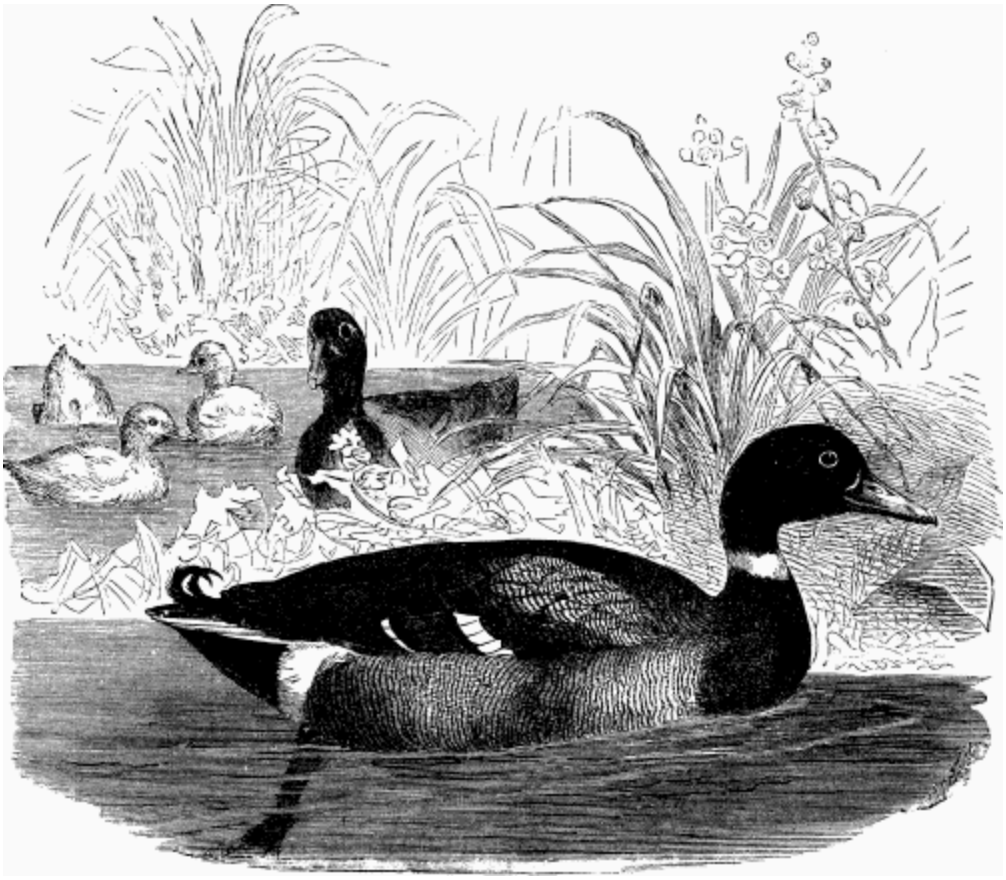
No subject connected with the history of birds furnishes more interesting material for study than that of instinct. Young birds of different species show that they have very different degrees of instinctive knowledge. Some are able to take the entire care of themselves, and do not need a mother to watch over them; others, on the contrary, are perfectly helpless, and need teaching before they can do anything for themselves, except breathe, and swallow what is put into their mouths. The young chicken, a short time after it leaves the egg, knows how to take care of itself nearly as well as the young mound-bird. It can run after its mother, use its eyes, pick up food, and answer the call of the old hen; and it does all this without instruction. How different it is in all these respects from the young barn-swallow! This is blind, and unable to run, or even to stand, knowing only enough to open its mouth when it hears the old bird return to the nest, and to swallow the food placed in its open bill. Far from knowing by instinct how to use its wings, as the young chick does its legs, it does not learn this until it is well grown, and has had several lessons in flying; and even then it flies badly, and improves only after long practice. After it has learned to fly, it is still

very helpless and baby-like, and very different from the active, bright-eyed, independent little chick of the barn-yard; and, indeed, the young of all the *Rasores*, or scratching birds, such as the hen, the quail, the partridge, the pheasant and the turkey. In the admirable picture of an English pheasant and its brood, on page 610, you will see how very much like young chicks the young pheasants are.

ENGLISH PHEASANT AND YOUNG.

The scratching birds are not the only ones which can take care of themselves at an early age. This is true of the running birds, such as the ostrich; and the same is the case with many of the wading birds, such as the

woodcock; and among the swimming birds, there are several kinds that take full care of themselves soon after leaving the shell.



MALLARD DUCKS.

In the picture on the preceding page you have a pair of mallard ducks with three young ones, which are all able to swim and dive as well as their parents. You all know that, far from standing in need of instruction, young ducks take to the water by instinct, even when they have been brought up by a hen; and they know that they are perfectly safe upon it, although the anxious hen tries in every way to restrain them and to call them back. There are many ways in which some of our young birds show their really wonderful instincts, but there is nothing more curious in this respect than the habits of the little chickens, which most of us have opportunities of noticing,—if we choose to take the trouble. These little creatures, almost as soon as they are born, understand what their mother "clucks" to them; they

know that they must hide when a hawk is about; they often scratch the ground for food before they see their mother or any other chicken do so; they are careful not to catch bees instead of flies; and they show their early smartness in many ways which are well worth watching.

But, sometimes, a brood of these youngsters find something that puzzles them, as when they meet with a hard-shelled beetle, who looks too big to eat and yet too small for a playmate.

RAIN.

By Edgar Fawcett.

Oh, the Rain has many fitful moods
    Ere the merry summer closes,—
From the first chirp of the robin-broods
    To the ruin of the roses!

Through the sunshine's gold her glitter steals,
    In the doubtful April weather,
When the world seems trying how it feels
    To be sad and glad together.

Now and then, on quiet sultry eves,
    From her low persistent patter,
She would seem confiding to the leaves
    An extremely solemn matter.

Then, again, you see her from the sky
    Such a mighty flood unfolding,
That you wonder if Old Earth knows why
    It receives so hard a scolding!

Yet we learn to fancy, day by day,
    As we watch her softly shining,

That she has no cloud, however gray,
    But it wears a silver lining!

For in autumn, though with tears she tells
    How the lands grow sad and darken,
Yet in spring her drops are tinkling bells
    For the sleeping flowers to hearken!

And her tinted bow seems Love's own proof,
    As it gleams with colors seven,—
Like a stately dome upon the roof
    Of her palace, high in heaven!

SNEEZE DODSON'S FIRST INDEPENDENCE DAY.

By Mrs. M.H.W. Jaquith.

The usually quiet town of Greenville was in a hurly-burly of excitement on this Fourth of July morning, because of the great Sunday-school picnic, which was to take place on a fine ground, two miles distant. In the fervor of patriotism and the bustle of preparing for the picnic-celebration, almost every house in the village resounded with shouts and noises; and all the children were on the tip-toe of expectation and delight. Deacon Ebenezer Dodson sat in the arm-chair in the "spare room," staring out of the window, and trying to think up the speech he was to make that day. For he had been chosen by the town-committee to open the exercises upon the stand with an appropriate oration; and though he had mused and muttered and studied over it, from the day when he was first requested to "perform" until this eventful morning itself, he had not yet succeeded in composing a speech which satisfied him.

"The flies bother the horses so, I can't practice on it in the field, and my only chance is o' nights," he had often explained to his wife; but his nightly meditations on it had been disturbed by such foreign remarks as this:

"I say, Eb" (that was her family name for him; away from home she always said "Deacon"), "you haint gone off to sleep, be you? I should feel masterly cut up ef my cake should be heavy, an' everybody on the grounds will know it's mine from the marks o' my name I'm goin' to put on the frostin',"—by which she meant her initials done in red, white, and blue powdered sugar.

And again:

"Do you remember Mis' Deacon Pogue's pound-cake at the d'nation party las' winter? She'd bragged on it to every livin' soul, an', when they came to cut it, there was a solid streak of dough right through the middle from eend to eend. She didn't happin to be 'round when 'twas cut, an' I thought it was my duty to let her see a piece, so she'd know how to better it next time, and she was so mad, she's turned up her nose at me ever sence."

The Deacon here murmured something beginning "Ninthly," for he had arranged his speech in heads; but she kept on with such inspiring memories, that he had poor chance to get up that "Speech by Deacon Dodson," the sight of which legend on the printed programme had aroused in him a fixed determination to do or die. But it seemed to him, as he sat there, that it would be die; for not one "head" could he call up clearly, and ever and anon his wife would cry out for wood or water, or to state some fact concerning her cake or chickens.

Just now her rusk was the all-absorbing topic of thought. More than twenty times she had looked at the dough and reported its "rise" to the unsympathetic Deacon, who was pumping his arms up and down, and trying to disentangle his "firstly" and "secondly."

"The procession is going to form at nine o'clock punctial, and march to the grounds, and so there's no use of dressing Bubby twice," Mrs. Dodson had said, so that youth of three summers was wandering around in his night-gown, and had taken so active an interest in the proceedings that Mrs. Dodson had several times sent him to his father, complaining, "I never did see him so upstroferlous before."

Sneeze—so called because he was named for his father, and it was necessary to distinguish them—was hurried in from the barn; his ears were boxed for "not bein' 'round to take care of Bubby," and then he was sent with him to the barn.

Deacon had been duly badgered and pestered about household troubles. He had helped to put on Bubby's shoes—now far too small—and tried to

hook Mrs. Dodson's dress—similarly outgrown. But he was at length exasperated into saying:

"By George! I can't think of a word of my speech, you bother me so!"

"You fairly make my blood run cold to be sayin' sech words as that on this Fourth o' July mornin', which you always said was nex' door to swearin'!" replied his wife; but her stream of talk was frozen up for the time, and they were at length dressed, packed, and rattling over the stony hills in a lumber-wagon.

"Wal, this seems quite like Independence Day," she said musingly. "I remember once goin' to a reg'lar picnic when I was about the bigness of Sneeze there, an' we had an awful good time. Mother'd plegged herself to git up somethin' that nobody else'd have, an' finally she made a lot o' figger four doughnuts to stand for Fourth o' July, you know, an' Aunt Jane, she that was a Green, Uncle Josiah's first wife, was kind o' jealous 'cause people noticed them more'n her cookin', an' she said they was shortened with toughening till nobody couldn't eat 'em. It come right straight back to mother, an' they never spoke for better'n a year—no, 'twas just a year, come to think, for mother took sick in bed very nex' Fourth, an' then Aunt Jane confessed humble enough, and they made up."

Sneeze had been listening, and while his mother paused for breath, he asked, "What do we keep Fourth of July for, an' what makes 'em call it Independence Day? I heard Reub Blake say that was the true name of it."

"Why, Sneeze, I'm 'shamed of you that you don't know that much. It is because George Washington was born on that day, or died; which was it, father? An' he fought for our independence. Besides, he never told a lie, as it tells about in the spellin'-book."

"Yes, it was something of that natur'," said the Deacon; "you'll know all about it to-day when we come to speak and make our orations."

"Yes, Sneeze, an' Cynthia Ann, your father is goin' to be a speaker on the stage; but you mus'n't feel set-up over the other girls an' boys whose fathers

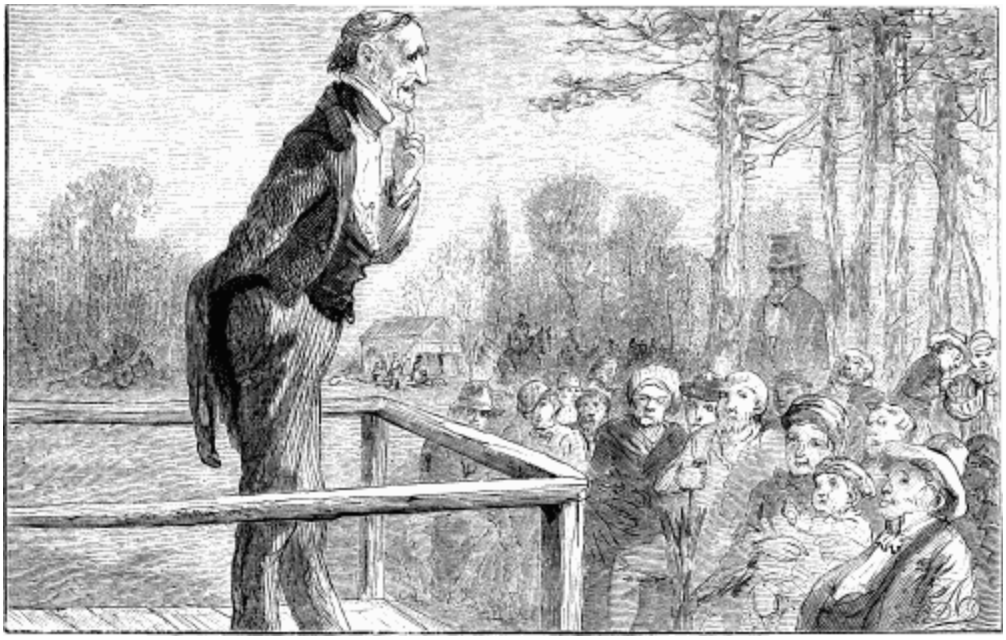
an' mothers aint app'inted as speakers an' on the table committee. You must listen to what father says."

They promised faithfully, and this is what Sneeze would have heard if he had kept his pledge; but to tell the truth, he was at that time going around with another boy looking into the baskets, and speculating on the length of time before dinner.

"Deacon Ebenezer Dodson, the first speaker on the programme, will now address the assembly," announced the chairman in a stentorian voice, after the procession had formed, marched, settled down, and were ready for the "exercises of the day." The Deacon stepped forward, and, with very evident shaking of the knees, with coughs and ahems, glancing to the right of him and to the left of him, to the heavens above and the earth beneath, with trembling voice he began:

"Firstly, my friends and fellow-citizens of this great country, this institution which we have come here to celebrate was instituted a great many hundred years ago,—leastways, if not quite so long, since this institution was instituted all men are free and equal"—(a long pause); "and since this institution was instituted in this great country, we have Sunday-schools and can go to church." Another pause.

"Secondly, little children, friends and fellow-citizens of this great country, let us all use rightly and not abuse the advantages of this institution which has been instituted for us, and go to church and Sunday-school, and —and—I see Deacon Pogue is waiting to make some remarks, and my friends and fellow-citizens of this great country, I will detain you no longer to dwell upon this institution, which was instituted to—to—" Here somebody benevolently thought to cheer, and the "Hip, hip, hurrahs!" were taken up so lustily by the small boys, that the magnetic sound warmed the Deacon into "Thirdly;" but Deacon Pogue had stepped briskly forward, and so with a bow, and "Good-by, my friends and fellow-citizens of this great country," he descended to his delighted wife, who received him with many proud and joyful congratulations.



DEACON DODSON'S ORATION.

Deacon Pogue was more ready and noisy, but spoke quite as much to the point as Deacon Dodson. He was followed by several others, none of whom could be omitted without giving offense, and at length, with a great flourish, the chairman announced "*The* orator of the day, Captain Buzwell, from Thornton, who has kindly consented to honor us," etc.

He was a lawyer with a gift of tongues, and his first few words brought all the hitherto indifferent assembly quietly near the stand. After a few well-put anecdotes, he said: "But to come back to the subject in hand: one of your eloquent speakers has called this Fourth of July an 'institution.' That was a novel and happy idea. It is an 'institution,' and upon it are founded all of our institutions,—free schools, free religion, free speech, free press, free ballots, free action: freedom everywhere for all men free and equal is founded on this glorious 'institution,' the corner-stone of which was laid Fourth of July, 1776."

At this point so great was Mrs. Dodson's conjugal pride, and so fearful was she that her husband was not attending to the speaker's flattery, that she

poked him with her parasol till the Deacon was "fain to cry out," as Bunyan says. When quiet was restored, the speaker continued:

"Another gifted orator has said,"—and, quoting something from Deacon Pogue's pointless remarks, he made them also seem full of meaning; and so on through the list of "distinguished speakers," till each one felt that he himself had spoken most effectively.

Having thus pleased and interested all parties, he followed with an instructive, historical speech, to which Sneeze, doughnut and cheese in hand, listened so intently, that he found out at last "why they kept Fourth of July."

After the speech and "appropriate instrumental music by the band," which consisted of a drum and a bass-viol, the people dispersed to amuse themselves as they saw fit, till dinner should be announced.

Mrs. Dodson, as "Table Committee," was disposed to magnify her office. She kept the Deacon standing guard over her basket till nearly all the rest were emptied, having reserved conspicuous places on the table for her goodies. Taking advantage of her rival's presence, smiling sweetly, she said as she opened the basket, "Mis' Pogue, your vittles look so nice, I'm real 'shamed to bring mine out at all."

"But all the while I knew she was proud as Lucifer over 'em, and thought she'd throw me quite in the shade," Mrs. Pogue told her next neighbor that afternoon. "Her big cards of rusk did look nice, but her mince-pies had slipped over into the custards, and they had dripped onto her cake so it looked just awful! and that red-headed Sneeze had squeezed her jelly-cake into flap-jacks, most likely by settin' on the basket. I never see anybody so cut up in my life; her face was redder than a beet."

And Mrs. Dodson said to the Deacon that night, "I did feel despritly morterfied over my squashed vittles, with Mis' Pogue a-lookin' on with all her eyes."

But when "the orator of the day" ate of her rusk, and said, "Mrs. Dodson, these rusk have a peculiar taste, just such as those my dead mother used to

make for me when I was a boy, and I want you to give me the recipe for my wife," and he took it down in his note-book, there was full compensation for all her trials.

When all had eaten all they could, the young folk and children swung, played ball, or "chased the squirrel" with the delightful penalty of kissing it when caught, or rambled about at will, while the mothers gathered the dishes together, and exchanged recipes and confidential remarks on somebody's cookin'.

By four o'clock the babies were fretful; children of Bubby's age complained that their shoes and clothes were too tight; somebody suggested going home. In vain the young people protested—an hour from that time the grounds were deserted; the lumber of the stage, made sacred by such oratory, had been gathered up with the seats and tables, and where so much of life had been, all was silence.

A neighbor's hired man was riding home with the Dodsons, but as Mrs. Dodson did not mind him, she at once began to congratulate her husband on his maiden speech. "Cappen Buzwell said you made the best oration there was made to-day, Deacon. Did you pay 'tention, Sneeze, an' hear what he said 'bout your father's speakin'?"

The Deacon modestly put in a faint, "Now, mother, don't," but she interrupted him: "Yis I shall, for it's so, father, an' I'm goin' to say my say. Besides, he told me, with tears in his eyes, that my rusk tasted just like his dead mother's. But ef you'd only seen him tryin' to eat one o' Mis' Pogue's doughnuts as if they was real good, when I could see they was half chokin' of him!"

"That there man from town did make a purty considerable speech," said the Deacon; "not so hefty as some I've heard, but real instructing. It made me feel as though I wanted to fight somebody—purty much as I used to when I was a boy, and heard my father tell how he fit in the war of eighteen hundred and twelve, and his grandsir in the Revolutionary war."

"I guess you wasn't in any o' them wars?" stated the hired man, inquiringly.

"No; I wasn't born then, and o' course I couldn't; but my father used to tell us about it on trainin'-day nights. Trainin'-day was a great time, with its uniforms and feathers; my father was a sarjint, and we had gingerbread and federal cake."

"Well," burst out Sneeze, "if ever I get a chance I'm goin' to be a soldier, an' fight for my country, as George Washington did. I just wish we'd have trainin'-day now, and that Fourth of July came every day. Then, too, when I'm a man, I'm goin' to marry Eliza Johnson, for she—"

"Shut up, Sneeze!" put in Mrs. Dodson. "Little boys like you ought to be seen and not heard; when your parents make speeches and rusk at Fourth o' July celebrations that them that was good judges says was most interestin', you had ought to be listenin' to their talkin' and learnin' o' them. Here's Bubby a tunin' for somethin' to eat; give him one of them rusk out of the basket, an' stop your nonsense."

Sneeze's face was as red as his hair, and not another word did he say; but his dreams that night were a mixture of feathers, soldiers and pound-cake, Eliza Johnson, mother and speeches, and thus ended his first memorable Independence Day.

MEADOW TALK.

By Caroline Leslie.

A bumble-bee, yellow as gold,
Sat perched on a red-clover top,
When a grasshopper, wiry and old,
Came along with a skip and a hop.
"Good-morrow!" cried he, "Mr. Bumble-Bee!
You seem to have come to a stop."

"We people that work,"
Said the bee with a jerk,

"Find a benefit sometimes in stopping;
Only insects like you,
Who have nothing to do,
Can keep up a perpetual hopping."

The grasshopper paused on his way,
And thoughtfully hunched up his knees;
"Why trouble this sunshiny day,"
Quoth he, "with reflections like these?
I follow the trade for which I was made;
We all can't be wise bumble-bees.

"There's a time to be sad,
And a time to be glad;
A time both for working and stopping;
For men to make money,
For you to make honey,
And for me to do nothing but hopping."

A BOY'S EXPERIENCE WITH TAR MARBLES.

By C.S.N.

Almost all boys, at some period of their lives, devote their spare time to playing with marbles, and I certainly was not unlike other boys in this respect. My fondness for marbles began very early, and when I was about seven years old led me into a curious experience, which I am about to relate. A great rivalry for acquiring marbles had suddenly arisen at that time among the boys of the town, and to possess as many of the little round beauties as my oldest brother owned, soon became the desire of my heart and the height of my ambition.

I had already obtained a large number, when one day I overheard my oldest brother telling one of his schoolmates that he had made the important discovery that marbles could be formed from coal-tar, of which there was a large quantity on a certain street in a distant part of the town. He did not condescend to explain the process of manufacture, but he showed the marbles he had made,—black, round, and glossy. The sight inspired me with ardent desire to possess an unlimited quantity.

My brother told me just where the coveted treasure was to be found, and, in the afternoon, I started off, without confiding to any one my intention, to find the spot and lay in a supply of the raw material, which I could convert into marbles at my leisure. Delightful visions of bags filled with treasure, dancing through my brain, hastened the rate of my speed almost to a run, before I arrived at the goal of my hopes. It was a very hot July afternoon, and I was in a violent heat; but the sight of the heaps of coal-tar put all thoughts of anything unpleasant quite out of my head; it caused me to forget

also that I had on a suit of new clothes, of which I had been cautioned by my mother to be extremely careful.

I need hardly remark that I was not very well acquainted with the substance I was handling, and my only idea of its qualities was, that it could be molded into any shape I pleased. I was not aware that it has all the qualities of ordinary tar,—melts with heat, and becomes the toughest, stickiest, most unmanageable of substances with which a small boy can come into contact.

I fell to work to collect what I wanted to carry home. I filled the pockets of my pantaloons, and of my jacket, and lastly, when these were stuffed to their utmost capacity, I filled the crown of my hat so full that it would hardly go on my head. The place was at some distance from my home, and I did not wish to have to return immediately for more.

With a heart filled with triumph, I started off toward home. By this time I began to realize that the weather was not cool. It had been a long walk, and I was pretty tired, but I was also in a great hurry to begin making marbles, so I walked as fast as I could. After a little time I began to be sensible of a disagreeable feeling of stickiness about my waist, and a slight trickling sensation in the region of the knees.

A cloud not bigger than a man's hand flitted across my horizon,—perhaps coal-tar *might* melt?

I resolved to ascertain; and, like the famous old woman with her "yard of black pudding," I very soon found it was much easier to obtain what I wanted, than to know what to do with it when I had it. A very slight inspection of my pockets satisfied me that coal-tar was capable of becoming liquid, and, if I needed further evidence, the sable rivulets that began to meander down the sides of my face gave ample corroboration of the fact. I tried to take off my hat, but it would not come.

I looked down at my new trousers with feelings of dismay. Ominous spots of a dismal hue were certainly growing larger. I tried to get the tar out of my pockets, but only succeeded in covering my hands with the black, unmanageable stuff, which at that moment I regarded as one of those

inventions of the devil, to entrap little boys, of which I had often been warned, but to which I had given no heed. If it was a trap, I was certainly *caught*; there was no doubt of that. But I was not without some pluck, and in my case, as in that of many another brave, my courage in facing the present calamity was aided by my fear of another still more to be dreaded.

"I LOOKED DOWN AT MY NEW TROUSERS WITH DISMAY."

That I should get a whipping for spoiling my new suit, if I could not manage to get the tar off, I was quite certain, and I had had no permission to go from home, and on the whole the outlook was not cheerful in that direction. Quite driven to desperation, I seated myself on the ground, and tried to scrape off the black spots, which had now extended to formidable

dimensions; while I could feel small streams coming down inside of the collar of my shirt, and causing rather singular suggestions of a rope around my neck. My labor was all in vain. I got a good deal off, but there seemed to be an inexhaustible quantity *on*. I gave it up in despair, and burst into uncontrollable sobs. The flow of tears thinned the lava-like fluid, and it now resembled ink, which covered my face like a veil; but in the extremity of my anguish a hope dawned upon me. I found that I could wipe off with my hand this thinner solution, and if water would do it, water was plenty, and I would wash it off. A cousin of mine lived not very far off, and I knew that in the yard of her house there was a pump. Inspired by this idea, I set off at a run, and did not slacken my pace until I reached the spot. Here another difficulty met me. I could not reach the handle of the pump so as to get the benefit of the stream from its mouth, and it was only a complete shower-bath that would restore me to respectability. I set to work to find a rope, and fastened together quite a complicated piece of machinery, as I thought, by which I managed to pump the ice-cold water upon my devoted head. The effect was not as immediate as I had hoped. But I had faith if a little was good, more must be better. Creak—creak—creak—went the pump-handle, which did more work that afternoon than in half a dozen days' washing.

Creak—creak—creak! But the tar only became harder and harder, until I was encased in sheet-armor, like the famous Black Knight. Presently, my cousin Jenny, an especial friend of mine, hearing such continual pumping, and becoming anxious for the family supply of water, came out to see what was the matter. Seeing a small figure curled up under the spout of the pump, drenched to the skin and black as Othello, she stooped down to investigate the phenomenon. Oh, what was my despair when she discovered who it was, and in what plight!

To say she laughed would be to give a feeble idea of the peals of laughter that succeeded each other as she stood and looked at me. She would try to control her merriment for a moment, only to break forth afresh, until she was obliged to sit down from sheer exhaustion. Every time she glanced at my woe-begone countenance, and drenched condition, she would go into fresh convulsions of fun. At last she recovered breath enough to inquire into my case, and to assure me she would do what she could for me; but she soon found, to my despair, that what she could do was not much to my

relief. The clothes could not be got off, and certainly they could never be got clean. She did manage, with a strong pair of shears, to cut off the pockets in my breeches, and then, fearing my mother would be alarmed, she bade me go home, and she would promise to secure me against a whipping.

I fancy she thought this last promise would be easily kept.

Somewhat comforted, I took up my line of march toward the paternal roof, but, as I went along, my heart began to sink again; visions of a rod, with which my not too saintly character had made me somewhat familiar, loomed up before me; but worse than all, the thought of my brother's ridicule made my sensitive spirit quail. I thought I would evade all for that night, however, by going quietly up the back stairs, going to bed, and "playing sick." Fortune favored me. I reached the bedroom without being seen; and, just as I was, with my hat on, for it could only have come off with my scalp, I got into bed, and covered myself entirely up with the bed-clothes. It was now dusk, and I felt for the moment quite safe. Presently my aunt came into the room to get something for which she was looking, and I could hear her give several inquiring sniffs, and as she went out I heard her say: "I certainly do smell tar; where can it come from?" An interval of peace followed, and then in came my mother. "Tar? Smell tar? Of course you do; it's strong enough in this room. Bring a light."

"I COVERED MYSELF WITH THE BED-CLOTHES."

It was the sound of doom!

My mother soon came close up to the bed, and held the light so that it fell full upon me as she tried to turn down the bed-clothing. Probably, if it had not been for several previous scrapes in which I had been involved, she would have been much frightened; but as it was, the sight of her young blackamoor had much the same effect upon her as upon my cousin. Her exclamations and shrieks of laughter brought every member of the household successively to the room, and as one after another came in, fresh

zest seemed to be given to the merriment of which I was the unfortunate victim.

But every renewal of the fun was an added agony to me, for I clearly foresaw that it would be rehearsed by Jack and Tom to all the boys in the neighborhood. Beside this, I was not in a condition to be hilarious. Plastered with tar from head to foot; streaming with perspiration at every pore; my clothes drenched; my hair matted together, and my straw hat, soaked with water, fastened upon it, and falling limp and wet about my eyes; I was not rendered more comfortable by the fact that I could not move without taking pillow and bed-clothes with me, as, in my desperate desire to conceal myself from view, I had become enwrapped in the bed-clothing like a caterpillar in its chrysalis; and I was conscious of a dim fear that if I sat up, with the pillow stuck fast on the top of my hat, the sight of me might produce fatal results upon the already exhausted family.

At last the point was reached where I thought patience ceased to be a virtue, and I rebelled against being any longer made a spectacle.

I declared if they would all go away but mother, I would tell her all about it. The crowd retired, commissioned to send up a crock of butter, a tub of hot water, and a pair of shears. Maternal love is strong, but I doubt if it was often put to a severer test of its long-suffering than was that of my mother that night.

THE SHOWER-BATH.

Suffice it to say that, after my clothes had been cut to ribbons, the sheets torn up, my head well-nigh shaved, and my whole person subjected first to an African bath of melted butter, and afterward to one of hot soap-suds, I had had my fill of bathing for one day, and was, shortly before midnight, pronounced to be tolerably clean.

P.S.—I never made any marbles of coal-tar.

DAB KINZER: A STORY OF A GROWING BOY

By William O. Stoddard.

CHAPTER V.

During the week which followed the wedding-day, the improvements on the Morris house were pushed along in a way that surprised everybody.

Every day that passed, and with every dollar's worth of work that was done, the good points of the long-neglected old mansion came out stronger and stronger; for Mrs. Kinzer's plans had been a good while getting ready, and she knew exactly what was best to be done.

Before the end of the week Mr. Foster came over, bringing Ford with him, and he soon arrived at an understanding with Dabney's mother.

"A very business-like, common-sense sort of a woman," he remarked to his son. "But what a great, dangling, overgrown piece of a boy that is. Still, you may find him good company."

"No doubt," said Ford, "and thus I can be useful to him. He looks as if he could learn if he had a fair chance."

"I should say so," responded Mr. Foster, thoughtfully; "and we mustn't expect too much of fellows brought up away out here, as he has been."

Ford gravely assented.

There was a surprise in store for the village people; for, early in the following week it was rumored from house to house, "The Kinzers are all a-movin' over to Ham Morris's."

And before the public mind was settled enough to inquire into the matter, the rumor was changed into, "The Widder Kinzer's moved to Ham's house, bag and baggage."

So it was, although the carpenters and painters and glaziers were still at work, and the piles of Kinzer furniture had to be stowed around as best could be. Some of them had even to be locked up overnight in one of the barns.

The Kinzers, for generations, had been a trifle weak about furniture, and that was one of the reasons why there was so little room for human beings in their house. The little parlor, indeed, had been filled till it put one in mind of a small "furniture store" with not room enough to show the stock on hand, and some of the other parts of the house required knowledge and care to walk about in them.

Bad for a small house, truly, but not so much so when the same articles were given a fair chance to spread themselves.

It was a treat to Dab to watch while the new carpets were put down, one after another, and then to see how much at home and comfortable the furniture looked as it was moved into its new quarters.

Mrs. Kinzer took care that the house she left should speak well of her to the eyes of Mrs. Foster, when that lady came to superintend the arrival of her own household goods.

The character of these, by the way, at once convinced the village gossips that "lawyer Foster must be a good deal forehanded in money matters." And so he was, even more than his furniture indicated. Ford had a wonderful deal to do with the settlement of his family in their new home, and it was not until nearly the close of the week that he found time for more than an occasional glance over the north fence.

"Take the two farms together," his father had said to him, "and they make a really fine estate. I learn, too, that the Kinzers have other property. Your young acquaintance is likely to have a very good start in the world."

Ford had found out nearly as much on his own account, but he had long since learned the uselessness of trying to teach his father anything, however well he might succeed with ordinary people, and so he had said nothing.

"Dabney," said Mrs. Kinzer, that Friday evening, "you've been a great help all the week. Suppose you take the ponies to-morrow morning, and ask young Foster out for a drive."

"Mother," exclaimed Samantha, "I shall want the ponies myself. I've some calls to make, and some shopping. Dabney will have to drive."

"No, Sam," remarked Dabney; "if you go out with the ponies to-morrow, you'll have my old clothes to drive you."

"What do you mean?" asked Samantha.

"I mean, with Dick Lee in them."

"That would be just as well," said Mrs. Kinzer. "The ponies are gentle enough, and Dick drives well. He'll be glad enough to go."

"Dick Lee, indeed!" began Samantha.

"A fine boy," interrupted Dab, "and he's beginning to dress well. His new clothes fit him beautifully. All he really needs is a shirt, and I'll give him one. Mine are getting too small."

"Well, Dabney," said Mrs. Kinzer, "I've been thinking about it. You ought not to be tied down all the while. Suppose you take next week pretty much to yourself. Samantha wont want the ponies every day. The other horses have all got to work, or I'd let you have one of them."

Dabney got up, for want of a better answer, and walked over to where his mother was sitting, and gave the thoughtful matron a good, sounding kiss.

At the same time he could not help thinking, "This comes of Ham Morris and my new rig."

"There Dabney, that'll do," said his mother; "but how'll you spend Saturday?"

"Guess I'll take Ford Foster out in the bay a-crabbing, if he'll go," replied Dabney. "I'll run over and ask him."

It was not too late, and he was out of the house before there was a chance for further remarks.

"Now, he muttered," as he walked along, "I'll have to see old lawyer Foster, and Mrs. Foster, and I don't know who all, besides. I don't like that."

Just as he came to the north fence of his former residence, however, he was hailed by a clear, wide-awake voice: "Dab Kinzer, is that you?"

"Guess so," said Dab; "is that you, Ford?"

"I was just going over to your house," said Ford.

"And I was just coming to see you. I've been too busy all the week, but they've let up on me at last."

"I've got our family nearly settled," replied Ford, "and I thought I'd ask if you wouldn't like to go out with me on the bay to-morrow. Teach you to catch crabs."

Dab Kinzer drew a long, astonished sort of whistle, but he finished it with, "That's about what I was thinking of. There's plenty of crabs, and I've got a tip-top boat. We wont want a heavy one for just us two."

"All right, then. We'll begin on crabs; but some other day we'll go for bigger fish. What are you going to do next week?"

"Got it all to myself," said Dab. "We can have all sorts of a good time. We can have the ponies, too, when we want them."

"That's about as good as it knows how to be," responded the young gentleman from the city. "I'd like to explore the country. You're going to have a nice place of it over there, before you get through. Only, if I'd had the planning of that house, I'd have set it back further. Not enough trees, either."

Bab came stoutly to the defense of not only that house, but of Long Island architecture generally, and was fairly overwhelmed, for the first time in his life, by a flood of big words from a boy of his own age.

He could have eaten up Ford Foster, if properly cooked. He felt sure of that. But he was no match for him on the building question. On his way home, however, after the discussion had lasted long enough, he found himself inquiring: "That's all very nice, but what can he teach me about crabs? We'll see about that to-morrow."

The crab question was one of special importance, beyond a doubt; but one of even greater consequence to Dab Kinzer's future was undergoing discussion at that very hour, hundreds of miles away.

Quite a little knot of people there was, in a hotel parlor; and while the blooming Miranda, now Mrs. Morris, was taking her share of talk very well with the ladies, Ham was every bit as busy with a couple of elderly gentlemen.

"It's just as I say, Mr. Morris," said one of the latter, with a superfluous show of energy; "there's no better institution of its kind in the country than Grantley Academy. I send my own boys there, and I've just written about it to my brother-in-law, Foster, the New York lawyer. He'll have his boy there this fall. No better place in the country, sir."

"But how about the expenses, Mr. Hart?" asked Ham.

"Fees are just what I told you, sir, a mere nothing. As for board, all I pay for my boys is three dollars a week. All they want to eat, sir, and good accommodations. Happy as larks, sir, all the time. Cheap, sir, cheap!"

If Ham Morris had the slightest idea of going to school at a New England Academy, Miranda's place in the improved house was likely to wait for her; for he had a look on his face of being very nearly convinced.

She did not seem at all disturbed, however, and probably her husband was not looking up the school question on his own account.

That was the reason why it might have been interesting for Dab Kinzer, and even for his knowing neighbor, to have added themselves to the company Ham and Miranda had fallen in with on their wedding tour.

That night, however, Dab dreamed that a gigantic crab was trying to pull Ford Foster out of the boat, while the latter calmly remarked: "There! did you ever see anything just like that before?"

CHAPTER VI.

That Saturday morning was a sad one for poor Dick Lee!

His mother carefully locked up his elegant apparel, the gift of Mr. Dabney Kinzer, the previous night, after Dick was in bed, and, when daylight came, he found his old clothes by his bedside.

It was a hard thing to bear, no doubt, but Dick had been a bad boy on Friday. He had sold his fish instead of bringing them home, and then had gone and squandered the money on a brilliant new red neck-tie.

"Dat's good nuff for me to w'ar to meetin'," said Mrs. Lee, when her eyes fell on the gorgeous bit of cheap silk. "Reckon it wont be wasted on any good-for-nuffin boy. I'll show ye wot to do wid yer fish. You's gettin' too mighty fine, anyhow."

Dick was disconsolate for a while, but his humility took the form of a determination to go for crabs that day, mainly because his mother had long since set her face against that tribe of animals.

"Dey's a wasteful, stravagant sort ob fish," remarked Mrs. Lee, in frequent explanation of her dislike. "Dey's all clo'es and no body, like some w'ite folks I know on. I don't mean the Kinzers. Dey's all got body nuff."

And yet that inlet had a name of its own for crabs. There was a wide reach of shallow water inside the southerly point at the mouth, where, over several hundred acres of muddy flats, the depth varied from three and a half to eight feet, with the ebb and flow of the tides. That was a sort of perpetual crab-pasture, and there it was that Richard Lee determined to expend his energies that Saturday.

Very likely there would be other crabbers on the flats, but Dick was not the boy to object to that, provided none of them should notice the change in his raiment. At an early hour, therefore, Dab and Ford were preceded by their colored friend, they themselves waiting for later breakfasts than Mrs. Lee was in the habit of preparing.

Dick's ill fortune did not leave him when he got out of sight of his mother. It followed him down to the shore of the inlet, and compelled him to give up all idea, for that day, of borrowing a respectable boat. There were several belonging to the neighbors, from among which Dick was accustomed to take his pick, in return for errands run and other services done for their owners; but, on this particular morning, not one of them all was available. Some were fastened with ugly chains and padlocks. Two were hauled away above even high-water mark, and so Dick could not have got them into the water even if he had dared to try; and as for the rest, as Dick said, "Guess dar owners must hab borrowed 'em."

The consequence was that the dark-skinned young fisherman was for once compelled to put up with his own boat, or rather his father's.

The three wise men of Gotham were not much worse off when they went to sea in a bowl than was Dick Lee in that rickety little old flat-bottomed punt.

Did it leak?

Well, not so very much, with no heavier weight than Dick's; but there was reason in his remark that "Dis yer's a mean boat to frow down a fish in, w'en you cotch 'im. He's done gone suah to git drownded."

Yes, and the crabs would get their feet wet and so would Dick; but he resigned himself to his circumstances and pushed away. To tell the truth, he had not been able to free himself from a lingering fear lest his mother might come after him, before he could get afloat, with orders for some duty or other on shore, and that would have been worse than the little old "scow," a good deal.

"Reckon it's all right," said Dick, as he shoved off. "It'd be an awful risk to trus' dem nice clo'es in de ole boat, suah."

Nice clothes, nice boats, a good many other nice things, were as yet beyond the reach of Dick Lee, but he was quite likely to catch as many crabs as his more aristocratic neighbors.

As for Dabney Kinzer and his friend from the city, they were on their way to the water-side at an hour which indicated smaller appetites than usual, or greater speed at the breakfast table.

"Plenty of boats, I should say," remarked Ford, as he surveyed the little "landing" and its vicinity with the air of a man who had a few fleets of his own. "All sorts. Any of 'em fast?"

"Not many," said Dab; "the row-boats, big and little, have to be built so they'll stand pretty rough water."

"How are the sail-boats?"

"Same thing. There's Ham Morris's yacht."

"That? Why, she's as big as any in the lot."

"Bigger, but she don't show it," said Dab.

"Can't we make a cruise in her?" said Ford.

"Any time. Ham lets me use her whenever I like. She's fast enough, but she's built so she'll stand most anything. Safe as a house if she's handled right."

"Handled!"

Ford Foster's expression of face would have done honor to the Secretary of the Navy, or the chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee in Congress, or any other perfect seaman, Noah included. It seemed to say: "As if any boat could be otherwise than well sailed with me on board."

Dabney, however, even while he had been talking, had been hauling in from its "float and grapnel," about ten yards out at low water, the very stanch-looking little yawl-boat that called him owner. She was just such a boat as Mrs. Kinzer would naturally have provided for her boy,—stout, well made and sensible,—without any bad habits of upsetting, or the like. Not too large for Dabney to manage all alone, the "Jenny," as he called her, and as the name was painted on the stern, was all the better off for having two on board.

"The inlet's pretty narrow for a long reach through the marsh," said Dabney, "and as crooked as a ram's-horn. I'll steer and you pull till we're out o' that, and then I'll take the oars."

"I might as well row out to the crab-grounds," said Ford, as he pitched his coat forward and took his seat at the oars. "All ready?"

"Ready," said Dab, and the "Jenny" glided gracefully away from the landing with the starting push he gave her.

Ford Foster had had oars in his hands before, but his experience must have been limited to a class of vessels different from the one he was in now.

He was short of something, at all events. It may have been skill, and it may have been legs, or discretion; but, whatever was lacking, at the third or fourth stroke the oar-blades went a little too deeply below the smooth

surface of the water; there was a vain tug, a little out of "time," and then there was a boy on the bottom of the boat, and a pair of well-polished shoes lifted high in the air.

"You've got it!" shouted Dabney.

"Got what?" exclaimed an all but angry voice from between the seats.

"Caught the first 'crab,'" replied Dabney,—"that's what we call it. Can you steer? Guess I'd better row."

"No you wont," was the very resolute reply, as Ford regained his seat and his oars; "I sha'n't catch any more crabs of that sort. I'm a little out of practice, that's all."

"I should say you were, a little. Well, it wont hurt you. 'Tisn't much of a pull."

Ford would have pulled it, now, if he had blistered all the skin off his hands in doing so, and he did very creditable work, for some minutes, among the turns and windings of the narrow inlet.

"Here we are," shouted Dabney, at last. "We are in the inlet yet, but it widens out into the bay."

"That's the bay, out yonder?"

"Yes; and the island between that and the ocean's no better'n a mere bar of sand."

"How d'you get past it?"

"Right across there, almost in a straight line. We'll run it, next week, in Ham's yacht. Splendid weak-fishing, right in the mouth of that inlet, on the ocean side."

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Ford. "I'm in for that. Is the bay deep?"

"Not very," replied Dabney, "but it gets pretty rough sometimes."

Ford was getting red in the face, just then, with his unaccustomed exercise, and his friend added:

"You needn't pull so hard. We're almost there. Hullo! if there isn't Dick Lee in his dry-goods box! That boat'll drown him, some day, and his dad, too. But just see him pull in crabs!"

Ford came near "catching" one more as he tried to turn around for the look proposed, exclaiming:

"Dab, let's get to work as quick as we can. They might go away."

"Might fly?"

"No; but don't they go and come?"

"Well, you go and drop the grapnel over the bows, and we'll see 'em come in pretty quick."

The grapnel, or little anchor, was thrown over quickly enough, and the two boys were in such an eager haste that they had hardly a word to say to Dick, though he was now but a few rods away.

Now it happened that when Ford and Dab came down to the water that morning, each of them had brought a load. The former had only a neat little japanned tin box, about as big as his head, and the latter, besides his oars, carried a seemingly pretty heavy basket.

"Lots of lunch, I should say," had been Ford's mental comment; but he had not thought it wise to ask questions.

"Plenty of lunch, I reckon," thought Dab at the same time, but only as a matter of course.

And they were both wrong. Lunch was the one thing they had both forgotten.

But the box and the basket?

Ford Foster came out, of his own accord, with the secret of the box, for he now took a little key out of his pocket and unlocked it with an air of "Look at this, will you?"

Dab Kinzer looked, and was very sure he had never before seen quite such an assortment of brand-new fish-hooks, of many sorts and sizes, and of fish-lines which looked as if they had thus far spent their lives on dry land.

"Tip-top!" he remarked. "I see a lot of things we can use one of these days, but there isn't time to go over 'em now. Let's go for the crabs. What made you bring your box along?"

"Oh," replied Ford, "I left my rods at home, both of 'em. You don't s'pose I'd go for a crab with a rod, do you? But you can take your pick of hooks and lines."

"Crabs? Hooks and lines?"

"Why, yes. You don't mean to scoop 'em up in that landing-net, do you?"

Dab looked at his friend for a moment in blank amazement, and then the truth burst upon him for the first time.

"Oh, I see! You never caught any crabs. Well, just you lock up your jewelry-box, and I'll show you."

It was not easy for Dab to keep from laughing in Ford Foster's face; but his mother had not given him so many lessons in good breeding for nothing, and Ford was permitted to close his ambitious "casket" without any worse annoyance than his own wounded pride gave him.

But now came out the secret of the basket.

The cover was jerked off and nothing revealed except a varied assortment of clams, large and small, but mostly of good size; tough old customers that no amount of roasting or boiling would ever have prepared for human eating.

"What are they for,—bait?"

"Yes, bait, weight and all."

"How's that?"

Dabney's reply was to draw from his pocket a couple of long, strong cords, bits of old fishing-line. He cracked a couple of clams, one against the other; tied the fleshy part firmly to the ends of the cords; tied a bit of shell on, a foot or so from the end, for a sinker; handed one to Ford; took the other himself, and laid the long-handled scoop-net he had brought with him down between them, saying:

"Now we're ready. Drop your clam to the bottom and draw it up gently. You'll get the knack of it in five minutes. It's all knack. There isn't anything else so stupid as a crab."

Ford watched carefully, and obeyed in silence.

In a minute or so more the operation of the scoop-net was called for, and then the fun began.

"The young black rascal!" exclaimed Dabney. "If he hasn't gone and got a sheep's-head!"

"A sheep's-head?"

"Yes; that's why he beats us so badly. It's better than clams, only you can't always get one."

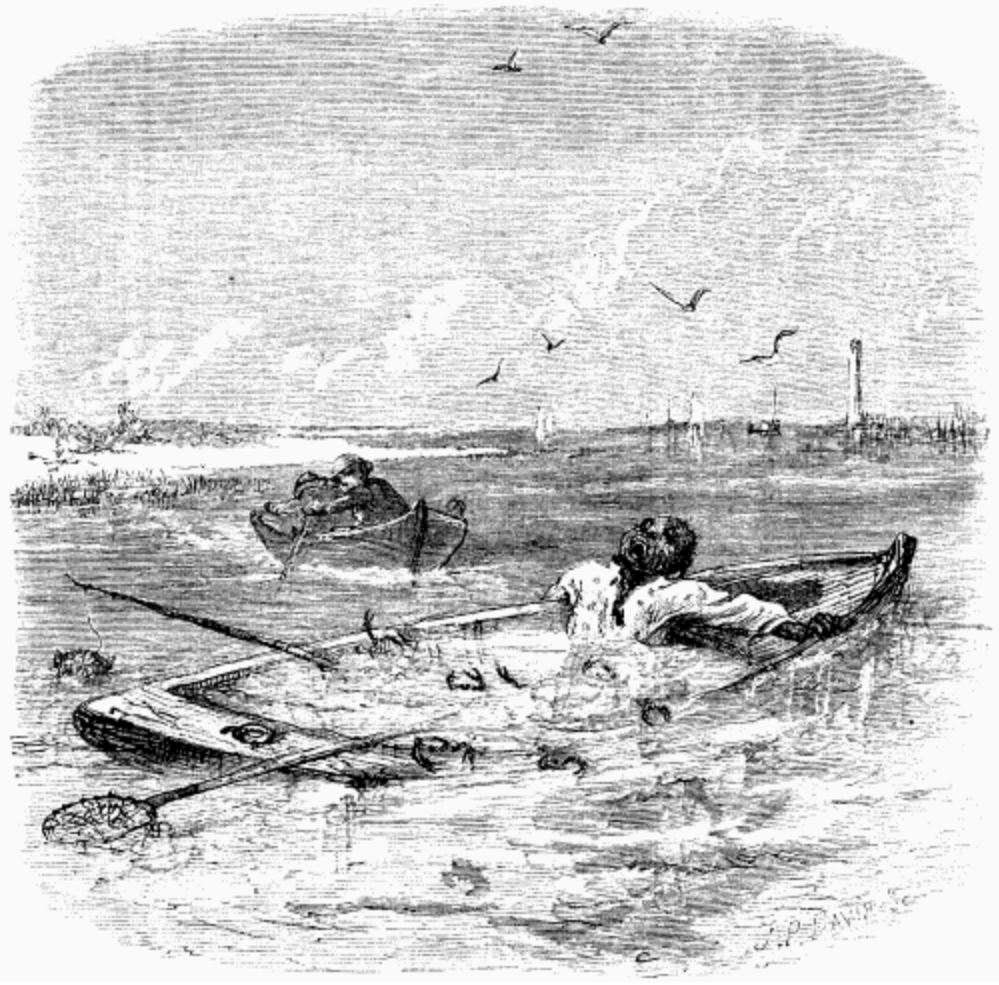
"But how he does pull 'em in!"

"We're doing well enough," began Dabney, when suddenly there came a shrill cry of pain from Dick Lee's punt.

"He's barefooted," shouted Dab, with, it must be confessed, something like a grin, "and one of the little fellows has pinned him with his nippers."

There need have been nothing very serious in that, but Dick Lee was more than ordinarily averse to anything like physical pain, and the crab which had seized him by the toe was a very muscular and vicious specimen of his quarrelsome race.

The first consequence was a momentary dance up and down in the punt, accompanied by vigorous howling from Dick, but not a word of any sort from the crab. The next consequence was that the crab let go, but so, at the same instant, did the rotten board in the boat-bottom upon which Dick Lee had so rashly danced.



DICK LEE IN TROUBLE.

It let go of the rest of the boat so suddenly that poor Dick had only time for one tremendous yell as it let him right down through to his armpits. The water was perfectly smooth, but the boat was full in an instant, and nearly a bushel of freshly caught and ill-tempered crabs were maneuvering in all directions around the woolly head which was all their late captor could now keep in sight.

"Up with the grapnel, Ford," shouted Dab. "Take an oar! We'll both row. He can swim like a duck, but he might split his throat."

"Or get scared to death."

"Or eaten up by the crabs."

CHAPTER VII.

At the very moment when the angry crab closed his nippers on the bare big toe of Dick Lee, and his shrill note of discomfort rang across the inlet, the shrill whistle of the engine announced the arrival of the morning train at the little station in the village.

A minute or so later, a very pretty young lady was standing beside a trunk on the platform, trying to get some information of the flag-man.

"Can you tell me where Mr. Foster lives?"

"That's the gimlet-eyed laryer from Yark?"

"Yes, he's from New York," said the young lady, smiling in his face. "Where does he live?"

"He's got the sapiest boy, thin. Is it him as took the Kinzer house?"

"I think likely it is. Can you tell me how to get there?"

"Thim Kinzers is foine people. The widdy married one of the gurrels to Misther Morris."

"But how can I get to the house?"

"Is it there ye're afther goin'? Hey, Michael, me boy, bring up yer owld rattlethrap an' take the leddy's thrunk. She'll be goin' to the Kinzer place. Sharp, now!"

"I should say it was!" muttered the young lady, as the remains of what had been a carry-all were pulled up beside the platform by the skinny skeleton of what might once have been a horse. "It's a rattletrap!"

There was no choice, however, for that was the only public conveyance at the station, and the young lady's trunk was already whisked in behind the dashboard, and the driver was waiting for her.

"THE ONLY PUBLIC CONVEYANCE AT THE STATION."

He could afford to wait, as it would be hours before another train would be in.

There was no door to open in that "carriage." It was all door except the top and bottom, and the pretty passenger was neither helped nor hindered in finding her place on the back seat.

If the flag-man was more disposed to ask questions than to answer them, "Michael" said few words of any kind except to his horse. To him, indeed, he kept up a constant stream of encouraging remarks, the greater part of which would have been hard for an ordinary hearer to understand.

Very likely the horse knew what they meant, for he came very near breaking from a limp into a trot several times, under the stimulus of all that clucking and "g'lang now."

The distance was by no means great, and Michael seemed to know the way perfectly. At least, he answered, "Yes'm, indade," to several inquiries from his passenger, and she was compelled to be satisfied with that.

"What a big house it is! And painters at work on it, too!" she exclaimed, just as Michael added a vigorous jerk of the reins to the "Whoa!" with which he stopped his nag in front of an open gate.

"Are you sure this is the place?"

"Yes'm, indade. Fifty cints, mum."

By the time the trunk was out and swung inside the gate, the young lady had followed; but for some reason Michael sprang back to his place and whipped up his limping steed. It may have been the fear of being asked to take that trunk into the house, for it was not a very small one. The young lady stood for a moment irresolute, and then left it where it was and walked straight up to the door.

No bell; no knocker. The workmen had not reached that part of their improvements yet. But the door was open, and a very neatly furnished

parlor at the left of the hall seemed to say, "Come right in, please," and so in she went.

Such an arrival could not possibly have escaped the notice of the inmates of the house, and, as the young lady from the railway came in at the front, another and a very different looking lady marched through to the parlor from the rear.

Each one would have been a puzzle to the other, if the elder of the two had not been Mrs. Kinzer, and the widow had never been very much puzzled in all her life. At all events, she put out her hand with a cordial smile, saying:

"Miss Foster, is it not? I am Mrs. Kinzer. How could he have made such a mistake?"

"Yes, Miss Annie Foster. But do please explain. Where am I, and how do you know me?"

The widow laughed cheerily.

"How do I know you, my dear? Why, you resemble your mother almost as much as your brother Ford resembles his father. You are only one door from home here, and I'll have your trunk taken right over to the house. Please, sit down a moment. Ah! my daughter Samantha, Miss Foster. Excuse me a moment, while I call one of the men."

By the time their mother was fairly out of the room, however, Keziah and Pamela were also in it, and Annie thought she had rarely seen three girls whose appearance testified so strongly to the healthiness of the place they lived in.

The flag-man's questions and Annie's answers were related quickly enough, and the cause of Michael's blunder was plain at once.

The parlor rang again with peals of laughter, for Dab Kinzer's sisters were ready at any time to look at the funny side of things, and their accidental guest saw no reason for not joining them.

"Your brother Ford is out on the bay, crabbing, with our Dabney," remarked Samantha, as the widow returned. But Annie's eyes had been furtively watching her baggage, through the window, and saw it swinging up on a pair of broad, red-shirted shoulders just then, and, before she could bring her mind to the crab question, Keziah exclaimed: "If there isn't Mrs. Foster coming through the farm gate!"

"My mother?" And Annie was up and out of the parlor in a twinkling, followed by all the ladies of the Kinzer family. It was really quite a procession.

Now, if Mrs. Foster was in the least degree surprised by her daughter's sudden appearance, or by her getting to the Kinzer house first instead of to her own, it was a curious fact that she did not say so by a word or a look.

Not a breath of it. But, for all the thoroughbred self-control of the city lady, Mrs. Kinzer knew perfectly well there was something odd and unexpected about it all. If Samantha had noticed this fact, there might have been some questions asked; but one of the widow's most rigid rules in life was to "mind her own business."

The girls, indeed, were quite jubilant over an occurrence which made them at once so well acquainted with their very attractive new neighbor; and they might have followed her even beyond the gate in the north fence if it had not been for their mother. All they were allowed to do was to go back to their own parlor and hold a "council of war," in which Annie Foster was discussed from her bonnet to her shoes.

Mrs. Foster had been abundantly affectionate in greeting her daughter; but when once they were alone in the wee sitting-room of the old Kinzer homestead, she put her arms around her, saying:

"Now, my darling, tell me what it all means."

"Why, mother, it was partly my mistake and partly the flag-man's and the driver's, and I'm sure Mrs. Kinzer was kind. She knew me, before I said a word, by my resemblance to you."

"Oh, I don't mean that! How is it you are here so soon? I thought you meant to make a long visit at your Uncle Hart's."

"I would but for those boys."

"Your cousins, Annie!"

"Cousins, mother! You never saw such young bears in all your life. They tormented me from morning till night."

"But, Annie, I hope you have not offended—"

"Offended, mother! Aunt Maria thinks they're perfect, and so does Uncle Joe. They'd let them pull the house down over their heads, you'd think."

"But, Annie, what did they do and what did you say?"

"Do! I couldn't tell you in all day; but when they poured ink over my cuffs and collars, I said I would come home. I had just one pair left white to wear home, and I traveled all night."

Poor Mrs. Foster! A cold shudder went over her at the idea of that ink among the spotless contents of her own collar-box.

"What boys they must be! But, Annie, what did they say?"

"Uncle Joe laughed till he cried, and Aunt Maria said boys will be boys, and I half believe they were sorry; but that was only a sort of a winding-up. I wouldn't stay there another hour."

Annie had other things to tell, and, long before she had finished her story, there was no further fault to be found with her for losing her temper. Still, her mother said, mildly:

"I must write to Maria at once, for it wont do to let those boys make trouble between us."

CHAPTER VIII.

Dab Kinzer and his friend were prompt enough in coming to the rescue of their unfortunate fellow-crabber; but to get him out of the queer wreck he had made of that punt was a tough task.

"I isn't drownin'," exclaimed Dick, heroically, as the other boat came up beside him. "Jest you take yer scoop-net an' save dem crabs."

"They wont drown," said Ford.

"But they'll get away," said Dab, snatching the scoop. "Dick's head is level on that point."

The side boards of the old punt were under water half the time, but the crabs were pretty well penned in. Even a couple of them that had mistaken Dick's wool for another sheep's-head were secured without difficulty.

"What luck he'd been having!" said Ford. "He always does," said Dab. "I say, Dick, how'll I scoop you in?"

"Has you done got all de crabs?"

"Every pinner of 'em."

"Den jest you wait a minute."

They were quite likely to wait, for the shining black face had instantly disappeared.

"Sunk!" exclaimed Ford.

"There he comes," replied Dab. "He'd swim ashore from here, and not half try. Why, I could swim twice as far as that, myself."

"Could you? I couldn't."

That was the first time Dab had heard his new acquaintance make a confession of inability, and he could see a more than usually thoughtful

expression on his face. The coolness and skill of Dick Lee had not been thrown away on him.

"If I had my clothes off," said Ford, "I'd try that on."

"Dab Kinzer, you's de best feller dar is. Wot'll we do wid de ole boat?" burst out Dick on coming to the surface.

"Let the tide carry her in while we're crabbing. She isn't worth mending, but we'll tow her home."

"All right," said Dick, as he grasped the gun-wale of Dab's boat and began to climb over.

"Hold on, Dick."

"I is a-holdin' on."

"I mean wait a bit. Aint you wet?"

"Ob course I's wet."

"Well, then, you stay in there till you get dry. It's well you didn't have your new clothes on."

"Aint I glad about dem!" emphatically exclaimed the young African. "Nebber mind dese clo'es. De water on 'em's all good, dry water, like de res' ob de bay."

And, so saying, Dick tumbled over in, with a spatter which made Ford Foster tread on two or three crabs in getting away from it. It was not the first time by many that Dick Lee had found himself bathing without time given him to undress.

And now it was discovered that the shipwrecked crabber had never for one instant loosened his hold of the line to the other end of which was fastened his precious sheep's-head.

It was a regular crabbing crew, two to pull up and one to scoop in, and never had the sprawling "game" been more plentiful on that crab pasture, or more apparently in a hurry to be captured.

"What on earth shall we do with them all?" asked Ford.

"Soon's we've got a mess for both our folks, we'll quit this and go for some fish," replied Dab. "The clams are good bait, and we can try some of your tackle."

Ford's face brightened a good deal at the suggestion, for he had more than once cast a crestfallen look at his pretentious box. But he replied:

"A mess! How many crabs can one man eat?"

"I don't know," said Dab. "It depends a good deal on who he is. Then, if he eats the shells, he can't take in so many."

"Eat de shells? Yah, yah, yah! Dat beats my mudder! She's allers a-sayin' wot a waste de shells make," laughed Dick. "I jest wish we might ketch some fish. I dasn't kerry home no crabs."

"It does look as if we'd got as many as we'd know what to do with," remarked Dab, as he looked down on the sprawling multitude in the bottom of the boat. "We'll turn the clams out of the basket and fill that; but we mustn't put any crabs in the fish-car. We'll stow 'em forward."

The basket held more than half a bushel, but there was a "heap" of what Ford Foster called "the crusties" to pen up in the bow of the boat.

That duty attended to, and Dick was set at the oars, while Dab selected from Ford's box just the very hooks and lines their owner had made least account of.

"What'll we catch, Dab?"

"Most anything. Nobody knows till he's done it. Perch, porgies, cunners, black-fish, weak-fish, may be a bass or a sheep's-head, but more cunners than anything else, except we strike some flounders at the turn of the tide."

"That's a big enough assortment to set up a fish-market on."

"If we catch 'em. We've got a good enough day, anyhow, and the tide'll be about right by the time we get to work."

"Why not try here?"

"'Cause there's no fish to speak of, and because the crabs'll clean your hook for you as fast as you can put the bait on. We must go out to deeper water and better bottom. Dick knows just where to go. You might hang your line out all day and not get a bite, if you didn't strike the right spot."

Ford made no answer, for it was beginning to dawn upon him that he could teach the "long-shore boys," black or white, very little about fishing. He even allowed Dab to pick out a line for him and put on the hook and sinker, and Dick Lee showed him how to fix his bait, "So de fust cunner dat rubs agin it wont knock it off. Dem's awful mean fish. Good for nuffin but steal bait."

A merry party they were, and the salt water was rapidly drying from the garments of the colored oarsman, as he pulled strongly and skillfully out into the bay and around toward a deep cove to the north of the inlet mouth.

Then, indeed, for the first time in his life, Ford Foster learned what it was to catch fish.

Not but what he had spent many an hour, and even day, in and about other waters: but he had never had two such born fishermen at his elbow to take him to the right place precisely, and then to show him what to do when he got there.

Fun enough, for the fish bit well, and some of them were of very encouraging size and weight.

Ford would have given half the hooks and lines in his box if he could have caught from Dick or Dab the curious "knack" they seemed to have of coaxing the biggest of the finny folks to their bait and then over into the boat.

"Never mind, Ford," said Dab; "Dick and I are better acquainted with 'em. They're always a little shy with strangers at first. They don't really mean to be impolite."

Still, it almost looked like some sort of favoritism, and there was no danger but that Dick would be able to appease the mind of his mother without making any mention of the crabs.

At last, almost suddenly, and as if by common consent, the fish stopped biting, and the two "'long-shore boys" began to put away their lines.

"Going to quit?" asked Ford.

"Time's up and tide's turned," responded Dab. "Not another bite, most likely, till late this evening. Might as well pull up and go home."

"Mus' look for wot's lef ob de ole scow on de way home," said Dick. "I'se boun' to ketch it for dat good-for-not'in' ole board."

"We'll find it and tow it in," said Dab, "and perhaps we can get it mended. Anyhow, you can go with us next week. We're going to make a cruise in Ham Morris's yacht. Will you go?"

"Will I go? Yoop!" almost yelled the excited boy. "Dat's jest de one t'ing I'd like to jine. Wont we hab fun! She's jest de bes' boat on dis hull bay. You aint foolin' me, is yer?"

He was strongly assured that his young white associates were in sober earnest about both their purpose and their promise, and, after that, he insisted on rowing all the distance home.

On the way, the old punt was taken in tow; but the tide had swept it so far inside the mouth of the inlet, that there was less trouble in pulling it the rest of the way. It was hardly worth the labor, but Dab knew what a tempest the loss of it might bring around the ears of poor Dick.

When they reached the landing and began to overhaul their very brilliant "catch," Dabney said:

"Now, Dick, take your string home, leave that basket of crabs at Mr. Foster's, then come back with the basket and carry the rest to our house. Ford and I'll see to the rest of the fish."

"I haven't caught half so many as you have, either of you," said Ford, as he saw with what even-handed justice the fish were divided, in three piles, as they were scooped out of the "fish-car."

"What of that?" replied Dabney. "We follow fisherman's rules down this way. Share and share alike, you know. All the luck is outside the boat, they say. Once the fish are landed, your luck's as good as mine."

"Do they always follow that rule?"

"The man that broke it wouldn't find company very easily, hereabouts, next time he wanted to go a-fishing. No, nor for anything else. Nobody'd boat with him."

"Well, if it's the regular thing," said Ford, hesitatingly. "But I'll tell who really caught 'em."

"Oh, some of yours are right good ones. Your string would look big enough, some days. Don't you imagine you can pull 'em in every time like we did this morning. Crabs nor fish, either."

"No, I s'pose not. Anyhow, I've learned some things."

"I guess likely. We'll go for some more next week. Now for a tug!"

The boat had already been made fast, and the two boys picked up their strings of fish, two for each, after Dick Lee had started for home, and heavy ones they were to carry under that hot sun.

"Come and show the whole lot to my mother," said Ford, "before you take yours into the house. I want her to see them all."

"All right," replied Dab. But he little dreamed of what was coming, for, when he and Ford marched proudly into the sitting-room with their finny prizes, Dabney found himself face to face with, not good, sweet-voiced

Mrs. Foster, but, as he thought, the most beautiful young lady he had ever seen.

Ford Foster shouted: "Annie! you here? Well, I never!"

But Dab Kinzer wished all those fish safely back again, swimming in the bay.

(*To be continued*.)

THE STORY OF PERSEUS.

(*Adapted from the German*.)

By Mary A. Robinson.

Many gods and goddesses were worshiped by the ancient Greeks and Romans, but, besides these, they also believed in *demigods*, so called because, according to tradition, their parentage was half divine and half human. These beings were generally distinguished for beauty, strength, valor or other noble qualities. The stories of their adventures told by ancient writers are as interesting as fairy-tales, and are so often represented in painting and sculpture, and mentioned in books, that it is well for every one to know something about them.

Perseus, one of these demigods, was the son of Jupiter, the highest of the gods, and of Danaë, a mortal woman. It had been prophesied to Danaë's father, Acrisius, king of Argos, that a grandson would take from him both his throne and life, and he therefore caused Danaë and her child to be shut up in a wooden box and thrown into the sea. The box was caught in the net of a fisherman of the isle of Seriphos, by whom its inmates were put safely on shore. The king of the island, whose name was Polydectus, afterward took Danaë under his special care, and brought up her son as if he had been his own.

When Perseus had grown to be a young man, the king urged him to go in search of adventures, and set him the task of bringing him the head of the terrible Gorgon named Medusa. Perseus asked the aid of the gods for this

expedition, which he felt obliged to make, and in answer to his prayers, Mercury and Minerva, the patrons of adventurers, led him to the abode of the Grææ, the woman-monsters, so called because they had been born with gray hair. Perseus, compelled them to show him where lived the nymphs who had in charge the Helmet of Hades, which rendered its wearer invisible. They introduced Perseus to the nymphs, who at once furnished him with the helmet, and gave him, besides, the winged shoes and the pouch, which he also needed for his task. Then came Mercury, and gave him the Harpe, or curved knife, while Minerva bestowed upon him her polished shield, and showed him how to use it in approaching the Gorgons, that he should not be turned into stone at the sight of them.

Perseus donned his shoes and helmet, and flew until he reached the abode of the Gorgons. These were three hideous daughters of Phorcus, and sisters of the Grææ. One only of them, Medusa, was mortal. Perseus found the monsters asleep. They were covered with dragon scales, and had writhing serpents instead of hair, and, besides these charms, they had huge tusks like those of a boar, brazen hands and golden wings. Whoever looked on them was immediately turned to stone, but Perseus knew this and gazed only on their reflection in his shield. Having thus discovered Medusa, without harm to himself, he cut off her head with his curved knife. Perseus dropped the head of Medusa into the pouch slung over his shoulder, and went quickly on his way. When Medusa's sisters awoke, they tried to pursue the young demigod, but the helmet hid him from their sight and they sought him in vain.

At length he alighted in the realm of King Atlas, who was of enormous stature and owned a grove of trees that bore golden fruit, and were guarded by a terrible dragon. In vain did the slayer of Medusa ask the king for food and shelter. Fearful of losing his golden treasure, Atlas refused the wanderer entertainment in his palace. Upon this Perseus became enraged, and taking the head of Medusa from his pouch, held it toward the huge king, who was suddenly turned to stone. His hair and beard changed to forests, his shoulders, hands and bones became rocks, and his head grew up into a lofty mountain-peak. Mount Atlas, in Africa, was believed by the ancients to be the mountain into which the giant was transformed.

Perseus then rose into the air again, continued his journey, and came to Ethiopia, where he beheld a maiden chained to a rock that jutted out into the sea. He was so enchanted with her loveliness that he almost forgot to poise himself in the air with his wings. At last, taking off his helmet so that he and his politeness might be perceived, he said: "Pray tell me, beauteous maiden, what is thy country, what thy name, and why thou art here in bonds?"

The weeping maiden blushed at sight of the handsome stranger, and replied:

"I am Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus, king of this country. My mother boasted to the nymphs, daughters of Nereus, that she was far more beautiful than they. This roused their anger, and they persuaded Neptune, their friend, to make the sea overflow our shores and send a monster to destroy us. Then an oracle proclaimed that we never should be rid of these evils until the queen's daughter should be given for the monster's prey. The people forced my parents to make the sacrifice, and I was chained to this rock."

As she ceased speaking the waves surged and boiled, and a fearful monster rose to the surface. The maiden shrieked in terror, just as her parents came hastening to her in hopeless anguish, for they could do nothing but weep and moan.

Then Perseus told them who he was, and boldly proposed to rescue the maiden if they would promise to give her to him as his wife.

The king and queen, eager to save Andromeda, at once agreed to this, and said they would give him not only their daughter, but also their own kingdom as her dowry.

Meanwhile, the monster had come within a stone's throw of the shore, so Perseus flew up into the air, put on his helmet, pounced down upon the creature, and killed it, after a fierce struggle. He then sprang ashore and loosed the bonds of Andromeda, who greeted him with words of thanks and looks of love. He restored her to the arms of her delighted parents, and entered their palace a happy bridegroom.

Soon the wedding festivities began, and there was general rejoicing. The banquet was not yet over, however, when a sudden tumult arose in the court of the palace. It was caused by Phineus, brother of Cepheus, who had been betrothed to his niece Andromeda, but had failed her in her hour of need. He now made his appearance with a host of followers and clamored for his bride.

But Cepheus arose and cried:

"Brother, art thou mad? Thou didst lose thy bride when she was given up to death before thy face. Why didst thou not then win back the prize? Leave her now to him who fought for her and saved her."

Phineus held his peace, but cast furious looks both at his brother and at Perseus, as if hesitating which to strike first. Finally, with all his might, he threw a spear at Perseus, but missed the mark. This was the signal for a general combat between the guests and servants of Cepheus and Phineus and his followers. The latter were the more numerous, and at last Perseus was quite surrounded by enemies. He fought valiantly, however, striking down his opponents one after another, until he saw that he could not hold out to the end against such odds. Then he made up his mind to use his last, but surest, means of defense, and crying, "Let those who are my friends turn away their faces," he drew forth the head of Medusa and held it toward his nearest adversary.

"Seek thou others," cried the warrior, "whom thou mayst frighten with thy miracles!"

But in the very act of lifting his spear he grew stiff and motionless as a statue. The same fate came upon all who followed, till at last Phineus repented of his unjust conduct. All about him he saw nothing but stone images in every conceivable posture. He called despairingly upon his friends and laid hands on those near him; but all were silent, cold and stony. Then fear and sorrow seized him, and his threats changed to prayers.

"Spare me—spare my life!" he cried to Perseus, "and bride and kingdom shall be thine!"

But Perseus was not to be moved to mercy, for his friends had been killed before his very face. So Phineus shared the doom of his followers and was turned to stone.

After these events Perseus and Andromeda were married, and together they journeyed to Seriphos, where they heard that the king had been ill-treating Danaë. When, therefore, the tyrant assembled his court to see how Perseus had done his task, the son avenged his mother's wrongs by petrifying the assemblage—king, courtiers and all! Then he gave back to the nymphs the helmet, shoes and pouch they had lent to him, returned the knife to Mercury, and presented Minerva with Medusa's head, which ever after she wore upon her shield.

With his mother and his wife Perseus then sought his timid grandfather Acrisius, and found him, not in his own realm of Argos, but at Larisa, the city of King Teutamias, looking on at some public games. Perseus must needs meddle in the exercises, and so managed to fulfill the old prophecy and accidentally slay his grandfather by an unlucky throw of the discus, a kind of flat quoit.

Perseus, who deeply mourned his grandfather's fate, soon exchanged the kingdom of Argos for Tiryns, and there founded the city of Mycenæ. He lived very happily with his wife, and ruled his kingdom long and wisely.

THE STORY LITTLE NELL READ.

Nell's mother had gone away for a long visit, and had left her little girl with grandma, who loved her so much and was so kind to her that Nell was very happy and very good,—except sometimes. Her naughty times were lesson-times. Grandma, who lived in the country, far away from schools, taught Nell herself; and Nell didn't like it.

That was queer, too, for she dearly loved stories—when grandma read them—and could lie down on the soft rug before the fire, and play with the kitty, and just listen. But when she had to sit up in a chair by the table, and read for herself,—out loud, so that grandma could be sure she got all the long words right,—she would look so cross that it made grandma sad to see her, and long for a way to cure her little girl's naughty temper.

She did find a way. One day, she came home from the store with a beautiful new book, all red and gold outside, and full of pictures within. "There!" she said to Nell, "you'll surely like to read that!" But Nell didn't think so, and, when grandma opened the book and asked her to read the middle story, she looked crosser than ever.

"Why, it's the story of 'A Naughty Girl!'" she said. "I don't believe I'll like that, grandma." But grandma said nothing; only looked as if she were listening very hard, and Nell read on:

"Once up-on a time, there was a naught-y lit-tle girl. She had been naught-y so long that two lit-tle frowns had grown quite fast to her eyebrows, and the cor-ners of her mouth turn-ed down so tight that she on-ly had room for a lit-tle bit of a smile, which did not come ver-y oft-en, be-cause it felt so crowd-ed; and, when she was ver-y an-gry, it just slip-ped a-way al-to-geth-er—"

"Stop there!" said grandma, in such a funny tone that Nell looked up to see what she meant. Grandma stood beside her, holding a little mirror so that Nell could not help seeing her own face in it.

She looked and looked, and her face grew as red as the cover of her book, and she wanted to cry, but at last she thought better of it, and, looking up shyly, said:

"Grandma, I know! I'd do for a picture to put to this girl's story! My face is just like that! But see now!"—and she opened her eyes very wide, and raised up her eyebrows so far that the two little frowns in them got frightened and tumbled off, and the wee smile that came to her lips found so much room that it stretched itself into a real good laugh, and grandma laughed too, and they were very merry all that day.

"THE FROWNS TUMBLED OFF."

Grandma's little mirror taught Nell a lesson, and now, when she feels the frowns coming back, she lifts her eyebrows almost up to her hair, and runs for her red book, and she and grandma both laugh to think how Nell was made into a picture to fit the naughty girl's story.

JACK IN THE PULPIT

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

Well, here's July come again, warm and bright and happy, and the children of the Red School-house are as busy as bees getting ready for the Fourth. I suppose you are, too, my dears. Have as good a time as you can, and help some other body to have a good time, too. But don't blow yourselves up, for that is not the proper way to rise in the world.

For my part, I don't quite see the use of burning so much gunpowder by way of celebrating the Fourth of July. From all I can make out, the mere making sure of that day burned up quite enough of it.

But then, I'm only a peaceable Jack-in-the-Pulpit, and, of course, I can't be expected to understand all these things.

Now, to work! But take it coolly and quietly, my dears. Don't treat business as though it were a lighted fire-cracker with a short fuse.

First comes a message from Deacon Green about

ARIOSTO'S FAIRY-STORY.

The Deacon says that, as preaching is warm work just now, he will do no more than give you a text, this time, and you can have a try at the sermon all by yourselves. Here is what he sends you as the text:

Ariosto, the Italian poet, tells a story of a fairy, whose fate obliged her to pass certain seasons in the form of a snake. If anybody injured her during those seasons, he never after shared in the rich blessings that were hers to give; but those who, in spite of her ugly looks, pitied and cared for her,

were crowned for the rest of their lives with good fortune, had all their wishes granted, and became truly blessed.

"Such a spirit," adds the Deacon, "is Liberty. And neither we nor our country can be kept safe without her. Since, too, Liberty cannot be kept safe without sincerity and manhood—"

There, my dears, this gives you a good start. Now go on with the sermon.

A CONGRESS OF BIRDS.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: I have something to tell you about some of your friends the birds, and perhaps your chicks can help answer the questions the anecdote raises.

One summer evening of 1846, at Catskill Village, vast numbers of whip-poor-wills and swallows began to gather from all directions about an hour before sunset, and in a few minutes the sky was dark with their wings. They assembled above a high hill, and over the cemetery which was on this hill they circled and wheeled and mixed together, calling and twittering in a state of great excitement. They were so many that, standing anywhere in the cemetery, which covered about forty acres, one might have knocked them down by hundreds with an ordinary fishing-rod.

The birds, though of such opposite natures, mingled in a friendly way, and seemed to be trying to settle some question of importance to both parties. Soon, the sun sank behind the mountains, and, while his last rays were fading, the birds went off in squads, as they had come, and all quickly disappeared.

Whence they came, whither they went, and why they assembled, are yet mysteries to, your friend,

Z.R.B.

MIDSUMMER NOON.

Here are some lines I heard a summer or two ago. It seems to me that John Clare—-the man who wrote them, I believe—must have made them when he was near my pulpit, for they tell just how things are here these sultry noons.

"The busy noise of man and brute
Is on a sudden hushed and mute;
Even the brook that leaps along
Seems weary of its merry song,
And, so soft its waters sleep,
Tired silence sinks in slumber deep.

"The taller grass upon the hill,
And spider's threads, are standing still;
The feathers, dropped from moor-hen's wing,
Which to the waters surface cling,
Are steadfast, and as heavy seem
As stones beneath them in the stream."

PIGS WITH SOLID HOOFS, AND PIGS THAT ARE NOT PIGS.

In Texas there are pigs whose hoofs are not divided like those of ordinary pigs, but are each in one solid piece; at least, so I'm informed in a paragram fresh from England.

If this is true, it is a strange thing; but here's something that seems even stranger still:

The Guinea-pig is not a pig, and there are no Guinea-pigs in Guinea. However, there are plenty in Guiana, and, as the names of these places are very much alike, perhaps people got mixed in calling them. The places are far enough apart, though, I believe; but this you can see by your maps.

At any rate, the Guinea-pig is a sort of cousin of the squirrel and rabbit, and is fond of potato and apple peelings, carrot-tops, parsley, and cabbage; but he likes best the leaves from the tea-pot.

JACK.

Well, well! How much the dictionary men have to answer for! Now, who, without them, ever would have thought that the name "Jack"—my name—is sometimes used in an offensive sense?

For instance, as I'm told, these fellows make out that "Jack Frost" means a mischievous boy; "Jack Towel" is a servants' towel; and a "Jack" is a machine to do the work of a common work-man, to lift heavy weights. Then there's a "Boot Jack," taking the place of a servant; a "Smoke Jack," another servant, to turn a spit; a "Jack-a-Napes," or saucy fellow; "Jack Tar," a common sailor; and "Jacket," a little Jack or coat.

Now, I'm half inclined to take this ill of the dictionary men. But perhaps I'm misinformed about them.

"TAKE THAT!"

This is not slang, my dears; not a bit of it. It is but the translation of an inscription on an ancient Egyptian ball, a leaden one, used as a kind of bullet and thrown from a sling. Sometimes the name of the slinger was put on the ball,—so that the wounded could tell whom to thank, perhaps.

The phrase "Take that!" has not entirely gone out of fashion, I believe; and yet the world ought to be old enough to know better, by this time.

ANTS AGAIN.

Talking about ants last month put me in mind of a scrap, written long ago by the Little Schoolma'am, and which one of my chicks sent to me. Here it is, with the picture that belongs to it:

"AND AWAY WENT THE PIECE OF BREAD!"

"Hurrah!" said an ant to her sister,
"I've found a nice piece of bread;
We may push and pull, to carry it home,
Where the little ants wait to be fed."

So one pulled till she fell over backward,
And the other pushed with her head,
When down came a thief of a sparrow,
And away went the piece of bread!

AIR THAT SINGS AND TALKS.

No doubt, my dears, you think that it is only men and phonographs and such things that talk and sing; so did I until lately. But I've just heard that there are some places in the world where the air itself sings and talks. This fact, I'm told, is as old as the hills and woods; and it is easy to prove, too. All you have to do is to go into the open air and blow a horn, or call aloud, or sing in a strong clear voice, among the hills, or by the edge of a wood, or even near a big empty barn.

Give this a good trial, my chicks, and let me know the result. Even if you don't succeed, there's no doubt the experiment will prove interesting, and you'll do no harm. Don't be afraid of disturbing the birds; they're friends of mine, as you know, and, if you tell them you are doing it for me, they will gladly put up with a little extra noise.

PLANTS WITH HAIR.

Some plants have hairs on their leaves, making them feel rough to the touch, as I've heard. This can be seen very plainly by looking at a common mallow-leaf through a microscope. And there is the mullein, too, with very stiff hairs.

Now, what are these hairs for? I have been wanting to know this for some time, and should be glad if some of you clever chicks would look into the matter, and tell me what you find out.

AN ODD HYMN.

Philadelphia, Pa.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: Will you please ask the Little Schoolma'am, Deacon Green, and all your young folks, if they know and can tell me where to find the rest of the verses that go with this one?

"The Choctaw and the Cherokee,
The Kickapoo and Kaw,
Likewise the Pottawatamie,—
O teach them all thy law!"

I think it is part of an old-fashioned missionary hymn. I once heard a boy repeat the whole of it, but this is the only verse I can remember.—Yours truly,

L.M.B.

ANCIENTS AND MODERNS, ONCE MORE.

F.'s question, in the May number, about when the Ancients left off and the Moderns began, has been answered by Charles J. Brandt, E.L.S., Stevie B. Franklin, H.J.W., "Amneris," S.B.A., Edward Liddon Patterson, A.R.C., C.C.F., and Bessie P.

They all say pretty much the same thing, which is, that Ancient history left off about the year A.D. 476, with the fall of the western Roman Empire; that then came the Middle or Dark Ages; and that the Moderns began about the year A.D. 1450, or a little while before the discovery of America. But,

of course, if you don't feel quite sure that these chicks have given correct answers, you'd do well to look farther into the matter.

THE INCOMPLETE TEXT.

MY DEAR JACK: The letter E is the one to be added to that church-wall text which you gave to your chicks in May. If this vowel is set in at the right places, the text will read:

"Persevere, ye perfect men;
Ever keep these precepts ten!"

This refers, of course, to the Ten Commandments that came through Moses. In a postscript you will find the names of the bright chicks who sent in the whole text in its complete form. Please give them my good wishes.—Yours sincerely,

SILAS GREEN.

P.S.—Fred S. Mead, Charles F. Fitts, Mary H. Bradley, Lou D. Denison, H.J.W., Arnold Guyot Cameron, "Nane," A.R.C., "Daisy," Nellie Emerson; Bessie and Charlie Wheeler; Marie Armstrong, Neils E. Hansen, Katie Burnett, Lucy V. McRill, O.K.H., Bessie Dorsey, S.C., Edward A. Page, Bessie P.; Gladys H. Wilkinson, of Manchester, England; and Lane MacGregor.

THE LETTER-BOX.

Boston, Mass., May 2, 1878.

DEAR SAINT NICHOLAS: Will you give me room to rectify a slip of the pen? My "Sing-away Bird," in your May number, is not a thrush, but a sparrow; and I ought to be ashamed of the mistake, for I knew he was a sparrow, and had already spoken of him, in a story in verse, published three or four years ago, as

"Only a sparrow with a snowy throat."

Not only that, I hear his music every year, when I go into the White Mountain region, and consider it one of the chief charms of the wild scenery there. He sang this particular song to me last autumn, on the banks of the Androscoggin at Berlin Falls.

I ask his pardon and yours for the blunder, and send the stanza as I have corrected it to make it tell the truth:

'Twas the white-throated sparrow, that sped a
light arrow
Of song from his musical quiver;
And the lingering spell slid through every dell
On the banks of the Runaway River.
"O sing! sing-away! sing-away!"
And the trill of the sweet singer had
The sound of a soul that is glad.

I hope there are plenty of the ST. NICHOLAS children who know our wild birds well enough to see for themselves that I must have meant the one commonly known as the "Peabody-bird," so styled because his song seems always to be calling some human estray of that name, who never comes.

But, indeed, I am afraid that none of us know our musical little friends of the fields and woods as well as we should and might know them, if we studied into the matter,—Truly yours,

LUCY LARCOM.

The story of Perseus, in this number, has been set in a frame of stars by the old astronomers. In Professor Proctor's sky-map in ST. NICHOLAS for January, 1877, you will find the constellation.

New York.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I find in Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" that he speaks of a "voyage to the country of the Houyhnhnms." Here are six consonants all in a row, and I would like to know if such a word can be correctly pronounced.

If it is pronounced "hoy-nims," and I doubt the possibility of pronouncing it any other way, is there any need of so many consonants?—Yours truly,

CHARLES A. REED.

The word "Houyhnhnms" is the name given by Dean Swift to an imaginary race of horses endowed with reason. It is in two syllables, hou-yhnhnms, and may be pronounced "hoo-inmz," with the accent on either syllable, but the voice ought to be quavered in sounding the "n." It is likely that Swift spelled the word so as to get a set of sounds as nearly as possible like the gentle whinny of a horse when pleased.

Aintab, Northern Syria.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I saw a little piece in your magazine, in the department of "Jack-in-the-Pulpit," entitled "Persian Stoves," and I thought you would like to know that the native people in Turkey, right here, do just the same; and, to tell the truth, it is very comfortable sometimes. They call it tandoor. I have a brother in Constantinople studying, also a younger brother, and a dear little sister named Isabelle, here. We have taken your magazine ever since it started, and I think I at least shall never tire of it. Love to Jack and the Little Schoolma'am, Deacon Green, and all our old friends.—Your loving friend and reader,

Elizabeth M. Trowbridge.

Portsmouth, N.H.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am sure you will like to hear how a cat adopted a mouse, so here is the whole story for you.

A mother cat, named Tabby, had all her kittens taken away except one, and she loved and petted this one little kitten as much as one little

kitten could be loved and petted. But she had a heart so full of love that she could not possibly use it all up on one kitten; so, one day, she brought home the cunningest little mouse I ever saw. That little mouse, when she found herself in the cat's mouth, must have thought there was not much more fun for her, but that Mrs. Cat was taking her home to make a luncheon upon her. But Tabby carried her very carefully, so as not to rumple her smooth coat of fur nor break any of her tiny bones. When Tabby reached home, she dropped the mouse into the warm nest where lay her kitten, and immediately began to wash off the dust of travel, just as she daily bathed Kitty. Mousey liked this so well that she remained very quiet and quickly dropped asleep.

Tabby's mistress soon became interested in the happy family, and supplied bits of cheese and other things that mice like to eat. Now and then she saw this mouse perched on the back of the sleepy little kitten, and nibbling a bit of cheese held between her two front paws. Old Tabby would raise her head from her nap, to see what the little one was doing, and the Mousey would hide her lunch in one cheek, and look so innocent that Tabby would go to sleep again. Then Mousey would out with her cheese and go on nibbling. Thus, cat, kitten and mouse lived happily together until, one unfortunate day, Tabby had company; and before she could introduce the company to her family, the company had introduced the pet mouse to itself, and had swallowed her at one mouthful. Tabby tried hard to act as if her company were welcome, but she wore a very sad look during the whole visit. This is a true story.—Yours sincerely,

A.J.B.

"THE ST. NICHOLAS CLUB, of Philadelphia," a company of young puzzlers, have sent us four clever metrical answers to Mr. Cranch's poetical charades published in the April number. We are sorry that we have not room to print all these answers, but here are two of them:

First Charade.

When swiftly in the *car* you glide,
With friend or lover by your side,
All fear or danger you deride.

But should the car be overset,
You surely will be in a *pet,*
Although no ill betide.

When safely in your home you rest,
With foot upon the *carpet* pressed,
You heed no gloom outside.

Third Charade.

A man named Nicholas, with heavy *pick*.
On bar of steel scarce made a dent or *nick,*
"Pick, Nick!" a passing jester cried, in pleasant part.
"I wish it were *picnic*," said he, "with all my heart."

All the illustrations to the article called "Easter in Germany," printed in the April number, were credited in the table of contents to Mr. J.F. Runge. But the pictures entitled "An Easter Fancy," "An Easter Carriage," and "An Easter Load," were drawn by Miss Fanny E. Corne, the author of the article, and should have been credited to her.

A correspondent, H.F.G., sends us the following novel and audacious comparisons of words:

Comparisons of Words.

(P. stands for Positive; C., Comparative; S., Superlative.)

P.	A part of the foot	Sole
C.	Pertaining to the sun	Solar
S.	Comforted	Solaced
P.	A river in Scotland	Dee
C.	An animal	Deer
S.	One who does not believe in inspiration	Deist
P.	A negative	No
C.	A Bible worthy	Noah
S.	Dost know	Knowest
P.	To divide	Halve
C.	A port of France	Havre
S.	The time of gathering grain and fruit	Harvest
P.	A grain	Corn
C.	An angle	Corner
S.	With an upper molding	Cornised
P.	A personal pronoun	Ye
C.	A division of time	Year
S.	Is used in making bread	Yeast

P. A knot	Bow
C. A tedious person	Bore
S. To make great pretensions	Boast
P. A personal pronoun	You
C. A pitcher	Ewer
S. Accustomed	Used
P. A line of things	Row
C. A loud, deep voice or sound	Roar
S. To cook	Roast
P. To move with a lever.	Pry
C. Previous	Prior
S. Appraised	Priced
P. A secret agent	Spy
C. A steeple	Spire
S. Seasoned	Spiced
P. A body of water	Sea
C. A prophet	Seer
S. At an end	Ceased
P. A song	Lay
C. A stratum	Layer
S. Fastened with a cord	Laced
P. A meadow	Lea
C. One of Shakspeare's royal characters	Lear
S. Rented	Leased

P. An insect	Flea
C. To mock	Fleer
S. Sheared	Fleeced
P. A path	Way
C. One who weighs	Weigher
S. Desolate	Waste
P. A very common abbreviation	Co
C. The center	Core
S. Border of the sea	Coast
P. A part of the body	Neck
C. A river of South-west Germany	Neckar
S. Nearest	Next
P. A river in Italy	Po
C. To examine steadily and earnestly	Pore
S. A pillar	Post
P. A vowel	E
C. A spike of corn	Ear
S. A point of compass	East
P. A tool	Hoe
C. Whitish	Hoar
S. An army	Host
P. A personal pronoun	I
C. Anger	Ire
S. Cooled with ice	Iced

P.	Compensation	Fee
C.	Terror	Fear
S.	An entertainment	Feast

P.	To clothe	Indue
C.	To suffer	Endure
S.	Persuaded	Induced

Brattleborough, Vt.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have been trying to start a fresh-water aquarium which shall be self-supporting. I have failed, so far, because I have been unable to procure the proper oxygen-producing plants.

The little brook-plants I have tried do not answer the purpose. Can you tell me where I can find the following plants, or their seeds: *Vallisneria spiralis* (or tape-grass), *Callitriche verna* (or water-starwort), and *Anacharis alsinastrum* (or water-thyme)?—Yours truly,

E.M.P.

In general terms, the first and third plants named by E.M.P. are to be sought for in very quiet streams, or in ponds; but, as they are quite submerged, they may escape attention. *Callitriche* is to be found floating on the surfaces of small ponds or pools. But perhaps E.M.P. is a little too far north for Vallisneria. Anacharis is in Canada, and should, by rights, be in Vermont.

However, E.M.P. need not be restricted to these. In quiet fresh-water streams, and especially in ponds, there are *Myriophyllums* (or water-

milfoil), *Ceratophyllums* (or hornwort), the aquatic *Ranunculuses*, and the *Utricularias* (or bladderworts), all of which naturally grow submerged and are quite as good for producing oxygen as those named by E.M.P. Water-cresses will do to get along with until the other plants can be found.

DEAR ST. NICKOLAS: Daisie and me thought we would rite you a letter, and tell you that we did the ansers to some of your puzzles in the May number. We did them most all our own self. We are twin-sisters, and we are both just as old as each other. We go to skool every day. So good by.—From youre little frends,

DOTTIE AND DAISIE.

P.S.—We both send our love to your little girls and boys.

New York.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I thought you might like to know how to press flowers. The first thing to do, after you have gathered them, is to lay them smoothly between tissue-paper; then you must have felt drying-paper to put each side of the tissue-paper. The felt must be changed every day. The tissue-paper must not be changed at all, only the felt. Then you must have two pieces of smooth board, to put the papers between, and a box full of stones for a presser. We used a common soap-box, and put in stones to the weight of about thirty-five pounds. The handles were made of rope. I have found this a splendid way to press flowers, as it absorbs the moisture from the flower and does not leave it at all brittle.

Will you publish this, so that all the little girls who take ST. NICHOLAS may have the opportunity of pressing flowers?—and I hope they may enjoy it as much as I did.—Your little friend,

ROSIE S. PALMER.

We have received letters in answer to Frank R.M.'s question about an English painter, printed in the May "Letter-Box," from Carrie Johnson, M.S. Bagley, Alice Lanigan, Lillie M. Sutphen. Seth K. Humphrey, Hannah I. Powell, Frank R. Bowman, James Hardy Ropes, Grant Beebe, Isabelle Roorbach, and H.A.M.

Some say the name of the painter is Sir Joshua Reynolds; others say it is John Opie, who, also, was a great painter; and one or two think that while Frank R.M.'s anecdote about the reply "With brains, sir!" belongs to Opie, all the rest of the description concerns Reynolds only. And this last seems to be the fact.

John Opie was born at St. Agnes, near Truro, in the county of Cornwall, England, in the year 1761; and died in the city of London, April 9th, 1807.

Several of our young correspondents seem to have taken to writing poetry of late. The two following letters and poems—printed just as they came to us—will serve as samples of those received:

Winchester, Tenn.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS, Seeing so many writing to you of my age I thought I would send you a letter. I am ten years old, and am advanced

for my age. I like to read you very much, &c.—Your constant reader

ALBERT MARKS.

P.S.—Please publish this poetry, which I wrote.

1. I looked o'er the
   Place where Xerxes
   Massed his millions
   Before the grecian army,

2. I looked where Xerxes
   Massed his hundred of ships
   Before the small grecian
   Navy. I looked o'er the place

3. Where Xerxes reared a mighty
   Throne. I looked where ambitious
   Caesar fell benea the assassin's dagger.
   I looked where brave Leonidas braved
   The millions of Xerxes.

4. I looked where Vesuvius laid
   Pompeii under ashes and Lava. I looked
   Where Marco Bozzaris bled for the
   liberty of Greece.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS I have taken an idea lately, of writing poetry, and indeed, when I find myself at a loss to know what to do, I take out my little blank book and begin some little verses, some pretty good

and others to my dissapointment, the opposite. I first write my poem on paper and if thought good, put it in my book. The following is a little piece on

SPRING.

Oh, look! The grass is getting green
The buds begin to sprout
The blossoms on the oak-tree
Are beginning to come out

But hark! Who is that singing?
It is the robin gay
He has come back to greet us
Upon this happy day

But when we see the streamlet
Released from ice and snow
And down its pebbly routine
In music sweet and low,

And when at last the may flowers
Their sunny faces bring
It makes us feel so happy
And reminds us it is spring

R.S.F.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

From the American Tract Society:

Yusuf in Egypt: and his Friends. By Sara Keables Hunt. Eight full-page illustrations. Yusuf is a boy donkey-driver of Cairo, in Egypt. In telling the story of this brave little fellow's ups and downs in the world, the author describes many interesting scenes and incidents of modern Egyptian life, and conveys in an attractive way much information about the country and its people, customs, ancient temples and history.

Nan's Thanksgiving. By Hope Ledyard. Large type; illustrated. A bright and sweet little story of a girl's unselfishness.

Satisfied. By Catharine M. Trowbridge. Illustrated. Aunt Lou's Scrap-Book. By Harriet B. McKeever. Large type; illustrated. Angel's Christmas. By Mrs. O.F. Walton. Illustrated.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

DIAMOND REMAINDERS.

Behead and curtail, in the order given, words having the following significations: 1, Arid; 2, to run away; 3, cattle-drivers; 4, to consume; 5, to endeavor,—and leave a complete diamond reading horizontally as follows: 1, A consonant; 2, to cut off; 3, a wanderer; 4, an instrument for writing; 5, a consonant.

CYRIL DEANE.

A CONCEALED BILL-OF-FARE.

In each of the following sentences, fill the blank with a word to be found concealed in its sentence:

1. Let each guest have some ——. 2. Eating some —— will be effectual in satisfying hunger. 3. Nothing but terrible starvation could make one eat such ——! 4. Ah! a morsel of —— will taste good. 5. Give me, I beg, good brown bread and a well-cooked ——. 6. Don't take cold ham; eat some of this freshly cooked, hot ——. 7. Stop! I entreat you! Don't give the child any more ——. 8. What if I should eat more ——? 9. He has had quite enough ——. 10. Let me whisper to you. There sits a lady who, it seems to me, is very fond of ——. 11. You will take, I hope, a spoonful of ——? 12. She has helped me twice to ——.

O'B.

SQUARE-WORD.

1. An article used every day as human food. 2. A current report, generally unauthorized. 3. A mineral much used in polishing metals. 4. Part of the most important organ of the human body. 5. A mythical being, supposed by the ancient Greeks to inhabit lonely woods.

B.

ANAGRAM DOUBLE-DIAMOND AND INCLOSED DOUBLE WORD-SQUARE.

From the sentence "Mad at pert hens," form a double-diamond of which the center shall be a double word-square.

The diamond must read, across: 1. In profitable. 2. A covering for the head. 3. Paired. 4. An implement used in writing. 5. In profitless.

The word-square must read, downward: 1. A casual event. 2. Partook of food. 3. A spelled number.

C.D.

EASY "ANNIVERSARY" PUZZLES.

(Three Anniversaries.)

1.

2.

3.

These three pictures represent three annual anniversaries, the names of which are to be found. The character of each anniversary is appropriately symbolized in its picture.

CHARL.

GEOGRAPHICAL SINGLE ACROSTIC.

The initials will give one of England's principal sea-ports.

1. A river of Ireland. 2. A river in Farther India. 3. A river in France. 4. The largest river in Western Asia. 5. A river in France. 6. A river in Italy. 7. A river in Prussia. 8. A river in North America. 9. A river in Siberia.

S.

EASY HIDDEN LATIN PROVERB.

Find in the following sentence a Latin proverb in common use:

The sachem seized a garment on which was embroidered his totem, pushed the Italian, Orfugi, to the ground, and precipitately fled.

S.T.

DROP-LETTER PUZZLE.

M-K-H-Y-H-L-T-E-U-S-I-E-.

Every other letter is omitted; the answer is a well-known proverb.

J.M. and E.M.

EASY BEHEADINGS.

1. Behead an indication of sleepiness, and leave an artificial shade. 2. Behead another indication of sleepiness, and leave an animal. 3. Behead need, and leave an insect. 4. Behead an article used in packing crockery, and leave a reckoning. 5. Behead an awkward bow, and leave a kind of cloth. 6. Behead a locality, and leave network. 7. Behead to loiter, and leave a dolt. 8. Behead sudden blows, and leave parts of a horse. 9. Behead to turn, and leave a peg. 10. Behead a stain, and leave a piece of land. 11. Behead a bough, and leave a farm in California. 12. Behead loose, and leave want.

M.G.A.

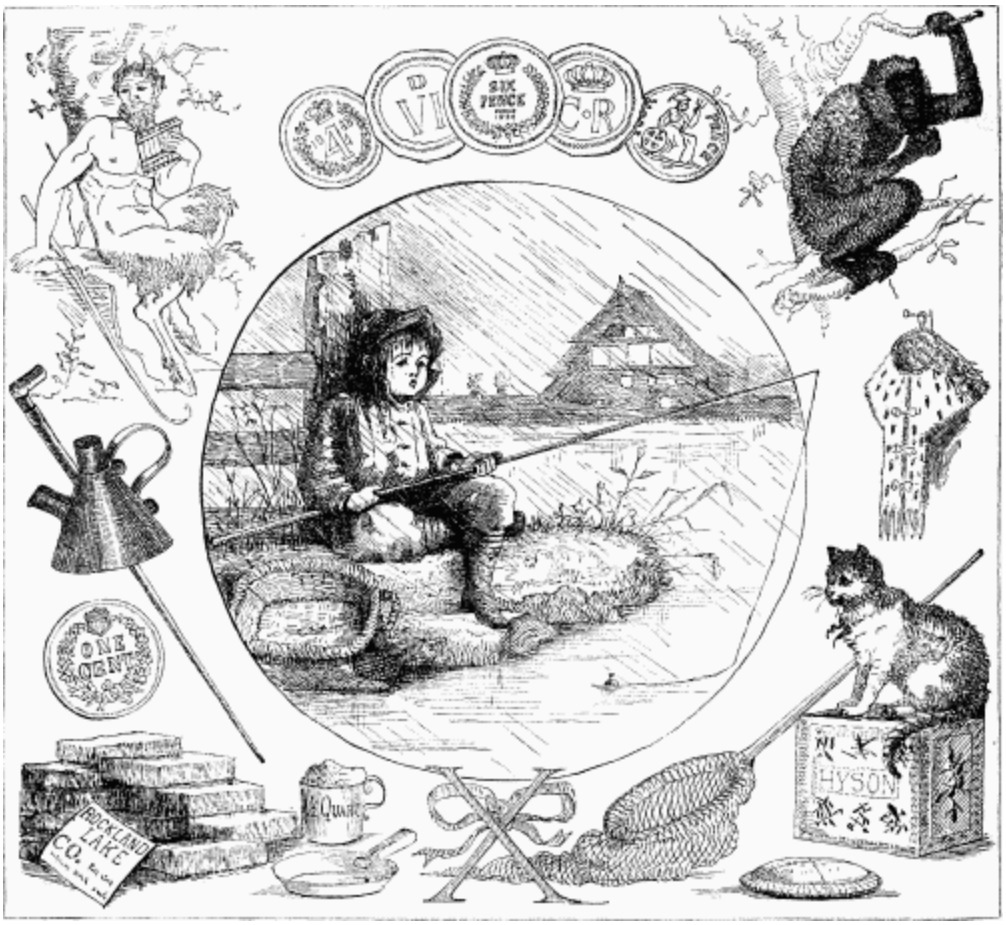
SHAKSPEAREAN ENIGMA.

My first is in Proteus, also in Thurio;
My second in Thurio, also in Proteus;
My third's in Alonso, also in Sebastian;
My fourth in Sebastian, also in Alonso;
My fifth is in Oliver, also in Sylvius;
My sixth in Sylvius, also in Oliver;

My seventh is in Ferdinand, also in Dumain;
My eighth in Dumain, also in Ferdinand;
My whole is in Shakspeare's "As You Like It."

E.D.A.

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.



From the eight letters of the word which describes the central picture, spell words which name the sixteen objects shown in the border pictures.

R.

NUMERICAL PUZZLE.

After I had read 1 2 3 4 5 ' 6 7 8 9 10 12 11 13, I was convinced that she was thoroughly conversant with the 1 2 3 4 5 6-7 8 9 10 12 11 13, as she is fond of styling polite literature.

C.D.

CHARADE.

Beneath his lady's window, erst,
In hopeless mood,
A minstrel stood.
As, passionate, he smote my first,
From his sad lips my second passed,
And from my first rang out my last.

A sudden joy possessed his soul.
As down the night air sweetly stole
A strain responsive from my whole.

L.W.H.

SYNCOPATIONS.

1. Syncopate a square column, and leave an adhesive salve; syncopate the salve, and leave a person found in a bindery; syncopate again, and leave a prayer. 2. A ladies' apartment in a seraglio, and leave injury; again, and leave a meat. 3. A rough fastening, and leave to strike together; again, and leave to cover the top.

L.E.

ACROSTIC.

The initials and finals name a fragrant flower. 1. A domestic animal. 2. A summer luxury. 3. A troublesome insect. 4. A kind of fruit. 5. A short poem.

ISOLA.

DOUBLE, REVERSED ACROSTIC.

A little verb used every day,
Whose letters spell the same each way;
My next, which means to lengthen out,
Spells just the same if turned about;
At close of day you'll find my third,—
Reversed, you have the self-same word;
My fourth, implying "held supreme,"
The same each way, though strange it seem.
An act, these four initials name,
Backward or forward spelled the same.

J.F.B.

ENIGMA.

This enigma is composed of twenty-one letters, and is the name of one who is dear to thousands of little folks.

1. The 4 6 2 9 10 12 is a mountain in California. 2. The 5 1 8 13 is part of your face. 3. The 7 17 3 19 are parts of harness. 4. The 18 20 16 is a color. 5. The 15 14 21 is a girl's nickname.

C.D.

EASY ENIGMA.

My 6 5 4 is wrong-doing. My 3 2 1 is an article of female dress sometimes worn over the hair. My whole is a lively ball-game, not now so popular as formerly.

H.H.D.

BIOGRAPHICAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The initials and finals name a noted American. 1. A naval officer of high rank. 2. Brigands. 3. A singing-bird of America. 4. Part of a circle. 5. A brave man. 6. A blacksmith's implement. 7. A small wild animal somewhat like a weasel.

L.A.

HOUR-GLASS PUZZLE.

1. To perceive. 2. King of Persia. 3. A boy's nickname. 4. A consonant. 5. An enemy. 6. Aches. 7. Subjects to a feudal lord. Centrals, read downward, an Alpine animal.

A.C. CRETT.

REVERSALS.

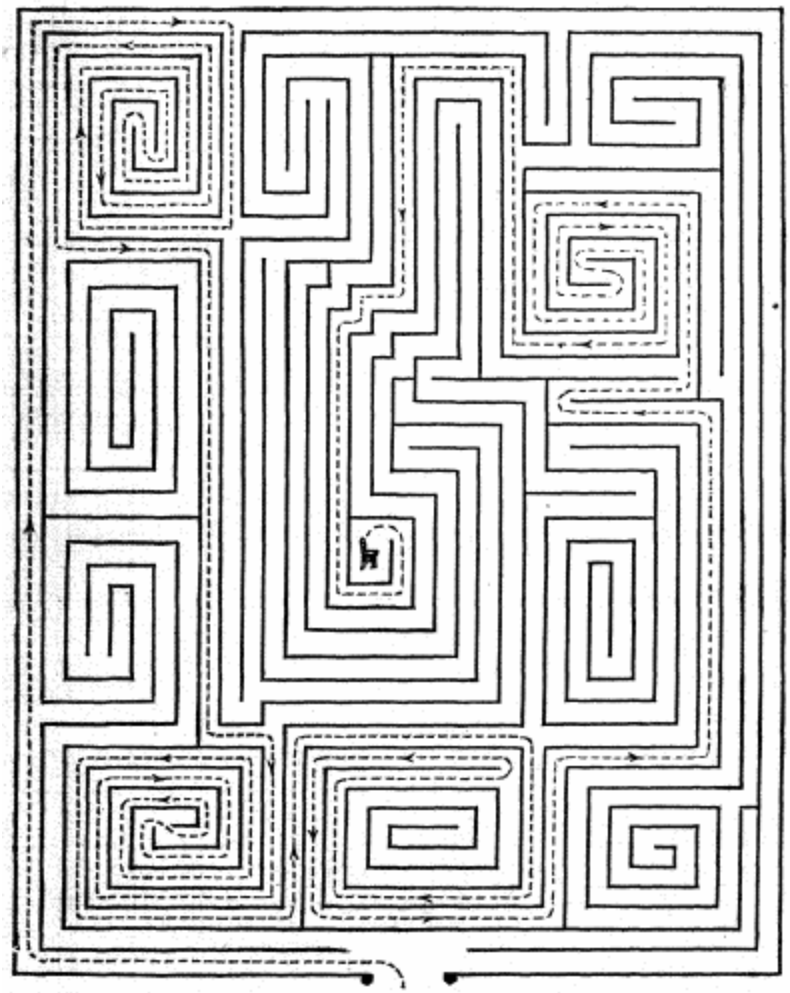
1. Reverse current, and give a wild animal. 2. Reverse part of a bridge, and give part of a city. 3. Reverse a swallow, and give a stopple. 4. Reverse to praise, and give consisting of two. 5. Reverse an oblique view, and give a lively dance.

ISOLA.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN JUNE NUMBER.

EASY BEHEADINGS.—Heart, tear, ear, a.

LABYRINTH.—The dotted line and arrows show the route to the center:



ACCIDENTAL HIDINGS.—Metrical Compositions: Pean (ho*pe an*d); glee (ea*gle e*ye); ode (go*od e*nough). Portions of Time: Hour (t*hou r*ove); eon (June *on*e); era (tow*er a*nd).

ANAGRAMS.—1. Rhapsody. 2. Numerical. 3. Depredation. 4. Exonerates. 5. Deranging.

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.—An ox. Turn the picture so that the right-hand edge becomes the bottom.

MELANGE.—1. Clover, lover. 2. Clover, clove. 3. Clover, cover. 4. Clove, love. 5. Lover, lore. 6. Cover, over. 7. Cover, core. 8. Over, rove. 9. Rove,

roe.

Easy Classical Acrostic.—Demosthenes.

Enigma.—"A stitch in time saves nine."

Easy Diamond Puzzle.—

```
    A
  E L F
A L T E R
  F E W
    R
```

Charade.—Catacomb; cat, a, comb.

Numerical Puzzle.—Levi Nathan; leviathan.

Four-Letter Square-Word.—

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K I N G
I D O L
N O T E
G L E E
```

Easy Cross-Word Enigma.—Ohio.

Metagram.—1. Batter. 2. Fatter. 3. Latter. 4. Matter. 5. Patter. 6. Tatter. 7. Ratter.

Easy Acrostic.—Constantinople.

Blank Word Syncopations.—1. Staging—tag, sing. 2. Sporting—port, sing. 3. Roulette—let, route.

Charade.—Woman; wo, man.

Transpositions of Proper Names—1. Pensacola, clean soap. 2. Taxes, Texas. 3. Carolina, an oil-car. 4. Colorado, cool road, 5. Washington; saw

nothing, thin wagons, 6. Load fir, Florida. 7. New York, worn key. 8. Baltimore, broil meat. 9. Daniel; nailed, denial. 10. Catherine, in the acre.

SQUARE-WORD.—

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L I M E S
I D E A L
M E R G E
E A G L E
S L E E P
```

ADDITIONS.—1. Imp, ale; impale. 2. Bulls, eye; bull's-eye. 3. Nan, keen; Nankin. 4. P, age; page. 5. Den, Mark; Denmark. 6. Asp, ire; aspire.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE MAY NUMBER were received, before May 18, from "Pansy," Ben Merrill, Arnold Guyot Cameron; May and Charlie Pray; Bessie Hard, Harry H. Wolbert, "Bessie and her Cousin," Nessie E. Stevens, Allie Bertram, Nettie A. Ives, L.E.B., Alice Lanigan, M.E. Bagley, Katie Burnett, Bessie Dorsey, "Hard and Tough," E.L.S., Stella N. Stone, Clara S. Gardiner, "Winnie;" X.Y.Z., and Bob White; Arthur Stowe, R.T. French, Lizzie Folsom, Lizzie C. Lawrence, Bessie Taylor, Laura Randolph; John D. Cress, M.R. Cress, and W.S. Eichelberger; Carrie J. Willcox; Frank and Ralph Bowman; Nellie Emerson, "Black Prince," Neils E. Hansen; Bessie and Charlie Wheeler; "Daisy," S.V. Gilbert, Rufus B. Clark, W.H. McGee, Eva Doeblin, Edith Louise Jones, Harold S. MacKaye; Alice B. MacNary and Mary C. Taylor; Florence L. Turrill, "Dottie and Daisie," Nellie C. Graham, S. Norris Knapp, Carrie L. Bigelow, George C. Harris, Jr., Eddie F. Worcester, Charles H. Stout, Frank H. Nichols, Susie Hermance, "Birdie and Allie;" Allen Bigelow Hathaway and Harold Gray Hathaway; Anna E. Matthewson, H.B. Ayers, Austin D. Mabie, "Kaween," Lewis G. Davis, "Beech-Nut," E.M. Fergusson, Julie Baker, Mary H. Bradley, Alfred C. Beebe, Charles N. Cogswell; C.M. Hunter and Frances Hunter; "Prebo and Prebo's Uncle," "Cosy Club," Georgine C. Schnitzspahn; V. and G.S.; Floy and Lillie Brown; Austin M. Poote, Georgie B., Eddie Vultee, Bessie L. Barnes, Louisa K. Riedel; and Gladys H. Wilkinson, of Manchester, England.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ST. NICHOLAS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS, VOL. 5, JULY 1878, NO. 9 ***

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