

# ST. NICHOLAS.

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## JACK'S INDEPENDENCE DAY.

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE

"MOTHER! say, mother! can I go home with Hi next week, and spend Independence Day?"

"Oh, Jack! can you be a bit more gentle?" sighed the pale lady on the sofa.

"Darlingest mammy, I did n't mean to roar, but you see I forget so!"

Mrs. Blake laughed; who could help it? There he stood in the door, fresh as an apple, his curly hair tumbled about his head, his eyes shining, his mouth open, as eager and as honest as—a boy! Jack truly did not mean to "roar," as he called it; he loved his mother dearly, but he was well and strong, and a boy, bless him! He ought to have been barreled up, but then it would have gone hard with the barrel. He began again on a little lower key.

"You see, mother, Hi always goes home Fourth of Julys, you know, and last year—well——"

Here Jack hung his head. We won't tell tales; but this must be acknowledged, that Hiram did lose his holiday last year, all on Jack's account.

"I know," said Mrs. Blake, smiling; "but I can trust you, dear; you may go next week, if you like."

"Oh! bully for you, mother! You are the——"

"Jack! Jack!"

Mrs. Blake looked quite aghast; if there was a little glitter in her blue eyes, Jack did not see it.

"Thunder! there,—I've done it again! Fifteen cents, as sure as you live! Mother, how can a feller help a little slang once in a while?"

"He must help it, Jack, if he is my boy, when he speaks to a lady."

"But I did n't!"

"Is n't your mother a lady?"

"No, sir-ree! she's a born angel."

"Oh, Jack!" This time she could not help it,—she must laugh.

"But all the same,—I don't approve, sir! You're not in the right, because you are absurd."

"Mother, dear, let us change the subject, as grandpa says when father and the minister begin to talk politics. You see, if I go to Beartown, we must start Monday afternoon. I want to be at Tinker's all day long."

"Send Hiram in to me, Jack, and I will talk it over with him."

Jack threw up his cap in the air, banged the door behind him, and presently was heard out of doors shouting for Hiram at the top of his voice. Mrs. Blake laid her aching head down on the pillow, and wished, as she did every day, and many times a day, that her husband could live at home, and manage Jack; he was getting to be too much for her. Not that he was disobedient, or bad; but he was, like a great many of his kind, noisy, heedless, and running wild. The feeble little lady did not know any day what he would do before night; she was always ready to see him brought in with a broken leg or arm, though he never had been yet; every winter she expected him to skate into an air-hole; every summer to capsize his boat on the pond, and be drowned; yet here he was, "high and dry," to use his own phrase. His mother did not know boys,—she had not the least idea how often they can be just not killed or wounded,—how many dreadful and delightful scrapes they live through; how much they learn



out of danger, or how sure they are to be good for nothing when they stay at home and are coddled.

"Turn him out, Mary!" papa always said; "let him do all the good-natured mischief he wants to; he must learn to risk his bones, and run his chances; he must be a man, not a doll-baby. If he tells lies, or disobeys, or is cruel, I'll thrash him when I come home; but I don't think I'll have to: he is our boy;" and there was no more to be said. So he was to go to Beartown with the "hired man," as Hiram Tinker called himself; and here stood Hiram at the door, speaking for himself.

"Jack said you wanted me, Mrs. Blake."

"Yes, Hiram; he says you want to take him home with you on Monday."

"Well, I had sort o' lotted on it. I said last year I guessed I'd better look out for him come next Fourth; and seein' the boss aint comin' hum this time, I calc'lated you'd feel safer ef he was off up on Saltash Mountain, out o' the way of crackers 'nd cannon, 'nd sech —"

"So I should, Hiram; but you want Delia to go too, and you must find a man to stay here and do the work."

"Oh, that's all reg'lated. Uncle Israel, he's a-comin'; he can do chores pretty spry fur a spell, and he can do sleepin' first-rate; and Nancy Pratt, she'll come to keep Roselle company."

"I depend on you to bring him home safe and sound, Hiram."

"Land o' liberty! yes; he can't drownd, fur there aint no pond. I dunno what he can do; I bet he'll find somethin'; I never see his beat for a boy; but I'll keep my eyes skinned, I tell ye; he'll have to be everlastin' 'cute if he gets round me."

Monday came at last,—hot, bright, and odorous as June could be, if it were nominally July. Delia had packed a basket of provisions big enough to last a week; but Mrs. Blake knew Jack's appetite, and meant, besides, to send something to the old people on the mountain, for they were poor enough; their children, scattered here and there, helped them, to be sure, and old Tinker was a charcoal-burner, but he was not able to work as he used to, and the money Hiram and Delia and the rest sent him he saved up as carefully as he could for the fast-coming time when he could not work at all. Jack had put up fish-lines, hatchet, hooks, at least a pint of worms, and fifty or more grasshoppers for bait,—the grasshoppers making much kicking and tinkling in their tin box; two jack-knives, a tin trumpet, and a pound of mixed candy, all in his fishing-basket, and now stood by eying with delight the cold chickens, the tongue, gingerbread,

cookies, biscuit, jam, and loaf of frosted cake that were wedged into the basket; and the tin pail holding lemons, and a package of tea, with another of white sugar.

Delia had picked the biggest bunch of flowers she could carry, for on Saltash Mountain the small clearing about her father's house was used for beans and potatoes; there was no room to spare for flowers, and her mother loved them dearly. All this provender being stowed in the bottom of the wagon, Jack hugged his mother for good-bye, and mounted to the front seat with Hiram, and off they went; Delia and a mysterious big bundle on the back seat, and Jack's bait tinkling and bouncing under his own feet. At the foot of the mountain they stopped at Uncle Sam Tinker's house to water the horse, and Delia stepped in for a few minutes, coming back with a basket of russet apples that no cellar but Uncle Sam's could have kept over till July, and a pail of cream for her mother; there was a cow up on the mountain,—a little black Irish cow,—but her pasture was so scant she gave but a small measure of milk, and cream was not to be thought of except for butter.

Now they started off again. The road wound up the steep mountain-side through deep, dark woods full of cool and sweetness, and a brook, swollen by recent rains, foamed down over the rocks. How Jack wanted to stop and watch the little waterfall! But night was coming on and they must hurry. By and by they turned into a rough logging road, and after a mile or two came to a clearing almost at the top of the mountain. Jack thought he should see a nice green field with a pretty little house in the middle, but instead of that he saw a space where the trees had been cut but the stumps still left, between which grew potatoes and corn as best they could, mixed with here and there a raspberry shoot, or a tall fire-weed that had escaped the hoe, while the house was a real log cabin, set on the south side of a great granite rock, comfortable in winter, no doubt, but hot enough now, and to the right stood a small barn, also of laid up logs. Jack was delighted; this was like a real adventure in the backwoods. Old Mrs. Tinker came out with a very hearty welcome, and pretty soon the old man followed Hiram in from the barn and nodded to Jack and shook hands with Delia. But Jack did not stop to listen to the questions and comments of the family, his eyes were in full use; he never had been in such a house before; there was a big stone chimney outside, lined with rough stone laid up with mud, and on a crane hung the tea-kettle and the pot-hooks; overhead in the logs were iron hooks holding a leg of dried beef, a lantern, fishing-poles, pails, rude baskets and other handy things; a big bench with a

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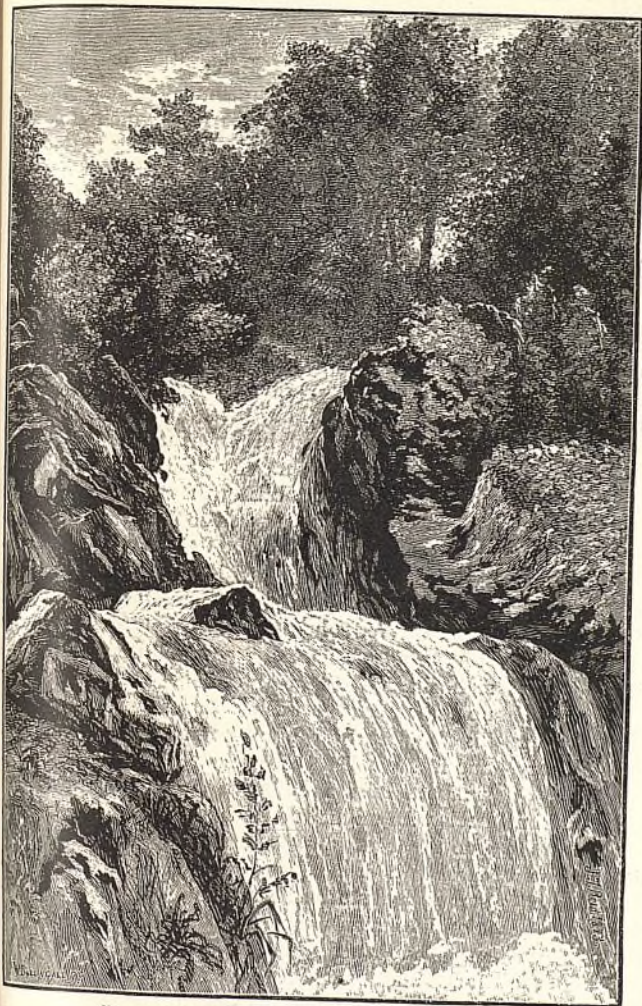
high back stood one side of the fire; and a pine table, three or four splint-bottomed chairs, a wooden clock and a spinning-wheel, were all the furniture. The sun was just about to set as Jack finished his survey inside the house and stepped out-doors; it seemed to him he could see all the world, he was

before bed-time! Mountain evenings are cool, and the smoldering blaze was comfortable enough. Hiram went out to feed the horse and cow, and old Tinker began to tell Jack a bear story, but in a few minutes man and bear both vanished. Jack's head fell on his breast, his eyes shut, and he began

to dream. He had just shot a bear himself and was taking aim at another one that, strange to say, had on Delia's sun-bonnet, when he heard a laugh, opened his eyes, and found Hiram trying to wake him. It certainly was time to go to bed; and, half asleep still, he scrambled up the ladder into the loft, slipped off his clothes, and tumbled into some sort of a bed, on the floor, and was asleep directly. When he woke up next morning with the first peep of dawn he thought all the birds in the world must be singing, there were so many waking up in the woods and telling each other it was day-break. Jack looked about his bedroom with wonder. The logs met in a point overhead, and where he was he could lift his hand and touch the roof. A couple of pine chests, an old hair trunk, and one flag-bottomed chair, stood about the room. A little window at one end looked out on the great rock, now blooming in every crack with harebells, pink herb-robert, yellow violets, and green with rich mosses and climbing vines; the other window looked out over tree-tops far off to the south. From the rafters hung bunches of herbs, dried apples, dried rings of squash, bags of nuts, and the Sunday clothes. Jack's bed was a tick stuffed with sweet fern leaves. Hiram snored in the other corner on a heap of hay covered with a bear-skin. How delightful it was! Do you think Jack could go to sleep again? Not he!

Hiram was roused up at once, and produced from that big bundle a suit of old clothes for Jack. "You see," said he, "we're goin' to hang up them grasshoppers and worms this mornin', on a string, 'nd see ef there's any trout to hum in Popple brook, 'nd I expect you'll hev them things torn off of ye with briars and what not."

Jack did n't care. Clothes were a small matter compared with catching a real trout. He scrambled down the ladder like a cat, picked up chips and cones to light the fire, brought a pitcher of water



"A BROOK FOAMED DOWN OVER THE ROCKS."

so high; great stretches of dark forest rolled away from the edge of the clearing; he saw mountains beyond him and all around on either hand; the Lake glittered very far away, and just beyond it the sun slipped softly out of sight, and all the splendid sky shone like roses. But, after all, Jack was glad to be called in to supper; to have roast potatoes, white and mealy, thick slices of rye bread and butter, savory fried pork, fresh gingerbread and a mug of milk. How that boy did eat! and how sleepy he got in the corner of the settle long



from the spring, got out the worms, the candy, the jackknives and the tin trumpet from his basket, somewhat mixed up, and began to blow his blast of independence at such a rate that Delia sent him out-doors with Hiram to stay till breakfast was ready; and by the time two fish-poles were cut, the lines tied on, and the bait sorted, Jack was hungrier than ever; and when they set out afterward for the fishing tramp, good old Mrs. Tinker rolled up a big piece of rye bread and butter and at least a pound of maple sugar for Hiram to put in his pocket for Jack.

"Well, I guess I hed better," dryly remarked Hiram; "he might take to eatin' on me up, he's so everlastin' hungry about these days."

It was a long tramp to the brook, but Jack's legs were stout. Hiram beguiled the way with tales of his old accidents and adventures hereabout: there was the rock he fell from once in a dark evening when he lost his way; in that hollow tree he found two bear cubs; seven gray squirrels about as big as mice fell out of a nest in that beech-tree, and he found them on the ground, stunned and scared, and took them home and brought up two—the rest died. Jack listened with all his ears; he laughed at Hiram's terror of the old bear's finding him at her nest, boasted as to what he would have done, and aired his courage in a very Fourth of July manner.

"Mebbe you don't know jest what you would do, young man," said Hiram; "folks don't always come out jest as they calkerlate to; I should n't wonder if you was to slip up some, if we reelly should come acrost a sizable bear."

"Ho! I guess I should n't run; you'd better believe I'd give it to him, sir! Bears aint very fierce animals anyhow."

"Well," drawled Hiram, "you might eat him up afore he eat you, that's a fact."

And here was the brook, so Jack said no more.

It would take too long to tell all about this morning's fishing, how often Jack caught his line in the branches, or slipped into the water. He really did catch one trout out of a deep, dark pool where the hurrying brook paused in its wild flight, as if to rest, and his delight was great. He looked at the speckled beauty from nose to tail, "studyin' the spots," Hiram said, till he knew every tinge of color, every gold or roseate speck; and he labored hard to catch another. Hiram angled with better luck, or skill; a dozen or two rewarded his patience, but Jack had only one by the time it was noon, and they hastened home to have the fish dressed in time for dinner—dressed to be eaten, not to be looked at, as other beauties are. Then after dinner they were going farther up the mountain to an old burnt-over clearing to pick raspber-

ries, for Delia promised to make a raspberry short-cake for tea if they could find enough ripe ones; and with a couple of tin pails they went off in another direction from the brook, and after a long, hot walk found themselves in a place where the trees had been cut and the brush burned off for several acres, and wild red raspberries had sprung up thickly all over it.

Behind the clearing the great cliffs of the mountain-top rose abruptly, dotted on the very crest with stunted pines, and the sun shone on them and was reflected hotly on the clearing, which also faced southward; all helped to ripen the big red berries, which hung here and there like jewels. There was a fine view from Saltash top, but neither Jack nor Hiram cared for that; they came after berries, and in five minutes were picking away as if for life. You could hear the fruit rattle on the tin at first, but soon they lay deep over the bottom of each pail, and the hot, still air was only stirred by the rustle of a bird, or the clear, high note of the wood robin. Hiram and Jack picked away from each other gradually. They first skirted the patch, but Hiram soon worked his way into the middle, and was quite lost to sight. By and by Jack's pail was half full. He saw a bush with many more ripe on it than any he had seen yet, so for the sake of having his hands both free he tied the pail on a scrub oak that was close by and began to strip the bush. Presently something stirred behind the oak-leaves; Jack shivered; he looked sharply, keeping very still; a thick black tail swung a little, and a sort of sigh, like a deep breath of some beast just waking up came from the bush. Jack's heart stood still; his tongue choked him; he made a desperate effort and feebly called "H-i-ram!" There was a quick scabble behind the bush, and our boy took to his heels with might and main; down the hill he went, into the trees, anywhere, any way; what did he care, with a big bear after him? over logs and stones, and stumps, into springs and bushes, head-long he went; while hard-hearted Hiram, who had, as it happened, just climbed a rock to look after Jack, and beheld the whole scene, sat down and laughed till he held his sides!

Before long Jack came to a small wild apple-tree that he remembered seeing on the way up; he scrambled into its rough, thorny boughs in a fashion that would have done credit to a monkey, and sat still, thankful to get his breath, and quite sure no bear could climb so small a trunk.

That he did not lose his way was owing to the fact that a coal road, grown over, it is true, but still a road through the trees, led from the Tinker cabin up to the clearing in a pretty direct line, and Jack had taken the right path merely from avoiding the thick forest on either side of it. But he had



made such good speed with the bear behind him that he found his breath, scrambled down from his perch in a state of rags beyond description, and ran home to the house, where he was detailing his wonderful escape to the old people and Delia, his eyes big as saucers, his face red with heat and scratches, and his clothes waving all about him like small flags, when Hiram entered with both pails, his usually sober face broad with laughter, and his great shoulders shaking.

"Well, you be some scared, I swow! you made the best time down that 'ar road, I tell ye! It did beat all to see that little feller pull foot, Dely. Land o' Goshen! I nigh about died a larfin!"

"Did you see the bear?" eagerly exclaimed Jack, too curious to mind Hiram's amusement.

"See the bear? Good Jehoshaphat! I guess I did! heerd it bleat, too!" answered Hiram, splitting with laughter afresh.

"What ails ye, Hi?" put in the old man; "can't ye tell ef it's there or thereabout, so that we can track it? I did n't believe there was a bear left on Saltash."

"Ask Jack," Hiram sputtered, with still new bursts of laughter; "he saw it fust; I tell ye I heerd it bleat."

"I guess you're sun-crazed," growled the old man; "where was it, anyhow?"

"A-eatin' sprouts, Dad, as nateral as life; and I'll be teetotally jiggered ef it war n't our old black lamb that strayed off two year ago, as sure as shootin'!"

They all went off then in as wild a fit of laughter as Hiram. Jack turned red with rage and shame; he was angry enough, and frightened and tired. After all his boasting, to run from a bear was hardly excusable, but to be scared by a black sheep was too much; still, to his credit be it said, Jack swallowed his temper, and, with a little shamefaced laugh, pulled up his rags about him, and manfully said:

"Well, next time I'll stop and ask the thing's name before I run."

"That's a hero," said Hiram.

But Jack had learned a good lesson, and one he never forgot: he was cured of boasting for all his life.

There were raspberries enough for a big short-cake that filled the whole bake-kettle, and when Jack, now in a whole suit and with a cool face, sat down to supper, that light and tender cake, split open and buttered, and filled with a pink mixture of berries, maple sugar and cream, might have tempted anybody; as for Jack, he ate enough for two people, and had to sit still an hour before he could walk out to the big rock, which was a steep precipice on Saltash side overhanging the river valley, from whose top they all watched the rockets shooting up from at least seven towns far, far below, like small stars trying to reach the others in the sky above them.

"Oh Hiram! I've had an awful nice time!" sighed Jack, with a great yawn, as he scrambled up the ladder to bed.

"Bear and all?" laughed Hiram.

Jack turned a little red; he had forgotten that. "Say, Hi, don't tell mother about that, will you?"

"Why?"

"Oh, I want to tell her myself."

"That's all right, sir; no, I wont. I mistrusted ye felt kinder sheepish about it; haw, haw, haw!"

Hiram evidently thought he had made a good joke.

But Jack did tell his mother all about it, next day; after he had laid before her a shining bunch of trout Hiram had got up by sunrise to catch, a great slab of fragrant maple sugar, a bag of butternuts, and a basketful of tiny ferns, delicate mosses, wood-sorrel, Linnæa, and squattee-vines, for her fernery.

Mrs. Bruce laughed, to be sure, but it was a soft mother-laugh that did not hurt Jack a bit; he gave her a big hug, and wound up his story with—

"I never *did* have such a good Fourth of July in all my life!"





## CHERRIES.

BY EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

UNDER the tree the farmer said,  
Smiling, and shaking his wise old head:  
"Cherries are ripe! but then, you know,  
There's the grass to cut and the corn to hoe;  
We can gather the cherries any day,  
But when the sun shines we must make our hay;  
To-night, when the chores have all been done,  
We'll muster the boys, for fruit and fun."

Up in the tree a robin said,  
Perking and cocking his saucy head:  
"Cherries are, ripe! and so; to-day,  
We'll gather them while you make the hay;  
For we are the boys with no corn to hoe,  
No cows to milk, and no grass to mow."  
At night the farmer said: "Here's a trick!  
Those roguish robins have had their pick."

## EIGHT COUSINS.

BY LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## COSEY CORNER.



As vacation was over, the boys went back to school, and poor Mac was left lamenting. He was out of the darkened room now, and promoted to blue goggles, through which he took a gloomy view of life, as might have been expected; for there was nothing he could do but wander about, and try to amuse himself without using his eyes. Any one who has ever been condemned to that sort of idleness, knows how irksome it is, and can understand the state of mind which caused Mac to say to Rose in a desperate tone one day:

"Look here, if you don't invent some new employment or amusement for me, I shall knock myself on the head as sure as you live."

Rose flew to Uncle Alec for advice, and he ordered both patient and nurse to the mountains for a month, with Aunt Jessie and Jamie as escort.

Pokey and her mother joined the party, and one bright September morning six very happy-looking people were aboard the express train for Portland. Two smiling mammas laden with luncheon baskets and wraps, a pretty young girl with a bag of books on her arm, a tall, thin lad with his hat over his eyes, and two small children, who sat with their short legs straight out before them, and their chubby faces beaming with the first speechless delight of "truly traveling."

An especially splendid sunset seemed to have been prepared to welcome them when, after a long day's journey, they drove into a wide, green doorway, where a white colt, a red cow, two cats, four kittens, many hens, and a dozen people, old and young, were gayly disporting themselves. Every one nodded and smiled in the friendliest manner, and a lively old lady kissed the new-comers all round, as she said heartily:

"Well, now, I'm proper glad to see you! Come right in and rest, and we'll have tea in less than no time, for you must be tired. Lizzie, you show the folks upstairs; Kitty, you fly round and help



father in with the trunks, and Jenny and I will have the table all ready by the time you come down. Bless the dears, they want to go see the pussies, and so they shall !”

The three pretty daughters did “fly round,” and every one felt at home at once ; all were so hospitable and kind. Aunt Jessie had raptures over the home-made carpets, quilts, and quaint furniture ; Rose could not keep away from the windows, for each framed a lovely picture ; and the little folks made friends at once with the other children, who filled their arms with chickens and kittens, and did the honors handsomely.

The toot of a horn called all to supper, and a goodly party, including six children besides the Campbells, assembled in the long dining-room, armed with mountain appetites and the gayest spirits. It was impossible for any one to be shy or sober, for such gales of merriment arose they blew the starch out of the stiffest, and made the saddest jolly. Mother Atkinson, as all called their hostess, was the merriest there, and the busiest ; for she kept flying up to wait on the children, to bring out some new dish, or to banish the live stock, who were of such a social turn that the colt came into the entry and demanded sugar ; the cats sat about in people's laps, winking suggestively at the food ; and speckled hens cleared the kitchen-floor of crumbs, as they joined in the chat with a cheerful clucking.

Everybody turned out after tea to watch the sunset till all the lovely red was gone, and mosquitoes wound their shrill horns to sound the retreat. The music of an organ surprised the new-comers, and in the parlor they found Father Atherton playing sweetly on the little instrument made by himself. All the children gathered about him, and, led by the tuneful sisters, sang prettily till Pokey fell asleep behind the door, and Jamie gaped audibly right in the middle of his favorite :

“Coo,” said the little doves : “Coo,” said she,  
“All in the top of the old pine-tree.”

The older travelers, being tired, went to “bye low” at the same time, and slept like tops in home-spun sheets, on husk mattresses made by Mother Atkinson, who seemed to have put some soothing powder among them, so deep and sweet was the slumber that came.

Next day began the wholesome out-of-door life, which works such wonders with tired minds and feeble bodies. The weather was perfect, and the mountain air made the children as frisky as young lambs ; while the elders went about smiling at one another, and saying, “Is n't it splendid ?” Even Mac, the “slow coach,” was seen to leap over a fence as if he really could not help it ; and when Rose ran after him with his broad-brimmed hat, he

made the spirited proposal to go into the woods and hunt for a catamount.

Jamie and Pokey were at once enrolled in the Cosey Corner Light Infantry,—a truly superb company, composed entirely of officers, all wearing cocked hats, carrying flags, waving swords or beating drums. It was a spectacle to stir the dullerest soul when this gallant band marched out of the yard in full regimentals, with Captain Dove—a solemn, big-headed boy of eleven—issuing his orders with the gravity of a General, and his Falstaffian regiment obeying them with more docility than skill. The little Snow children did very well, and Lieutenant Jack Dove was fine to see ; so was Drummer Frank, the errand-boy of the house, as he rub-a-dub-dubbed with all his heart and drumsticks. Jamie had “trained” before, and was made a colonel at once ; but Pokey was the best of all, and called forth a spontaneous burst of applause from the spectators as she brought up the rear, her cocked hat all over one eye, her flag trailing over her shoulder, and her wooden sword straight up in the air ; her face beaming and every curl bobbing with delight as her fat legs tottered in the vain attempt to keep step manfully.

Mac and Rose were picking blackberries in the bushes beside the road when the soldiers passed without seeing them, and they witnessed a sight that was both pretty and comical. A little farther on was one of the family burial spots so common in those parts, and just this side of it Captain Fred Dove ordered his company to halt, explaining his reason for so doing in the following words :

“That 's a grave-yard, and it 's proper to muffle the drums and lower the flags as we go by, and we 'd better take off our hats, too ; it 's more respectable, I think.”

“Is n't that cunning of the dears ?” whispered Rose, as the little troop marched slowly by to the muffled roll of the drums, every flag and sword held low, all the little heads uncovered, and the childish faces very sober as the leafy shadows flickered over them.

“Let 's follow and see what they are after,” proposed Mac, who found sitting on a wall and being fed with blackberries luxurious but tiresome.

So they followed and heard the music grow lively, saw the banners wave in the breeze again when the grave-yard was passed, and watched the company file into the dilapidated old church that stood at the corner of three woodland roads. Presently the sound of singing made the outsiders quicken their steps, and, stealing up, they peeped in at one of the broken windows.

Captain Dove was up in the old wooden pulpit, gazing solemnly down upon his company, who, having stacked their arms in the porch, now sat in



the bare pews singing a Sunday-school hymn with great vigor and relish.

"Let us pray," said Captain Dove, with as much reverence as an army chaplain, and, folding his hands, he repeated a prayer which he thought all would know; an excellent little prayer, but not exactly appropriate to the morning, for it was:

"Now I lay me down to sleep."

Every one joined in saying it, and it was a pretty sight to see the little creatures bowing their curly heads and lisping out the words they knew so well. Tears came into Rose's eyes as she looked; Mac took his hat off involuntarily, and then clapped it on again as if ashamed of showing any feeling.

"Now I shall preach you a short sermon, and my text is, 'Little children, love one another.' I asked mamma to give me one, and she thought that would be good; so you all sit still and I'll preach it. You must n't whisper, Marion, but hear *me*. It means that we should be good to each other, and play fair and not quarrel as we did this very day about the wagon. Jack can't always drive and need n't be mad because I like to go with Frank. Annette ought to be horse sometimes and not always driver, and Willie may as well make up his mind to let Marion build her house by his, for she *will* do it and he need n't fuss about it. Jamie seems to be a good boy, but I shall preach to him if he is n't. No, Pokey, people don't kiss in church or put their hats on. Now you must all remember what I tell you, because I'm the Captain and you should mind me."

Here Lieutenant Jack spoke right out in meeting with the rebellious remark:

"Don't care if you are; you'd better mind yourself, and tell how you took away my strap, and kept the biggest doughnut, and did n't draw fair when we had the truck."

"Yes, and you slapped Frank; I saw you," bawled Willie Snow, bobbing up in his pew.

"And you took my book away and hid it 'cause I would n't go and swing when you wanted me to," added Annette, the oldest of the Snow trio.

"I *sha'* n't build my house by Willie's if he don't want me to, so now!" put in little Marion, joining the mutiny.

"I *will* tiss Dimmy! and I tore up my hat 'tause a pin picked me," shouted Pokey, regardless of Jamie's efforts to restrain her.

Captain Dove looked rather taken aback at this outbreak in the ranks; but being a dignified and calm personage, he quelled the rising rebellion with great tact and skill by saying, briefly:

"We will sing the last hymn; 'Sweet, sweet good-bye'—you all know that, so do it nicely, and then we will go and have luncheon."

Peace was instantly restored, and a burst of melody drowned the suppressed giggle of Rose and Mac, who found it impossible to keep sober during the latter part of this somewhat remarkable service. Fifteen minutes of repose rendered it a physical impossibility for the company to march out as quietly as they had marched in. I grieve to state that the entire troop raced home as hard as they could pelt, and were soon skirmishing briskly over their lunch, utterly oblivious of what Jamie (who had been much impressed by the sermon) called "the Captain's beautiful teck."

It was astonishing how much they all found to do at Cosy Corner, and Mac, instead of lying in a hammock and being read to, as he had expected, was busiest of all. He was invited to survey and lay out Skeeterville, a town which the children were getting up in a huckleberry pasture; and he found much amusement in planning little roads, staking off house-lots, attending to the water-works, and consulting with the "select-men" about the best sites for public buildings; for Mac was a boy still, in spite of his fifteen years and his love of books.

Then he went fishing with a certain jovial gentleman from the West; and though they seldom caught anything but colds, they had great fun and exercise chasing the phantom trout they were bound to have. Mac also developed a geological mania, and went tapping about at rocks and stones, discoursing wisely of "strata, periods, and fossil remains;" while Rose picked up leaves and lichens, and gave him lessons in botany, in return for his lectures on geology.

They led a very merry life; for the Atkinson girls kept up a sort of perpetual picnic; and did it so capitally, that one was never tired of it. So their visitors thrived finely, and long before the month was out it was evident that Dr. Alec had prescribed the right medicine for his patients.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### A HAPPY BIRTHDAY.



THE twelfth of October was Rose's birthday, but no one seemed to remember that interesting fact, and she felt delicate about mentioning it, so fell asleep the night before wondering if she would have any presents. That question was settled early the next morning, for she was awakened by a soft tap on her face, and opening her eyes she beheld a little black and white figure sitting on her pillow, staring at her with a pair of round eyes very like blueberries, while one downy paw patted her nose



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to attract her notice. It was Kitty Comet, the prettiest of all the pussies, and Comet evidently had a mission to perform, for a pink bow adorned her neck, and a bit of paper was pinned to it bearing the words, "For Miss Rose, from Frank."

That pleased her extremely, and that was only the beginning of the fun, for surprises and presents kept popping out in the most delightful manner all through the day, the Atkinson girls being famous jokers and Rose a favorite. But the best gift of all came on the way to Mount Windy-top, where it was decided to picnic in honor of the great occasion. Three jolly loads set off soon after breakfast, for everybody went, and everybody seemed bound to have an extra good time, especially Mother Atkinson, who wore a hat as broad-brimmed as an umbrella and took the dinner-horn to keep her flock from straying away.

"I'm going to drive aunty and a lot of the babies, so you must ride the pony. And please stay behind us a good bit when we go to the station, for a parcel is coming, and you are not to see it till dinner-time. You won't mind, will you?" said Mac in a confidential aside during the wild flurry of the start.

"Not a bit," answered Rose; "it hurts my feelings *very* much to be told to keep out of the way at any other time, but birthdays and Christmas it is part of the fun to be blind and stupid, and poked into corners. I'll be ready as soon as you are, Giggles."

"Stop under the big maple till I call,—then you can't possibly see anything," added Mac, as he mounted her on the pony his father had sent up for his use.

"Barkis" was so gentle and so "willing," however, that Rose was ashamed to be afraid to ride him; so she had learned, that she might surprise Dr. Alec when she got home; meantime she had many a fine canter "over the hills and far away" with Mac, who preferred Mr. Atkinson's old Sorrel.

Away they went, and coming to the red maple, Rose obediently paused; but could not help stealing a glance in the forbidden direction before the call came. Yes, there was a hamper going under the seat, and then she caught sight of a tall man whom Mac seemed to be hustling into the carriage in a great hurry. One look was enough, and with a cry

of delight, Rose was off down the road as fast as Barkis could go.

"Now I'll astonish him," she thought. "I'll dash up in grand style, and show him that I am not a coward, after all."

Fired by this ambition, she startled Barkis by a sharp cut, and still more bewildered him by leav-



ROSE STOPS TOO SUDDENLY.

ing him to his own guidance down the steep, stony road. The approach would have been a fine success if, just as Rose was about to pull up and salute, two or three distracted hens had not scuttled across the road with a great squawking, which caused Barkis to shy and stop so suddenly that his careless rider landed in an ignominious heap just under old Sorrel's astonished nose.

Rose was up again before Dr. Alec was out of the carryall, and threw two dusty arms about his neck, crying with a breathless voice:

"Oh, uncle, I'm *so* glad to see you! It is better than a cart-load of goodies, and so dear of you to come!"

"But are n't you hurt, child? That was a rough tumble, and I'm afraid you must be damaged somewhere," answered the Doctor, full of fond anxiety, as he surveyed his girl with pride.



"My feelings are hurt, but my bones are all safe. It's too bad! I was going to do it so nicely, and those stupid hens spoilt it all," said Rose, quite crest-fallen, as well as much shaken.

"I could n't believe my eyes when I asked 'Where is Rose?' and Mac pointed to the little Amazon pelting down the hill at such a rate. You could n't have done anything that would please me more, and I'm delighted to see how well you ride. Now will you mount again, or shall we turn Mac out and take you in?" asked Dr. Alec, as Aunt Jessie proposed a start, for the others were beckoning them to follow.

"Pride goeth before a fall,—better not try to show off again, ma'am," said Mac, who would have been more than mortal if he had refrained from teasing when so good a chance offered.

"Pride does go before a fall, but I wonder if a sprained ankle always comes after it?" thought Rose, bravely concealing her pain, as she answered, with great dignity:

"I *prefer* to ride. Come on, and see who will catch up first."

She was up and away as she spoke, doing her best to efface the memory of her downfall by sitting very erect, elbows down, head well up, and taking the motion of the pony as Barkis cantered along as easily as a rocking-chair.

"You ought to see her go over a fence and race when we ride together. She can scud, too, like a deer when we play 'Follow the leader,' and skip stones and bat balls almost as well as I can," said Mac, in reply to his uncle's praise of his pupil.

"I'm afraid you will think her a sad tomboy, Alec; but really she seems so well and happy, I have not the heart to check her. She has broken out in the most unexpected way, and frisks like a colt; for she says she feels so full of spirits she *must* run and shout whether it is proper or not," added Mrs. Jessie, who had been a pretty hoyden years ago herself.

"Good,—good! that's the best news you could tell me;" and Dr. Alec rubbed his hands heartily. "Let the girl run and shout as much as she will,—it is a sure sign of health, and as natural to a happy child as frisking is to any young animal full of life. Tomboys make strong women usually, and I had far rather find Rose playing foot-ball with Mac than puttering over head-work like that affected midget, Ariadne Blish."

"But she cannot go on playing foot-ball very long; and we must not forget that she has a woman's work to do by and by," began Mrs. Jessie.

"Neither will Mac play foot-ball much longer, but he will be all the better fitted for business, because of the health it gives him. Polish is

easily added, if the foundations are strong; but no amount of gilding will be of use if your timber is not sound. I'm sure I'm right, Jessie; and if I can do as well by my girl during the next six months as I have the last, my experiment *will* succeed."

"It certainly will; for when I contrast that bright, blooming face with the pale, listless one that made my heart ache a while ago, I can believe in almost any miracle," said Mrs. Jessie, as Rose looked round to point out a lovely view, with cheeks like the ruddy apples in the orchard near by, eyes clear as the autumn sky overhead, and vigor in every line of her girlish figure.

A general scramble among the rocks was followed by a regular gypsy lunch, which the young folks had the rapture of helping to prepare. Mother Atkinson put on her apron, turned up her sleeves, and fell to work as gayly as if in her own kitchen, boiling the kettle slung on three sticks over a fire of cones and fir-boughs; while the girls spread the mossy table with a feast of country goodies, and the children tumbled about in everyone's way till the toot of the horn made them settle down like a flock of hungry birds.

As soon as the merry meal and a brief interval of repose were over, it was unanimously voted to have some charades. A smooth, green spot between two stately pines was chosen for the stage; shawls hung up, properties collected, audience and actors separated, and a word quickly chosen.

The first scene discovered Mac in a despondent attitude and shabby dress, evidently much troubled in mind. To him entered a remarkable creature with a brown-paper bag over its head. A little pink rose peeped through one hole in the middle, white teeth through another, and above two eyes glared fiercely. Spires of grass stuck in each side of the mouth seemed meant to represent whiskers; the upper corners of the bag were twisted like ears, and no one could doubt for a moment that the black scarf pinned on behind was a tail.

This singular animal seemed in pantomime to be comforting his master and offering advice, which was finally acted upon, for Mac pulled off his boots, helped the little beast into them, and gave him a bag; then, kissing his paw with a hopeful gesture, the creature retired, purring so successfully that there was a general cry of "Cat, puss, boots!"

"Cat is the word," replied a voice, and the curtain fell.

The next scene was a puzzler, for in came another animal, on all fours this time, with a new sort of tail and long ears. A gray shawl concealed its face, but an inquisitive sunbeam betrayed the glitter as of goggles under the fringe. On its back rode a small gentleman in Eastern costume, who ap-



appeared to find some difficulty in keeping his seat as his steed jogged along. Suddenly a spirit appeared, all in white, with long newspaper wings upon its back and golden locks about its face. Singularly enough the beast beheld this apparition and backed instantly, but the rider evidently saw nothing and whipped up unmercifully, also unsuccessfully, for the spirit stood directly in the path, and the amiable beast would not budge a foot. A lively skirmish followed, which ended in the Eastern gentleman's being upset into a sweet-fern bush, while the better-bred animal abased itself before the shining one.

The children were all in the dark till Mother Atkinson said, in an inquiring tone:

"If that isn't Balaam and the ass I'd like to know what it is. Rose makes a sweet angel, don't she?"

"Ass" was evidently the word, and the angel retired, smiling with mundane satisfaction over the compliment that reached her ears.

The next was a pretty little scene from the immortal story of "Babes in the Wood." Jamie and Pokey came trotting in, hand in hand, and having been through the parts many times before, acted with great ease and much fluency, audibly directing each other from time to time as they went along. The berries were picked, the way lost, tears shed, baby consolation administered, and then the little pair lay down among the brakes and died with their eyes wide open and the toes of their four little boots turned up to the daisies in the most pathetic manner.

"Now the wobins tum. You be twite dead, Dimmy, and I'll peep and see 'em," one defunct innocent was heard to say.

"I hope he'll be quick, for I'm lying on a stone and ants are walking up my leg like fury," murmured the other.

Here the robins came flapping in with red scarfs over their breasts and leaves in their mouths, which they carefully laid upon the babes wherever they would show best. A prickly blackberry-leaf placed directly over Pokey's nose caused her to sneeze so violently that her little legs flew into the air; Jamie gave a startled "Ow!" and the pitying fowls fled giggling.

After some discussion it was decided that the syllable must be "strew or strow," and then they waited to see if it was a good guess.

This scene discovered Annette Snow in bed, evidently very ill; Miss Jenny was her anxious mamma, and her merry conversation amused the audience till Mac came in as a physician, and made great fun with his big watch, pompous manner, and absurd questions. He prescribed one pellet with an unpronounceable name, and left after demanding twenty dollars for his brief visit.

The pellet was administered, and such awful agonies immediately set in that the distracted mamma bade a sympathetic neighbor run for Mother Know-all. The neighbor ran, and in came a brisk little old lady in cap and specs, with a bundle of herbs under her arm, which she at once applied in all sorts of funny ways, explaining their virtues as she clapped a plantain poultice here, put a pounded catnip plaster there, or tied a couple of mullein leaves round the sufferer's throat. Instant relief ensued, the dying child sat up and demanded baked beans; the grateful parent offered fifty dollars; but Mother Know-all indignantly refused it and went smiling away, declaring that a neighborly turn needed no reward, and a doctor's fee was all a humbug.

The audience were in fits of laughter over this scene, for Rose imitated Mrs. Atkinson capitally, and the herb-cure was a good hit at the excellent lady's belief that "yarbs" would save mankind if properly applied. No one enjoyed it more than herself, and the saucy children prepared for the grand finale in high feather.

This closing scene was brief but striking, for two trains of cars whizzed in from opposite sides, met with a terrible collision in the middle of the stage, and a general smash-up completed the word *catastrophe*.

"Now let us act a proverb. I've got one all ready," said Rose, who was dying to distinguish herself in some way before Uncle Alec.

So every one but Mac, the gay Westerner, and Rose, took their places on the rocky seats and discussed the late beautiful and varied charade, in which Pokey frankly pronounced her own scene the "bestest of all."

In five minutes the curtain was lifted; nothing appeared but a very large sheet of brown paper pinned to a tree, and on it was drawn a clock-face, the hands pointing to four. A small note below informed the public that 4 A. M. was the time. Hardly had the audience grasped this important fact when a long water-proof serpent was seen uncoiling itself from behind a stump. An inch-worm perhaps would be a better description, for it traveled in the same humpy way as that pleasing reptile. Suddenly a very wide-awake and active fowl advanced, pecking, chirping, and scratching vigorously. A tuft of green leaves waved upon his crest, a larger tuft of brakes made an umbrageous tail, and a shawl of many colors formed his flapping wings. A truly noble bird, whose legs had the genuine strut, whose eyes shone watchfully, and whose voice had a ring that evidently struck terror into the caterpillar's soul, if it was a caterpillar. He squirmed, he wriggled, he humped as fast as he could, trying to escape; but all in vain. The



tufted bird espied him, gave one warbling sort of crow, pounced upon him, and flapped triumphantly away.

"That early bird got such a big worm he could hardly carry him off," laughed Aunt Jessie, as the children shouted over the joke suggested by Mac's nickname.

"That is one of uncle's favorite proverbs, so I got it up for his especial benefit," said Rose, coming up with the two-legged worm beside her.

"Very clever; what next?" asked Dr. Alec as she sat down beside him.

"The Dove boys are going to give us an 'Incident in the Life of Napoleon,' as they call it; the children think it very splendid, and the little fellows do it rather nicely," answered Mac, with condescension.

A tent appeared, and pacing to and fro before it was a little sentinel, who, in a brief soliloquy, informed the observers that the elements were in a great state of confusion, that he had marched some hundred miles or so that day, and that he was dying for want of sleep. Then he paused, leaned upon his gun, and seemed to doze; dropped slowly down overpowered with slumber, and finally lay flat, with his gun beside him, a faithless little sentinel. Enter Napoleon, cocked hat, gray coat, high boots, folded arms, grim mouth, and a melodramatic stride. Freddy Dove always covered himself with glory in this part and "took the stage" with a Napoleonic attitude that brought down the house, for the big-headed boy with solemn, dark eyes and square brow, was "the very moral of that rascal, Boneyparty," Mother Atkinson said.

Some great scheme was evidently brewing in his mighty mind,—a trip across the Alps, a bonfire at Moscow, or a little skirmish at Waterloo, perhaps, for he marched in silent majesty till suddenly a gentle snore disturbed the imperial reverie. He saw the sleeping soldier and glared upon him, saying in an awful tone:

"Ha! asleep at his post! Death is the penalty—he must die!"

Picking up the musket, he is about to execute summary justice, as emperors are in the habit of doing, when something in the face of the weary sentinel appears to touch him. And well it might, for a most engaging little warrior was Jack as he lay with his shako half off, his childish face trying to keep sober, and a great black moustache over his rosy mouth. It would have softened the heart of any Napoleon, and the Little Corporal proved himself a man by relenting, and saying, with a lofty gesture of forgiveness:

"Brave fellow, he is worn out; I will let him sleep, and mount guard in his place."

Then, shouldering the gun, this noble being

strode to and fro with a dignity which thrilled the younger spectators. The sentinel awakes, sees what has happened, and gives himself up for lost. But the Emperor restores his weapon, and, with that smile which won all hearts, says, pointing to a high rock whereon a crow happens to be sitting: "Be brave, be vigilant, and remember that from yonder Pyramids generations are beholding you," and with these memorable words he vanishes, leaving the grateful soldier bolt upright, with his hand at his temple and deathless devotion stamped upon his youthful countenance.

The applause which followed this superb piece had hardly subsided, when a sudden splash and a shrill cry caused a general rush toward the waterfall that went gamboling down the rocks, singing sweetly as it ran. Pokey had tried to gambol also, and had tumbled into a shallow pool, whither Jamie had gallantly followed, in a vain attempt to fish her out, and both were paddling about half-frightened, half-pleased with the unexpected bath.

This mishap made it necessary to get the dripping infants home as soon as possible, so the wagons were loaded up, and away they went, as merry as if the mountain air had really been "Oxygenated Sweets not Bitters," as Dr. Alec suggested when Mac said he felt as jolly as if he had been drinking champagne instead of the current wine that came with a great frosted cake wreathed with sugar roses in Aunt Plenty's hamper of goodies.

Rose took part in all the fun, and never betrayed by look or word the twinges of pain she suffered in her ankle. She excused herself from the games in the evening, however, and sat talking to Uncle Alec in a lively way, that both amazed and delighted him; for she confided to him that she played horse with the children, drilled with the Light Infantry, climbed trees, and did other dreadful things that would have caused the aunts to cry aloud if they knew of them.

"I don't care a pin what they say if you don't mind, uncle," she answered when he pictured the dismay of the good ladies.

"Ah, it's all very well to defy *them*, but you are getting so rampant, I'm afraid you will defy me next, and then where are we?"

"No I won't! I should n't dare; because you are my guardian, and can put me in a strait-jacket if you like;" and Rose laughed in his face, even while she nestled closer with a confiding gesture pleasant to see.

"Upon my word, Rosy, I begin to feel like the man who bought an elephant, and then didn't know what to do with him. I thought I had got a pet and plaything for years to come; but here you are growing up like a bean-stalk, and I shall find



"I've got a strong-minded little woman on my hands before I can turn round. There's a predicament for a man and an uncle!"

Dr. Alec's comic distress was mercifully relieved for the time being by a dance of goblins on the lawn, where the children, with pumpkin lanterns on their heads, frisked about like will-o'-the-wisps, as a parting surprise.

When Rose went to bed, she found that Uncle Alec had not forgotten her; for on the table stood a delicate little easel, holding two miniatures set in velvet. She knew them both, and stood looking at them till her eyes brimmed over with tears that were both sweet and sad; for they were the faces of her father and mother, beautifully copied from portraits fast fading away.

Presently she knelt down, and, putting her arms round the little shrine, kissed one after the other, saying with an earnest voice, "I'll truly try to make them glad to see me by and by."

And that was Rose's little prayer on the night of her fourteenth birthday.

Two days later, the Campbells went home, a larger party than when they came; for Dr. Alec was escort, and Kitty Comet was borne in state in a basket, with a bottle of milk, some tiny sandwiches, and a doll's dish to drink out of, as well as a bit of carpet to lie on in her palace car, out of which she kept popping her head in the most fascinating manner.

There was a great kissing and cuddling, waving of handkerchiefs, and last good-byes, as they went; and when they had started, Mother Atkinson came running after them, to tuck in some little pies, hot from the oven, "for the dears, who might get tired of bread-and-butter during that long day's travel."

Another start, and another halt; for the Snow children came shrieking up to demand the three kittens that Pokey was coolly carrying off in a traveling-bag. The unhappy kits were rescued, half smothered, and restored to their lawful owners, amid dire lamentation from the little kidnapper, who declared that she only "took 'em 'cause they'd want to go wid their sister Tomit."

Start number three and stoppage number three, as Frank hailed them with the luncheon-basket, which had been forgotten, after every one had protested that it was safely in.

All went well after that, and the long journey was pleasantly beguiled by Pokey and Pussy, who played together so prettily that they were considered public benefactors.

"Rose does n't want to go home, for she knows the aunts won't let her rampage as she did up at Cosy Corner," said Mac, as they approached the old house.

"I *can't* rampage if I want to,—for a time, at least; and I'll tell you why. I sprained my ankle when I tumbled off of Barkis, and it gets worse and worse; though I've done all I know to cure it and hide it, so it should n't trouble any one," whispered Rose, knitting her brows with pain, as she prepared to descend, wishing her uncle would take her instead of her bundles.

How he did it, she never knew; but Mac had her up the steps and on the parlor sofa before she could put her foot to the ground.

"There you are,—right side up with care; and mind, now, if your ankle bothers you, and you are laid up with it, I am to be your footman. It's only fair, you know; for I don't forget how good you have been to me." And Mac went to call Phebe, so full of gratitude and good-will, that his very goggles shone.

## CHAPTER XV.

### EAR-RINGS.



WING to neglect, Rose's sprain proved to be a serious one, and Dr. Alec ordered her to lie on the sofa for a fortnight at least, whereat she groaned dismally, but dared not openly complain, lest the boys should turn upon her with some of the wise little sermons on patience which she had delivered for their benefit.

It was Mac's turn now, and honorably did he repay his debt; for, as school was still forbidden, he had plenty of leisure, and devoted most of it to Rose. He took many steps for her, and even allowed her to teach him to knit, after assuring himself that many a brave Scotchman knew how to "click the pricks." She was obliged to take a solemn vow of secrecy, however, before he would consent; for, though he did not mind being called "Giglamps," "Granny" was more than his boyish soul could bear, and at the approach of any of the clan his knitting vanished as if by magic, which frequent "chucking" out of sight did not improve the stripe he was doing for Rose's new afghan.

She was busy with this pretty work one bright October afternoon, all nicely established on her sofa in the upper hall, while Jamie and Pokey (lent for her amusement) were keeping house in a corner, with Comet and Rose's old doll for their "childrens."

Presently, Phebe appeared with a card. Rose read it, made a grimace, then laughed and said:



"I'll see Miss Blish," and immediately put on her company face, pulled out her locket, and settled her curls.

"You dear thing, how *do* you do? I've been trying to call every day since you got back, but I have so many engagements, I really could n't manage it till to-day. So glad you are alone, for mamma said I could sit awhile, and I brought my lace-work to show you, for it's perfectly lovely," cried Miss Blish, greeting Rose with a kiss, which was not very warmly returned, though Rose politely thanked her for coming, and bid Phebe roll up the easy chair.

"How nice to have a maid!" said Ariadne, as she settled herself with much commotion. "Still, dear, you must be very lonely, and feel the need of a bosom friend."

"I have my cousins," began Rose, with dignity, for her visitor's patronizing manner ruffled her temper.

"Gracious, child! you don't make friends of those great boys, do you? Mamma says she really does n't think it's proper for you to be with them so much."

"They are like brothers, and my aunts *do* think it's proper," replied Rose, rather sharply, for it struck her that this was none of Miss Blish's business.

"I was merely going to say I should be glad to have you for *my* bosom friend, for Hatty Mason and I have had an awful quarrel, and don't speak. She is too mean to live, so I gave her up. Just think, she never paid back one of the caramels I've given her, and never invited me to her party. I could have forgiven the caramels, but to be left out in that rude way was more than I could bear, and I told her never to look at me again as long as she lived."

"You are very kind, but I don't think I want a bosom friend, thank you," said Rose, as Ariadne stopped to bridle and shake her flaxen head over the delinquent Hatty Mason.

Now in her heart Miss Blish thought Rose "a stuck-up puss," but the other girls wanted to know her and could n't, the old house was a charming place to visit, the lads were considered fine fellows, and the Campbells "are one of our first families," mamma said. So Ariadne concealed her vexation at Rose's coolness, and changed the subject as fast as possible.

"Studying French, I see; who is your teacher?" she asked, flirting over the leaves of "Paul and Virginia," that lay on the table.

"I don't *study* it, for I read French as well as English, and uncle and I often speak it for hours. He talks like a native, and says I have a remarkably good accent."

Rose really could not help this small display of superiority, for French was one of her strong points, and she was vain of it, though she usually managed to hide this weakness. She felt that Ariadne would be the better for a little crushing, and could not resist the temptation to patronize in her turn.

"Oh, indeed!" said Miss Blish, rather blankly, for French was not *her* strong point by any means.

"I am to go abroad with uncle in a year or two, and he knows how important it is to understand the languages. Half the girls who leave school can't speak decent French, and when they go abroad they are *so* mortified. I shall be very glad to help you, if you like, for of course *you* have no one to talk with at home."

Now Ariadne, though she *looked* like a wax doll, had feelings within her instead of sawdust, and these feelings were hurt by Rose's lofty tone. She thought her more "stuck up" than ever, but did not know how to bring her down, yet longed to do it, for she felt as if she had received a box on the ear, and involuntarily put her hand up to it. The touch of an ear-ring consoled her, and suggested a way of returning tit for tat in a telling manner.

"Thank you, dear; I don't need any help, for our teacher is from Paris, and of course *he* speaks better French than your uncle." Then she added, with a gesture of her head that set the little bells in her ears to tingling: "How do you like my new ear-rings? Papa gave them to me last week, and every one says they are lovely."

Rose came down from her high horse with a rapidity that was comical, for Ariadne had the upper hand now. Rose adored pretty things, longed to wear them, and the desire of her girlish soul was to have her ears bored, only Dr. Alec thought it foolish, so she never had done it. She would gladly have given all the French she could jabber for a pair of golden bells with pearl-tipped tongues, like those Ariadne wore; and, clasping her hands, she answered, in a tone that went to the hearer's heart:

"They are *too* sweet for anything! If uncle would only let me wear some, I should be *perfectly* happy."

"I would n't mind what he says. Papa laughed at me at first, but he likes them now, and says I shall have diamond solitaires when I am eighteen," said Ariadne, quite satisfied with her shot.

"I've got a pair now that were mamma's, and a beautiful little pair of pearl and turquoise ones, that I am dying to wear," sighed Rose.

"Then do it. I'll pierce your ears, and you must wear a bit of silk in them till they are well; your curls will hide them nicely; then, some day,



slip in your smallest ear-rings, and see if your uncle don't like them."

"I asked him if it would n't do my eyes good once when they were red, and he only laughed. People do cure weak eyes that way, don't they?"

"Yes, indeed, and yours *are* sort of red. Let me see. Yes, I really think you ought to do it before they get worse," said Ariadne, peering into the large clear eye offered for inspection.

"Does it hurt much?" asked Rose, wavering.

"O dear no! just a prick and a pull, and its all over. I've done lots of ears, and know just how. Come, push up your hair and get a big needle."

"I don't quite like to do it without asking uncle's leave," faltered Rose, when all was ready for the operation.

"Did he ever forbid it?" demanded Ariadne, hovering over her prey like a vampire.

"No, never!"

"Then do it, unless you are *afraid*," cried Miss Blish, bent on accomplishing the deed.

That last word settled the matter, and, closing her eyes, Rose said "Punch!" in the tone of one giving the fatal order "Fire!"

Ariadne punched, and the victim bore it in heroic silence, though she turned pale and her eyes were full of tears of anguish.

"There! Now pull the bits of silk often, and cold-cream your ears every night, and you'll soon be ready for the rings," said Ariadne, well pleased with her job, for the girl who spoke French with "a fine accent" lay flat upon the sofa, looking as exhausted as if she had had both ears cut off.

"It does hurt dreadfully, and I know uncle wont like it," sighed Rose, as remorse began to gnaw. "Promise not to tell, or I shall be teased to death," she added, anxiously, entirely forgetting the two little pitchers gifted with eyes as well as ears, who had been watching the whole performance from afar.

"Never. Mercy me, what's that?" and Ariadne started as a sudden sound of steps and voices came up from below.

"It's the boys! Hide the needle. Do my ears show? Don't breathe a word!" whispered Rose, scrambling about to conceal all traces of their iniquity from the sharp eyes of the clan.

Up they came, all in good order, laden with the proceeds of a nutting expedition, for they always reported to Rose and paid tribute to their queen in the handsomest manner.

"How many, and how big! We'll have a grand roasting frolic after tea, wont we?" said Rose, plunging both hands into a bag of glossy brown nuts, while the clan "stood at ease" and nodded to Ariadne.

"That lot was picked especially for you, Rosy.

I got every one myself, and they are extra whackers," said Mac, presenting a bushel or so.

"You should have seen Giglamps when he was after them. He pitched out of the trée, and would have broken his blessed old neck if Arch had not caught him," observed Steve, as he lounged gracefully in the window seat.

"You need n't talk, Dandy, when you did n't know a chestnut from a beech, and kept on thrashing till I told you of it," retorted Mac, festooning himself over the back of the sofa, being a privileged boy.

"I don't make mistakes when I thrash you, old Worm, so you'd better mind what you are about," answered Steve, without a ray of proper respect for his elder brother.

"It is getting dark, and I must go, or mamma will be alarmed," said Ariadne, rising in sudden haste, though she hoped to be asked to remain to the nut-party.

No one invited her; and all the while she was putting on her things and chatting to Rose, the boys were telegraphing to one another the sad fact that some one ought to escort the young lady home. Not a boy felt heroic enough to cast himself into the breach, however; even polite Archie shirked the duty, saying to Charlie, as they quietly slipped into an adjoining room:

"I'm not going to do all the gallivanting. Let Steve take that chit home and show his manners."

"I'll be hanged if I do!" answered Prince, who disliked Miss Blish because she tried to be coquetish with him.

"Then I will," and, to the dismay of both recreant lads, Dr. Alec walked out of the room to offer his services to the "chit."

He was too late, however, for Mac, obeying a look from Rose, had already made a victim of himself, and trudged meekly away, wishing the gentle Ariadne at the bottom of the Red Sea.

"Then I will take this lady down to tea, as the other one has found a *gentleman* to go home with her. I see the lamps are lighted below, and I smell a smell which tells me that aunty has something extra nice for us to-night."

As he spoke, Dr. Alec was preparing to carry Rose down-stairs as usual; but Archie and Prince rushed forward, begging with penitent eagerness for the honor of carrying her in an arm-chair. Rose consented, fearing that her uncle's keen eye would discover the fatal bits of silk; so the boys crossed hands, and, taking a good grip of each curly pate, she was borne down in state, while the others followed by way of the banisters.

Tea was ordered earlier than usual, so that Jamie and his dolly could have a taste, at least, of the holiday fun, for they were to stay till seven, and be



allowed twelve roasted chestnuts apiece, which they were under bonds not to eat till next day.

Tea was dispatched rapidly, therefore, and the party gathered round the wide hearth in the dining-room, where the nuts were soon dancing gayly on hot shovels or bouncing out among the company, thereby causing delightful panics among the little ones.

"Come, Rosy, tell us a story while we work, for you can't help much, and must amuse us as your

"Well, once upon a time, a little girl went to see a young lady who was very fond of her. Now the young lady happened to be lame and had to have her foot bandaged up every day; so she kept a basketful of bandages, all nicely rolled and ready. The little girl liked to play with this basket, and one day, when she thought no one saw her, she took one of the rolls without asking leave, and put it in her pocket."

Here Pokey, who had been peering lovingly



ROSE AND ARIADNE HAVE SPECTATORS.

share," proposed Mac, who sat in the shade pricking nuts, and who knew by experience what a capital little Scheherazade his cousin was.

"Yes, we poor monkeys can't burn our paws for nothing, so tell away, Pussy," added Charlie, as he threw several hot nuts into her lap and shook his fingers afterward.

"Well, I happen to have a little story with a moral to it in my mind, and I will tell it, though it is intended for younger children than you," answered Rose, who was rather fond of telling instructive tales.

"Fire away," said Geordie, and she obeyed, little thinking what a disastrous story it would prove to herself.

down at the five warm nuts that lay at the bottom of her tiny pocket, suddenly looked up and said, "Oh!" in a startled tone, as if the moral tale had become intensely interesting all at once.

Rose heard and saw the innocent betrayal of the small sinner, and went on in a most impressive manner, while the boys nudged one another and winked as they caught the joke.

"But an eye did see this naughty little girl, and whose eye do you think it was?"

"Eye of Dod," murmured conscience-stricken Pokey, spreading two chubby little hands before the round face which they were not half big enough to hide.

Rose was rather taken aback by this reply, but,

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feeling that she was producing a good effect, she added, seriously:

"Yes, God saw her, and so did the young lady, but she did not say anything; she waited to see what the little girl would do about it. She had been very happy before she took the bandage, but when it was in her pocket she seemed troubled, and pretty soon stopped playing and sat down in a corner, looking very sober. She thought a few minutes, and then went and put back the roll very softly, and her face cleared up and she was a happy child again. The young lady was glad to see that, and wondered what made the little girl put it back."

"Tonscience p'icked her," murmured a contrite voice from behind the small hands pressed tightly over Pokey's red face.

"And why did she take it, do you suppose?" asked Rose, in a school-marmish tone, feeling that all the listeners were interested in her tale and its unexpected application.

"It was so nice and wound, and she wanted it deffly," answered the little voice.

"Well, I'm glad she had such a good conscience. The moral is that people who steal don't enjoy what they take, and are not happy till they put it back. What makes that little girl hide her face?" asked Rose, as she concluded.

"Me's so 'shamed of Pokey," sobbed the small culprit, quite overcome by remorse and confusion at this awful disclosure.

"Come, Rose, it's too bad to tell her little tricks before every one, and preach at her in that way; you would n't like it yourself," began Dr. Alec, taking the weeper on his knee and administering consolation in the shape of kisses and nuts.

Before Rose could express her regret, Jamie, who had been reddening and ruffling like a little turkey-cock for several minutes, burst out indignantly, bent on avenging the wound given to his beloved doll.

"I know something bad that *you* did, and I'm going to tell right out. You thought we did n't see you, but we did, and you said uncle would n't like it, and the boys would tease, and you made Ariadne promise not to tell, and she punched holes in your ears to put ear-rings in. So now! and that's much badder than to take an old piece of rag; and I hate you for making my Pokey cry."

Jamie's somewhat incoherent explosion produced such an effect, that Pokey's small sin was instantly forgotten, and Rose felt that her hour had come.

"What! what! what!" cried the boys in a chorus, dropping their shovels and knives to gather

round Rose, for a guilty clutching at her ears betrayed her, and with a feeble cry of "Ariadne made me!" she hid her head among the pillows like an absurd little ostrich.

"Now she'll go prancing round with bird-cages and baskets and carts and pigs, for all I know, in her ears, as the other girls do, and wont she look like a goose?" asked one tormentor, tweaking a curl that strayed out from the cushions.

"I did n't think she'd be so silly," said Mac, in a tone of disappointment that told Rose she had sunk in the esteem of her wise cousin.

"That Blish girl is a nuisance, and ought not to be allowed to come here with her nonsensical notions," said the Prince, feeling a strong desire to shake that young person as an angry dog might shake a mischievous kitten.

"How do *you* like it, uncle?" asked Archie, who, being the head of a family himself, believed in preserving discipline at all costs.

"I am very much surprised; but I see she is a girl, after all, and must have her vanities like all the rest of them," answered Dr. Alec, with a sigh, as if he had expected to find Rose a sort of angel, above all earthly temptation.

"What shall you do about it, sir?" inquired Geordie, wondering what punishment would be inflicted on a feminine culprit.

"As she is fond of ornaments, perhaps we had better give her a nose-ring also. I have one somewhere that a Fiji belle once wore; I'll look it up," and, leaving Pokey to Jamie's care, Dr. Alec rose as if to carry out his suggestion in earnest.

"Good! good! We'll do it right away! Here's a gimlet, so you hold her, boys, while I get her dear little nose all ready," cried Charlie, whisking away the pillows as the other boys danced about the sofa in true Fiji style.

It was a dreadful moment, for Rose could not run away,—she could only grasp her precious nose with one hand and extend the other, crying distractedly: "Oh, uncle, save me, save me!"

Of course he saved her; and when she was securely barricaded by his strong arm, she confessed her folly in such humiliation of spirit, that the lads, after a good laugh at her, decided to forgive her and lay all the blame on the tempter, Ariadne. Even Dr. Alec relented so far as to propose two gold rings for the ears instead of one copper one for the nose; a proceeding which proved that if Rose had all the weakness of her sex for jewelry, he had all the inconsistency of his in giving a pretty penitent exactly what she wanted, spite of his better judgment.

(To be continued.)



## MASTER TOTO'S CANARY.

BY SARAH D. CLARK.

MASTER TOTO struck hard on the wires,  
 When up flew the little cage door,  
 And, quick as a wink, or canary-bird's blink,  
 Little William tripped out on the floor.  
 Then off through the window he flew,  
 Singing, "Up with the sun and the dew,  
 I am off and away, for a long holiday—  
 Ho! ho! little man,  
 Catch me, if you can!"

The roses grew red in the bower,  
 The hollyhocks bloomed every one;  
 The gay spider threads, like gossamer shreds,  
 With brightest dew glanced in the sun.  
 The lords and the ladies, they listened,  
 Their eyes like the great dewdrops glistened—  
 Surely never was heard such a wonderful bird,  
 No robin nor sparrow is he,  
 Trilling out from the tall alder-tree.

But holidays come to an end,  
 The beautiful Summer had fled,  
 With the long, long night came frost-work and blight,  
 And the flowers were drooping and dead;  
 Not a bird nor a bee in the air,  
 The fields were all withered and bare;  
 Though a brave little lad, Master Toto was sad  
 For his poor little bird that was lost  
 Out in the cold and the frost.

The hen-hawk swooped down from the sky,  
 The squirrel was ready to spring;  
 With a shiver of dread, our young William's head  
 Went under one stiff little wing.  
 All crumpled his soft yellow breast,  
 He longed for some shelter of rest;  
 With his fun and his play, and his long holiday,  
 He had nothing to eat,  
 And no perch for his feet.

He wanted his snug little home—  
 So off with a penitent trill,  
 Where his seeds, golden bright, shone out in the light,  
 He pecked at the gay window-sill,  
 Calling out, "I would like to engage  
 Apartments in one little cage—  
 I am getting too wise and too old, to be out in the frost and the cold;  
 Master Toto, once more,  
 Please to open the door!"



## HOW THE GRASSHOPPERS CAME.

BY A NEBRASKA WOMAN.

I WISH to tell the readers of ST. NICHOLAS a story about the Great American Desert, where the grasshoppers made such a fearful raid last Summer.

When you see the little creatures hopping harmlessly about in the grass, you can think of what a power for evil they possess when they gather together in such armies as those which overran our part of the country last year.

The weather was intensely warm here all last season, and for thirty days within the space of six weeks the thermometer ranged from 100° to 116°.

It was during this heat in the latter part of July that our Swede girl, Selma, said she must go home to care for her aged mother. Pete and Polly, our two mules, were harnessed to the express wagon in the early morning, and a pleasant little company of us started out to take Selma home.

Our road lay up the banks of a clear winding stream, on each side of which our industrious Swede neighbors have settled, and turned over the virgin soil of this "Garden of the Desert," upon which appeared fields of waving grain.

We had not ridden far before Pete and Polly, who had been whisking their long ears very contentedly, began to lay them back and toss their heads into the air. As they tossed them higher and higher, we noticed that a grasshopper came at intervals with a bounce into our laps or hit our hands and faces, and the farther we went north the more frequently their whizz and click assailed our ears, or their sharp wings struck our noses, till we sympathized with our restless mules. Soon we noticed the little brown bodies and gray wings lying in piles along the shady side of our track, and that the green leaves of the corn hung like slit ribbons swaying in the breeze; and farther on there was here and there a field that had been planted on the sod where nothing but the stalk was left, and we said, "See what the grasshoppers have been doing."

We set Selma down at her door, and turned toward home, wondering if the grasshoppers were going to do much harm.

The season had been unusually dry, as well as warm, and for that reason the small grain, though very light, was ready for the reaper, or already cut.

Soon after the harvesters had repaired to the field that afternoon, the cry was heard, "The grasshoppers have fallen upon the corn-fields." Then we knew we had met the scouting party in

the morning, and that, by some wonderful insect power, they had telegraphed to the main body the news of our rich fields.

We had a corn-field of twenty acres, that was the pride of our foreman, and pronounced the most luxuriant of any for miles up and down the valley. The destroyers were at work upon it, but the men, hoping to save a part, left their harvest and built fires all along the rows. They whipped and switched and smoked, running from one part of the field to the other in the heat, but it was all of no avail. The little invaders ate on, and at night nothing was left of our boasted corn-field but the tall bare stalks, looking like bean-poles.

The Indian women had corn and bean patches near us, and when they came and saw their work all destroyed they wept and moaned, and said, "God is not pleased, or He would not send the grasshoppers to eat what we need."

The next day the raiders came to our gardens, and though we covered the plants with barrels and boxes and sheets, though we smoked and whipped and brushed, hoping to save some vegetables, they seemed to laugh at our dismay, and kept steadily at work, even eating our onions and red pepper-stalks down to the ground.

They stripped young fruit-trees of their leaves and gnawed our shrubbery and flowers till there was no green thing left to cover the brown earth, and then they mounted our shade trees, and the ground was soon covered with falling leaves.

The heat was intensified by the presence of such a mass of animal matter, and our nights, usually so cool, were hot and uncomfortable. The unwonted sound of the rustling of millions of wings caused the dogs to howl dolefully, and a vague terror began to steal over our hearts.

Near nightfall of the third day of the presence of the foe, a brisk breeze blew from the north. Our neighbor Keturah came to our door, and said, "Do you see how the smoke is rising on every side of us?"

We could see from ten to twenty miles in any direction, and all about us were pyramidal columns of smoke, as we thought, rising toward the heavens. "How is it," we asked, "that these great masses of smoke appear simultaneously at every point?" And as we gazed and saw them slowly grow blacker and rise higher, an indefinable dread of some fearful coming took possession of us.



Two of our number were out taking a gallop on their ponies. On their return they said, "Did you see the grasshoppers rise? We heard a sound like a rushing wind, and thought we were riding into the edge of a whirlwind" (such as are often seen here, carrying pyramids of dust and sand many feet from the earth), "but, looking a moment, saw the grasshoppers going up in cloud-like masses, and they passed off south."

"Ah! that was the grasshoppers, and we thought it smoke!" we exclaimed; and immediately the weight was lifted from our hearts. Some grasshoppers were left near our buildings, but they were merely going to rest for the night, and by noon next day very few were to be seen. In just one week from the day of their first arrival, a great shower of grasshoppers fell again, and began to devour what the others had left. One corn-field which the others had left in part, and which still promised a small harvest, was attacked by these later marauders, and our last hope for corn that season soon vanished.

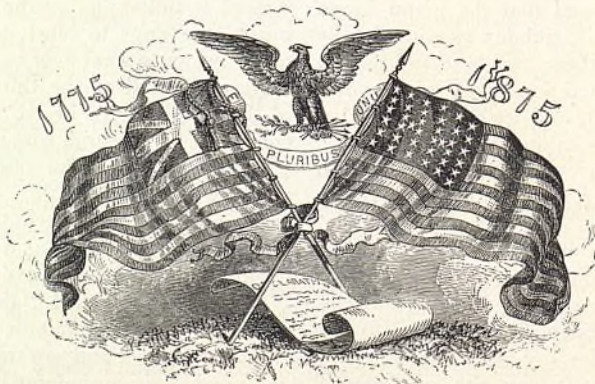
Our shade-trees were entirely stripped of their leaves, the netting screens in our doors and windows hung in tatters, and the greedy millions made their way into our houses to devour plants which we thought hidden from their insatiate little jaws. They ate holes in clothing, in curtains, and in pin-cushions, and I heard of one woman who found the draught of her stove clogged with grasshoppers, they having fallen down the pipe in such numbers as to fill it.

The houses and fences soon were black with the

millions of these insects. We could not even see the bark on the trees because of the myriads of wings, and we beheld the result of the labor of many hands a blank before us. We sat in awed silence, feeling we were in the presence of that Power which can bar the raging waves of the sea with little grains of sand and send an army of little insects to bring to naught the boasted work of man.

The third day after their arrival, clouds flitted across the sun at intervals, screening us from its intense heat, and toward night a company of us, daughters of these prairies, dragged our really exhausted selves to the river, hoping to find a little refreshment by a bath. We were scarcely in the water before we were startled by a crash, a peal, and then a rushing wind. Peering over the high northern bank, we saw a black cloud driven furiously up toward the zenith, and at the same time the sun burst from under a dark veil in the west, revealing to our eyes a scene of wonder. Myriads upon myriads of little wings were flashing like specks of silver in the sunlight, not only as far as the eye could reach, east, west, and south, but as far as we could see into the air above us, and we knew the grasshoppers were driven again before the north wind.

When our bath was finished, very few of them were left to annoy us as we returned home, and great was our relief and joy to have them gone. But we did not look forward to the want which has oppressed so many hearts, and to the relief of which so many of the readers of ST. NICHOLAS have, no doubt, contributed.



OUR FLAG IN 1775 AND IN 1875.



## ROSES.

BY LILY DE SOZIA WOOD.



So many beautiful and useful things come to us from Eastern countries, that it is hard to say what is most valuable to us; but I expect, if the young folks were asked what they liked best that comes from Persia, they would not say the fine silks, or splendid carpets, or even the exquisite shawls made there, but the peaches and the lovely damask roses!

The Persians, compared with their neighbors, the Turks and Egyptians, are a lively people, but we would call them quiet, and even sad, because their gayety is so different from ours, and their manners are more grave and dignified. But they are fond of amusements, and one of their yearly festivals is the "Feast of the Roses," which takes place during the Rose season, which is June, July, and indeed the greater part of the Summer. I will try to tell you something about it.

The climate being very warm, the people live much out of doors, and during this feast tents are pitched; every one wears his or her prettiest dresses, and, as all Eastern people are fond of bright colors, the scene is a very gay one.

During this festival everything betokens mirth and enjoyment. The cymbals and lute are heard from morning till night, the story-tellers recount their most beautiful tales, and the dancing-girls dance for hours at a time. Then, when the night comes, and the moonlight covers everything like a silver cloud, the people stretch themselves on their soft carpets and listen to the songs of the nightingales and soft serenades on the women's lutes.

In some parts of Turkey whole fields of roses are cultivated, from which the Turks make the famous "attar of roses," which is so fragrant that a vessel anything touched with a drop of it seems never to lose the smell; and the Hindoos scatter rose-leaves in the water they drink to give it a pleasant appearance.

There are more than two hundred kinds of roses, and they are of all sizes, from the tiny "Picayune rose," so called because it is no larger than a five-cent-piece,—which, in the South, is called a picayune,—to the immense cabbage-rose; of all shades of color, bright yellow, pink, red, and almost

black. The Rose of Damascus, or damask rose, is the one first brought to this country, and is a very deep red, with a strong perfume. Then there are the Egyptian sea-roses, tea-roses, rock-roses, which grow in dry, rocky places, where no other flower can live; and the Alpine rose, growing by the eternal snow-drifts of the Alps.

Roses are hardy plants, and will live a long time, if properly cared for. There is a rose-tree in Germany, which is known to be eight hundred years old, and it is still blossoming.

We all know and love the pretty moss-rose, with its mossy, green veil, that gives it such a shy, modest air; and the tea-rose, which, in the South and West, grows on large trees. The writer had, in her garden in Arkansas, one which grew to be over seven feet high, and would bear as many as five hundred blossoms at once.

But there is one rose more curious than all the others—the Rose of Jericho. It has another name which botanists call it, that is, *Anastatica*, a Greek word, meaning resurrection; and the Arabs call it the symbol of immortality, because it comes to life again long after it has seemed to be dead. It lives in the hot sands of the Desert of Sahara, and when the dry season comes it withers, folds its leaves, and draws up its roots, like little feet, into a light ball, and the winds of the desert carry it until it reaches a moist soil, and then, we are told, it drops, takes root, and its leaves become green, and its blossoms open, a delicate pink.

There is a flower in Mexico, known as the Resurrection Flower, which is very much the same. It may be carried about in your pocket for a year and more, and yet, when put into a saucer of water, in a few hours will blossom out as bright and fresh as if it had just come out of the garden.

When the Romans conquered Britain, more than eighteen hundred years ago, they introduced many curious customs into that country,—among others, that of carving the figure of a rose on the ceilings of their banqueting-halls, or suspending a natural rose over the dining-table, with the Latin motto, "*Sub rosa*," written above it, to indicate that whatever was said there among friends, or *under the rose*,—for that was the meaning of the words,—should not be repeated, the white rose being the symbol of silence.

The rose is the national emblem of England, as the thistle is of Scotland, and the shamrock, or clover, of Ireland. Every one who has studied



history knows of the Wars of the Roses in England, when the two rival families of York and Lancaster fought for the English crown, the house of York having for its badge the white rose, and the house of Lancaster the red.

Many of my young readers have heard of the language of flowers, in which people can hold conversations with each other; for instance: A white rose is the emblem of silence; a withered rose of any color means, "Let us forget;" and a yellow rose, "Despair," and so on. A rose handed to a

person means one thing when handed upright, another when its position is reversed. With its thorns it has a certain meaning; without them, still another. Among these Eastern people—the Persians, Turks, and Hindoos—this language of flowers is so perfectly understood that, by means of a bunch of their favorite roses, long conversations may be carried on without a word being spoken. This suits these people, who do not like to talk very much, but who are, nevertheless, a very romantic, dreamy, and poetic race.

## AMERICAN ORATORS.

BY WILLIAM H. RIDEING.

WE are a nation of speakers, and have a speech ready for every occasion, whether it be a public dinner, a political mass-meeting, or a Fourth of July celebration. Our English cousins are astonished at the general fluency and confidence we exhibit; for while they possess some of the wittiest and most learned masters of debate living, the gift of public talking is not common among them.

Of course, talking is no more like real oratory than a pot of paint is like art; and a good many Americans have never found out the difference.

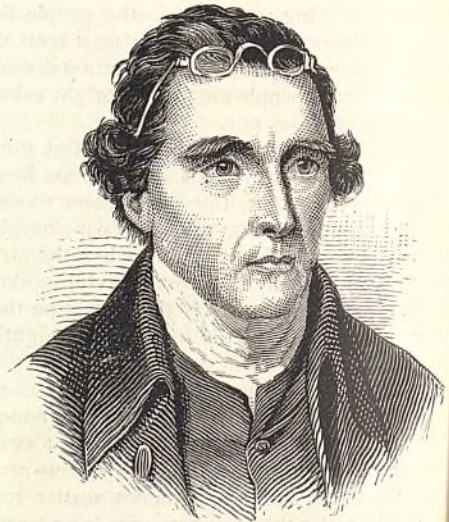
The high-flown words of the patriot who declaims to his fellow-countrymen on the Fourth of July are often nonsensical and meaningless. Who, to his mortification, has not heard much rubbish spoken from "the stump" in rural villages? But we have an unusual number of bright, eloquent, sensible speakers withal, and in the hundred years past we have produced some of the greatest orators the world has known,—real orators, mind you, who had a wonderful power of filling multitudes of intelligent men and women with fear, hope, courage, dismay, and horror in turn; orators who could, with passionate words alone, drive a populace to war and restore it to a love of peace in a few brief moments.

It is scarcely necessary for me to tell you who these great orators were. All of you have heard of Patrick Henry, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, Edward Everett, and Rufus Choate. These are some notable representatives of our orators,—I cannot mention all,—and I have collected a few anecdotes about them, which may, perhaps, interest you at this season.

Boys who do not love study, and would rather

fish and swim on a Summer's afternoon than pore over First Lessons in Latin, may find much consolation in the life of Patrick Henry.

He was born on a Virginia farm in 1736, and was as fine a specimen of the ne'er-do-well as could be found in his county. His person was ugly, his manners were awkward, and his dress was slovenly.



PATRICK HENRY.

When the hour for study came he was usually absent, and was to be found in the woods with his gun, or by the river with his fishing-rod. But at the age of fifteen he was installed behind the counter of a merchant, and a year afterward began business for himself in partnership with his brother



William. The firm failed in a short time, and Patrick then tried farming, in which he also failed. Opening another store, he again became a bankrupt, and at last sought relief for his disappointment in reading classical books.

With only a smattering of law, he obtained a license to practice in the courts; and one day a case was intrusted to him which was so hopeless that no other lawyer would accept it. As he arose to make the opening address the spectators laughed at him, and his father, who presided on the bench, was overcome with confusion.

But before he had spoken many words those who had laughed were struck with amazement at the eloquence he displayed, and listened to him in death-like silence. They were fascinated by the spell of his eyes, the majesty of his attitudes, the commanding expression of his face, and as he concluded, tears of joy rolled down his father's face. The case was won, and the name of Patrick Henry became known far and wide as that of a great orator.

But he was no more inclined to study after his success than before, and instead of improving his manners and dress he took great delight in their plainness, and would often come into court attired in a coarse hunting jacket, greasy leather breeches, and with a pair of saddle-bags under his arm.

While he remained in his seat he was a shuffling, independent-looking farmer, but when he arose and spoke his body seemed to burn with passion.

The intense force of his words is shown by an incident which occurred during a speech describing the effects of the adoption of the present Constitution of the United States, in which he looked "beyond the horizon that binds mortal eyes, to those celestial beings who were hovering over the scene, anxiously waiting for a decision which involved the happiness or misery of the whole human race." To those celestial beings he made an appeal that caused the nerves of all who listened to him to shake with horror, and as his passion was at its height a terrible thunder-storm rumbled without, and the members rushed from the legislative chamber in terror.

Henry Clay was almost worshiped by his adherents. He was born in 1777, and was a very tall man, straight and slim as an arrow. And here you must remember that command of words alone does not make an orator. There are some speakers whose language is carefully chosen and whose thoughts are beautiful; yet these are not orators. They have not the passionate, thrilling voice nor the mastering presence that gave Mr. Clay his great power over an audience. It has been said that, in listening to him, you were reminded of his intellect only, that seemed to shine through his thin

flesh. As he spoke every muscle of his face was at work, and his whole body was agitated. He did not use many words, but they were to the point, and spoken grandly.

John Randolph, of Roanoke, spoke scornfully in Congress one day of Mr. Clay's language.



HENRY CLAY.

"The gentleman from Virginia," said Mr. Clay in reply, "was pleased to declare that, in one point of my speech, he agreed with me,—in an humble estimate of my command of words. I know my deficiency. I was born to no proud patrimonial estate of my father. I inherited only infancy, ignorance, and indigence. I feel my defects; but so far as my situation in early life is concerned I may, without presumption, say they are more my misfortune than my fault. But, however I may deplore my inability to furnish the gentleman with a better specimen of my powers of verbal criticism, I will venture to say my regret is not greater than the disappointment the members of Congress feel as to the strength of his argument on the question before us."

Thus he managed to vindicate his origin and to turn the laugh against his antagonist in one breath.

Mr. Clay's knowledge of human nature was thorough and profound; and he was able to put it to use at any moment, as the following anecdotes will show:

On a certain occasion he met an old hunter, who had once been his supporter, but who afterward went against him on account of his vote on a certain bill in Congress.

"Have you a good rifle, my friend?" he asked of the hunter.

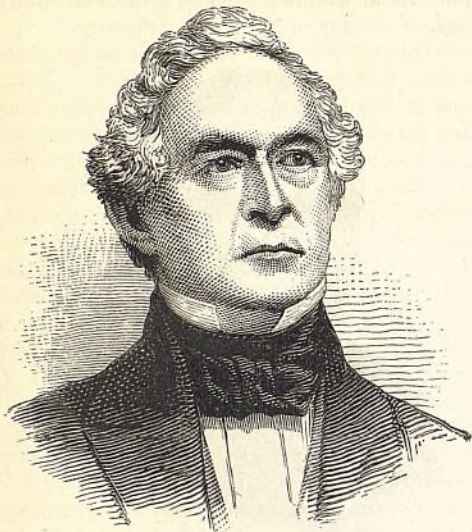
"Yes."

"Does it ever flash in the pan?"



"It never did so more than once," the hunter answered, proud of his weapon.

"Well, what did you do with it? You did n't throw it away, did you?" continued Mr. Clay.



EDWARD EVERETT.

"No; I picked the flint, tried it again, and brought down game."

"Have I ever flashed in the pan, except on the Compensation bill?"

"No, I can't say you have."

"Well, will you throw me away?"

"No; I'll pick the flint and try you again."

So the hunter grasped Mr. Clay's hand and gave him his vote.

At another time Clay was visiting a backwoods county in Kentucky, where the man who could fire the best shot stood highest in esteem, and the man who could n't fire at all was looked upon with contempt. He was canvassing for votes, when he was approached by some old hunters, one of whom told him that he would be elected to Congress, but that he must first show how good a shot he was. Clay declared that he never shot with any rifle except his own, which was at home.

"No matter. Here's 'Old Bess,'" answered the hunter, giving him a gun, "and she never fails in the hands of a marksman. She's put a bullet through many a squirrel at a hundred yards, and has let daylight through a red-skin at twice that distance. If you can shoot with any gun, you can shoot with 'Old Bess.'"

A target was set up, and Mr. Clay aimed "Old Bess" at it. He fired faint-heartedly, but the shot struck the bull's-eye in the center.

"A chance shot! a chance shot!" cried his opponents.

"Never mind," he answered. "You beat it, and then I will."

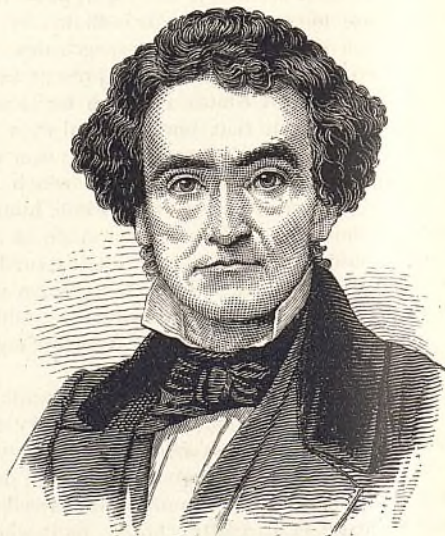
No one could beat it, and Mr. Clay had too much sense to try again.

In appearance and manner, Edward Everett was almost the exact opposite of Patrick Henry, and even more elegant and refined than Henry Clay. He was very polished, and his voice was clear and sweet; but his orations were not so powerful. They were beautiful compositions, that read well in a book, and were not a bit like the wild-fire utterances that burst from the Virginian.

Rufus Choate was also a man of great eloquence, and it is said that he would plead a case with the earnestness of one whose life and character were at stake. He was a lawyer by profession, and at an early age distinguished himself as an advocate.

Mr. Whipple has written of him: "His legal arguments were replete with knowledge, and blazed with the blended fires of imagination and sensibility, which swept along the minds of his hearers on the torrent of his eloquence." He was fanciful and humorous, too.

On one occasion a witness testified that he had found one of Mr. Choate's clients crying, and that when the witness asked him what was the matter, he answered that he was afraid that he had "struck on a snag." Mr. Choate translated this testimony as follows: "Such were my client's feelings, and such his actions, down to the fatal night, when, at

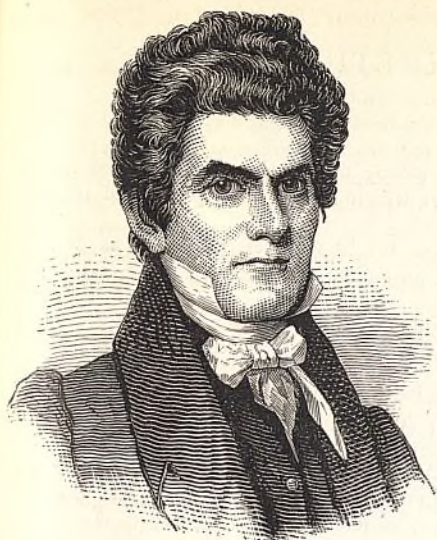


RUFUS CHOATE.

ten o'clock, in that flood of tears, his hopes went out like a candle."

In March, 1844, he delivered a famous speech, and thus alluded to a statement that the American





JOHN C. CALHOUN.

people cherished a feeling of deep-rooted hatred to Great Britain.

"No, sir; we are above all this. Let the Highland clansman, half-naked, half-civilized, half-blinded by the peat-smoke of his cavern, have his hereditary enemy, and his hereditary enmity, and keep the keen, deep, and precious hatred alive if he can; let the North American Indian have his, and hand it down from father to son, by Heaven knows what symbol of alligators, rattle-snakes, and war-clubs smeared with vermilion; let such a country as Poland, cloven to the earth, the armed heel on her radiant forehead, her body dead, her soul incapable of death,—let her remember her wrongs of the days long past; let the lost and wandering tribes of Israel remember theirs,—the manliness and sympathy of the world may allow or pardon this to them; but shall America, young, free and prosperous, just setting out on the highway of heaven, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just begins to move in \* \* \* shall she pollute and corrode her noble and happy heart by moping over old stories of wrongs? \* \* No, sir; no, sir; a thousand times no! We are born to happier feelings. We have, we can have no barbarian memory of wrongs for which brave men have made the last expiation to the brave!"

But no extract, nor the oration printed in full, can give an idea of the stirring effect which the music of the living voice gave to the vivid words.

I have left myself so little space that I cannot do more than mention Calhoun, who was born in 1782, and was an exceedingly brilliant speaker. In the same year Daniel Webster was born, and with a few anecdotes about him I must conclude.

In appearance he was tall and ugly. His head was large, and his face set with great black eyes. The words he spoke came up from his broad chest with such emphasis that it has been said that each of them seemed to weigh at least twelve pounds.

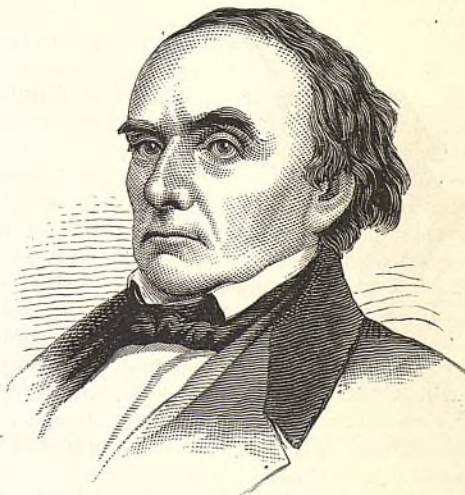
Like Henry, he could entrance an audience and hold them spell-bound by his eloquence. "When his speech was over," one writer says, "the tones of the orator still lingered in the ear, and the people, unconscious of its close, retained their positions. The agitated face, the heaving breast, the suffused eye attested its influence. There was not a movement or a whisper for several minutes, when a sharp rap of the chairman's hammer broke the charm that Mr. Webster had wound about them."

One of his best orations was made in answer to a Colonel Hayne, who generously congratulated Webster on his effort.

"And how do you feel this evening, Colonel?" Webster asked.

"None the better for your speech, sir," answered his opponent.

You understand, of course, that a great orator must have a mind quick to seize upon apt similes. Alluding to Alexander Hamilton, Webster said, in an after-dinner speech, "He smote the rock of public credit, and streams of revenue gushed forth." As



DANIEL WEBSTER.

if to illustrate this, he brought his clenched fist down upon the table, and in doing so he struck a wine-glass, which broke and cut his hand. He slowly covered the wound with his napkin, which suggested a shroud, and then continued: "He touched the dead corpse of public credit, and it rose upon its feet." Thus he made himself master of the situation.



## TOTTY'S ARITHMETIC.

By E. S. F.

ONE little head, worth its whole weight in gold,  
Over and over, a million times told.

Two shining eyes, full of innocent glee,  
Brighter than diamonds ever could be.

Three pretty dimples, for fun to slip in,  
Two in the cheeks and one in the chin.

Four lily fingers on each baby-hand,  
Fit for a princess of sweet Fairy-land.

Five on each hand, if we reckon Tom Thumb,  
Standing beside them, so stiff and so glum!

Six pearly teeth just within her red lips,  
Over which merriment ripples and trips.

Seven bright ringlets, as yellow as gold,  
Seeming the sunshine to gather and hold.

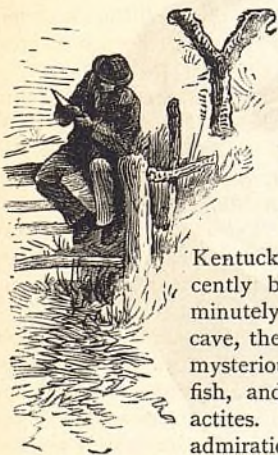
Eight tiny waves running over her hair,  
Sunshine and shadow, they love to be there.

Nine precious words that Totty can say;  
But she will learn new ones every day.

Ten little chubby, comical toes;  
And that is as far as this lesson goes.

## A GREAT SPECULATION.

By ROSSITER JOHNSON.



YOUNG Tommy Baker's uncle, who was a great reader and traveler, came to his nephew's home one day for a short visit, and during his stay he talked a good deal about the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, which he had recently been to see, describing minutely the approach to the cave, the winding passages, the mysterious rivers, the eyeless fish, and the crystals and stalactites. Tommy was lost in admiration.

Wishing to teach him as much as possible, and to have him remember what he had learned, his father, after his uncle had gone, continued the subject, telling him about other celebrated caves—Wier's Cave and Madison's Cave, in Virginia; Franconia, in Germany; Kirkdale, in England; and Fingal's, in Staffa. Then he told him about celebrated artificial excavations—the catacombs of Paris, Rome, Syracuse, and Palermo; and, finally, he described some of the discoveries at Hercula-

neum and Pompeii, and in the mounds of our Western States. When he had fully awakened Tommy's interest and curiosity, he told him in what books he could find more information on these subjects, and then left him to study them up for himself.

Tommy and I were, one day, in his father's yard at the point where the sward began to slope toward the brook, a tributary to Rocky Creek. We sat on a large boulder, with our feet hanging over the edge, looking down into the little valley of the brook, and he repeated what his father and his uncle had told him about the caves and the catacombs and Herculaeum and the mounds.

"I wish," said he, "that the mouth of one of 'em was in our yard."

"Yes," said I, "that would be nice. Then we could go in and see all the curiosities and get as many crystals and vases and arrows and hatchets as we wanted."

My fancy included the products of all the different kinds of caves and excavations in the one which was to be in Tommy's yard; but perhaps it was just as well,—certainly it was all the more enjoyable.

"But that would n't be the best of it," said he. "Why, what would?" I asked.



"We could put up a gate, and charge folks for going in," he answered, and his eyes twinkled over his imaginary profits.

"Could we?" said I, incredulously.

"Of course I could," said he; and the singular pronoun signified to me that he was growing avaricious, and no longer wanted me for a partner in the business.

I began to wish that the cave had been located in our yard, instead of in theirs. I thought if it had been, I would teach Tommy a lesson of magnanimous liberality by dividing the money with him every Saturday night.

"You always have to pay to go into such places," he continued; "and it's the easiest way to get rich there is. You just put up a little sign that says: 'This way to the Cave!' and a hand pointing. And then it's a long distance, and the path is crooked and real hard to walk on, and you leave all the stones and bushes and old rubbish in it. And when the people get to the end of it, there you are, sitting by a little table with a box on it for the money; and they've got to pay you twenty-five cents, or fifty perhaps, before they can go in, because the cave's on your land. And some of 'em say they won't give it; and then they think about the hard, stony path, and they say it's too bad to come over all that for nothing, and then they pay the money and go in. And you have some little books on the table, that tell all about it, and you sell 'em one of them for ten cents, or else they can't understand it; and there you make some more money."

Tommy was growing very enthusiastic on the subject, and I was catching a little of the same spirit.

"I wish we had a cave," said I.

"Yes," said the speculative Tommy, "I could sit at the little table and take the money, and you could go with the folks to show 'em the way and tell 'em about things. Some of 'em have rivers in 'em, that have fish in 'em without any eyes; and you have to row the people across in a boat, and you charge 'em extra for that."

I had an idea. "Suppose we *make* a cave?"

"Could we?" said Tommy.

"We could try," said I, remembering that somebody or other had once given that as a very heroic answer, which had made him famous. And now, what if the same answer, given in the same spirit, should make Tommy and me rich!

"How should we do it?" he asked.

"Oh, dig it!" said I, as confidently as if I had been a journeyman cave-maker half my life, and were ready to take Tommy for my apprentice.

"Where would we have it?" said he, looking around.

"I don't know; let's look for a good place," said I, and I slid down the face of the rock, followed by the little fortune-hunter.

We surveyed the whole yard, and very quickly concluded that the entrance must be somewhere along the bank of the creek. At a certain point a few yards below, in the direction of down stream, the bank, instead of descending in a grassy slope, fell off suddenly, and presented an almost perpendicular face of clay, on which no grass grew. It was evident that this was the place to begin operations, if we were to make a cave. We had nothing to do but dig straight in at the base of the cliff; and we could throw the dirt into the stream, and the water would wash it away out of sight about as fast as we two boys could dig it. This would prevent the work from being discovered, unless some one should happen to go down the bank and approach closely to the mouth of the proposed cave.

I asked Tommy what he thought his father would say as to the cave.

"I guess," said he, "he would n't want me to do it, if he knew. But when he sees the money, he'll say it's all right."

"It can't hurt anything, at any rate," said I, beginning to fear that if he thought too much about what his father would say, he might give up the project.

"No," said he, "it can't hurt anything. We can throw the dirt over into the brook, and not make a bit of muss. And then it'll be all underground, and the ground on top'll be just as good for a garden or anything as ever 't was."

"And then," I pursued, "when we get a hundred dollars, we can make our fathers and mothers a present of half of it"—for I still had a vague fear that, in some unsuspected manner, the cave *might* interfere with some of Mr. Baker's plans.

But Tommy did n't know about making any such munificent presents. It was n't the way people usually did when they got rich. He promised, however, to think about it.

One thing was certain. We must keep the whole matter a profound secret—that was agreed upon. And we would begin operations the very next day—that also was agreed upon. I stood before the face of the clay cliff, and with a sharp stick marked the arched outline of the entrance to the cave that was to be.

We got together again in the evening, alone in Mrs. Baker's kitchen, and used up several sheets of paper in drawing plans for the cave.

"We must have some parts of it very crooked," said I.

"Yes, and in one place there must be quite a large room, with stalakites hanging down from the top," said Tommy.



"O yes! *stalactites*," said I, intending to correct him very gently.

"It's *stalakites*," said he; "my Uncle Charles said so."

I was sure I was right, and was not inclined to let it go so. We came very near falling into a serious quarrel on the subject, and giving up the project. At length we agreed to leave it to the dictionary, which the confident Tommy brought, and looked out the word.

"Well, *stalactites*," said he, "if you must have it so;" and then he hurried on to the consideration of other parts of the plan. "If we could strike a stream of water underground it would be nice," he continued. "There's one runs right through the bottom of our well."

"Perhaps we can dig a pond and pour some water into it," I suggested, "and catch some fish in Rocky Creek to put into it."

"Put their eyes out first?" asked Tommy.

"No," said I, "that would be cruel. Besides, after they've been there awhile their eyes will go away, and their little fishes will be born blind."

Tommy saw that I considered the subject from a lofty point, both in morals and in science, and he was much impressed.

"What I want," said he, after musing a few minutes on these weighty questions, "is a few skulls, so it'll look like the catacombs. And that'll scare the boys, and make 'em not try to get in when we aint there."

"There's a horse's skull on the common," I suggested.

"I suppose we can't get human skulls," said he.

"I suppose not."

"Then may be, if we put the horse's skull pretty high up, and stick the long nose-part deep into the wall, it'll look like a human skull, and we can make 'em think 't is."

"May be so."

"But then," said he, "the teeth ought to show. The teeth are the scariest part of a skull."

"That's so," said I, emphatically; and I immediately gave my whole mind to the solution of the problem how to make a horse's skull look like a human skull, and yet have the teeth show. I solved it at last. "I have it! I have it! provided we can get two horses' skulls," and I stopped in doubt on that question.

"O yes," said Tommy; "we can get two easy enough."

"Well, then, we'll fix one as you say, with the long nose-part in the wall, and close to it we'll fix the other so that it will be all buried up in the wall except the mouth, which will stick out and show its teeth. The first one will make folks think they're human, and the other will scare 'em—a little; we

don't want to scare 'em too much." Thus we agreed to arrange it.

Tommy put the finishing touches to the last plan we had drawn, and made quite conspicuous the table at the entrance, with the money-box on it.

Then I went home, and we both went to bed,—not so much to sleep as to lie awake and think about the cave and its profits.

Early next morning, with a shovel and a hoe and a light crowbar, we went to work. With an old nail-keg to stand on while working at the upper part of the arch, we got along very well. Before school-time we had dug more than a foot into the bank, and thrown the dirt, a shovelful at a time, into the brook. We were tired enough to be perfectly willing to leave off work in good season for school. But our enthusiasm was growing, and we longed for vacation to come, that we might give our whole time to the task.

After school we worked again until supper-time; and the close of that first day saw the completion of the first two feet of the tunnel.

"How much shall we charge?" said I, as we took a last look at the hollow arch, before going home to our well-earned rest.

"I never heard of a cave that you could go into, and all through, for less than twenty-five cents," said Tommy.

"That ought to be cheap enough, certainly," said I.

"Yes," said he, "we must charge a quarter of a dollar; and no half-price for children, and no free passes to anybody."

"No," said I, "no free passes. But shall we admit children at all? They'll meddle with things, and may be break something. They're awful troublesome."

"Admit 'em if they pay," said the business-like Tommy. This seemed to settle the matter, and we walked away in silence.

"But," said I, when we had reached the top of the bank, "not many of the boys that we know have got twenty-five cents. They never have so much, except on Fourth of July."

"Then let 'em sell something and raise the money," he answered, knowing that he had the monopoly of the cave market.

"But," I suggested, "what if they wont?"

Tommy took a few minutes to consider that question. It put the matter in a new light. He began to realize that the boys were under no obligation, and might not be at all anxious, to pay tribute to the money-box on the little table where he already imagined himself sitting at the receipt of custom.

"I guess," said he, slowly, "we shall have to let them in for about five cents apiece."



"I think that will be the best way," I answered; and then we parted for the night.

The next day was Saturday, and we gave the whole time to the work. In order to lose as little as possible, we brought our dinners; but long before noon we became fiercely hungry and ate all our provisions, and two hours later we went home for more.

By tea-time, Saturday, we had penetrated two yards into the bank, rounding the arch out completely all the way, and throwing all the dirt over into the brook, which was here pretty swift and swept it away. We saw that our progress would necessarily be slower and slower, as we had farther and farther to carry the dirt. But we thought we had done well so far, and were very much encouraged.

Thus we dug away, mornings, afternoons, and Saturdays, until we reached a point about fifteen feet from the entrance. And now it was very slow work, because every shovelful had to travel over those five yards. We began to realize that we had taken a pretty large contract. None of the winding passages had been attempted yet. It was just a straight tunnel. We sat down and discussed the situation.

"If we carry out the whole plan, it will take all Summer," said Tommy.

"Yes," said I, "and, when the Fall rains come, this won't be a pleasant place to stay in."

"No," said he; "a fellow might take an awful cold—consumption, may be—sitting here all day making change when the equinoctial was going on."

"Let's finish it up right here," said I.

"I think we'd better," said Tommy. "We can dig some away at the sides here and make one room, and that'll do. One room's enough, if they're only going to pay five cents. We can put all the skulls and things in here."

"And if it pays pretty well," said I, "we can dig it farther next year, and put in more things, and then the boys will want to come in again."

"It's a good idea," said Tommy; "it will be most profitable that way."

So we went to work with a will, and dug away a few yards of earth on each side of the inner end of the tunnel, until we had made a small room. Then we scooped a good deal off from the ceiling of this room, until it was considerably higher than the tunnel.

"That'll do first-rate," said Tommy; "that's plenty dark enough."

"Now for the things," said I. "How are we going to make the stalactites?"

"Let's go and see what we can find," said Tommy.

We went on a voyage of discovery around the house and barn. Behind the barn, leaning up against it, was a section of an old white picket-fence, that had been torn up to make room for a new one somewhere.

"I think those would do nicely," said I, and we knocked off seven or eight of the pickets, sawed them short, and carried them to the cave, where we stuck them into the ceiling, points down.

"That's splendid!" said Tommy. "That looks just like the Mammoth Cave. Now for the skulls."

I thought it would be better not to go for the skull until evening, as somebody might see us in the day-time. Tommy agreed to that; and then we went over to our house, to see what we could find.

I stole into the front room and brought out two flint arrow-heads and a stone hatchet, which were among other curiosities on a little stand in the corner. In the wood-shed we found a broken preserve-jar and an old iron dumb-bell.

All these we carried to the cave, and arranged them around the sides.

"Those," said Tommy, "make it look like an Indian mound."

We employed the little remaining time before supper in sweeping and smoothing the floor, and discussing the management of the show.

"I wish there was a door to it, so we could lock it up," said Tommy. "I'm afraid when a few of the boys learn the way, they'll bring the others when we ain't here."

This was a very serious consideration. But presently I thought I saw the remedy.

"We can't make a door," said I; "but we mustn't let them learn the way here."

"How can we help it?" said Tommy.

"We must take them one at a time, and blindfold them at your father's gate, and then lead them down here by some real crooked, roundabout way."

Tommy was delighted with the idea.

"And that," said he, "will do instead of a winding passage."

In the evening we went to the common and got the horse's skull. Then we scoured the whole common to find another one, but we were not successful.

"Never mind," said Tommy, "I guess we can make this one do."

We carried it home and deposited it in the wood-shed.

Early next morning Tommy came over to our house in high spirits.

"I've found just the thing, in our garret," said he.



"What is it?" said I, eagerly.

"Come and see!"

I went with him over to their wood-shed, and, after shutting the door and locking it, he went to a barrel in one corner, and carefully lifted out one of those plaster models of the human head which the phrenologists use, with little paper labels pasted on the bumps all over it.

"That's splendid! That's lucky!" said I, in unfeigned admiration.

"That'll make it look like Herculeum," said he.

Tommy wrapped it in an old piece of carpet, and I put a newspaper around the horse's skull, and we hurried them to the cave.

The keg we had stood on for the high work was still there. We placed it in one corner, threw the piece of carpet over it, and set the bust on it. Then we scooped a hole in the wall, and put in the skull so that it stuck about half-way out. We tamped the dirt close around it, making it look as if it had been buried there before the cave was formed.

Tommy surveyed it and pronounced it perfectly satisfactory.

"That," said he, "looks just like the catacombs."

We were now ready for customers, and we agreed upon the route over which they must travel. We thought we'd light it up with a candle or two after school, and then bring the boys in.

If we made rather poor recitations that day, you may readily guess the reason. We hurried home after school, and got a stub of a candle and carried it to the cave, where we lighted it and placed it on a shingle driven into the wall, and then went to the front gate to look for customers.

The first boy that came along was Charlie Garnett.

"Hello, Charlie!"

"Hello!"

"We've found a cave," said Tommy.

"A cave!" said Charlie, wondering.

"Yes, a cave; and it's full of curiosities. Statuettes, and statues, and skulls, and stone tomahawks, and arrows, and lots of things. Like Herculeum and the Mammoth Cave, you know."

"You're foolin'," said Charlie.

"No foolin'," said Tommy, solemnly. "We'll take you all through it for five cents."

"Honest true?"

"Honest true! Aint it?" and he turned to me for confirmation.

"Yes," said I, "it's a splendid cave."

"But I haint got five cents," said Charlie.

"How much have you got?" said Tommy.

"Only three."

Tommy consulted with me. He thought it was better to let him in for three cents than not to have him visit it at all. I assented.

"We'll let *you* in for three," said Tommy, graciously.

"All right! Where's your cave?" said Charlie.

"We'll blindfold you and lead you there," said Tommy.

"No you don't! I know your tricks," said Charlie.

"No trick about it," said Tommy; "is there?" and again he appealed to me.

"There is n't any trick in it," said I. "It's a real cave. But we don't want anybody to know where to find it. And besides, it's more fun to go blindfolded. It makes it seem like the dark winding passages of the Mammoth Cave."

Charlie concluded he'd try it. Tommy took his three cents, and then we tied a handkerchief tightly over his eyes. We led him through the gate, three times around the house, once around the barn, once around Mrs. Baker's flower-beds, then to the boulder and on top of it.

"Now," said I, "jump down about four feet with me."

We jumped, and at the same time Tommy rattled an iron chain against the stone, "to make it seem dungeony," he said. Then we took him down the bank to the brook, and up the other side, and three times around a tree, and over a big flat stump, and down to the brook again, and up the bank, and along the narrow path to the cave. We went to the center of the interior before we unblindfolded him.

"One, two, three!" said Tommy, and jerked off the bandage.

Charlie was lost in amazement. He looked around in perfect awe and wonder, and was speechless as a mummy—until he saw the skull. He walked up close to that, which was near the candle, and looked at it steadily a minute or two.

"That was my father's horse," said he, turning round and facing us. "You've got to pay me for that."

"I aint agoing to pay for no dead horses," said Tommy, excitedly, his business principles getting the better of his grammar. "What's throwed out on the common," he continued, "is anybody's that wants it."

Charlie was not ready to admit this proposition, and a serious debate seemed likely to ensue; but just here certain events which had been happening above ground came to a crisis.

Mrs. Baker had several ladies visiting her that afternoon, and they all walked out to see her flower-garden. As they stood admiring a bed of lilies-of-the-valley, six of them, including Mrs.

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Baker, suddenly found themselves moving in a direct line toward China.

At the same instant, we heard a cracking and crumbling overhead; and as the lumps of dirt

mons came out looking as if the sharpest of the Indian weapons had been deftly wielded about her scalp. Perhaps her wig reposes to this day on the bald bumps of the phrenologist's model. Miss

Moore's muslin dress was badly torn on the stalactites; and Mrs. Baker's shoes, like the tiger's visitors in the fable, made no tracks away from that dread cave. If the loss of them could have saved her son from punishment, he at least would have been entirely satisfied.

As for Tommy and me, we did n't exactly want the hills to cover us—that we could have had by standing still. But we felt the desirability of immediate emigration. We ran down the gorge of the brook, and escaped to the woods, not venturing home until night-fall.

The next day, Tommy came over. He did not come into the house, but stole around to the woodshed, and gave a low whistle. I went out, and we sat down on a large billet of wood. "Old Burke was at our house this morning," said he.

"What did he want?" said I, a little nervously, apprehending some new peril.

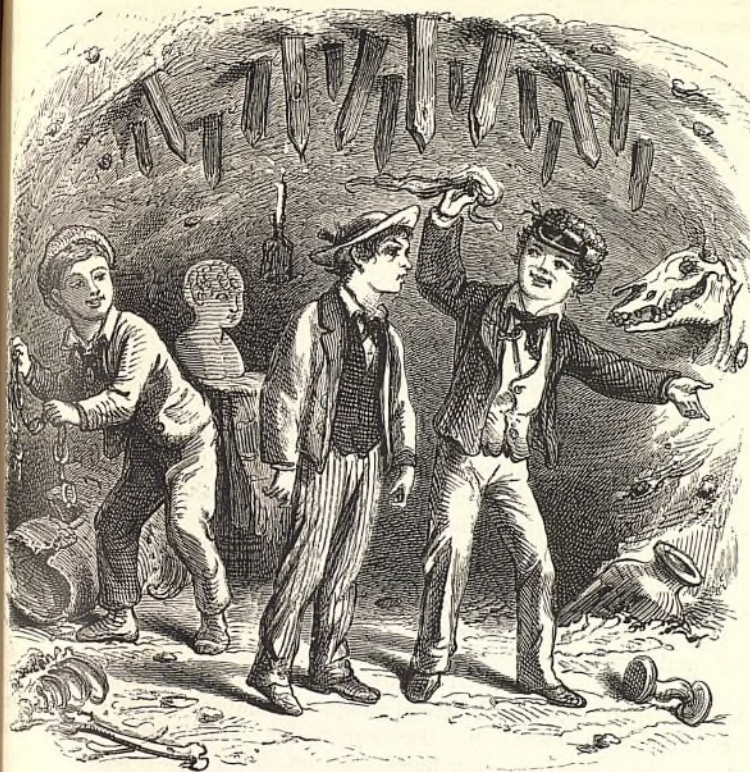
"He wanted to see father. He said he'd wondered what made the water that comes into his house so muddy these two or three weeks back. And yesterday the hydraulic ram stopped working, and he went and found it clogged up with dirt. And then he traced the muddy water up to the brook, until he came to where we threw the dirt over from the cave. That's what he wanted to see father about."

"What did your father say?"

"He said he was very sorry, and then he told him all about it. Then he said he was going to have the cave filled up, and not have any more such works. He's going to send me away to boarding-school next week."

Here Tommy looked very doleful, and a long pause ensued.

This would necessarily wind up the cave business, and dissolve the partnership. Tommy said



CHARLIE'S EYES ARE UNBANDAGED.

and stalactites began to fall, Tommy cried out: "It's cavin' in! run!" and we hurriedly adjourned the debate, and fled out of the cavern in mortal terror.

We were none too quick. Six unprofitable visitors, who had not paid anything, and had no free passes, and were not blindfolded, were suddenly introduced into the midst of all the wonders of the Mammoth Cave, the Indian mounds, the catacombs, and Herculaneum. And they brought daylight with them, before which the glory and the mystery of those wonders vanished forever.

The screaming and the consternation that ensued may be imagined. Daddy Blake, who was working in a garden two doors off, came promptly to the rescue. He wasted no time in approaching the cave by the winding passage, but got the long step-ladder, let it down from the top, and helped the ladies out.

Fortunately no one was seriously hurt, but there was a terrible rumpling of toilets. Old Mrs. Sim-



nothing about dividing the profits, and I delicately reminded him that there must be a little cash in the treasury.

"There's only three cents," said he.

"Yes," said I, "three cents."

"And that can't be divided evenly," said he.

"That's so," said I.

"And the cave was on our land," said he.

"Yes," said I, "it was on your land"—and I added silently, "I'm glad it was."

"And, besides, I had to take a lickin'," he added, ruefully.

"Did you? That's too bad," said I, with genuine sympathy.

Tommy handed me one cent.

"That's fair," said I.

## HOW THE "MARGARETTA" WAS CAPTURED ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

BY GEORGE J. VARNEY.

ALMOST at the extreme limit of "Down East," in Maine, and on a river and bay of the same name, lies the good old town of Machias. At the date of the Revolution it contained about eighty families and one hundred single men.

No community in the thirteen colonies was more indignant than this at the usurpations of King George the Third and his Ministers; and none was more prompt in throwing off the British yoke when the signal was given.

In the Spring of 1775 there reached Machias the proclamation of the Massachusetts Congress, authorizing preparations for resistance to Great Britain; and, in a few days, a tall liberty pole was erected by the patriots of the village.

On Saturday, the ninth of May, intelligence of the battle of Lexington reached them, having been brought by the crews of two lumber sloops from Boston. The vessels had come for "pickets and plank," to be used by the British in defense of their position at Boston against the Americans. In order to secure the desired cargoes, and the safe return of the vessels, the British armed schooner "Margaretta" attended them as convoy.

When the captain of the schooner saw the liberty pole, he went on shore and informed the people that it must be taken down, or he should fire upon the town.

A meeting of the inhabitants was held within a few hours, but they voted not to take down the pole. The owner of the two sloops, a wealthy merchant trading in Boston and Machias, represented to the captain that the meeting was not fully attended; and he induced him to wait for the action of another meeting, to be called on Monday, before carrying out his threat.

The next day being Sunday, Captain Moore, of the "Margaretta," attended worship at the village church. During the service, he saw through a window some twenty men, with guns in their hands, crossing the river on the logs. Suspecting a design of seizing him in church, the captain made his way over the seats to the nearest window, and, leaping through it, he ran to the shore, closely followed by his officers.

The party which he had seen, joined by others, hastened along the bank of the river in pursuit. But the crew of the "Margaretta" had observed the movements on shore, and, bringing her guns to bear, succeeded in keeping the pursuers at bay until the captain and his companions were on board.

The schooner soon dropped down the river, firing a few shots over the town as she got under way.

The party which had come across the river were from the Pleasant River settlement, about twenty miles westward,—having been sent for the day before by the Machias people, who by no means intended to have their liberty pole taken down.

The Pleasant River men had only two or three charges of powder apiece; and the next day a woman arrived at Machias, having come all the way through the woods alone to bring her husband a horn of powder, which she had found after he had gone.

Early on Monday morning, four young men took possession of one of the lumber sloops, and, bringing her up to the wharf, gave three cheers, to call the attention of the villagers. Thirty-five athletic men were soon gathered at the wharf, and a design of capturing the "Margaretta" was made known to them. Arming themselves as well as they were



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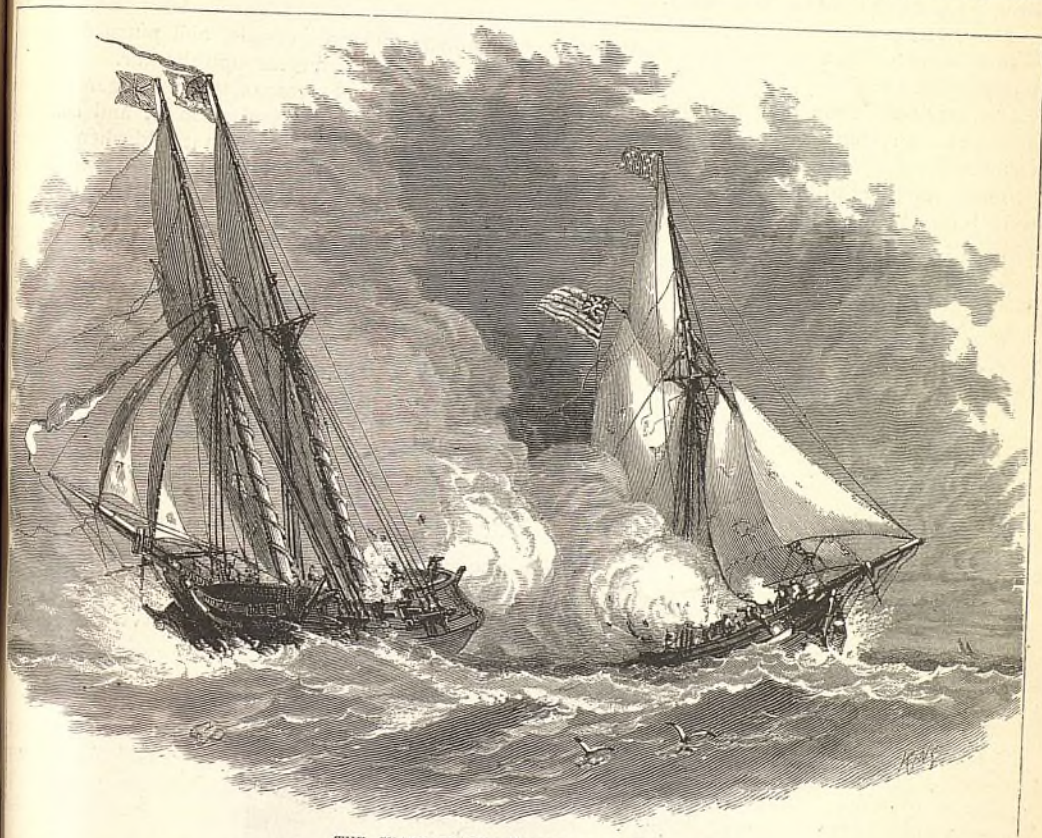
able at so brief a notice, they set sail in pursuit of the British vessel, which was lying at anchor a few miles below.

As yet, they had no commander; but an election was held on the way, by which Jeremiah O'Brien, the eldest of six noble brothers on board, was unanimously chosen captain. He immediately gave permission, for all who did not wish to venture in the attack, to leave the vessel, and three men accordingly went ashore in the boat.

When the "Margaretta" observed the approach

The "Margaretta" had an armament of four light deck guns and fourteen swivels; while the sloop had only a single cannon, rudely mounted, with which to return the fire. The first discharge killed the "Margaretta's" helmsman and cleared the quarter-deck. The schooner broached suddenly to windward, throwing the sails back, and bringing her deck into full view of her pursuers. Those of the patriots who had fire-arms instantly discharged them.

In a very few moments the vessels came together.



THE CHASE OF THE "MARGARETTA."

of the sloop, she weighed anchor and crowded on all sail to avoid a conflict. In changing her jib she carried away the boom; but, continuing her flight, she ran into Holmes' Bay, and took a spar from a vessel lying there.

While repairs were making, the sloop hove in sight; and the "Margaretta" stood out to sea, in hope still of avoiding her. So anxious was Captain Moore to avoid a collision, that he cut away his boats to increase the speed of his vessel; but this, too, was ineffectual. Finding the sloop fast upon him, he at length opened fire upon

Then ensued a contest with musketry, Captain Moore himself throwing hand-grenades into the sloop with considerable effect. An attempt was made by the patriots to board the schooner; but only one man—John O'Brien, brother of the commander—reached her deck. Seven of the British crew discharged their guns at him almost at the same moment, but not a ball struck him. Then they charged upon him with bayonets, but he escaped these by jumping overboard. The vessels had fallen some thirty yards apart; but he swam to the sloop, and was taken on board without having received any worse harm than a wetting.



The American vessel was again brought alongside the enemy, and twenty men, armed chiefly with pitchforks, sprang on board the schooner. Captain Moore had already fallen, pierced by two balls; and the conflict was so fierce that the officer left in command fled, panic-stricken, to the cabin.

Thus the schooner and her stores fell nearly uninjured into the hands of these brave freemen of Machias. The loss of the Americans was four killed and eight or nine wounded; that of the British was more than twice as many.

The "Margaretta" was the first British armed vessel captured by the Americans in the War of Independence. This enterprise was entirely a private one, the Continental Congress not having authorized any nautical force until the following October.

The Committee of Safety of Machias soon after sent John O'Brien, the hero of the action, with

despatches to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, where he was received with much applause. On the 26th of June, the Congress passed a vote of thanks to those engaged in this patriotic action at Machias, "for their courage and good conduct."

The swift little vessel of the patriots was afterward fitted up with the armament of the "Margaretta," and was named "The Liberty." A few weeks later she received a commission from Massachusetts, and did good service in protecting our coast from predatory incursions of the enemy.

Both the elder O'Briens soon became commanders of larger vessels, and pursued the business of privateering through the war.

The medicine-chest of the "Margaretta," with the name of that vessel upon it, and containing some of the medicines which it held when captured, was in good preservation a few years ago at Machias, and it may be so at this date.

## WORKING ON THE FOURTH OF JULY.

BY RUTH KENYON.



"THE BIG TREES IN THE SHADY GROVE."

WHAT a hot day it was, that Fourth of July! But the children wanted to go, just the same; two long miles in open wagons under the full heat of a blazing sun was not to be thought of as an objection, when there was such a delightful picnic at the end, with games without number and a nice supper, all under the big trees in the shady grove.

"All the world is in for fun to-day, isn't it?" said Claude, as a bob-o-link sailed by. He was try-

ing how close he could go over the tops of the tall meadow grass, without hitting his glossy black and white wings; and was so perfectly full of jollity, that all the time it bubbled over in the very merriest song you ever heard. And when they reached the woods they were surer than ever that it was holiday for the whole world; the squirrels were chattering, birds were singing, the brook was dancing, and there was a playful rustle among the leaves over-



head, as a little breeze came creeping among them. But with all this mirth about him, there was one old fellow who kept about his work; he was the Sun. It is true we thought at first that it was special fire-works, gotten up by him for Independence Day that sent the thermometer up to 94 degrees that noon; but in the end it proved there was never a bit of sport in it; he was doing his regular work. Up so far above, that he could see the dusty roads and the thirsty flowers; with such sharp ears that he could hear them crying for water; with sight so keen that he could peer away down under the ground and see how low the springs were getting, and how empty the wells, this good old friend decided he had too much work on hand to take a holiday, and so he went on with his business. He sent his very hottest rays down upon the lake and the river, and some of them to the little brook, where it went leaping through the meadow, and the little particles of water grew warm, very warm; and as they became warmer they began to feel strangely light, as if it would be very easy to fly, and they whispered to each other of this new feeling. And soon they grew so very light that they were lifted up by the air and floated away toward the sky,—first a few, then more and more, until hundreds and thousands of these wee particles were flying away. Higher they went, and still more followed, till the crowd reached from the lake to the very tops of the mountains.

Pretty soon the first ones met with a new friend, a gentle wind that was making a journey. It had just called upon Mt. Washington, and had brought some of her cool snowy air home with it. It was really refreshing on this warm day, and they stopped to chat with this cool breeze a moment; but the very first word with her chilled them through, and they pressed up to each other to get warm; the others coming up grew cold too, and as they crowded together people looked up from the picnic table and said, "There's a cloud coming up; hope it won't rain before we get home," and then they very soon forgot all about it.

But more and more of the water reached the cool air, and larger grew the cloud. Grandma Perkins opened all her blinds and shut all her windows; Mr. Merchant drew up his awning and carried in the new prints he had stacked up in front of the store; and the people at the picnic wished the wagons would come to carry them home, but the wagons were two miles off.

Up in the cloud the tiny particles pressed closer together till they made great drops, and the same old heavy feeling came over them that they had in the lake; then they began to fall, down into the meadow and town over which the wind had drifted them, all over Farmer Chapin's hay, left out to dry; down on Grandma's windows to rinse them clean; down into the garden, where the lilies were holding up their cups to catch them, and where the rose-bushes clapped a cordial welcome with their shaking leaves. They visited the picnic grove too; thick and fast they pattered through the branches; there were no carriages to take the children, there was no roof to shelter them; they crowded under the table and behind the rocks; some thought it was fun, and laughed; some thought it anything else, and cried; those who wore their best dresses were sorry; those who came in the every-day prints were glad, for had n't they seen the wash-tub too often to be frightened by water?

But never mind, little people, who were troubled. The sun did n't mean to hurt you by working on a holiday, and calling the lake-water into the sky and sending it sprinkling down; he was only doing his work. And it soaked into the earth, away down to the empty springs, and they ran bubbling into the wells, and the sparkling water we drank at tea was all the fresher for the shower; and the cisterns were filled brim full, so that Peggy's eyes brightened at the thought of her Monday's washing. So what seems bad for us now may prove good for us in the end, or good for somebody else, and we'll all be happy whatever comes, even if it is a shower in the midst of our picnic.



CAUGHT IN THE RAIN.





LITTLE Biddy O'Toole, on her three-legged stool,  
Was 'atin' her praties so hot,  
Whin up shtep'd the pig,  
Wid his appetoite big,  
And Biddy vacated the spot.

## TOM'S DELUGE.

BY MRS. H. HUDSON HOLLY.

ONCE there was a troublesome boy, named Tom, who was always in mischief. Not only that, but you never knew where to have him, for he was an original youth, and broke out constantly in unexpected places. He put the cat in walnut-shell boots and painted her pink and green in stripes. He took the wheels out of the parlor clock to make "penny-spinners;" and even that was not the worst thing he did.

One day his mamma and grown-up sisters went out, and Master Tom was left all alone in his glory. They did n't often commit such an oversight, since there was no telling what might happen before they came back; however, at first he happened to do

nothing more than to sit on the cover of the sewing-machine, drawing horses all over the fly-leaves of his sister's favorite copy of Tennyson. All at once a bright idea struck him. He slapped down the book and jumped off the sewing-machine, exclaiming, "Good! I know what I'll do! I mean to set the water running in the bath-tub, and play with my Noah's ark!"

Thereupon, Master Tom jerked open the drawer where his toys were kept, jerked out the ark, cramming in several stray animals that were kicking up their heels in various corners, and scampered down to the bath-room, talking to himself all the while.

"Now then, I must turn on both faucets, so as to



hurry up the water as fast as possible. Goody! how deep it is getting! Make haste, Noah, don't stop to count the grasshoppers, but pile into your old ark and shut the door quick! There—now you're off—but it ought to be raining—if you're Noah in the ark. Oho! I'll start the shower-bath going!" and, presently, a highly respectable shower was pattering and rattling down, while Tom jumped up and down in a perfect ecstasy of delight.

All at once the front-door bell rang. "I wonder who *that* is?" thought Tom. He listened.

"Oh, there's Uncle George!" he cried; "I'm going down to see him this minute;" and forgetting all about poor Noah, away he scampered, slamming the bath-room door behind him, and leaving the water still running.

His uncle, with whom he was a great favorite, was waiting in the hall.

"Well, young monkey," he said, as Tom's curly head appeared at the top of the stairs, "do you want to take a drive to the park with me?"

"Oh, don't I though!" cried Tom. "Please, may I drive the *buckle*?" by which he meant being allowed to hold the reins where they were buckled together.

"Yes; just as you like—only hurry. I don't want to keep the horse standing."

Away flew Tom, but only to appear again in two minutes, and to scramble into the buggy like a lamplighter, when off they went. Meantime, the water was rising higher and higher in the bath-tub, and presently brimmed over and began to trickle slowly upon the floor. It ought to have passed off through the top drain, but, unluckily, the day before Master Tom had amused himself by plugging up the little holes. Soon a slow but steady stream was creeping under the door, and making little alternate puddles and waterfalls down the front stairs. And still nobody came home.

After about an hour of this, John, the black water came into the dining-room to lay the table for dinner. He was just standing by the sideboard arranging an elegant pyramid of fruit in a glass dish, when crash, bang! down fell big, square yards of plaster on top of his poor pate, and knocked

him flat upon the floor. The water had gradually soaked through the boards, and plaster ceilings will melt, you know, if not quite as easily as sugar, yet just as surely if you keep at them long enough.

Up rushed the cook, leaving the roasting turkey to take care of itself; and when she saw the condition of the dining-room, and poor John lying senseless on the floor, she began to scream murder, fire, and thieves, at the top of her voice, which so alarmed the housemaid, that she dropped her best duster into the parlor fire, and rushed all the way down the street calling for the police, before it occurred to her to find out what was the matter.

At this moment Tom's mother and sisters returned, and when they found the front door wide open, and a stream of water running along the entry and down the front steps, they were very nearly petrified with astonishment. Just then up came Tom and his uncle, who were walking home from the stables, where they had left the horse and buggy.

"Why, what is the matter here?" exclaimed his uncle; "have your pipes burst that you are all overflowed like this?"

Poor Tom! he turned as red as a beet and then as white as this paper, but he was a truthful little chap with all his faults, and, in a minute he burst out with, "Oh, mamma! oh, uncle! I did it—it's *my deluge*! oh, oh!"

"YOUR DELUGE?"

"Yes; I set the water running in the bath-room to play deluge with my Noah's ark, and I went out to ride and forgot all about it!"

"Did ever I hear—!" shouted Uncle George, and, rushing upstairs, two steps at a time, he flew into the bath-room and turned off the deluge in double-quick time.

It took all Tom's pocket-money, for ever so long, to pay the doctor who came to mend poor John's broken head, and I don't know how much of his papa's to replace the carpets which were ruined by the catastrophe. As for Noah's ark, every bit of the paint was washed off, and the animals swelled so, they could n't be got in at the door. But that did n't make much difference, for the ark itself soon fell to pieces; and as for Master Tom, he behaved beautifully for a whole week after that day.





## THE WILD SHEEP AND THE TAME.

BY ETHEL GALE.

WHEN looking at our common domestic sheep with his short and slender legs and his thick body covered with soft wool, did you ever think of how his first wild ancestors may have looked? Not much like their descendants, you may be sure. How do we know? Because there are still places where the wild sheep is found, looking, probably,

parts, and insides of the limbs, it is of a dirty white. Under the throat, and about the neck and shoulders, the hair is considerably longer than elsewhere.

Now let us imagine our moufflon introduced to his very distant cousin, the fine merino sheep of our American farms. In manners—being restrained by our presence—they may probably manifest a



THE MOUFFLON, OR WILD SHEEP.

just like his ancestors hundreds of years ago; for it is man's care and cultivation that have changed the looks of our domestic sheep.

The moufflon, or wild sheep, is still found on the hilly islands of Corsica, Sardinia, and Cyprus, and among the mountains of Greece, and of Central Asia; sometimes even straying into the plains of the latter continent. The moufflon is a good deal larger and stronger than our domestic sheep; his body is thinner, his legs longer and stouter, and—greatest difference of all—he is not covered with thick curling wool, but with hair. In summer this hair is thin, short and straight, but in winter it becomes thick, long and slightly curly, though never woolly. On the back and sides this hair is of a dark-brown color, while on the under

dignified courtesy, but we can fancy the remarks that each is making to himself.

"Humph!" sniffs the moufflon; "I would like to see you in my native mountains, Cousin Merino. Those short, delicate legs of yours would n't be of much service in carrying your heavy body about among the rocks, I fear; and I think there should n't be a great deal left of that queer, thick coat of yours after a few hours of scrambling over stones and among the brambles. Ha! ha! would n't I like to see you trying to follow me around for a few hours! You'd pant even harder than you do now, I'm afraid. When I come to think about it, I don't know but it would be cruel to lead you such a chase, fat and heavy as you are. And then, I don't believe you could see your way about very

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well with the 'wool pulled over your eyes' in that ridiculous fashion. By the way, I wonder if you would consider the question as impertinent, if I were to ask you to tell me by what dreadful accident you have lost your tail?"

Meanwhile the delicate merino is eyeing his rough-haired relative with very compassionate glances.

"Poor fellow!" he says to himself; "poor fellow! How dreadfully Cousin Moufflon must suffer from the cold in winter, with nothing but that short hair to protect him! And how shockingly thin he is, to be sure! I'm afraid the poor creature must be very weak. But, dear me! I shall be quite ashamed to introduce him about, for I should n't think he had been well washed once in his lifetime, or even sheared! And then he has

allowed his tail to grow, until, after awhile, it will be almost long enough for a calf! If it were not for his voice, which certainly bears a strong resemblance to the melodious tones of all our family, I could scarcely believe him to be a relative. It is true his pronunciation is a little peculiar, so that I can't understand him very well, but his deep bass tones are indeed charming. I am sure he will be welcomed as a choice addition to our select choir. Baa-a-a-a, Cousin Moufflon, will you walk down and be introduced to the rest of the flock?"

"Baa-a-a-a-a-a-a, Cousin Merino, you're a very obliging fellow, after all."

And as the two walk off together the moufflon is casting about in his mind to find the least disagreeable way to satisfy his curiosity about how his cousin lost his tail.

## THE YOUNG SURVEYOR.

BY J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

### CHAPTER XXVI.

#### VICTORY.

PEAKSLOW halted in the gap of the fence, his fury cooling before Lord Betterson's steady eyes and quiet threat.

Betterson went on, speaking deliberately, while his poised and ready barrels gave emphasis to his remarks:

"You've talked a good deal of shooting, one time and another, friend Peakslow. I think it is about time to have done with that foolishness. Excuse my frankness."

"I've a right to defend my property and my premises!" said Peakslow, glowing and fuming, but never stepping beyond the gap.

"What property or premises, good neighbor? The horse is this young man's; and nobody has set foot on your land."

"That dog was on my land."

"And so was the horse," put in Jack.

"Take him off, pa! he's smotherin' on me!" shouted Zeph.

"Your boy is abusin' mine. I'll take care o' him!" And Peakslow set a foot over the two lower rails left in the gap.

"You'd better stay where you are,—accept a friend's disinterested advice," remarked Betterson.

"If your boy had been on the right side of the fence, minding his own business,—you will bear

with me if I am quite plain in my speech,—my boy would have had no occasion to soil his hands with him."

Peakslow appeared quite cowed by this unexpected show of determination in his easy-going neighbor. He stood astride the rails, just where Betterson had arrested his advance, and contented himself with urging Dud to the rescue of his brother.

"Why do ye stan' there and see Zeph treated that way? Why don't ye pitch in?"

"That's a game two can play at," said Jack.

"Hands off, Dud, my boy." And he stood by to see fair play.

"My boy had a right on that land; it's by good rights mine to-day!" exclaimed Peakslow.

"We wont discuss that question; it has been settled once, neighbor," replied Betterson. "Rufus, I think you've done enough for that boy; his face is blacker than I ever saw it, which is saying a good deal. Let him go. Mr. Peakslow,"—with a bow of gracious condescension over the frayed stock,—“you are welcome to as much of this disputed territory as you can shake out of that youngster's clothes,—not any more."

"That seems to be a good deal," said Jack, laughing to see Zeph scramble up, gasping, blubbing, flirting soil from his clothes and hair, and clawing it desperately from his besmeared face.

"That's for daring me to fight you," said Rufe,



as he let him go. "I'll pay you some other time for what you did to Cecie;" while Zeph went off howling.

"No more, Rufus," said Betterson. "Come and put up this fence."

"I'll do that," said Jack. "I'm bound to leave it as I found it; if Mr. Peakslow will please step either forward or back."

Peakslow concluded to step back; and Jack and Rufe laid up the corner, rail by rail.

"Don't you think you've played me a perty shabby trick?" said Peakslow, glaring at Jack.

"You are hardly the man to speak with a very good grace of *anybody's* shabby tricks," Jack replied, putting up the top rail before the hooked nose.

"I did n't think it of you!" And Peakslow cast longing eyes after the horse.

"You must have forgotten what you thought," said Jack. "You did n't dare turn the horse out till Zeph told you I'd gone home; and it seems you kept pretty close watch of him then."

Peakslow choked back his wrath, and muttered: "Ye might 'a' gi'n me suthin' for my trouble."

"So I would, willingly, if you had acted decently."

"Gi' me suthin' now, and settle it."

"I consider it already settled,—like your land-claim dispute," said Jack. "But no matter; how much do vou want? Don't bid too high, you know."

"Gi' me a dollar, anyhow!"

Jack laughed.

"If I should give you enough to pay for the charge in your gun, would n't that satisfy you? Though, as you did n't fire it at me, I don't quite see that I ought to defray the expense of it. Good-day, Mr. Peakslow."

Jack went to find the chicken that had been shot; and Peakslow vented his rage upon his neighbor across the fence.

"What a pattern of a man you be! stuck-up, struttin',—a turkey-gobbler kind of man, I call ye. Think I'm afraid o' yer gun?"

"I have no answer to make to remarks of that nature," said Lord Betterson, retiring from the fence.

"Haint, hey?" Peakslow roared after him. "Feel above a common man like me, do ye? Guess I pay *my* debts. If I set out to build, guess I look out and not bu'st up 'fore I get my paintin' and plasterin' done. Nothin' to say to me, hey?"

Betterson coolly resumed his slow and stately march across the buckwheat, looking for prairie chickens.

"You puffed-up, pompous, would-be 'ristocrat!" said Peakslow, more and more furious, "where'd

you be if your relations did n't furnish ye money? Poorer'n ye be now, I guess. What if I should tell ye what yer neighbors say of ye? Guess ye would n't carry yer head so plaguy high!"

Two chickens rose from before Betterson's feet, and flew to right and left. With perfect coolness and precision of aim he fired and brought down one, then turned and dropped the other, with scarce an interval of three seconds between the reports.

"This is a very pretty piece of yours," he observed smilingly, with a stately wave of the hand toward Jack.

"I never saw anything so handsomely done!" exclaimed Jack, bringing the chicken previously shot.

At the same time he could not help glancing with some apprehension at Peakslow, not knowing what that excitable neighbor might do, now that Betterson's two barrels were empty.

"I think I will stay and have one or two more shots," said Betterson. "A very pretty piece indeed!"

The muttering thunder of Peakslow's wrath died away in the distance, as he retired with his forces. Rufe picked up the last two prairie chickens and followed Jack, who ran to overtake the dog and horse.

Lion still held the bridle rein, letting Snowfoot nip the grass that grew along the borders of the corn, but keeping him from the corn itself. Jack patted and praised the dog, and stroked and caressed the horse, looking him all over to see if he had received any fresh injury.

Then Rufe joined him; and presently Wad came bounding down the slope from the barn, laughing, carrying Jack's coat; and Link appeared, running and limping, having hurt his ankle in jumping down from the cowshed. Behind came Chokie, trudging on his short legs, and tumbling and sprawling at every few steps.

The boys were jubilant over the victory; and Jack was the object of loud congratulations; while Lion and Snowfoot formed the center of the little group.

"Much obliged to you, Wad," said Jack, as they re-exchanged coats and hats. "Thanks to you, I've got my horse again. Thanks to all of you. Boys, I was perfectly astonished at your father's pluck!" And he could not help thinking what a really noble specimen of a man Betterson might have made, if he had not been standing on his dignity and waiting for legacies all his life.

"Not many folks know what sort of a man father is," replied Rufe. "Peakslow would have found out, if he had drawn a bead on you. How quick he stopped, and changed countenance! He can

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govern his temper when he finds he must; and he can cringe and crawl when he sees it's for his interest. Think of his asking you at last—after you had got your horse in spite of him, and at the risk of your life—think of his begging you to give him a dollar!"

Jack said: "Look at that galled spot on Snowfoot's neck! Peakslow has got all he could out of him the past week,—kept him low and worked

delighted Lill clapped her hands, and Mrs. Betterson and Cecie looked eagerly from the window, as the little procession approached the house,—Lion walking sedately before, then Link and Chokie riding the lost horse, and Jack and Rufe and Wad following with the prairie chickens.

More congratulations. Then Lord Betterson came from the field with another bird. Then Snowfoot was saddled, and Jack, with dog and gun,



THE PROCESSION APPROACHES THE HOUSE.

him hard in a cruel collar. Never mind, old Snowfoot! better times have come now, for both of us. Here, Link, you are lame; want a ride?"

Link did want a ride, of course,—who ever saw a boy that did n't? Jack took hold of his foot and helped him mount upon Snowfoot's back; then called to Chokie, who was getting up from his last tumble (with loud lamentations), a few yards off.

"Here, Chokie; don't cry; fun isn't all over yet; you can ride too." Tossing the urchin up, Jack set him behind Link. "Hold on now, Chokie; big brother tight!"

Both chubby arms reaching half around Link's waist, one chubby cheek pressed close to Link's suspender, and two chubby legs sticking out on Snowfoot's back, Chokie forgot his griefs, and, with the tear-streaks still wet on his cheeks, enjoyed the fearful pleasure of the ride.

Vinnie's bright face watched from the door, the

and two of the prairie chickens, took leave of his friends, and rode home in triumph.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### VINNIE IN THE LION'S DEN.

WHEN Link the next morning went to the spring for water he found that the Peakslow boys (it could have been nobody else) had, by a dastardly trick, taken revenge for the defeat of the day before.

Link came limping back (his ankle was still sore) with an empty pail, and loud complaints of the enemy.

"They've been and gone and filled the spring with earth and leaves and sticks, and all sorts of rubbish! It will take an hour to dig it out, and then all day for the water to settle and be fit to drink."

"Those dreadful Peakslow boys! what *shall* we



do?" Caroline said despairingly. "No water for breakfast, and no near neighbors but the Peak-slows; but their well is the last place where we should think of going for water."

"I'll tell you what I'll do!" said Link. "I'll go to-night and give 'em such a dose in their well, that they won't want any water from it for the next two months! I know where there's a dead rabbit. The Peakslows don't get the start of us!"

"I don't see but that one of the boys will have to go to Mr. Wiggett's for water," said poor Caroline, bemoaning her troubles.

"Rufe and Wad are doing the chores," said Link, "and I'm lame. Besides, you don't catch one of us going to old Wiggett's for water, for we should have to pass Peakslow's house, and it would please 'em too well."

"Let me take the pail; I will get some water," said Vinnie.

"Why, Lavinia dear!" Caroline exclaimed, "what are you thinking of? Where are you going?"

"To Mr. Peakslow's," Vinnie answered with a smile.

"Going into the lion's den! Don't think of such a thing, Lavinia dear!"

"No, by sixty!" cried Link. "I don't want them boys to sass you! I'd rather go a mile in the other direction for water,—both the lame foot!"

But Vinnie quietly persisted, saying it would do no harm for her to try; and putting on her bonnet, she started off with the empty pail.

I cannot say that she felt no misgivings; but the consciousness of doing a simple and blameless act helped to quiet the beating of her heart as she approached the Peakslow door.

It was open, and she could see the family at breakfast within, while the loud talking prevented her footsteps from being heard.

Besides Dud and Zeph, there were three or four younger children, girls and boys, the youngest of whom—a child with bandaged hands and arms—sat in its father's lap.

Vinnie remembered the swarthy face, bushy beard and hooked nose; and yet she could hardly believe that this was the same man who once showed her such ruffianly manners on the wharf in Chicago. He was fondling and feeding the child, and talking to it, and drumming on the table with his knife to amuse it and still its complaining cries.

"Surely," thought Vinnie, "there must be some good in a man who shows so much affection even toward his own child." And with growing courage she advanced to the threshold.

Mrs. Peakslow—a much bent, over-worked woman, with a pinched and peevish face—looked

up quickly across the table and stared at the strange visitor. In a moment all eyes were turned upon Vinnie.

"I beg your pardon," she said, pausing at the door. "I wish to get a pail of water. Can I go to your well and help myself?"

The children—and especially Dud and Zeph—looked in astonishment at the bright face and girlish form in the door-way. As Mr. Peakslow turned his face toward her, all the tenderness went out of it.

"What do Betterson's folks send here for water for? And what makes 'em send a gal? Why don't they come themselves?"

"They did not send me," Vinnie answered as pleasantly as she could. "I came of my own accord."

Peakslow wheeled round in his chair.

"Queer sort of folks, they be! An' seems to me you must be queer, to be stoppin' with 'em."

"Mrs. Betterson is my sister," replied Vinnie in a trembling voice. "I came to her because she is sick, and Cecie—because I was needed," she said, avoiding the dangerous ground of Zeph's offense.

"I've nothin' pa'tic'lar ag'in' Mis' Betterson as I know on," said Peakslow, "though of course she sides with him ag'in' me, an' of course *you* side with *her*."

"I've nothing to do with Mr. Betterson's quarrels," Vinnie answered, drawing back from the door. "Will you kindly permit me to get a pail of water? I am sorry if I give you any trouble."

"No trouble; water's cheap," said Peakslow. "But why don't they have a well o' their own, 'ste'd o' dependin' on their neighbors? What makes 'em so plaguy shif'less?"

"They have a well, but it is dry this Summer, and —"

"Dry every Summer, aint it? What a way to dig a well that was!"

"They have a very good spring," Vinnie said, "but something happened to it last night;" at which Dud and Zeph giggled and looked sheepish.

"What happened to the spring?"

"Somebody put rubbish into it and spoiled the water."

"Who done it, did you hear 'em say?"

"I don't know who did it; and I should be sorry to accuse any person of such an act," Vinnie answered with firm but serene dignity.

The boys looked more sheepish and giggled less. "I know who put stuff in the spring," spoke up a little one, proud of being able to convey useful information; "Dud and Zeph —"

But at that moment Dud's hand stopped the prattler's mouth.

"I don't believe my boys have done anything of



the kind," said Peakslow; "though 't would n't be strange if they did. See how that great lubberly Rufe treated our Zeph yist'day! rubbed the dirt into his skin so 't he ha' n't got it washed out yit."

"I am sorry for these misunderstandings," said Vinnie, turning to Mrs. Peakslow with an appealing look. "I wish you and my sister knew each other better. You have a sick child, too, I see."

"T aint sick, 'xac'ly," replied the mother in a peevish, snarling tone. "Pulled over the teapot, and got hands and arms scalt."

"Oh! poor little thing!" Vinnie exclaimed. "What have you done for it?"

"Haint done nothin' much, only wrapped up the blistered places in Injin meal; that's coolin'."

"No doubt; but I've some salve, the best thing in the world for burns. I wish you would let me bring you some."

"I guess Bubby'll git along 'thout no help from outside," said Peakslow, his ill-natured growl softened by a feeling of tenderness for the child, which just then came over him. "He's weathered the worst on 't."

But Bubby's fretful cries told that what was left was bad enough.

"I will bring you the salve," said Vinnie, "and I hope you will try it; it is so hard to see these little ones suffer."

She was retiring, when Peakslow called after her: "Goin' 'ithout the water?"

"I—thought—you had not told me I could have it."

"Have it! of course you can have it; I would n't refuse nobody a pail o' water. Ye see where the well is?"

"O yes; thank you." And Vinnie hastened to the curb.

"She can't draw it," snickered Zeph. "Handle's broke; and the crank'll slip out of her hands and knock her to Jericho, if she don't look out."

"Seems to be a perty spoken gal," said Peakslow, turning to finish his breakfast. "I've nothin' ag'in' her. You've finished your breakfast; better go out, Dudley, and tell her to look out about the crank."

With mixed emotions in his soul, Dud went; his countenance enlivened at one and the same time with a blush of boyish bashfulness and a malicious grin. As he drew near, and saw Vinnie embarrassed with the windlass, which seemed determined to let the bucket down too fast (as if animated with a genuine Peakslow spite toward her), the grin predominated; but when she turned upon him a troubled, smiling face, the grin subsided, and the blush became a general conflagration, extending to the tips of his ears.

"How does 't go?"

"It's inclined to go altogether too fast," said Vinnie, stopping the windlass; "and it hurts my hands."

"Le' me show ye."

And Dud, taking her place by the curb, let the windlass revolve with moderated velocity under the pressure of his rough palms, until the bucket struck the water. Then, drawing it up, he filled her pail.

The grin had by this time faded quite out of his countenance; and when she thanked him sweetly and sincerely for helping her, the blush became a blush of pleasure.

"It is more than I can carry," she said. "I shall have to pour out some."

Thereupon Dud Peakslow astonished himself by an extraordinary act of gallantry.

"I'll carry it for ye as far as the road; I'd carry it all the way, if 't was anywhere else." And he actually took up the pail.

"You seem to have a very bad opinion of my relations," Vinnie said.

"Good reason! They hate us, too!"

"And think *they* have good reason. But I'm sure you are not so bad as they believe; and *you* may possibly be mistaken about *them*. Let me take the pail now. You are very kind."

Dud gave up the pail with reluctance, and gazed after her up the road, his stupid mouth ajar with an expression of wistful wonder and pleasure.

"Hurry now and git up the team, Dud!" his father called from the door. "What ye stan'in' there for? Did n't ye never see a gal afore?"

When Vinnie reached home with her pail of water, all gathered around, eager to hear her adventure.

"The lions were not very savage, after all," she said, laughing.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### AN "EXTRAORDINARY" GIRL.

AFTER breakfast Vinnie left Lill to "do the dishes," and went with her box of salve to fulfill her promise to Mrs. Peakslow. Dud and Zeph were off at work with their father; and she was glad to find the mother alone with the younger children.

"Oh! you ag'in?" said Mrs. Peakslow, by the chimney, looking up from a skillet she was stooping over and scraping. "Ye need n't 'a' took the trouble. Guess Bubby's burns'll git along."

But Vinnie was not to be rebuffed.

"I have brought some linen rags to spread the salve on. Will you let me do it myself? I wish you would; the poor thing is suffering so."

And Vinnie knelt down beside the girl who was holding Bubby in her arms.



"Is't any o' the Betterson folks's sa'v'?" Mrs. Peakslow inquired, scraping away at her skillet.

"No; it is some I brought from the East with me, thinking I should find a use for it in my sister's family; it is good for various things."

"Better keep it for her family!" snarled Mrs. Peakslow. Scrape, scrape.

"There's plenty and to spare," said Vinnie, unrolling her rags. "And my sister will be only too glad if it can be of any service to you."

"Think so?" Mrs. Peakslow stopped her scraping and scowled at Vinnie. "Her folks ha' n't never showed us none too much good-will."

"They have never known you—you have never understood each other," said Vinnie. "It is too bad that the troubles between the men should prevent you and her from being on neighborly terms. Can I use a corner of this table to spread the salve? And can I see the little thing's burns, so as to shape the plasters to cover them?"

"He tol' me not to use the sa'v', if ye brought it," said Mrs. Peakslow doubtfully, laying down the skillet.

"When he sees the good effect of it I am sure he wont complain; he is too fond of his little boy," said Vinnie, placing rags and salve on the table. "Will you let me take a case-knife and a pair of scissors?"

"Got rags enough of my own. Need n't trouble yourself to cut and spread plasters. Try the sa'v', 'f ye say so."

Vinnie did say so, and dressed Bubby's burns with her own hands, doing the work so deftly and tenderly, talking now to the child, now to the mother, who had taken him into her lap, and showing in every look and tone so cheerful and sweet a spirit that poor Mrs. Peakslow's peevish heart warmed and softened toward her.

"I do declare," she said, as the outer bandages were going on, "Bubby feels comforted a'ready. Must be dreffle good sa'v'! Much obleeged to ye, I'm sure. How is yer sister, Mis' Betterson?"

"Much better than she was; and the baby is better too. Indeed," said Vinnie, "I think the baby will get well as soon as the mother does."

"And Cecie—how's Cecie?" Mrs. Peakslow timidly asked.

"O, Cecie is in very good spirits. She is the most gentle, patient, beautiful girl you ever saw! She never complains; and she is always so grateful for any little thing that is done for her!"

"S'pose the folks feel hard to our Zeph; don't they?"

"I believe the boys do, and you can hardly wonder at it, Mrs. Peakslow," said Vinnie; "their own dear sister! crippled for life, perhaps. But Cecie wont allow that your son meant to hurt her;

she always takes his part when the subject is brought up."

"Does she?" exclaimed Mrs. Peakslow, surprised into sudden tears. "I would n't 'a' believed that! Must be she's a good gal. Truth is, Zeph had n't no notion o' hurtin' on her. It's re'ly troubled me,—it's troubled all on us, though I don't s'pose her folks'll believe it."

And Mrs. Peakslow, not finding it convenient to get at her apron, with Bubby in her lap, wiped her eyes with a remnant of Vinnie's rags.

"Is n't it too sad that this quarrel is kept up?" said Vinnie.

"O dear me! nobody knows," said Mrs. Peakslow, in a quavering voice, "what a life it is! Our folks is some to blame, I s'pose. But the Bettersons have been so aggravatin'! Though I've nothin' ag'in' the gals. They're as perty gals as I'd ask to have play with my children. My children is sufferin' for mates. I want society, too, for it's a dreffle life—a dreffle life!" And the quavering voice broke into sobs.

Vinnie was surprised and pained at this outburst, and hardly knew what reply to make.

"Lyddy, wipe them dishes!" Mrs. Peakslow went on again, sopping her eyes with the remnant of rags. "Lecty Ann! here, take Bubby. 'Scuse me, miss; I d'n' know what sot me goin' this way; but my heart's been shet up so long; I've so wanted sympathy!" And now the apron did service in place of the rags.

"Yes, I know," said Vinnie. "This is a lonesome country, unless you have friends around you. There seem to be a few nice people here—people from the East; you are from the East, I suppose?"

"O yes; but he a'nt a very social man, an' he's dreffle sot in his way. He don't go out nowheres, 'thout he has business, an' he don't think there's any need of a woman's goin' out. So there it is. The Wiggetts, our neighbors on one side, a'nt our kind o' people; then there's the Bettersons on t' other side. An' there's allus so many things a wife has to put up with, an' hold her tongue. O dear! O dear! Keep to your work, gals! hear?"

There was something almost comical in this sharp and shrill winding-up of the good woman's pathetic discourse; but Vinnie never felt less like laughing.

"I am glad you can speak freely to me," she said. "I'll come and see you again, if you will let me; and I want you some time to come and see my sister."

"I d'n' know! I d'n' know!" said Mrs. Peakslow, still weeping. "You may come here,—like to have ye,—only it'll be jest as well if you time your visits when me an' the gals is alone; you know what men-folks be."

"You are really an extraordinary girl, Lavinia



"dear!" Caroline said, when Vinnie went home and told her story. "Did you know it?"

Vinnie laughed.

"Why, no; I never thought of such a thing; what I do comes so very natural."

"Extraordinary!" Caroline repeated, regarding her admiringly. "I'm proud of such a sister. I always told Mr. Betterson there was good blood on our side too. I wonder what Radcliff would think of you."

Vinnie sincerely believed that so fine a young gentleman would not think anything of her at all,



LORD BETTERSON.

but feared it might seem like affectation in her to say so.

"And I wonder," Caroline continued, with the usual simper which her favorite theme inspired, "what you would think of Radcliff. Ah, Lavinia dear! it is a comfort for me to reflect that it was a Betterson—nobody less than a thorough-bred Betterson—who took the place in our family which you would otherwise have filled."

Evidently Caroline's conscience was not quite easy on the subject of her early neglect of so "extraordinary" a sister; for she often alluded to it in this way. Vinnie now begged her not to mention it again.

"And you really cherish no hard feelings?"

"None whatever."

"You are *very* good. And pretty; did you know it? Quite pretty."

Vinnie laughed again.

"Mrs. Presbit brought me up to the wholesome belief that I was quite plain."

"That was to prevent you from becoming vain. Vanity, you know," said Caroline, with her most exquisite simper, "spoils so many girls! I'm thankful it does n't run in *our* family! But did n't your glass undeceive you?"

"On the contrary; I used to look in it and say to myself: 'It is a very *common* face; I *wish* it was pretty, but Aunt Presbit is right; I'm a homely little thing!'"

"And you felt bad?"

"I never mourned over it; though, of course, I should have much preferred to be handsome."

"And has n't anybody ever told you you *were* handsome?"

Vinnie blushed.

"Of course, I've heard a good deal of nonsense talked now and then."

"Lavinia dear, you *are* extraordinary. And handsome, though not in the usual sense of the word. Your face *is* rather common, in repose, but it lights up wonderfully. And, after all, I don't know that it is so much your face, as the expression you throw into it, that is so enchanting. What *would* Radcliff Betterson say to you, I wonder?"

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### ANOTHER HUNT, AND HOW IT ENDED.

JACK had one day been surveying a piece of land a few miles east of Long Woods. It was not very late in the afternoon when he finished his work; and he found that, by going a little out of his way, and driving rather fast, he could, before night, make Vinnie and her friends a call, and perhaps give Mrs. Wiggett the promised noon-mark on her kitchen floor.

Leaving in due time the more traveled thoroughfare, he turned off upon the neighborhood road, which he knew passed through the woods and struck the river road near Betterson's house. Away on his left lay the rolling prairie, over a crest of which he, on a memorable occasion, saw Snowfoot disappear with his strange rider; and he was fast approaching the scene of his famous deer hunt.

Jack had his gun with him; and, though he did not stop to give much attention to the prairie hens which now and then ran skulkingly across the track, or flew up from beside his buggy wheels, he could not help looking for larger game.

"I'd like to see another doe and fawn feeding off on the prairie there," thought he. "Wonder if I could find some obliging young man to drive them in!"

He whipped up Snowfoot, and presently, riding



over a swell of land, discovered a stranger walking on before him in the road.

"No deer or fawn," thought he; "but there's possibly an obliging young man."

As he drove on, fast overtaking the pedestrian, Jack was very much struck by his appearance. He was a slender person; he walked at a loitering pace; and he carried his coat on his arm. There was something also in the jaunty carriage of the head, and in the easy slouch of the hat-brim, which startled Jack.

"I vow, it's my obliging young man himself!" he muttered through his teeth,—“or a vision of him!”

Just then the stranger, hearing the sound of wheels, cast a quick glance over his shoulder. It was the same face, and Jack could almost have taken his oath to the quid in the cheek.

He was greatly astonished and excited. It seemed more like a dream than anything else, that he should again meet with the person who had given him so much trouble, so near the place where he had seen him first, in precisely similar hat and soiled shirt-sleeves, and carrying (to all appearances) the same coat on his arm!

The stranger gave no sign of the recognition being mutual, but stepped off upon the road-side to let the buggy pass.

"How are you?" said Jack, coming up to him, and drawing rein; while Lion snuffed suspiciously at the rogue's heels.

"All right, stranger; how are you yourself?" And a pair of reckless dark eyes flashed saucily up at Jack.

"Better than I was that night after you ran off with my horse!" Jack replied.

"Glad you're improving. Wife on the mending hand? And how are the little daisies? Which is the road to Halleluia Corners? I branch off here; good day, fair stranger."

These words were rattled off with great volubility, which seemed all the greater because of their surprising irrelevancy.

Before Jack could answer, the youth, with a wild laugh, struck off from the road, and began to walk fast toward the woodland. Jack called after him:

"Hold on! I want to speak with you!"

"Speak quick, then; I'm bound for the Kingdom,—will you go to glory with me?" the rogue shouted back over his shoulder, with a defiant grin, never slackening his pace.

Jack gave Snowfoot a touch of the whip, reined out of the track, and drove after him.

The fellow at the same time quickened his step to a run, and before he could be overtaken he had come to rough ground, where fast driving was dangerous.

Jack pulled up unwillingly, revolving rapidly in his mind what he should do. Though he had recovered his horse, he felt the strongest desire to have the thief taken and punished. Moreover, he had lately seen the truckman to whom the stolen animal was sold, and had promised to do what he could to help him obtain justice.

He might have leveled his gun and threatened to shoot the fugitive; but he would not have felt justified in carrying out such a threat, and recent experience had disgusted him with the shooting business.

He would have jumped from the wagon, and followed on foot; but, though a good runner, he was convinced that his heels were no match for the stranger's. There was then but one thing to do.

"Stop, or I'll let the dog take you!" Jack yelled.

For reply, the fugitive threw up his hand over his shoulder, with fingers spread, and thumb pointing toward the mid-region of countenance occupied by the nose; which did not, however, take the trouble to turn and make itself visible.

Lion was already eager for the chase; and Jack had only to give him a signal.

"Take care of him, Lion!" and away sped the dog.

Fleet of foot as the fellow was, and though he now strained every nerve to get away, the distance between him and the dog rapidly diminished; and a hurried glance behind showed him the swift, black, powerful animal, coming with terrible bounds, and never a bark, hard at his heels.

The thickets were near,—could he reach them before the dog reached him? Would they afford him a refuge, or a cudgel? He threw out his quid, and *leaned* to his work.

Jack drove after as fast as he could, in order to prevent mortal mischief when Lion should bring down his game; for the dog, when too much in earnest with a foe, had an overmastering instinct for searching out the windpipe and jugular vein.

The rogue had reached the edge of the woods, when he found himself so closely pursued that he seemed to have no resource but to turn and dash his coat into the dog's face. That gave him an instant's reprieve; then Lion was upon him again; and he had just time to leap to the low limb of a scraggy oak-tree, and swing his lower limbs free from the ground, when the fierce eyes and red tongue were upon the spot.

Lion gave one leap, but missed his mark, the trap-like jaws snapping together with a sound which could not have been very agreeable to the youth whose dangling legs had been actually grazed by the passing muzzle.

With a wistful, whining yelp, Lion gave another



upward spring; and this time his fangs closed upon something—only cloth, fortunately; but as the thief clambered up out of their range, it was

"My horse is n't in the habit of running away without help. Will you come down?"

"I was just going to invite you to come up.

I'll share my lodgings with you,—give you an upper berth. A very good tavern; rooms airy, fine prospect; though the table don't seem to be very well supplied, and I can't say I fancy the entrance. 'Sich gittin' upstairs I never did see!"

Jack checked this flow of nonsense by shouting: "Will you come down, or not?"

"Suppose not?" said the fellow.

"Then I leave the dog to guard the door of your tavern, and go for a warrant and a constable, to bring you down."

"What would you have me come down for? You seem to be very pressing in your attentions to a stranger!"

"Don't say stranger,—you who drove the deer in for me! I am anxious to pay you for that kindness. I want you to ride with me."

"Why did n't you say so before?" cried the rogue. "I always ride when you ask me to, don't I? Say, did you ever know me to refuse when you offered me a ride? Which way are you going?"

"Down through the woods," said Jack, amused, in spite of himself, at the scamp's reckless gayety.

"Why, that's just the way I am going! Why did n't you mention it? I never should have put up at this tavern if I had thought a friend would come along and give me a lift in his carriage. Please relieve the guard, and I'll descend."

The dog was driven off, and the youth dropped from the branches to the ground.

"Pick up your coat," said Jack, "and do pretty much as I tell you now, or there'll be trouble. None of your tricks this time!"

He held the reins and the gun while he made the fellow get into the buggy; then took his seat, with the prisoner on his left and the gun on his right, drove on to the traveled track, and turned into the woods; the vigilant Lion walking close by the wheel.

(To be continued.)



LION JUST MISSES HIS MARK.

with a very good chance for a future patch upon the leg of his trousers.

Leaping from his wagon, Jack rushed to the tree, and found his obliging young man perched comfortably in it, with one leg over a limb; while Lion, below, made up for his long silence by uttering frantic barks.

"What are you up there for?" said Jack.

"To take an observation," the fellow replied, out of breath, but still cheerful. "First-rate view of the country up here. I fancy I see a doe and a fawn off on the prairie; would n't you like a shot at 'em?"

"I've other game to look after just now!" Jack replied.

"Better look out for your horse; he's running away!"



## HOW TO MAKE A BOAT.

BY FREDERIC G. MATHER.

ALMOST all boys who live near the water want to own a boat, and it very often happens that the only way they can get one is to build it themselves. It is very well to do this, for, when they have done their work well, they get not only a boat, but some excellent experience in mechanical construction, which can scarcely fail to be of use to them.

The object of this article is to tell boys how, with a good deal of labor and a very little money, they can build a boat for themselves.

The first thing to be done is to learn to swim—that is, if you do not know how already. No boy should have a boat who cannot swim. Any boat, no matter how skillfully handled, may upset, and any boy, no matter how careful he may be, may fall out of a boat.

The next thing is to study carefully the plain account here given of the building of a boy's boat. Any boy who can use a plane, a saw, a bit-stock, and a drawing-knife, can easily build a boat like the one of which we are about to give the history from the time she existed in the form of boards until she floated gracefully in the water.

In the first place, you must go to the lumber-yard or mill, and select two boards of clear pine, eleven or twelve feet long and one inch thick. One should be wider than the other; but together they should make a width of twenty-five inches. Have them planed on both sides, and a groove planed out of the edge of one board and a tongue out of the corresponding edge of the other board. When you have taken the boards home, buy a two-pound can of white lead. Fill the groove with this lead; then put the boards together, and drive the tongue of one into the groove of the other. This will make the joint water-tight. To keep the boards from spreading, tack three or four strips across the crack, and lay the whole on the floor with the strips downward.

You will then have what is the same as one

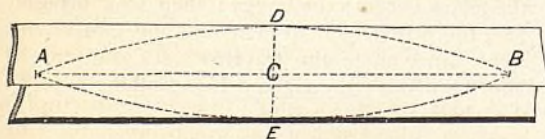


FIG. 1.—THE BOTTOM BOARD.

board, eleven or twelve feet long and not less than two feet wide. This we will call the bottom board (Fig. 1).

The next thing to do is to sweep the floor of your workshop, so that there will be a clear space of about fifteen feet square. Place the bottom board at one edge of the space thus cleared, and draw the line A B, which divides the width into equal parts.

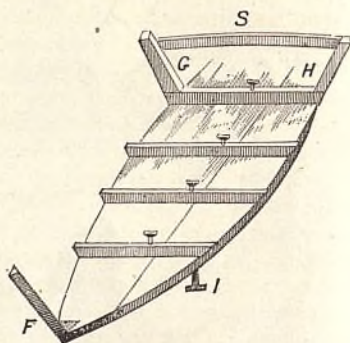


FIG. 2.—THE BRACES AND RIBS.

Draw D E at right angles to A B. The points A and B should be five feet three inches from C; and D and E, each one foot from the same. This will make A B ten feet six inches, and D E two feet.

To mark the curved line A E B, drive a nail in the floor in the direction of D, and about fourteen feet three inches from E. Having made a loop at the end of a piece of wire (string will stretch too much to be accurate), you must bring the wire to the point E. The wire is your radius, and your object is to hold a pencil at such a point that it will pass through the points A, E and B. Your pencil will easily hit A and B. If it falls outside of E, you must move the board away from the nail; if it falls between C and E, the radius is too long, and the board must be moved toward the nail. Having found the exact spot, draw the curved line A E B. Then turn the board around, end for end, and mark the line A D B in the same manner. Then saw carefully along the curved lines, and you will have cut out the bottom of your boat.

The next step is to bevel the edges just sawed; that is, to cut the wood away from the under side of the edge of the bottom board, so that the side boards will easily be fitted to it.

At H (Fig. 2) is an angle of 120 degrees. The under edge must be cut off at this angle; but, as you come toward the end, cut away less and less of the under edge, until at F you cut away scarcely any. Bevel the entire edge in the same way,

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taking great care to change the bevel gradually and uniformly.

You must now fasten some hard-wood strips, one inch square, upon the bottom. Lay one in the middle (G H), and three toward each end, about thirteen inches apart. Let them be long enough for the ends to project an inch over each side. Drive an inch-and-a-half screw through the middle of each strip into the bottom.

Then turn over the bottom board and drive from four to six screws the other way, as at I, taking care to drive screws into each strip not more than an inch from the crack between the boards, and not more than that distance from the outer edge.

You would do well to put these screws in first, and afterward put in as many others as may be necessary to keep the bottom from warping. Use the gimlet and countersink, and dip the screws into oil or paint before driving them. The heads of all the screws, which are drawn large in the cut so as to show distinctly, should be below the surface.

The ends of the strips, or braces as we will now call them, should be sawed off to correspond with the bevel of the edge which is just below them.

You will now need fourteen pieces of the inch-square hard-wood. They are for the ribs, and each one should be one foot long. Fit one of the ribs to each end of the middle brace, so that the angles at G and H will be 120 degrees. Fasten the ribs to the brace by an angle-iron (H), which any blacksmith can make. A temporary brace (S)

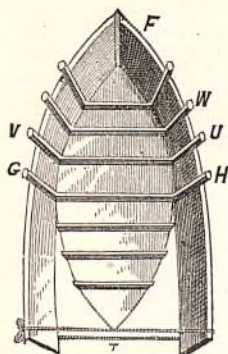


FIG. 3.—THE SIDES.

should be nailed into the ribs, G and H. A triangular piece (F), called the "dead-wood," is fastened with a block at an angle of 120 degrees with the bottom.

You must do the same with the other end of the bottom, which does not show in Fig. 2. You will then have seven braces, two ribs, and two dead-woods, all fastened to the bottom of the boat.

The boards for the sides should be of half-inch pine or three-eighths-inch ash. They should be of

uniform thickness, with both sides smoothly planed. The length, fourteen feet; and the breadth, fourteen inches. Mark the exact middle of one of the boards, and place that mark against the rib H (Fig. 3). Let the lower edge project four inches below the bottom, and fasten the side to the rib with about five screws.

Now fasten the other side to the rib G in like manner. Tie a string around the ends at T, so that they will not spread. Bring the other ends,

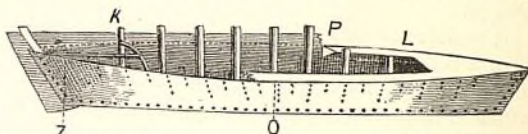


FIG. 4.—THE DECK AND CURVED BRACES.

at F, as near to each other as possible, and confine them with a string. Commence at H to fasten the side upon the bottom. Put in inch-and-a-quarter screws, about three inches apart. When you have reached the first brace, put the rib U in place and fasten it.

Pass to the other side, and fasten the bottom edge from G to V, and also the rib V. Return now to the first side, and fasten from U to W and the rib W. Do this alternately until you are within a foot of the end, F. You will then be obliged to cut off the ends of the side boards, in order to bring them up to the dead-wood at F.

This process is shown more plainly in Fig. 4. Your boat now looks something like Fig. 3; and the same course is to be followed as you commence at G and H and fasten toward the end, T.

The edge of the boat is rough, and the ribs project, as appears from K to P in Fig. 4. Having marked O, nine inches, and Z, eleven inches, you must trace a gradual curve each way from the middle. Be very careful about this, especially as you saw through ribs and all while following the mark. One edge in Fig. 4 is cut off in this way. The under edge is easily trimmed so as to be even with the lower surface of the bottom board.

The ribs nearest the ends should be connected at the top by the curved braces, K and L. A straight brace should extend from the middle of the curved brace to the top of the dead-wood. The corners which were left when you sawed out the bottom will now be of use. From them you can cut sixteen triangular pieces for brackets to support the deck. Let these brackets be upon each edge, seven, six, and five inches respectively. They are to be fastened half-way between the ribs with screws from the outside. The screws enter the edge which is six inches long, leaving the five-inch edge to receive the deck. Quarter-inch pine makes the best deck, and the fewer pieces in the



deck the better it will be. The greatest breadth of the boat across the deck will vary, according to the manner in which you have done the work. It ought to be about three feet two inches, and the extreme length twelve feet. For security, it is well to fix a ring and staple in each end of the deck.

Benches or stools make good seats, but these you can arrange according to your fancy. A false bottom of slats will help to preserve the true bottom. You can fit a rudder to either end, if you choose.

A paddle can be used to good effect in propelling such a boat as this, but oars are better. For oar-locks you can have simple pegs set in a block, which is firmly screwed to the edge of the deck; or you can buy iron oar-locks which fit into a hole in a block which is fastened as above; or you can have iron arrangements like Fig. 5 made at the blacksmith's. There may be two of these, each made of inch horseshoe iron. They pass through plates of one-eighth-inch iron, screwed into the deck and into the bottom, and are eighteen and a-half inches long. They are straight for thirteen inches of this length, and are finished with a thimble in which the pin of the iron oar-lock can play.

All the carpenter-work of the boat is now com-

pleted, and you must turn your attention to the painting. After the first coat, or priming, paint two other coats of whatever color you wish. Upon

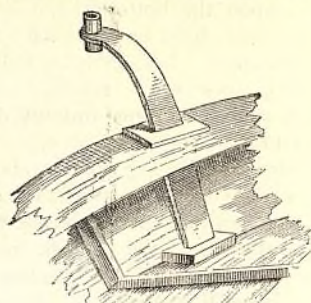


FIG. 5.—IRON SUPPORT FOR OAR-LOCK.

your choice of a color for the body will depend the color for the trimmings. If your own taste is not reliable, perhaps your friends will advise you how to paint.

At length, having followed these directions, you will have the satisfaction of launching your craft; and if it be carefully constructed, it will prove to be a very safe and a very useful boat, and not least among the pleasures you will experience will be that of having made it all yourself.

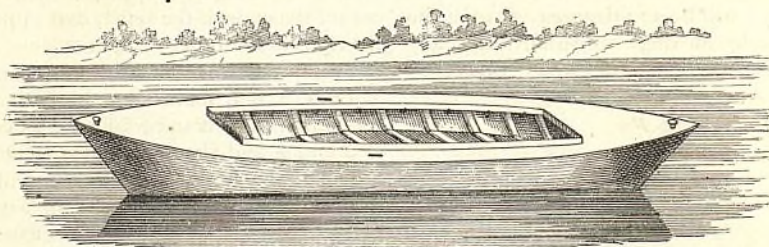


FIG. 6.—THE BOAT COMPLETE.

LITTLE Peri-Winkle,  
With her eyes a-twinkle,  
Said, "I am going to the ball to-night."  
But nobody could wake her,  
Hard as they might shake her,  
For she went to sleep with her eyes shut tight,  
And never waked up till the sun shone bright.

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## MARIGOLD HOUSE.

BY SARAH O. JEWETT.

I WONDER if you remember a story, printed in *ST. NICHOLAS* for last September, called "My Friend the Housekeeper?" It was about a girl named Nelly Ashford, whose father had a play-house built for her in the garden, which play-house was like a real house, only smaller, with a little entry-parlor and kitchen in it. This was Marigold House.

It might have been better to have said in the first story that Nelly wished her house to have a name, and that it took a whole evening to make choice of one. Finally, Aunt Bessie happened to think that the housekeeper was very fond of marigolds, and that Mrs. Ashford had told the gardener to plant some under the windows and in the borders near by; so she said: "Suppose we call it Marigold House?" and this name suited everybody.

There was only one thing that Nelly wished might be added to the outside or inside of her play-house, and this was a door-plate, with "Miss Nelly Ashford" on it in printing letters. The grown people laughed when she mildly suggested this; but the door-plate was ordered, nevertheless, and her considerate aunty even asked if she would also like a number on the door.

Nelly thought there was no need of that, and also refused the offer of lightning-rods, kindly made by grandmamma.

All through the vacation, Nelly, and Alice Dennis, who was her best friend, spent most of their time at Marigold House. All the children from the houses near came often to play with them, and there were several tea-parties which were capital fun. The guests could not help envying Nelly, for nobody had ever seen half so nice a play-house before, and at tea-time the low table, the new blue and gold tea-set, and the little napkins, were perfectly fascinating.

There was a great deal of sewing to be done, for the dolls' clothes had to be made ready for Summer as fast as possible, as the children insisted that nearly all the last Summer's clothes had been outgrown and must be altered, so making themselves a great deal of work, and the kitchen was almost neglected for several days at a time.

Aunt Bessie did not go home to Boston with grandma, for she liked so much being in the country, and she used to come out to the play-house often with her painting, and tell stories, and

sometimes sing, while the children sewed and took care of the dolls.

But our friends' fondness for dress-making did not last long, and the kitchen proved much more interesting. Miss Bessie gave them one day a little cook-book, with recipes for making cake and one or two puddings, and oat-cakes, which pleased them very much. She printed it herself with pen and ink, and instead of cupfuls and pounds of sugar or flour, she had reduced the measures to spoonfuls, and had tried these "doll recipes" herself, to be sure they were right. The first attempts were not very successful; but, after a week or so, they had learned to cook several things very well, and there was such continual feasting that Mrs. Ashford and Mrs. Dennis had to make a rule that they must never cook but one thing each day, or carry out provisions from the big house without special permission, and that they could only have one party a week. The children were required to keep everything tidy about the kitchen, and they soon learned to be orderly; but at first they had a fashion of putting away sticky dishes and forgetting to wash them.

Once, Nelly was away for a few days, and when she came back there was blue-mold on some unsuccessful cake she had carefully stored away in the kitchen-closet, and this gave such a shock to her feelings that she was much more careful afterward. The little cooks became most expert in making plum-puddings, which even Mrs. Ashford, who was very dainty, said were delicious. These puddings were made of pounded crackers, with sugar and spice, and an egg and some milk, with a great many raisins and currants, besides some bits of citron. Nora taught them to make sauce for it; and they achieved great renown among their friends, great and small, beside learning much about housekeeping and cooking which they will not forget.

I think I must tell you about the day of the grand dinner-party. It was when Nelly had been at housekeeping several weeks. Mr. and Mrs. Ashford were away, and Miss Bessie had gone to spend the day with a friend, and on the way asked Edith and Mary Talbot, two nice girls, to go down to Marigold House to lunch. Alice Dennis was already there, of course; and after they had all been talking for a few minutes, making various plans for the work and enjoyment of the day, Alice



said: "I mean to have a dinner-party instead of lunch; mamma said we might have what we pleased."

Nelly's guests were usually entertained in the kitchen on such an occasion as this, and, indeed, would have felt defrauded if they had not been allowed to help with the cooking.

Nelly looked in the closet to see what was needed, and then ran into the great house to get supplies from the cook. Nora was particularly good-natured, and gave her potatoes to bake, some cold roast chicken and bread, filled her grocery-boxes

a little rice. The cook had used beef-bones, she thought, but it was likely any meat would do as well; so our friends took some of the roast chicken and put it on to boil. Then each took a knife to slice the vegetables. Nobody wished to cut up the onions, for they make one's eyes smart so dreadfully; so they chopped them a little on the outside with a knife, and dropped them in whole. The other things were cut as fine as possible, and as fast as they were ready Alice stirred them in. There was a great deal of tasting done, but for some time there was no flavor, when they remem-



COOKING THE DINNER.

and the big milk-pitcher, and then gave her some strawberries that had been left from breakfast; so my friend the housekeeper and one of the others had to make two voyages to carry everything out. It was a very busy morning. They made a plum-pudding of extra size and superior sweetness and fruitiness, and stoned all the raisins for it, which they commonly omitted to do. Then they undertook to make some soup. Alice had watched the cook at home do it several times, and was sure she knew how. So she and Edith went over to the vegetable garden, and came back with carrots, onions, beets, and radishes, though she was n't quite sure the last-named two belonged with the rest. There must be some potatoes and meat and

bered it ought to have pepper and salt, and it is not surprising that they got in altogether too much, so that it was worse than when it had no taste at all.

Poor Mary Talbot had the bad luck to swallow a large lump of dry pepper which had not been stirred in, and so it seemed to her more highly seasoned than it did to the rest, and she said, as soon as she could speak: "Can't we put more water in?"

This seemed to be a sensible idea, but the little kettle was already full, so they dipped half the soup out into the other kettle, and filled both up with water. The potatoes and the pudding were baking well, so they went into the parlor and en-

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joyed the society of the dolls for a season, then began to set the table and get ready for dinner.

"Now we must have some names," said Nelly. "I am going to be Queen Victoria, and you are great ladies come to dine with me."

It was finally decided that Alice should be the Princess of Wales; Edith, Mary Queen of Scots; and Mary, the Empress Eugenie. And then, with great state and majesty, Queen Victoria went out to the kitchen to take up the soup.

She was very sorry that she had no dinner-set, for the tea-set was, in some respects, inconvenient, though she could manage well enough except in the question of a soup-tureen; but one could easily pretend that the bright tin pan she was obliged to use was silver, and the only trouble about the saucers was that they were small and shallow; but, as it was a State banquet, there was no hurry at all, so they could be filled often.

The company were seated, and just ready to begin, when there was a loud ring at the door.

"Your Majesties will please excuse my leaving the table," said Queen Victoria; "but my servants are all busy. I hope it is nobody coming to call; but I shall ask them into the kitchen, unless it is somebody very nice."

On the door-step stood an odd-looking little old woman, with a big black bonnet, and a wide white cap-frill underneath, and a pair of huge green spectacles.

"How do you do, miss?" said she, with a sudden courtesy, which nearly made Nelly laugh; but she managed to say:

"I'm very well, thank you."

"Would n't ye take pity on a poor ould ooman as has to travel all the way to Bostin by her lone self, an' had nothin' to ate since 'arly this mor-nin', an' her heart failin' her intirely wid hunger? I can see it's a fine, kind little shild ye are, by yer two blue little eyes; and sure, I'll tell ye a fine story while I rist mesilf."

"Wont you please wait a minute?" said Nelly, and she ran in to ask the others what she had better do. "She's a clean old woman," said our friend, "and she says she will tell us a story. We have ever so much more dinner than we can eat," adding, virtuously: "Mamma never wishes beggars to go away hungry, and she always tells me to be very kind and polite to poor people. I should n't like to be hungry and tired if I were a poor old woman."

Their Majesties thought it would be great fun, and her Royal Highness of Great Britain and Ireland turned to go out and ask the guest to come in, but first had the thoughtfulness to say that perhaps they had better not tell her whom they were, as she might be frightened.

"We have cooked most of the dinner ourselves," said Nelly, "but we hope it is good, and, at any rate, there is chicken and bread and butter."

"My heart! my heart!" said the old woman, as she came in at the door; "and aint this the swate little house! Would n't I like the mate to it to be restin' me old bones in! and I wanderin' about the highways, that might be grandmother to all of yez. Och! but I had the tidy little house in Ould Ireland, with my bit of a pig in a nate sty forinst the door. Indade, miss, and the likes of me would niver make bould to sit down at the same table with yez. Give me a bit of bread in me hand."

"Oh, no!" said Nelly, hospitably; "you can sit right here. I'll move the dolls closer together. I'm glad you happened to come to-day, for I have a better dinner than usual—there are five courses!" at which information the old woman looked rather blank.

So the hostess explained that there was—first, soup, and then chicken and potatoes, and next, plum-pudding, then strawberries, and, lastly, "little-biscuit" and milk.

"May the saints presave ye!" said the guest. "My heart! and aint it the weary long day since I had a dinner like that!" and, without any more urging, she sat down at the table.

Nelly thought as she was so hungry that she would like more soup at once than the saucers held, so she went to the kitchen and found a nice white pint bowl, which the cook had lent her. She filled this with hot soup, and, remembering that Nora was fond of onions, she generously dipped out the two big ones that had been put in for flavoring, and carried it in triumphantly with both hands, the onions floating conspicuously on top.

The beets, which had, unfortunately, been boiling longest, had given it a most uninviting color, and there were bits of carrots and raddish and turnip, not to speak of potatoes and chicken-bones.

"Here is some nice hot soup for you, and I gave you all the onions," said my friend the house-keeper, while the other guests looked on admiringly.

The Irishwoman hesitated a minute, then tasted the undesirable-looking stew, but was instantly seized with a severe fit of coughing, and buried her face in her calico apron, while the children sat in great suspense, fearing she might choke.

"Wirra, wirra!" said she after awhile; "but the pepper in it was near the death of me, and what would I do and no praste near? Bless your pretty hearts, it's a fine soup; but I had a cough this tin years back, and the docther said mesilf could ate no bit of pepper at all, at all; and—well, I'm



'shamed to be turning away from yer kindness, but I'd best ate no more."

"It is strong of pepper," said Alice, looking quite crest-fallen; "and it's *very* strong of those horrid onions! I wish we had n't put them in; but never mind, I shall know how exactly, next time."

The cold chicken was eaten by all the company with great satisfaction; the potatoes were baked just right, and the pudding was a grand success, for the old woman asked if she might make so bold as to ask for another piece, which compliment was graciously received.

By the time the strawberries were served, she was chattering in the most amusing way, and seemed to have quite forgotten her weariness; in fact, the children thought her one of the most charming persons they had ever seen. Sometimes they could hardly sit in their chairs, they laughed so hard. She praised everything extravagantly, and told them proudly that she once cooked for a gentleman's family, and if anybody knew a good dinner when she saw it, it was Biddy Sullivan. And then she went on to tell a long story about her husband, one Larry Sullivan, who had been dead ("Hiven rist his soul!") thirteen years come Christmas.

The children were very sympathizing, and, after some further particulars of her life in the old country, she gave them their choice of two stories: "The Little Cakeen" or "The Bad Son and the Good Son."

"Oh, I don't want to hear the Cakeen story!" said Nelly. "I'm so tired of that. I used to like it, and now Aunt Bessie tells it to tease me. I've heard the other one too, but I like that ever so much."

"Whist, thin!" said Mrs. Biddy Sullivan. "I likes the other best meself, an' it having such a fine ind to it"

Then she drew a long breath, afterward putting her tongue out at the corner of her mouth in a meditative way, and then began.

She had left the dinner-table, and was sitting with her back to the light, which she said hurt her eyes. She still wore her big green spectacles, and had refused to take off her big reddish cotton gloves. I believe I have not told you that she said she was going to Boston to have her eyes doctored, and had requested them to give her money.

"An' it was once, long ago, in the ould counthry," said Mrs. Biddy, "there was livin' a fine, clane, honest, poor widdy woman, an' she havin' two sons, an' she fetched the both of 'em up fine and careful, but one of them turned out bad intirely. An' one day says she to him, says she:

"'I've given you your livin' as long as iver I

can, and it's you must go out into the wide worruld to sake your fortune.'

"'Mother, I will,' says he.

"'An' will ye take a big cake wid me curse, or a little cake an' me blessing?' says she.

"'The big cake, shure,' says he.

"So she baked a big cake and cursed him, and he wint away laughin'. By and by he came forninst a spring in the woods, and sat down to ate his dinner off the cake, and a small, little bird sat on the edge of the spring.

"'Give me a bit of that cake for me little ones in the nest,' says she; and he caught up a stone to throw at her.

"'I've scarce enough for meself,' says he; and she bein' a fairy, put her bake in the spring and toorned it black as ink, and wint away up in the trees. And whiles he looked for her to kill her, a fox wint away wid his cake.

"So he wint away from that place very mad, an' nixt day he stopped, very hungry, at a farmer's house, and hired out for to tind the cows.

"'Be wise,' says the farmer's wife, 'for the next field is belongin' to a giant, and if the cows gets in his clover he will kill you dead as a shtone.'

"But the bad son laughed and wint away out to watch the cows; and before the noon-time he wint to slape up in a tree, and the cows all wint in in the clover, an' out comes the giant and shook him down out of the tree an' killed him dead, and that was the ind of the bad son.

"And by the next year the poor widdy woman, says she to the good son:

"'Ye must go out into the wide worruld and sake your fortune, for I can kape you no longer,' says she.

"'Mother, I will,' says he.

"'An' will ye take a big cake wid me curse, or a little cake wid me blessing?'

"'The little cake,' says he.

"So she baked it for him and gave him her blessin', and he wint away, an' she a-weepin' afther him foine and loud. An' by and by he came to the same spring in the woods where the bad son was before him, and the small, little bird sat again on the side of it.

"'Give me a bit of yer cakeen for me little ones in the nest,' says she.

"'I will,' says he, an' he broke her off a foine piece, and she dipped her bake in the spring and toorned it into sweet wine; and when he bit his cake, shure an' she had toorned it into a fine plum-cake intirely; an' he ate and drank and wint on light-hearted. And nixt he comes to the farmer's house.

"'Will ye tind cows for me?' says the farmer.

"'I will,' says the good son.

"'Be wise,' says the farmer's wife, 'for the



clover-field beyant is belongin' to the giant, an' if ye lave in the cows he will kill you dead.'

"'Never fear!' says the good son; 'I don't slape at me worruk.'

"And he goes out in the field and lugs a big stone up in the tree, and thin sinds ivery cow far out in the clover-fields and goes back ag'in to the tree. An' out comes the giant a-roarin' so you could hear the roars of him a mile away; and when he finds the cow-boy, he goes under the tree to shake him down, but the good little son slips out the big stone, an' it fell down and broke the giant's head intirely. So the good son wint running away to the giant's house, and it bein' full to the eaves of gold and diamonds and splindid things!

"See what fine luck comes to folks that is good and honest! An' he wint home and fetched his old mother, an' they lived rich an' continted, and died very old and rispicted."

"That's a nice story," said Edith, and Nelly remarked that it was exactly the way that Aunt Bessie used to tell it.

"Would n't it have been awful if the stone had n't hit the giant?" said Mary, who was timid; while Alice Dennis said, "Now please tell us another."

"I must be going now," said the widow Sullivan. "Bless your innocent hearts!"

"Oh, I wish you could stay a little longer!" said Nelly. "My Aunt Bessie will soon be home. She

has lots of money, and I know she will give you some, so you need n't walk to Boston."

But now, to their great astonishment, the guest laughed and pulled Nelly into her lap and kissed her, and, taking off the big gloves, threw them at Alice with a very small white hand; and next off came the green glasses and the bonnet, and there sat Miss Bessie herself!

"You dear little geese!" said she. "I must n't cheat you any longer; but it has been such fun! I supposed you would find me out in the first ten minutes."

And then there was such a frolic!

"I came nearest laughing when you came in with that odd red soup with the big onions," said Aunt Bessie, "for you know I don't like onions at all. And I was sure you would suspect when I asked if you would like to hear the Cakeen story. But the best part of it was that you were all so sweet and kind and ladylike, and did your very best to make a poor old woman comfortable. I could n't help feeling a little ashamed at being only a naughty older girl who was deceiving you. But I'll help you clear away the dinner if you like, and then we will have a drive."

"Oh, *darling* Aunt Bessie! you are so funny!" said Nelly, and then they all laughed again. It began to rain, so they could n't go to drive; but Miss Bessie stayed at Marigold House all the afternoon, and "My Friend the Housekeeper" and her cronies had some capital fun.



HELLO!



## A GLANCE AT RHINELAND.

BY E. D. SOUTHWICK.



BACHARACH, ON THE RHINE.

THERE is nothing I should enjoy better than to take a party of bright boys and girls on a visit to "Rhineland."

We would start from Cologne, where we would first see all the sights. We would have the grandest time imaginable, for we would stop just where we liked. We would ride up the Drachenfels on little gray donkeys, and scamper all over the old castle (what there is left of it). Then, while en-

joying the view, taste some "dragon's blood;" for tradition says that a great dragon lived among these mountain crags when the castle was in its glory, and was slain by valiant knights, since which time all the wine made there, being very red, is called his blood. Going on up the river, we should pass the Isle of Nonnenworth, where the daughter of the Lord of Drachenfels died in a convent, because she believed that her lover, the Lord of

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