

# ST. NICHOLAS.

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## THE PARABLE OF ST. CHRISTOPHER.

By H. H.

To a king's court a giant came,—  
"O King, both far and near  
I seek," he said, "the greatest king;  
And thou art he, I hear.

"If it please thee, I will abide;  
To thee my knee shall bend;  
Only unto the greatest kings  
Can giants condescend."

Right glad the king the giant took  
Into his service then,  
For since Goliath's mighty days  
No man so big was seen.

Well pleased the giant, too, to serve  
The greatest king on earth;  
He served him well, in peace, in war,  
In sorrow, and in mirth,

Till came a wandering minstrel by,  
One day, who played and sang  
Wild songs, through which the devil's name  
Profanely, loudly rang.

Astonished then the giant saw  
The king look sore afraid;  
At mention of the devil's name,  
The cross's sign he made.

"How now, my master! Why dost thou  
Make on my breast this sign?"  
He said. "It is a spell," replied  
The king—"a spell divine,

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"Which shall the devil circumvent,  
And keep me safe and whole  
From all the wicked arts he tries  
To slay my precious soul."

"Oh, ho, my master! then he is  
More powerful than thou!  
They lied who called thee greatest king;  
I leave thy service now,

"And seek the devil; him will I  
My master call henceforth,"  
The giant cried, and strode away  
Contemptuous and wroth.

He found the devil soon. I ween  
The devil waited near,  
Well pleased to have this mighty man  
Within his ranks appear.

They journeyed on full many a day,  
And now the giant deemed  
At last he had a master found,  
Who was the king he seemed.

But lo! one day they came apace  
To where four road-ways met,  
And at the meeting of the roads  
A cross of stone was set.

The devil trembled and fell back,  
And said, "We go around."  
"Now tell me," fierce the giant cried,  
"Why fearest thou this ground?"





ST. CHRISTOPHER.



The devil would not answer. "Then  
I leave thee, master mine,"  
The giant said. "Of something wrong  
This mystery is sign."

Then answered him the fiend, ashamed:  
"Twas there Christ Jesus died;  
Wherever stands a cross like that,  
I may not, dare not bide."

"Ho, ho!" the giant cried again,  
Surprised again, perplexed;  
"Then Jesus is the greatest king,—  
I seek and serve him next."

The king named Jesus, far and near,  
The weary giant sought;  
His name was everywhere proclaimed,  
His image sold and bought,

His power vaunted, and his laws  
Upheld by sword and fire;  
But him the giant sought in vain,  
Until he cried in ire,

One winter eve, as late he came  
Upon a hermit's cell:  
"Now by my troth, tell me, good saint,  
Where doth thy master dwell?"

"For I have sought him far and wide,  
By leagues of land and sea;  
I seek to be his servant true,  
In honest fealty.

"I have such strength as kings desire,  
State to their state to lend;  
But only to the greatest king  
Can giants condescend."

Then said the hermit, pale and wan:  
"Oh, giant man! indeed  
The King thou seekest doth all kings  
In glorious power exceed;

"But they who see him face to face,  
In full communion clear,  
Crowned with his kingdom's splendor bright,  
Must buy the vision dear.

"Dwell here, O brother, and thy lot  
With ours contented cast,  
And first, that flesh be well subdued,  
For days and nights thou'lt fast!"

"I fast!" the giant cried, amazed.  
"Good saint, I'll no such thing.  
My strength would fail; without that, I  
Were fit to serve no king!"

"Then thou must pray," the hermit said;  
"We kneel on yonder stone,  
And tell these beads, and for each bead  
A prayer, one by one."

The giant flung the beads away,  
Laughing in scornful pride.  
"I will not wear my knees on stones;  
I know no prayers," he cried.

Then said the hermit: "Giant, since  
Thou canst not fast nor pray,  
I know not if our Master will  
Save thee some other way.

"But go down to yon river deep,  
Where pilgrims daily sink,  
And build for thee a little hut  
Close on the river's brink,

"And carry travelers back and forth  
Across the raging stream;  
Perchance this service to our King  
A worthy one will seem."

"Now that is good," the giant cried;  
"That work I understand;  
A joyous task 'twill be to bear  
Poor souls from land to land,

"Who, but for me, would sink and drown.  
Good saint, thou hast at length  
Made mention of a work which is  
Fit for a giant's strength."

For many a year, in lowly hut,  
The giant dwelt content  
Upon the bank, and back and forth  
Across the stream he went,

And on his giant shoulders bore  
All travelers who came,  
By night, by day, or rich or poor,  
All in King Jesus' name.

But much he doubted if the King  
His work would note or know,  
And often with a weary heart  
He waded to and fro.



One night, as wrapped in sleep he lay,  
 He sudden heard a call:  
 "Oh, Christopher, come carry me!"  
 He sprang, looked out, but all

Was dark and silent on the shore.  
 "It must be that I dreamed,"  
 He said, and laid him down again;  
 But instantly there seemed

Again the feeble, distant cry:  
 "Oh, come and carry me!"  
 Again he sprang, and looked; again  
 No living thing could see.

The third time came the plaintive voice,  
 Like infant's soft and weak;  
 With lantern strode the giant forth,  
 More carefully to seek.

Down on the bank a little child  
 He found,—a piteous sight,—  
 Who, weeping, earnestly implored  
 To cross that very night.

With gruff good-will, he picked him up,  
 And on his neck to ride,  
 He tossed him, as men play with babes,  
 And plunged into the tide.

But as the water closed around  
 His knees, the infant's weight  
 Grew heavier and heavier,  
 Until it was so great

The giant scarce could stand upright,  
 His staff shook in his hand,  
 His mighty knees bent under him,  
 He barely reached the land,

And, staggering, set the infant down,  
 And turned to scan his face;  
 When, lo! he saw a halo bright  
 Which lit up all the place.

Then Christopher fell down afraid  
 At marvel of the thing,  
 And dreamed not that it was the face  
 Of Jesus Christ, his king,

Until the infant spoke, and said:  
 "Oh, Christopher, behold!  
 I am the Lord whom thou hast served!  
 Rise up, be glad and bold!

"For I have seen and noted well  
 Thy works of charity;  
 And that thou art my servant good,  
 A token thou shalt see.

"Plant firmly here upon this bank  
 Thy stalwart staff of pine,  
 And it shall blossom and bear fruit,  
 This very hour, in sign."

Then, vanishing, the infant smiled.  
 The giant, left alone,  
 Saw on the bank, with luscious dates  
 His stout pine staff bent down.

For many a year, St. Christopher  
 Served God in many a land;  
 And master painters drew his face,  
 With loving heart and hand,

On altar fronts and church's walls;  
 And peasants used to say,  
 To look on good St. Christopher  
 Brought luck for all the day.

I think the lesson is as good  
 To-day as it was then—  
 As good to us called Christians  
 As to the heathen men:

The lesson of St. Christopher,  
 Who spent his strength for others,  
 And saved his soul by working hard  
 To help and save his brothers!





## THE LITTLE OLD MAN IN THE FOREST.

BY HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH.

THE New Year's story I am about to tell is well known to German children, all of whom go tripping through fairyland in the golden days of childhood. It was written by a good German baron, Frederic de la Motte Fouqué, who wrote the beautiful fairy-story "Undine," about which all of our readers have heard. It does not appear, however, in the popular translations of the works of the delightful old baron. It is quite a romance in the original, but we have reduced it to a very brief and simple story.

The nobleman who wrote it, and who loves good people and children almost as much as Hans Christian Andersen loved them, declares that this is a story that ought to be told. He does not say why; he leaves his readers, young and old, to guess that by their own firesides. So, you see, the story is something of a riddle—one must live in a particular way to find it out.

Berthold was a German merchant. He traveled much from city to city. In Germany there are long, dark forests, through which he often journeyed.

One evening, he became bewildered in one of these forests. He was riding on horseback, and just as the far sunset was flaming over the tall tops of the trees above him, he was startled to find he had ridden out of his way. He carried great treasure in his saddle-bags—jewels, ready money and bills of exchange. In the recesses of the forests there were robbers.

As he was proceeding along a lone defile, after nightfall, he espied a man walking in the foot-path before him. He called to him, saying:

"Who are you?"

"I am a collier. I live with my family apart from the world, in this forest."

"Can you give a stranger who has lost his way a night's lodging?"

"I have no right to refuse hospitality to a stranger. In God's name, you are welcome."

Berthold followed the man till they came to a little cottage. The good wife met them at the door with a lamp, and a happy family of children greeted the collier's return.

The evening passed pleasantly. The merchant told stories of his journeys, and soon felt at home among the children gathered lovingly around him.

At last it was proposed that they should sing. The sweet voices of the children were just joining in a merry roundelay, when a sudden and loud knocking was heard at the door. The children

stopped singing, and the collier said firmly: "In the name of God, come in!"

Upon this, the door slowly opened, and a little old man, of gentle appearance and manners, came stealing in, greeting the family courteously, and taking the lowest place at the table. His garments were of some ancient pattern; he seemed wan and woe-begone, as though reduced by disease. Berthold gazed at him with a feeling of great curiosity and surprise, but said nothing. He once met his eye; there was something in it so deeply mysterious that he felt a chill creeping over him, and he began to be restless and ill at ease.

At last the little old man folded his hands, and, turning to the collier, said:

"It is the hour of prayer."

The collier at once began to sing "Now all the woods are sleeping," in which the whole family joined, filling the house with such delightful music that the merchant listened like one enchanted.

Presently a voice rose above the rest. It startled Berthold, and made the cottage tremble. It was the little old man's.

The family knelt down, and the collier prayed. Then they all rose up with loving words, and the little old man glided out of the door, bowing as humbly as when he came in.

But presently the door opened again, and the little old man once more appeared. He threw a look of fearful wildness upon Berthold, then disappeared, the door closing after him with violence.

"He is a little touched in mind," said the merchant, nervously.

"He is perfectly harmless," said the collier. "I have not seen any evil in him for a long time. But," he added, "the only chamber I can give you for the night has a door that does not shut very tightly; he comes into it in the night, but do not fear him; if you do not think any evil thought or do any evil act, he will go out of his own accord."

Berthold's heart was now far from tranquil. He pressed his portmanteau of treasures close to his side as the collier lighted him up the narrow stairway to his room.

He lay down, placing his portmanteau and weapons beside him on the bed, but he could not sleep. He remembered what the collier had said about the little old man, that the safeguard against him was the absence of all evil thoughts and acts. In this respect the collier's family seemed secure; but the merchant knew how great was his



own greed for gain; how it made him hard and uncharitable, and he tried to put away all evil thoughts and to think of the hymn, "Now the woods are all reposing," lest the little old man should appear.

A little past midnight he fell into a troubled sleep, and his mind began to wander over his schemes for gain. He was dreaming of the good bargain he had made, or expected to make, when he was startled by a noise close by. He raised himself in bed, and saw the little old man in the

gaze!" he exclaimed, seizing his pistols. The little old man started back, as in terror. He seemed to be in an agony of prayer. A change seemed coming over him. He appeared conscious of it, and, going toward the door, disappeared.

Berthold gazed after him and then remembered the collier's admonition in regard to the danger of evil thoughts. He wished that he had acted differently, for he wished to bring no evil on the family.

There was a sound at the latch; the door opened, when an evil-looking giant, wearing a red mantle,



"HE THREW A LOOK OF FEARFUL WILDNESS UPON BERTHOLD."

moonlight, moving about the room. The merchant at first looked upon him with a feeling of curiosity rather than alarm or anger, and while he did so, all was well. But he at last became irritable under the disturbance, and, when the little old man at last approached the bed, Berthold's irritability kindled into anger, and wicked thoughts began to fill his mind, and he found it hard to restrain his lips from wicked words.

At last, the little old man touched the portmanteau containing the merchant's treasures. This was too much. The merchant's caution forsook him, and he was filled with rage.

"Back! you vile robber! back, from my bag-

appeared. He laughed wildly, and said: "I begin to be free again. You have made me *grow!*"

Berthold saw that the giant was none other than the little old man.

The merchant leaped from his bed and discharged his pistol. The giant vanished, growing taller and more fearful as he disappeared.

In a moment, the collier hurried up the stairs.

"In the name of God," said he, rushing into the room, "what have you been doing to our house-spirit?"

"House-spirit!" said Berthold, like one in a dream. "What do you mean?"

"He has just gone out of the house," said the



collier, "perfectly monstrous in his size, and inflamed with fury!"

But the collier saw that the merchant did not understand him, and he entreated him to go down into the common apartment where all of the family, aroused by the report of the pistol, had now met. The children shrunk away from him as he entered the room, and the collier's wife was in tears.

"And now," said the good woman, "we must live all those years over again."

"This may all seem strange to you," said the collier to the merchant; "but when my wife and I first came to the cottage to live, we found it haunted by a terrible specter, such as I have just seen disappear. But I said to myself, I will not fear him, for if I am a truly Christian man no power of evil can harm me. I will overcome him with a good life, and he shall not overcome me. So, in the name of God, I remained. Red Mantle—for such is his name—appeared to us continually, but we ceased to fear him. I brought up my little ones to believe that nothing could harm them while they trusted in God; and that any specter would grow less and less who dwelt in a family who had loving hearts and lived pure lives. So Red Mantle at last became my little ones' playmate. We restrained our dispositions, we guarded our thoughts, we loved each other. We prayed together much, and the specter began to grow more gentle and to shrink in size, year by year, until he became the dwarf you saw when he came in the evening to prayers. All evil disappeared from his face, and we all loved him as a meek and harmless house-

spirit, and expected that he would soon be released from this troubled state and vanish forever."

The next morning, the merchant left the cottage. Years passed away; he traveled from city to city, and into countries remote from Germany, but he never forgot the experiences of that night.

One afternoon, near sunset, he found himself on the borders of the same forest as before, and he resolved again to strike down the defile and see what had become of the good collier family.

It was somewhat late when the cottage appeared before him. He dismounted and entered. They were singing, "Now all the woods are sleeping." It was the hour of prayer!

The merchant knelt down beside the white-haired old man, expecting every moment the house-spirit would re-appear. But the little old man did not come. Only a soft light was shed abroad amid the shadows of the room, and a sweet, low melody arose, like the touch of the most delicate fingers on finely attuned musical-glasses.

It was all that remained of the house-spirit, for the collier and his family had all these years lived pure and holy lives.

"That was once our house-spirit," said the collier, "but it can only now make its presence known to us as a gentle light and a strain of music, sweet and low. We have subdued him by innocence and prayer."

O ye who read this untrue, true story by the light of the winter fireside, does the new year open with some specter in your hearts and homes? Unriddle the tale of the collier family.

## PICCOLA.

BY CELIA THAXTER.

POOR, sweet Piccola! Did you hear  
What happened to Piccola, children dear?  
'T is seldom Fortune such favor grants  
As fell to this little maid of France.

'T was Christmas-time, and her parents poor  
Could hardly drive the wolf from the door,  
Striving with poverty's patient pain  
Only to live till summer again.

No gifts for Piccola! Sad were they  
When dawned the morning of Christmas-day;  
Their little darling no joy might stir,  
St. Nicholas nothing would bring to her!



But Piccola never doubted at all  
That something beautiful must befall  
Every child upon Christmas-day,  
And so she slept till the dawn was gray.

And full of faith, when at last she woke,  
She stole to her shoe as the morning broke;  
Such sounds of gladness filled all the air,  
'T was plain St. Nicholas had been there!

In rushed Piccola sweet, half wild—  
Never was seen such a joyful child.  
"See what the good saint brought!" she cried,  
And mother and father must peep inside.



Now such a story who ever heard?  
There was a little shivering bird!  
A sparrow, that in at the window flew,  
Had crept into Piccola's tiny shoe!

"How good poor Piccola must have been!"  
She cried, as happy as any queen,  
While the starving sparrow she fed and warmed,  
And danced with rapture, she was so charmed.

Children, this story I tell to you,  
Of Piccola sweet and her bird, is true.  
In the far-off land of France, they say,  
Still do they live to this very day.

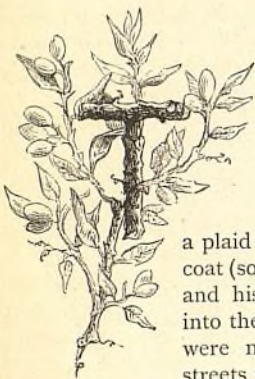


## THE BOY EMIGRANTS.

BY NOAH BROOKS.

## CHAPTER V.

## NEW PARTNERS.



THE boys were a little shy of Mr. Montague Morse. He had the appearance of "a city chap," Hiram Fender said. He wore a plaid velvet vest, a black frock-coat (somewhat seedy, to be sure), and his trousers, though tucked into the tops of his calfskin boots, were more suitable for Boston streets than for the plains. Then

he was very precise in his language, and had a way of saying "good morning," instead of "mornin' to yer," which quite discomfited Hiram and Tom. The latter took the earliest opportunity to declare that "that Boston feller was cranky." It seemed very odd, too, that he should be knocking about there on the frontier, alone, and seeking a chance to get in with some party bound across the continent. To be sure, he said that his party had broken up and had left a yoke of cattle on his hands; but how did they know that he had not stolen these oxen? Arthur fairly shuddered when this dark suspicion crossed his mind; and he looked involuntarily to see if their new acquaintance did not have the "game leg" by which Johnny had described a missing adventurer. Morse, however, told a very straightforward story, and his manner was so frank and open that one of the party, at least, regarded him with favor. Barnard said, after much deliberation, "That fellow is clear grit."

One afternoon, the boys, leaving Tom at home "to keep house," crossed the river and hunted up Morse, who was temporarily quartered at the camp of some Illinois men. They saw his oxen quietly grazing in the meadow hard by, and soon satisfied themselves that he had honestly come into possession of them. The people at the Illinois camp knew all the circumstances of the breaking up of the Boston man's party, and they incidentally told the story all over again while gossiping about the intended trade with our boys.

"But if we take your cattle in with our team, we shall have to trade off our horses, and get a yoke of oxen for ourselves," interposed Barnard.

"Hosses? have you got a hoss for sale?" asked one of the Illinois party.

"We have a pair," replied Barnard, "which we shall not want if we go on with cattle. What do you think are best for the plains—cattle or horses?"

"Well, some allow that hosses is best, because they're the fastest; then, agin, there's them that allows that cattle's best, because they hold out better in the long run. Then, agin, cattle can feed where hosses would e'enamost starve to death. Hosses is delicate critters, powerful delicate. How much do you allow you'll get for yer hoss?"

Hiram broke in with the information that they had not made up their minds to sell. They were only considering the matter. At this, a silent man, who was mending his trousers in a corner of the tent, spoke up:

"I know four chaps camped down by the creek. They've got a cheap yoke of cattle—a young cow and a smart, little steer; jest the thing for a leadin' yoke."

Arthur laughed outright at the idea of driving a cow in an ox-team.

"Well, yer may laugh, young feller," said the man, as he shut one eye to thread his needle; "but let me tell ye that cows is cows in Californy—one hundred and sixty or seventy dollars a head, I've heerd tell; and a good drivin' cow will pull like all possessed, if she's rightly yoked. Then there's yer milk all through, yer see, fur nothin', so to speak." And he resumed his mending.

"It would n't do any harm to go and see that team of mixed critters," suggested Hiram.

So the boys started up, and, getting directions from the party in the tent, went off in search of the camp by the creek. As they were moving away, the spokesman of the Illinois men called after them:

"I'll trade with ye for that white hoss of your'n. I seen him when we war comin' through Ioway. Say sixty-five dollars?"

"He's wuth seventy-five," called back Hiram; and the boys went on together, the Boston man leading off at a great pace. They searched around a long time before they found the camp of the men who had a yoke of cattle to sell. At most of the camps where they inquired, things seemed gloomy. The latest news from California was unfavorable. Many were talking about turning back; but many others were doggedly completing their preparations for the final start. One man, standing on the wheel



of his wagon, with a marking-brush and pot of paint, was printing on its canvas cover the words, "California or bust." This was a sort of defiant declaration that many men thought it necessary to make, considering how many people were endeavoring to discourage others. The sign was common on the tents and wagon-covers of the emigrants. Others had such inscriptions as, "We are bound to go through," or "Bound for the Sacramento," and one party had painted on their wagon-cover, "Root, hog, or die."

It was a picturesque sight, this city of emigrants. More people were here than on the east side of the river. Most of them had completed their outfit at Council Bluffs, and were fixing up the few odds and ends that were needed before the final start. They already affected the rude ways and manners of the plains. For the most part, the men wore slouched hats and red or blue flannel shirts; they discarded coats and vests, and wore belts at the waist. The weather was mild, for it was now early May, and groups of emigrants were cooking in the open air, or carrying on a sort of outdoor house-keeping, of which their wagons were the foundation. Here and there was a family of father, mother, and children. One wagon the boys saw had "No more Missouri for us" painted on its dingy red cover in black letters; a flock of white-haired children—Arthur said there were sixteen—climbed out and in, staring open-eyed at the strangers. This populous group had no tent, but lived wholly in the wagon, an enormous affair with a tall top, high at each end and lower in the middle. The father of the family, a yellow-faced, discouraged-looking man, wearing mud-colored clothes of homespun, "allowed" that he was from "Arkansas," and was not quite sure whether he should go to California or Oregon. He should go by the North Platte route, and turn off to the north by the Fort Hall road, if the gold news should "peter out" by the time he reached that point.

"Gosh! how that Boston feller do walk," sighed Hiram, who found it difficult to keep up with their new comrade. Morse strode on ahead, talking eagerly over his shoulder; the hard buds of the "rosin-weed" plants that covered the meadow rattled against his boot-legs as he measured off the ground. Arthur trotted along somewhat laboriously, and wondered if all Boston people walked like Mr. Montague Morse.

They found the men who had the ox and cow for sale—four great hulking fellows who had four yoke of cattle among them. They had had two wagons, one of which they had exchanged for provisions and cash in the town of Council Bluffs, and the other they retained. They would sell the ox and cow together for sixty-five dollars. The cow was

"skittish and a little wild-like," but a good milker and was first-rate in the yoke. The steer—well, there he was, a small black fellow, with one horn crumpled down in the oddest sort of way.

"Strong as a steam-ngine," explained the owner. "Strong as a steam-ngine and tame as a kitten. And, strannger, he's just the knowingest critter you ever see. 'Pears like he was human, sometimes—hey, Tige!" and the man affectionately patted the little black steer on his nose.

"Is this all you've got to sell?" asked Hiram, rather discontentedly.

"Well, the fact is, strannger," replied the man, "we don't reely want to sell. 'Pon my word, we don't. But we've no need fur all these cattle, and we do need the money. I just hate like pison to part with Old Tige. (His name's Tiger, you see, and we call him Tige, for short.) But we've got three other yoke and a light load; and we allow to go through right peart, without no trouble."

The boys walked around the cattle two or three times more, their owner entertaining them with a long string of praises of his odd yoke, as he sat on the wagon-tongue and talked fast.

"Come now, say sixty dollars and it's a trade. I want the money powerful bad," he concluded.

Arthur pulled Hiram's sleeve and said:

"Take him, Hi; take him. I like that little black steer."

Hiram spoke up: "Give us the refusal of this yer yoke of cattle until to-morrow?"

"We have not yet concluded whether we shall buy any cattle here, or go on with our horses,"

explained Barnard.

Morse looked a little disappointed, but said nothing.

It was agreed that the boys should have until next day to make up their minds about buying the cattle at sixty dollars for the yoke. As they walked back, Morse, thoughtfully



OLD TIGE.

whipping off the weed-tops with his ox-goad, said:

"You fellows take account of stock—wagon, outfit, provisions, and team. I'll put in my yoke of cattle and my share 'of provisions and outfit, or money to buy them, and will pay you my proportion of the cost of the wagon. Partnership limited; the concern to be sold out when we get through; share and share alike. How's that?"

"That's fair," said Barnard. But Hiram nudged him, and he added: "We'll talk it over. You come across and see us the fust thing to-morrow morning."



It was agreed, and the boys went back to their camp to discuss the proposition. Barnard and Hiram were really the final authorities in the matter; but Arthur and Tom exercised the younger brother's privilege of saying what they thought about it. Arthur thought the Boston man must be a good fellow. He was bright and smart; and Arthur had noticed that he spoke cheerily to the white-headed children in the Arkansas wagon. Besides, he was always pleasant and full of jokes, added the boy, with a feeling that that was not conclusive, though he had formed his opinions partly by it.

"I suppose we have really made up our minds to go with oxen. I like that Boston chap. We can't get another yoke of cattle—if we sell your horse and buy the ox-and-cow yoke—any better than by taking this man into camp with us," argued Barnard.

"But them store clothes!" said Hiram, with some disgust.

"Why, he can't help it if he has to wear out his old city clothes," said Arthur, eagerly. "He is not foolish enough to throw them away. So he wears 'em out for common ones. Don't you see?"

"And he's a powerful walker," added Hiram, with an expression of admiration on his freckled face. "Golly! how that chap kin walk, though!"

And this turned the scale. The Boston man was solemnly voted into the partnership.

Tom once more objected that Morse was "stuck up," and he was once more suppressed by his brother, who reminded him that he talked too much with his mouth. This frequent rebuke having silenced Tom, Hiram added:

"A feller that knows as much about cattle as he does, and kin walk like he does, is n't stuck up. Besides, he'll put in just about eighty dollars inter the company's mess."

At this, little Johnny, who still clung to the boys, started up. "Eighty dollars! Oh, I've got eighty dollars. Wont you take me through for that?"

Hiram looked with some disdain on the little fellow, who was trembling with excitement, and said: "You got eighty dollars, my little kid! Where?"

Johnny hastily slipped off his striped trousers, and, turning out the lining of the waistband, showed eight flat, round disks of something hard, carefully sewed in.

"Them's it! them's it! Eight on 'em; eight ten-dollar gold pieces, all sewed in." And, slitting little holes in the cloth, he showed the coins, sure enough, each sewed in separately from the other.

"Poor little chap! We don't want to take your money," said Barnard.

"No," added Hiram. "Besides, you haint got no clothes wuth speaking about. You can't go across the plains in them clothes."

"They're not 'store clothes,' though, Hiram," added Arthur, with a laugh. Arthur's heart had gone out to the poor little waif, and he reminded his comrades that part of his money might be used for an outfit, and it would be only fair to take part as his share of the cost of the trip.

"Besides, I've got clothes," said the waif; and, unrolling his bundle, he showed some coarse woolen shirts, a pair of cowhide shoes, overalls, and a few small articles of wearing apparel.

Barnard inspected these critically, and said: "No woman folks put these up; but they'll do better than nothing."

Arthur felt a touch of homesickness at this remark, and his thoughts flew back to his mother as he glanced over his own tidy suit, the work of his mother's hands. He saw her again at the garden-gate, as he had seen her many a time while camping out in the lonely Iowa prairies; and, with a soft voice, he said:

"Let's take Johnny along, boys. He shall have half of my blankets."

"What do you say, Barney?" asked Hiram, with a little glow in his honest heart, though he looked at the waif with an air of severe scrutiny.

"I'm agreed, if you are," replied Barnard. "But I tell you what it is, Arty,—our tent is full, and we can't have any more passengers nor lodgers. The partnership is complete this time."

At this, Johnny, who had ripped out the gold coins from his waistband, put them into Hiram's hand, and said:

"Am I going through with you?"

"Well, I allow you shall go through with us, youngster. It's share and share alike, you know; and you are to do your part of the work. That's all. There's nothin' comin' to ye when we get through. Understand that?" And a hard look flitted across the young man's face as he jingled the gold in his palm.

Johnny protested that he understood the bargain perfectly. He was to have such clothes as they thought necessary. The rest of his cash was to pay for his share of the provisions needed for the trip.

Next day, Morse came over early, with the information that the Illinois men would give seventy dollars for Hiram's white horse. Morse was informed of the conclusion of the partnership discussion. The terms were once more gone over and fairly understood on both sides, and the bargain was ratified.

"Now, then," said Barnard. "This is Mister Hiram Fender, late of Lee County, Illinois, known



as Hi Fender, for short. This is Thomas Fender, brother of the same, and 'a right peart boy,' as he says; otherwise Tom. And this infant is my brother, Arthur Adams Stevens, probably the best boy that ever lived—except me; and is known in this camp as Arty. As for myself, I am Arty's brother, which is glory enough for me, and my name is Barker Barnard Stevens; otherwise Barnard, usually called Barney for short, and sometimes dubbed Barney Crogan by my small and impertinent brother."

The boys laughed heartily at this long speech. Morse, not to be outdone in advancing into intimate acquaintance, said:

"Permit me, gentlemen, to introduce myself—Montague Perkins Morse, late of Hovey & Co.'s, Boston; now bound for California, or bust; and generally known as Mont Morse, or, if you prefer it, Mont,—and very much at your service."

With a great deal of enthusiasm, the boys celebrated this happy conclusion of affairs by going over the river and closing the two bargains. The white horse was sold to the Illinois men for seventy dollars; and they took Tige and Molly, for these were the names of the ox and cow, at the sum agreed upon the day before.

"We will move over here to-morrow," said Hiram, "and we will take the cattle off your hands then."

"But to-morrow is Sunday," said Mont. "We are not going to travel Sundays, are we?"

Hiram looked a little troubled for a moment. Then Barney cheerily said:

"Oh, no; we are not going to travel Sundays, except in cases of great emergency. Are we, Hi?"

"Certainly not," answered Hiram, briskly. "Never allow to travel on Sundays, not if we can help it."

"Then you'll keep the cattle until Monday, wont you?" asked Barnard.

"Well, if you fellers are too pious to come over on Sunday, you may take 'em away now," said the man, gruffly.

"All right," replied Hiram. "We'll take them now, and be beholden to nobody for nothin'."

So the cattle were taken across the ferry, and the boys had milk with their corn-meal mush that night.

"A mean old hunk," growled Hiram. "Wanted us to smash Sunday all to pieces, did he? Well, I allow we made just two milkings out of him."

Sunday here was not like the Sabbath at home. Labor was generally suspended throughout the camps, however, except where some impatient party stole out with their teams, driving along with a half-subdued air, as if afraid "to smash Sunday all to pieces." Generally, the emigrants, looking

neat but uneasy in their particularly clean clothes, lounged about the wagons and "traded" in undertones, or discussed the latest news from California by way of the States.

The bright May sun shone down upon a motley mass of people scattered among tents or grouped around wagons. About noon, the blowing of a horn announced that a religious service, of which notice had been previously circulated, would begin. There was a general sauntering in the direction of a cluster of wagons, near which a preacher, standing on a feed-box, called the people about him.

Five or six women, wives of emigrants, aided by twice as many men, formed a choir, and their voices rose sweetly on the air with the familiar hymns of Christian service. Then the minister, after devotional exercises, preached a little sermon from the text in Romans viii., 17. He talked about heirs and heirship; he dwelt on the fact that they were all seeking an inheritance, and while he advised wisdom and prudence in this search, admonishing the people about him to seek the true riches, he reminded them that they were joint heirs; that their inheritance was mutual. He taught them to forbear with one another; to be patient, loving, and to go on in their journey of life, as across the continent, with unselfishness, bearing each other's burdens.

"That's a right smart chance of a sermon," said Hiram, as they moved away after the last hymn had been sung and the attentive crowd had dispersed. "A good sermon; and just you remember what the parson said about toting one another's burdens, you Tom, will ye?"

Tom received this lesson with some show of indignation, and said: "O yes, you're the man that hears sermons for some other feller, you are."

But Arthur added, in the interest of peace:

"Tige can't carry the yoke alone. Molly must bear up her end. So if you and I don't wash the dishes and get supper, Hi and Barnard can't drive the wagon and get wood and water."

"Good for you, Arty," said Hiram, heartily. "And even little Johnny here is goin' to pitch in and do his share. I know he is, for I seen him choppin' wood this mornin' like sixty."

Johnny colored with pleasure at this rude praise, and Arty declared that Johnny was one of the joint heirs whom the preacher had talked about.

The debate about the sermon and their future united interests was a good end to a pleasant day. Mont had taken up his abode with the party. The tent was full, and the six young fellows were paired off among the quilts and blankets that covered their floor of grassy earth.

That night, Arthur felt Johnny stirring under the blankets by his side.



"What is the matter, Johnny?" he asked.

The boy put his thin hand on his companion's shoulder, and whispered in his ear, "I love you."

Arty kissed the little waif and said, "It's a bargain." Then they slept again.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ADrift.

"WELL, now, Johnny, you do look right peart." This was Hiram's opinion of the little lad when he had been equipped with his new clothes. He brought enough apparel with him for common wear; but he needed a serviceable suit for a change. This, with the necessary boots and shoes, a warm jacket for cold weather, and some additional supplies which his enlistment in the company required to be bought, made quite a hole in the eighty dollars which he had put into the common fund.

"Never mind, youngster," said the good-natured Hi. "I allow we'll have enough for all hands to get through on; so as you pitch in and do your share of work, we sha' n't find no fault."

Johnny declared his willingness to do all he could for the benefit of the company, whether it was picking up fuel, washing dishes, or driving the team. He was quite a man now, he thought, though only a little fellow. For was n't he bound for California to make his fortune? And he was going with his own resources, too, and could earn his way. This thought made the boy cheerful and happy; the color came again into his cheeks; he grew merry and frolicsome; and, before the last days of preparation were over, the poor outcast was, as Hi said, "right peart."

They had delayed at the river a long time. There were many things to be disposed of, and their places supplied with articles which were more needed. There were preventives against scurvy to be bought, for they had heard that some emigrants ahead of them had suffered from that dreadful disease, just as sailors do on the ocean when their vegetables and fresh provisions give out. So the boys laid in a supply of dried apples and vinegar, and traded away some of the stuff of which they had an excess. Then parts of the wagon had to be changed for the oxen, as they were now to make the voyage across the plains with cattle instead of horses.

One bright May morning, they took down their tent, packed their bedding, loaded the wagon, yoked up the cattle, and began their long, long tramp across the continent. Numerous other emigrant trains were stretching their way over the rolling prairies to the westward, and the undulating road was dotted with the white-covered wagons of their old neighbors of the canvas settlements by

the Missouri River. Looking behind, they saw, with a little pang of regret, the well-beaten spot where they had made their home so long. Around that place still lingered a few emigrants, who waved their hats to them by way of cheer, as the long procession of adventurers wound its way over the ridges. Beyond and behind them was the flowing river; the bluffs which give their name to the town bounded the horizon, and still beyond was the past life of these young fellows, with all their struggles; there was home.

Before them lay the heart of the continent with its mysteries, difficulties, and dangers. They tramped on right bravely, for beneath the blue horizon that lured them forward were wealth, fame, adventure, and—what these bright young spirits most longed for—opportunities for making their own way in the world. At any rate, they had turned their backs on civilization and home.

Their fortitude was tested somewhat severely during their very first week on the track across the continent. They expected disagreeable things, and they found them. They had been traveling through a rolling country, destitute of timber and dotted with only a few bunches of brushwood by the creeks. Barney, Arthur, and Tom took turns at driving the team. Mont strode on ahead. Hi and Johnny "changed off" with riding Old Jim, for whose back a saddle had been "traded" for at the Bluffs. The young emigrants were in first-rate spirits, and when a light rain came up at night, they laughed blithely over the prospect of soon getting used to the "hardships" of which they had been so often warned. It was discouraging work, however, cooking supper; for, by the time they had camped, the rain fell in torrents. They got their camp-stove into the tent, and, by running out its one joint of pipe through the open entrance, they managed to start a fire. More smoke went into the tent than out of it, for the wind had veered about and blew directly into it. Then they decided to strike the tent and change it around so as to face to the leeward. This was a difficult job to do while the rain fell and wind blew. But the boys packed their camp stuff together as well as they could, and took down the tent.

"Hold on tight, boys!" shouted Barnard, cheerily, for the canvas was flapping wildly in the wind, and threatened to fly away before it could be secured. Arty held up one pole and Barnard the other, while Mont, Hi, and Tom ran around to pin the canvas to the earth, Johnny following with the bag of tent-pins. Just then a tremendous gust came, and away flew the tent like a huge balloon, jerking Tom head over heels as it went. Poor little Johnny clung to it desperately, having caught hold of one of the ropes as it went whirling over



his head. He was dragged a short distance and gave it up, his hands being cut and torn by the line.

"Stop her! stop her!" yelled Hi, and away they all ran after the flying canvas. The cattle were cowering under the lee of a few bushes across the road, and the apparition of the collapsed tent coming over their heads, startled them so that they ran wildly in all directions. The cow was caught by the horns, a fold of the tent-cloth having been entangled on them, and she set off, frantically bellowing, across the prairie. The canvas by this

"We can get a good fire in the stove," said Mont, sagaciously, "and keep moving it about until we dry the worst of it; and, when it stops raining, it will drain off a great deal. But it does not look much like holding up," he added, as he looked out at the sheets of rain. "And if it don't hold up, we may as well not go to bed at all."

Indeed, the prospect was rather gloomy, and the young emigrants began to think themselves early introduced to the disagreeable part of their trip. They managed to keep up a roaring fire in their



"AWAY FLEW THE TENT LIKE A HUGE BALLOON."

time was so wet and heavy that it could not be dragged far, and, when the boys came up, poor Molly was a prisoner. They rescued their fugitive house, and, in sorry plight, took it back to where their camp was now exposed to a pelting rain.

"Aint this fun, Arty?" said Hi, grimly, when they were once more under cover.

"Fun alive!" replied Arty; "and so long as we have a roof over us for the night, we are in great luck. But how we are ever to get supper is more than I know."

"Supper!" retorted Barnard. "I'd like to know where we are going to sleep to-night. Every inch of ground is sopping wet, and no fire that we can build will dry it."

camp-stove, however, and the air in the tent was dry and warm. They made tea, and fried their meat, and, with dry crackers, secured a tolerable meal. By midnight the rain abated and ceased flowing under the canvas. They then lay down on the damp blankets, and slept as best they might. Toward morning Arty awoke, and, hearing the rain on the canvas roof, reached out his hand and found the ground near by covered with water. Water was everywhere around him. He lay in a puddle which had accumulated under him. At first, he thought he would turn over and find a dry spot. But he immediately discovered that that would not be a good plan. He had warmed the water next him with the natural heat of his body. To turn,



over was to find a colder place. So he kept still and slept again as soundly as if he were not lying in a small pond.

They were wakened after sunrise by the sound of wagons driving by. Jumping up from their damp beds, the young emigrants found themselves somewhat bedraggled and unkempt. But the rain had ceased, the sun was shining brightly, and what discomfort can long withstand the influence of a fair day, sunshine, and a warm wind?

The cattle, fastened up the night before to the wagon-wheels, were lowing for freedom; and the boys were at once ready to begin preparations for another day's journey. They spread their bedding and spare clothing in the sunshine, brought out their camp-stove, built a fire, and had a jolly breakfast with hot biscuits and some of the little luxuries of camp fare.

All that day the boys traveled with their blankets spread over the wagon-top, in order to dry them in the hot sun; but not one of the party complained of the discomforts of the previous night, nor showed any sign of being any worse for sleeping in the rain.

"It gets me, Mont," said Hi Fender, "that a city feller, like you, should put up with such an uncommon hard night without growling."

"Oh, that's nothing when you get used to it," said Mont, lightly.

"But you are getting used to it sooner than I am," replied Barnard, with admiration for the young city fellow's pluck.

"There aint much such accommodations in Boston, I allow?" said Hi. "No sleepin' out in canvas tents, with the water creeping under your blankets, in that village, is there?"

"Well, no; but we cannot bring city ways out on the plains, you know, Hi; and as long as we have a canvas roof over us, we ought to be satisfied and thankful. By the way, I wonder how those Pike County fellows got on last night. They intend to sleep in their wagon when they have reduced their load, but they sleep on the ground now. Must have found it a little damp last night."

Barnard thought that Bush, with his heifer and go-cart, would be worse off than anybody they knew. Bush was a jolly emigrant, traveling all alone with a hand-cart fixed up with shafts, into which was harnessed a young cow. He had quarreled with his partner at Council Bluffs, and had gone off in a fit of disgust. His entire worldly wealth was packed into the little cart, with one or two sacks of flour, some "side-meat," beans, and coffee. His cooking apparatus consisted of a frying-pan and a tin pot, in which latter useful utensil he made his coffee and cooked everything that could not be cooked in his frying-pan.

"I don't believe Bush put in much time singing last night," said Tom. "If his fiddle was n't drowned out, he was, I'll just bet."

"There he is now!" said Arty, and as he spoke they saw Bush's tall form stalking beside his queer little team, and rising over a swell of the prairie, just ahead.

At camping-time that night they overtook Bush, who was as gay and light-spirited as ever. He hailed the boys with heartiness and begged the privilege of baking a cake of dough in their camp-stove.

"The fact is, boys," he explained, "me and Sukey had a rough time of it last night, and I guess a hot corn-dodger will help us both mightily. Hey, Suke!" he said lovingly, for Bush and his vicious little cow were on very good terms.

"Rain?" he said in answer to the boys' inquiries.

"Rain? Oh, no, I guess not. It did n't rain at all worth mentioning. It just came down on the run. Well, it did. I crawled under the go-cart, where the water wa' n't more than a foot deep. It was n't dry quarters; but I could have got along as gay as you please only for my legs. They're so all-fired lengthy that they stuck out and got wet. When I pulled 'em in, my head stuck out, and when I pulled my head in agin, my legs stuck out. Pity about them legs, aint it, boys?" he added, looking down at his canvas-covered limbs. "Howsomever, I thought of you chaps. I'm used to it, but you Boston fellers aint seasoned yet. I was camping by myself over behind the divide, to keep out of the wet, and when I saw your tent get up and dust, I started to lend you a hand. But you corraled the pesky thing before I could get to you."

"Much obleeged, I'm sure," said Hi. "But we caught her on the critter's head afore she went far."

"Yes, yes, a tent's a mighty onhandy thing, I do believe. Good enough for them that can't get along without it; but, as for me, as the revolutionary feller said, gimme liberty or gimme death. I'd rather sleep out o' doors."

"Queer feller, that Bush," said Hi, when they were squatted about their camp-table at supper-time. "He's tough as sole-leather and chipper 'n a cricket. And he allows to go clean through to Californy with that 'ere go-cart and heifer. Why, the Mormons will steal him, his cow and his cart, and all, if he ever gets so far as Salt Lake."

"They'll be smart, then, for he sleeps with both eyes open," said Barnard, who admired Bush very much.

They were camped in a low, flat bottom, by the river Platte. Tall cotton-woods fringed the river-bank, on the north side of which the emigrant road then ran. Here were wood, water, and grass in



plenty; and at this generous camping-ground many emigrants pitched their tents for the night. After supper was over, the boys strolled out among the camps and enjoyed the novel sight. The emigrants had now got into the ways of the plains,—were doing their own cooking and washing, had put on their roughest manners and roughest clothes, and were already beginning to talk about the Indians. The Cheyennes, it was said, were very troublesome just beyond Fort Laramie; and it was reported that one party of emigrants had been attacked near the Point of Rocks and all hands killed.

At one camp-fire where our boys lingered, Bush was the center of a large party, to whom he was singing his one great song, "Lather and Shave." It was a famous song of many verses—ninety-nine, Bush said; but he never had time to sing them all, though often invited to give them. His violin had, so far, survived all misadventures and furnished lively music for the company. One handsome young fellow, with a tremendous voice, sang a ditty about emigrating to the gold mines, of which the refrain was:

"Ho! ho! and away we go,  
Digging up the gold on the Sacramento!"

All the by-standers and loungers joined in this chorus with spirit and emphasis, the last syllable of Sacramento being shot out with a will—"Toe!"

At another camp, they found a forlorn little woman dandling a child on her knee, sitting on a wagon-tongue, while her husband was trying to get supper under her directions. The fire would not burn, the man was awkward, and his patience seemed clean gone as he finally squatted back on the ground and caught his breath, after blowing at the fire until he was red in the face.

"Yes, we've had a powerful bad streak o' luck," he complained. "First, she took sick at the Bluffs," he said, jerking his head toward the woman on the wagon-tongue. That kep' us there nigh onto a month; and my pard, he got out of patience and lit out and left us. Then the young one up and had the cholery yesterday, and we broke down in that thar slew just beyond Pape's, and we had to double up teams twicet that day. And now then this 'ere blamed fire wont burn, and we be agoin' to Californy. We be," he added, with great sarcasm. "I never could build a fire; hit's woman's work, hit is! Oh, look at yer, smolderin' and smudgin' thar!" he continued, addressing the sulky fire. With a sudden burst of rage, he kicked the smoking embers to the right and left with his heavy boot, and said, "Blarst Californy!"

"Here, let me try," said Tom. "I'm right smart at fire-bildin';" and the boy gathered the

half-charred embers together, and deftly fanned a flame from them by wafting his hat before the coals, into which he poked some dry stems and grass. The fire recovered itself cheerily, and the man looked down on Tom's stooping figure with a sort of unwilling admiration. Arthur did not like the looks of a husband who seemed so indifferent to his wife and baby.

"Here, give me the baby," said he; "I'll tend it while you get your supper. And, Mister, you had better look after your cattle. I see they've got all snarled up with that ox-chain."

"Drat the cattle!" said the man; and he went off to swear at the poor beasts which had managed to turn their yokes and worry themselves generally into a tangle, while waiting for their master to take care of them for the night.

"Don't mind him," sighed the woman, relinquishing the sick baby to his volunteer nurse. "Don't mind him. He's got a right smart of a temper, and he do get contrarywise when things goes contrarywise, and the good Lord knows they have gone contrarywise ever since we left the States. Now trot the young one easy-like, if he hollers, and I'll just rattle up some supper for my ole man."

Arty held the baby as tenderly as he could, softly moving up and down on his knee the unpleasant-looking feather pillow on which it was laid. A tall young girl came around from behind the wagon; looked at the emigrant's wife, who was kneading biscuit, kneeling on the ground; looked at Arthur, who was crooning a little song to the sick baby; and then she remarked: "Goodness, gracious me!"

"Nance!" said Arthur, looking up.

"Yes, it's Nance," retorted the tall young girl, with some asperity. "Leastways, I'm called sich by folks that have n't got no more manners than they have room for."

"Beg pardon, Miss Nancy. But you surprised me so, you know."

"I suppose you don't allow I'm surprised. Oh, no, not the leastest bit. You a-tending baby out here on the perarie! Howsomever, I like it, I like it! I declare to gracious, I do!" she added in a milder tone. "It's just what boys are fit for. Hope you've learned to make bread by this time. Scalded their flour, the ornery critters! Oh, my!" and, overcome by the recollection of that first great experiment of the boys when in Iowa, the tall young girl sat down on the wagon-tongue and doubled herself up again.

"Never mind," she said, disengaging herself from her laugh. "If you'll come over to our camp, I'll give you some yeast—real hop-yeast; brought it all the way from Ioway myself. It's good enough to bust the cover of your camp-kettle off."



"Your camp! Are you going to California?" asked Arthur, with surprise.

"Goin' to Californy! Of course we be. What else do you suppose we'd be campin' out here on the Platte, miles and miles away from home, for?"

"But how did you pass us?"

"Could n't say. Dad, he allowed he would n't stop at the Bluffs more 'n one day. Oh, he's got the gold fever just awful!"

"Was he thinking of going to California when we passed your place in Iowa?"

"Could n't say. He seen the folks piling by on the emigrant road, bound to the gold mines. He used to set on the fence and swap lies with 'em by the hour, and ma just hollerin' at him from the back-door all the while. Oh, my! was n't she mad, though!"

"Did n't she want to come?"

"Not at first; but she got to talking with some of the women-folks on the road, and then she and dad talked gold night and day. They jest got wild. So one day, dad, he let the place, picked up his traps, bundled us into the wagon, and here we be."

"How do you find it, as far as you've got?" asked Tom, who by this time had become very much interested in Nance's story.

"Pretty tolerable-like. How's yerself?"

"Oh, it's pretty good fun, all but washing dishes," replied Tom, bashfully.

"Washin' dishes!" retorted the girl, with great scorn. "And you call yer handful of tin plates and things washin' dishes. Don't I wish you had to do up the dishes I had at home in loway! Oh, it's real persimmons, this,—just nothing to do. Barefooted, you see," and Nance put out a brown foot, to show that she had left her shoes with civilization.

"Where's your other fellers?" she asked,—  
"specially that one that scalded his flour?"

Arthur explained that they were about the camps, having tarried where Bush was playing his violin for a "stag dance," as it was called, down by the cotton-woods.

"Well, you come over to our camp to-morrow, early, and I'll give you some real hop-yeast. It's worth a hull raft of bakin' powder and self-risers. We're off at sun-up. So long!" And Nance was gone.

"Right smart chance of a gal, that," commented the emigrant, whose anger had cooled, and who was sitting on an ox-yoke contentedly smoking his pipe.

"So Miss Sunbonnet is going to California, is she?" said Barnard, when the boys related their interview with that young woman.

"Yes," replied Arthur, remembering Nance's brown foot; "she's going a-digging up the gold on the Sacramen—toe!"

(To be continued.)

## JOURNEYING THROUGH THE DAY.

BY GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

COME, children, come! we must hasten on,  
For still it's a long, long way;  
A happy long way, ere our journey be done—  
We are journeying through the day.

Think! here is another day begun,  
So close on the one that's gone;  
And to-morrow will be another one,  
As soon as the east can dawn.

For here it begins, and here it ends,  
All on the sun's highway;  
We need not part from home and friends,  
To journey through the day.

The day! what a wonderful thing it is—  
So full of love and delight,  
From the time of the mother's morning-kiss  
Till the kiss that comes with "Good-night!"

And it leads from the east, and goes to the west,  
And follow it we will;  
Though, whether we work, or whether we rest,  
We stay in the same place still.





## HOW PLANTS COME FROM SEEDS.

BY ANNIE J. MACKINTOSH.

### PART II.

YOU remember that in our last paper we noticed some of the differences between plants having their origin in two-lobed seeds and those growing from undivided seeds. But there are other differences just as great, and as strongly marked. If you examine a twig from any ordinary tree, you will find that the outside covering may be easily removed, and seems to be quite distinct from the wood. I need not tell you that this covering is called bark; and you know, too, that the trees that grow in your neighborhood are all provided with this outer coat.

But examine a piece of straw. You would not think for a moment of calling its covering bark; it is much more like a very thin skin or coating of varnish.

Now, if there are leaves on the various stems which we are examining, you will find that those which are parallel-veined all belong to the stems which have no bark, while the net-veined leaves are attached to the bark-covered branches.

Thus we have another difference between the two great divisions of plants. Let us see if we cannot discover still another. Take a portion of your corn-stalk and split it lengthwise; you find that it is stringy or fibrous. Examine a piece of wood in the same way, and you will see that it is solid. Now take a cross-slice from the corn, and another from one of the branches, and let us compare them. In the corn you find nothing but the skin-covering, and the ends of the fibers, like little specks, scattered through a spongy substance called cellular tissue (see Fig. 2, next page); while in the other slice (Fig. 1) you see first the bark, then one or more layers of solid wood; and in the middle you find the heart-wood or pith, so that the slice presents the appearance of a number of rings arranged around the center. By counting these rings in trees which have been cut down, you may judge of the number of years which have elapsed since they first showed themselves above ground, for the tree adds a new ring or layer to its growth every year. Such plants are called "exogenous," or



outward-growing plants, because the new layer is formed just within the bark, and outside those of previous years. The fibrous plants grow by additions to their inward surface, thus pushing the

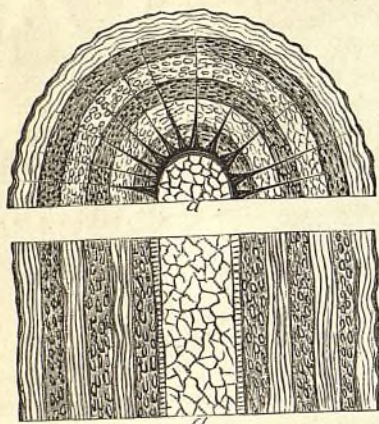


FIG. 1.—MAGNIFIED SECTIONS, TRANSVERSE AND LONGITUDINAL, OF OUTWARD-GROWING PLANT.

older parts outside. This class is entitled "endogenous," which means inward-growing.

Did you ever think that the plants not only grow but live? A very different life from ours, to be sure, yet resembling it in some points, and in none more than in the necessity for food. This food consists of earthy matter, gases and moisture, and these three combined constitute sap. The organs employed in providing food are the roots and leaves. The former take in earthy matter and moisture from the earth, while the latter obtain moisture and gases from the atmosphere. You may see this earthy matter, which is the solid part of the plant, very easily, if you live where wood is used as fuel. In the burning, the heat drives into the air both gas and moisture, leaving behind only the earthy matter, which we call ashes.

The stem of the plant is composed of minute cells or cavities, too small to be seen by the naked eye. These cells may be compared to little boxes, and you must try to imagine them piled one above the other, the bottom of one cell forming the top of the one just below. If you will remember that these separations are thinner than the sides of the cells, you will understand how the moisture, taken up by the rootlets, is forced from the cells below to those above, traveling thus until it reaches the leaves.

These too, as I have already said, assist in providing for the support of the plant. If you examine a common leaf under the microscope, you will find that the whole surface, more especially that of the under part, is covered with small holes, or breathing pores, which are said to open or close,

as the conditions of the atmosphere prove favorable or otherwise, to the collection of food-material.

When the moisture and earthy matter, taken up by the roots, have reached the leaves, they are mixed with the air and moisture which the leaves are constantly drawing in; thus mixed it forms sap, and passing back again through the plant, nourishes and builds up the parts which require it. If the supply be greater than the demand, that which is unused is carried down to the roots, where it mixes with the new material and passes again to the leaves. Thus a constant circulation is kept up during the summer months; but as fall approaches, the movement becomes slower and slower, until, when winter has really come, the plant sleeps, like the dormouse and hedgehog, until gentle showers and warm sunshine whisper that it is time to wake; then the sap begins again to flow, the buds expand and burst, and we know that spring has really come.

Now we shall have something to say of flowers. Collect specimens of as many different varieties as possible, but among them try to have a lily of some sort, as it is much easier to examine the parts in a large flower. In addition to these, we shall require a knife, a strong pin, and the magnifying glass.

Take a lily, then. What gives it its beauty? The leaves, of course. Well, these leaves taken together, just as they are on the flower, are called the corolla, which means crown; if we speak of a single leaf, it is called a petal. With your knife remove the corolla, being careful not to injure the heart inside. Having cut away the crown, you find inside a circle of stems (Fig. 3, *a, a*), surmounted

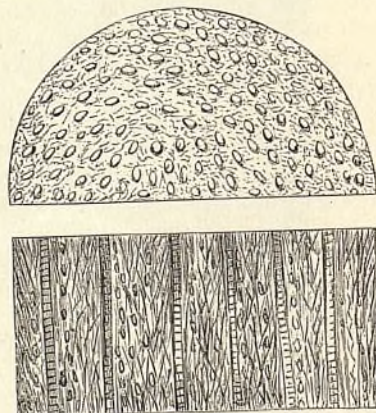


FIG. 2.—MAGNIFIED SECTIONS, TRANSVERSE AND LONGITUDINAL, OF INWARD-GROWING PLANT.

by oblong tips which are covered with yellow powder or dust. These stems are called stamens, and consist of two parts; the filament, which is the stalk, and the anther, the part which holds the dust. Remove some of the latter and place it



under the glass, when you will find that it is composed of rounded grains; this dust is called pollen. Now take a tip and examine it carefully through

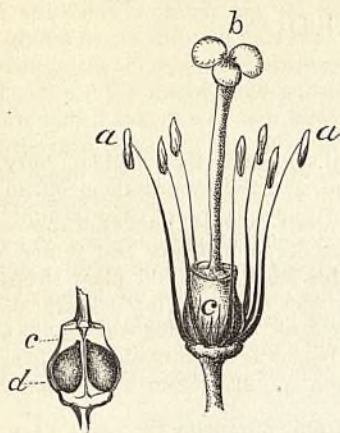


FIG. 3.—STAMENS, PISTILS, AND SEED-VESSEL.

the glass, turning it round with the pin; you see now that it is not a knob, but a little bag of skin, which seems to have been burst. This bag, or sac, is called the anther, and its duty is to hold the pollen until perfectly ripe, when it bursts, covering itself with the dust.

You have now remaining a greenish stem, at the end of which is a berry-like enlargement; this stem is called the pistil (Fig. 3, *b*), and the enlarged portion is the ovary (Fig. 3, *c*), which holds the seeds. If you will, without separating them, cut the pistil and ovary lengthwise, and put them under the glass, you will be able to see plainly the seeds neatly packed in the ovary (Fig. 3, *d*); you will also observe that the pistil is a hollow tube leading down to the ovary.

We have now learned the names of the parts in the flower which we have been examining, but the lily is not a complete flower; it lacks one part which you may find in some others of your specimens, as the rose, pink, morning-glory, &c. We refer to the green leaves outside of the corolla. This circle is called the calyx (Fig. 4, *a*), which means "flower-cup;" though ordinarily green, it is sometimes bright-colored, as in the case of the fuchsia.

We will make a list of the parts, so that you may memorize them more easily:

1. Calyx. (Fig. 4, *a*.)
2. Corolla. (Fig. 4, *b*.)
3. Stamens; filament, anthers, pollen. (Fig. 3, *a*, *a*.)
4. Pistil; ovary, seeds. (Fig. 3, *b*, *c*, *d*.)

A complete flower will present all of these sev-

eral parts, but many are lacking in one or more of them. Some, as the lily, have no calyx, others have no corolla—mignonette for instance; in some species the stamens are found in one flower and the pistil in another, as in Indian corn. Others, still, have all the stamen-bearing flowers on one plant, while another of the same species produces flowers containing pistils only; of this class the red maple is given by Prof. Gray as an illustration. There are also flowers which produce neither stamens nor pistils, of which the snow-ball will be a familiar example.

You already know that the seeds (Fig. 3, *d*), from the beginning of the flower, are packed away in the ovary (Fig. 3, *c*), but these seeds will be perfectly useless unless a portion of the pollen is allowed to come in contact with them; by useless we mean, that if planted they would never grow. But how is this accomplished? Touch the pistil, it is sticky; now, the pollen being very light, is dislodged by every passing breeze, and some of it is sure to fall upon the pistil, when it sends down through the tube a root-like thread, which, touching the seeds, makes them fertile, in some way which we do not understand. From this you will learn that the portions necessary to make the seeds productive are the stamens and pistils. In flowers which contain both you will observe that, if they are upright upon their stems, the pistil is apt to be shorter than the stamens, while if they droop, the reverse is the case; this is to enable the pollen more readily to reach the pistil. In cases where the stamens and pistils are separated, Dame Nature sometimes employs the wind and sometimes the insects which

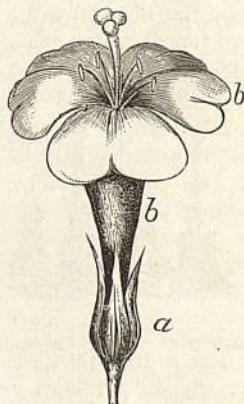


FIG. 4.—PARTS OF A FLOWER.

crawl over the flowers as her messengers; the pollen sticks to their legs and bodies, and they carry it very nicely for a short distance. But for long journeys the wind is much better, and cases have been mentioned of pollen traveling in this way for hundreds of miles.

After the pollen has reached the seeds, time only is required to enable them to ripen, so that we have now completed the circle: from the seed back to it again. But do not imagine that you know *all* about the subject. If, however, you have learned enough to prompt you to notice and experiment for yourselves, your time will not have been wasted.



# WHAT THEY DID NOT DO ON THE BIRTHDAY OF JACOB ABBOTT B., FAMILIARLY CALLED SNIBBUGGLEDYBOOZLEDOM.

(With illustrations by J. B.)

By M. S. B.


I WONDER if anybody in this city remembered that last Wednesday was Snibbuggledyboozledom's birthday. I guess nobody thought a word about it until the next day, which was a great pity, for everybody ought to have remembered it and turned out, and shouted



THE BELL IN THE FIRE-TOWER.

and fired guns, and made speeches and processions; and I would write and tell you all about what they did. But as they did n't celebrate the day at all, I can only write what they *did* n't do.

In the first place then, we were not waked up before light by a crowd of three or four hundred boys shouting and firing guns and fire-crackers and parlor-match pistols, and yelling, "Hurrah for Abbott, seven years old!" "Three cheers for Jakey, seven years old!" Then at sunrise the big bell in the fire-tower did not strike seven times: "Boo-oong! boo-oong! boo-oong! boo-oong! boo-oong!" and all the other bells in the steeples did n't strike in with a tremendous uproar: "Ding-dong-ding! ding-dong-ding! ding-dong-ding!" just as loud as they ever could n't sound. What a clatter they did n't make!

And all the flags in the city were not flying all day from sunrise till dark. And the boys all over the city did n't keep at work every minute of the day popping off fire-crackers and torpedoes, and little toy cannon that would shoot off a shot about as big as this:  and used a nail for a ramrod. Sometimes they would n't light the crackers and throw them up in the air, to see them go off before they came down again; and sometimes they would n't hold them out in little iron pistols, to look like



THE OTHER STEEPLES.

shooting; and sometimes they would n't bury them in the ground, and then touch them off, so as to throw the dirt up all around like a mine; and sometimes they would n't put a fire-cracker on a little chip (for a boat) and sail it off on the water, and light the cracker to see it blow up the boat. I tell you they did n't have a *splendid* time, and every boy's father did n't give him ten cents, all for his own, to buy peanuts or candy, or anything else he wanted.

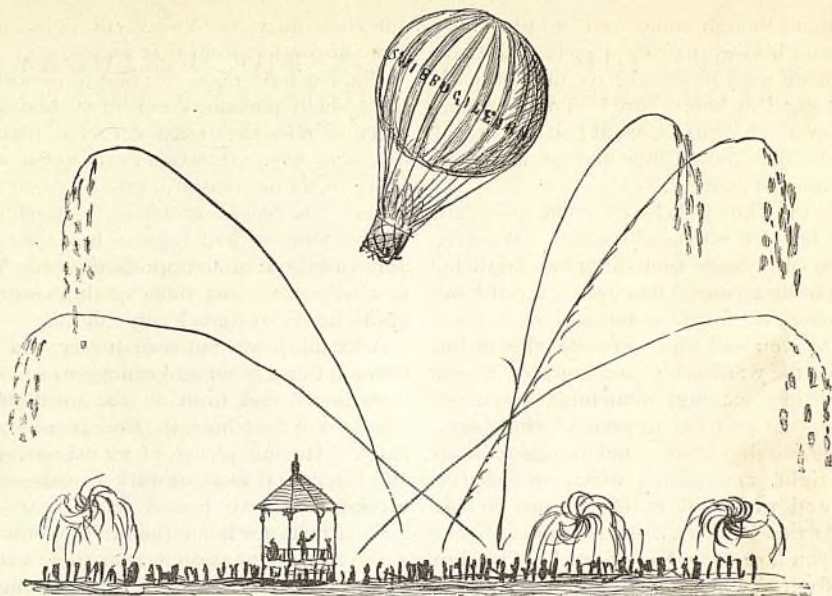
And then in the afternoon there was n't a grand procession three miles long, with lots of soldiers in bright-colored uniforms, and brass bands, each one with a drum-major with a tall bearskin cap and a gold-headed staff, and Masons with queer little white aprons, and firemen with their engines and hose-carts and ladder-trucks, and the mayor and common council, and three trained monkeys on as many little ponies, and an elephant and two camels, and a clumsy rhinoceros with his horn on his nose



(a very ugly nose too), and thirteen ministers in carriages. And they did n't go through all the streets and up to the park, and then the mayor did n't make a grand speech two hours long, telling how gratified he was n't to assist in the celebration of such a day, and what an honor he did n't consider it to the city to be the residence of two such great folks as himself and Snibbuggledyboozledom.

And then they did n't have a grand display of fire-works—great rockets that went s-s-s-izz away up in the air and then sent down lots of red and purple and green stars, and wheels that spun around and around with a whiz-z-z and threw off all manner of beautiful sparks, and Roman candles that burned with sparks and threw up with a "pop" brilliant white and colored balls. And at the end they did n't send up an enormous fire-balloon, thirty-five feet across, with red and white and blue stripes up and down it, and "Snibbuggledyboozledom, 1875," in large gold letters reaching all around it. And it did n't sail, sail, sail away, shining at first like a great big moon, and sailing, sailing further off till it looked no bigger than a star, and then sailing, sailing, sailing away till we could n't see it at all. And I don't believe it ever came down at all, anywhere. Because, you see,





THE CROWD, THE FIRE-WORKS, THE MAYOR SPEAKING, THE ROCKETS, AND THE BALLOON.

if it did n't ever go up, it could n't ever come down !

And that was the end of the things that did n't happen on the boy's birthday. Only the next day the papers did n't have lots of news about it—how one man did n't have his hat knocked off by a rocket that went along straight instead of going up in the air, and fifteen boys and three girls did n't get their fingers and faces burned with the fire-crackers and things, and ten horses were not frightened and

did n't run away, smashing nine wagons and barking fifteen trees, and five houses were not set on fire by sparks and crackers, and the usual number of such mishaps did not take place. And there were not about fifteen thousand pints of peanuts sold, and five thousand glasses of soda water, and a corresponding amount of other good things.

And then (this part did really happen) everybody went to bed and went to sleep, just as if it had been any common day.

## CHRISTMAS IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS.

BY J. H. WOODBURY.

WE were frozen in, within a bight of the coast in Camden Bay; to the northward of all our northern possessions; within the Arctic Circle, where there is one long winter night for months, unbroken by a rising sun.

We had lingered too long on that northern shore, where we had been cruising through the short summer season for whale-oil to feed the lamps at home.

Home! Home! The full meaning of the word came to us, as we sat round our own dim-burning lamps down in our well-protected quarters in the

steerage and talked of the loved ones whom we had left there. Should we ever return to them? Yes; every one believed it, and we were still cheerful.

The sun had been long gone, and it was Christmas-time; and because it was Christmas-time we thought the more of those we had left at home. Santa Claus, too, and the stockings he used to fill when we were there, came to our minds; and the sleigh-rides, the skating, coasting—and the dear girls who used to be such a help to us in enjoying it all—we remembered *them* you may well believe!—and we talked of them as well. Every man—of course,



we were all men, though some were a little under age—told about his own particular girl; and if you could have heard us, you would have thought each one had an angel at home, sure! You can't imagine how lovely the girls become, so far away! Just go beyond the Arctic Circle and get frozen in, and you'll know all about it.

The girls—the *dear* girls!—we could only talk about them; but that was some comfort. We were all resolved to carry home something nice for them, at least, and to that end we had been “scrimshawing” whalebone ever since the sun had set.

I don't think you will find *scrimshawing* in the dictionary, for the word is n't used much on shore. It means, cutting, etching, scratching, carving—making all sorts of pretty things out of whalebone. We had made jaggings-knives, and things to keep the girls straight, and things which we had no names for, and were still working away on our whalebone “fixins” when Christmas came.

I will tell you how *we* were “fixed.” The ship lay not far from the shore, within a bight of the coast, as I have said, so that there was a semicircle of snow-covered hills in full view from our decks; the nearest being hardly more than a mile distant. Although we had no sun, the moon was with us, round and full, at Christmas-time, and the snow-covered hills glistened in its light. We often walked as far as the hills, and sometimes over them, to give our limbs the exercise they needed; but as yet had never found anything very attractive in that direction.

We suffered less from the cold than you might suppose. The ship was well provided with all sorts of warm clothing, and the captain gave us all the extra garments we needed, at the ship's expense. The quarters of the foremast hands had been changed from the forecastle to the steerage—the space in which had been sufficiently enlarged to accommodate them as well as the boat-steerers—and all, but the officers in the cabin, now lived there together. The cabin was separated from the steerage only by a bulkhead.

The cabin contained a stove, in which a fire was kept always going, giving that apartment a moderate degree of warmth. The galley range had been lowered into the steerage, where it stood a little to one side of the hatchway, and having plenty of fuel, consisting in part of whale-scrap, a fire was kept constantly going in that also. Besides, the walls of our apartment were lined all around with sails—of which we had a large supply, besides those we had unbent from the yards after the ice had fastened upon us—and all around, outside, the ship had been banked with snow, almost as high as the rail. Indeed, we did not suffer much with cold; but the moisture accumulated in

our close quarters to such an extent as to cause some discomfort from that source.

The few light duties we had to perform occupied but a small portion of our time, and we were allowed to pass the remainder of it pretty much in our own way. It was almost worth while to be frozen in, for one reason at least: we were not obliged to turn out every four hours to stand a watch on deck. Still we had regular hours for sleep, and were called out at an appointed time. We still felt that we were under our captain's control, though his authority was much relaxed.

After all, it was not such a very bad thing to be frozen in, except for its keeping us so much longer from home, and from all the world besides ourselves. On the whole, the time passed rather pleasantly. Having plenty of whalebone, both white and black, and tools to work it with—and withal a turning-lathe—we passed more time in making fancy articles for home than in any other way.

But as Christmas drew near there was some talk about a visit from Santa Claus. From certain indications he might reasonably be expected, and it was even proposed that we should all hang up our stockings. Several of our number were making caps, mittens, mufflers, and such things, with which they were taking unusual pains; more than they would be likely to if they were going to wear the articles themselves; and this was what suggested to us that Santa Claus might possibly come.

Uncle Jim, our oldest man, was inclined to laugh at the idea, however. He was of the opinion that Santa Claus would n't come away up there just to please a few half-frozen whalers; but if he *should* come, he would want something bigger than stockings to put his nick-nacks in. He advised hanging up our *trousers*, with the bottoms of the legs tied together with rope-yarns.

“Most likely,” said he, “if he brings anything, it will be pickles, and old cheese and whisky.”—Uncle Jim was a dry old chap—“or something of that sort.”

Having no sun, we could only tell by the moon, and the captain's chronometer, when Christmas came, but we were ready to usher it in. Everybody was so wide awake that Santa Claus could not possibly have got into the steerage without being seen; and for that reason, as we supposed, he did not come. But we were as merry, perhaps, as though he had been there. We rang the fore-castle bell for an hour, and ran up the stars and stripes at the mizzen peak, and should have fired a salute with the two old guns on the quarter-deck, had they not been so filled with frost that there was danger of bursting them. While we were making all the noise we could, the cook, with another man and a boy to help him, began to get our



Christmas dinner; to which we looked forward with great expectations.

We had running and leaping matches and other games in the open air, till we were tired of them, and then we went down again into the steerage, and, while the dinner was cooking, we had songs, speeches, and theatricals. Booth was n't there, but we had Jack Short, probably the best star actor at that time within the Arctic Circle. Short made an awful Richard. Taking the first man he could lay hands on for a horse, he made the rest of us fly to our bunks for safety; and then we could n't help laughing to see the black cook's eyes stick out as he stood behind his coppers stabbing at Short with his longest beef-fork to keep him off.

In the midst of our fun, a strange voice hailed from on deck, and we all tumbled up to see who was there and what was the matter.

Behold! there stood Santa Claus himself! It could be no other; it was just like the pictures we had all seen of him, and every one recognized him at once. He spoke to Short, whom he seemed to recognize as our leading man, in a voice that was thick with frost.

"I'm a little late," said he; "but I was sure of getting here before sunrise, anyhow, so I thought I'd attend to all the others first. Mighty hard driving up this way. Broke a trace, crossing Winnipeg, and had to stop to mend it. Upset all my traps, too, coming down the Saddle-Back Mountains. But I'm here at last, all right, and if you've got any oats I'd like to give my team a feed before I begin to unload."

"Have n't got an oat," says Short; "but where's your team? Trot it up."

The heads of the team were visible, and the next moment four curious-looking animals came up the inclined snow-plane to the open gangway, drawing a sledge (which looked very much like the one we had built to use about the ship), and leaped upon deck. The sledge was loaded with packages and bundles, all labeled, but the *team* was what at first most interested us.

Those animals were not reindeer, nor dogs—unless they were a new species that we had not yet heard of. They had only two legs, and they wore boots. But their bodies and heads were covered with fur, and something that looked like raveled-out stocking yarn. Their heads looked somewhat like dogs' heads; but as none of them had their tongues out, we suspected they were not dogs at all. In some respects, especially in height, they resembled our four boat-steerers; and when we remembered that we had not seen the boat-steerers below for an hour or more, we thought it just possible that they might have been transformed into these strange animals.

The captain, and the others who lived in the cabin—all but the mate—came up to look at Santa Claus and his team. As for the sledge, we all felt sure we had seen it before; but we were not going to accuse Santa Claus of deception, or with stealing, to begin with. Evidently he had brought us presents, and we ought to be satisfied.

"No oats!" exclaimed he as if astonished, when his team stood stamping and shaking themselves on deck. "What have you been living on all winter?"

"Nothing to brag of, as yet," said Short. "We've been eating odds and ends, mostly. The doctor's got some good beef in his coppers to-day, though, and if your hounds are hungry enough to eat that, they can have some."

"Hungry! Have n't stopped to eat nor drink, till now, since we left Kamtchatka, almost twenty-four hours ago! Been clear round, you know. Guess they'll pick your beef-bones if you give 'em a chance! And that reminds me, I've got a few fixin's here that wont go bad with your Christmas dinner, and I guess I may as well give 'em to ye right away." And at once Santa Claus began to unpack.

The packages he drew out first were labeled, in very bold letters, "For General Distribution." There was a keg of molasses, two whole hams, frozen pickles, condensed milk, a package of cheese (very old cheese, that had been packed in brandy, or something else that was strong enough to keep it), pilot bread (a better quality of bread than we got every day), a quantity of preserved bananas, somewhat resembling figs, a box of mustard, vinegar, pickled potatoes, and a bag of dried apples.

All these Santa Claus unloaded, while we crowded around him, and then came articles of clothing, each bearing in large letters the name of one of the crew. A pair of boots for one, a flannel shirt for another, a Guernsey frock for a third, and so on. Every man of us got something to cheer his heart and show that he was not forgotten. Old Santa seemed to know us all, and handed to each his particular package, accompanying it with some appropriate remark.

We could not but admire the old fellow while he was doing this, but when it appeared that he had brought us *letters from home*, our enthusiasm almost upset him. From out a deep pocket he drew letter after letter, and, slowly reading the superscription, handed it to the one to whom it belonged. To every one, even the cook, he brought a letter.

But it was too cold to read the letters on deck, and we at once transferred all our presents to the steerage. Then we invited old Santa and his team to go down with us and hear the news and get some dinner. But the dinner would not be ready for



an hour, and the old fellow thought he could n't wait. He had only an empty sledge now, he said, and his spaniels would take him home in a jiffy. Most likely his wife would have dinner waiting. So he cracked his long whip, and away they went, round the stern of the ship; and we all rushed below.

Then such a time as we had—I can hardly tell! Of course, we read our letters first; but, after all, it was evident they had not been written by those from whom we most wished to hear. Yet there

taken Holland again. Uncle Seth had shingled his barn. They were talking of putting a new lighting-rod on the meeting-house. Ann Eliza had sprained her ankle running after grasshoppers. Sarah Jane had lost her waterfall, and all the other girls were going to give up waterfalls because she could n't find it again. Such as these were the items of news we got; and though, after all, there was not a word that could be depended upon about the dear ones at home, the letters helped to make our Christmas merry. By the time they were read,



SANTA CLAUS APPEARS ON DECK.

was news in them, such as it was. For instance, Sam Miller learned that Eliza, the girl he used to talk about, had got three new beaux since he left home, and was in an "awful pucker" because she did n't know which she liked best.

Another of the girls whom we had heard about was married, and had moved to Kansas; and another had started alone and on foot for the North Pole to look for her sailor-man, and had not been heard from since. But this was not half:

Grandmother Goose was dead. The Dutch had

our dinner was ready; and I venture to say that never was there a more generous Christmas dinner served up so near the North Pole, or a jollier crew there to partake of it.

I will add, that we got out of the ice at last, and after a little more whaling returned to the Sandwich Islands with a full ship. Our next Christmas was passed at Bahia, only a few degrees south of the Equator, in Brazil, beneath a blazing sun, in the midst of tropic scenery, and surrounded with nearly every kind of tropical production.



## MARJORIE'S BIRTHDAY GIFTS.

BY LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

MARJORIE sat on the door-step shelling peas, quite unconscious what a pretty picture she made with the roses peeping at her through the lattice-work of the porch, the wind playing hide-and-seek in her curly hair, while the sunshine with its silent magic changed her faded gingham to a golden gown, and shimmered on the bright tin pan as if it were a silver shield. Old Rover lay at her feet, the white kitten purred on her shoulder, and friendly robins hopped about her in the grass, chirping "A happy birthday, Marjorie!"

But the little maid neither saw nor heard, for her eyes were fixed on the green pods, and her thoughts were far away. She was recalling the fairy-tale granny told her last night, and wishing with all her heart that such things happened nowadays. For in this story, as a poor girl like herself sat spinning before the door, a Brownie came by, and gave the child a good-luck penny; then a fairy passed, and left a talisman which would keep her always happy; and last of all, the prince rolled up in his chariot, and took her away to reign with him over a lovely kingdom, as a reward for her many kindnesses to others.

When Marjorie imagined this part of the story, it was impossible to help giving one little sigh, and for a minute she forgot her work, so busy was she thinking what beautiful presents she would give to all the poor children in her realm when *they* had birthdays. Five impatient young peas took this opportunity to escape from the half-open pod in her hand and skip down the steps, to be immediately gobbled up by an audacious robin, who gave thanks in such a shrill chirp that Marjorie woke up, laughed, and fell to work again. She was just finishing, when a voice called out from the lane:

"Hi, there! come here a minute, child!" and looking up, she saw a little old man in a queer little carriage drawn by a fat little pony.

Running down to the gate, Marjorie dropped a curtsy, saying pleasantly:

"What did you wish, sir?"

"Just undo that check-rein for me. I am lame, and Jack wants to drink at your brook," answered the old man, nodding at her till his spectacles danced on his nose.

Marjorie was rather afraid of the fat pony, who tossed his head, whisked his tail, and stamped his feet as if he was of a peppery temper. But she liked to be useful, and just then felt as if there were few things she could *not* do if she tried, be-

cause it was her birthday. So she proudly let down the rein, and when Jack went splashing into the brook, she stood on the bridge waiting to check him up again after he had drank his fill of the clear, cool water.

The old gentleman sat in his place looking up at the little girl, who was smiling to herself as she watched the blue dragon-flies dance among the ferns, a blackbird tilt on the alder-boughs, and listened to the babble of the brook.

"How old are you, child?" asked the old man, as if he rather envied the rosy creature her youth and health.

"Twelve to-day, sir;" and Marjorie stood up straight and tall, as if mindful of her years.

"Had any presents?" asked the old man, peering up with an odd smile.

"One, sir—here it is;" and she pulled out of her pocket a tin savings bank in the shape of a desirable family mansion painted red, with a green door and black chimney. Proudly displaying it on the rude railing of the bridge, she added, with a happy face:

"Granny gave it to me, and all the money in it is going to be mine."

"How much have you got?" asked the old gentleman, who appeared to like to sit there in the middle of the brook, while Jack bathed his feet and leisurely gurgled and sneezed.

"Not a penny yet, but I'm going to earn some," answered Marjorie, patting the little bank with an air of resolution pretty to see.

"How will you do it?" continued the inquisitive old man.

"Oh, I'm going to pick berries and dig dandelions, and weed, and drive cows, and do chores. It is vacation, and I can work all the time, and earn ever so much."

"But vacation is play-time—how about that?"

"Why, that sort of work *is* play, and I get bits of fun all along. I always have a good swing when I go for the cows, and pick flowers with the dandelions. Weeding is n't so nice, but berrying is very pleasant, and we have good times all together."

"What shall you do with your money when you get it?"

"Oh, lots of things! Buy books and clothes for school, and if I get a great deal, give some to granny. I'd love to do that, for she takes care of me, and I'd be so proud to help her!"

"Good little lass!" said the old gentleman, as



he put his hand in his pocket. "Would you now?" he added, apparently addressing himself to a large frog who sat upon a stone looking so wise and grandfatherly, that it really did seem quite proper to consult him. At all events, he gave his opinion in the most decided manner, for, with a loud croak, he turned an undignified somersault into the brook, splashing up the water at a great rate. "Well, perhaps it would n't be best on the whole. Industry is a good teacher, and money cannot buy happiness, as I know to my sorrow."

The old gentleman still seemed to be talking to the frog, and as he spoke he took his hand out of his pocket with less in it than he had at first intended.

"What a very queer person!" thought Marjorie, for she had not heard a word, and wondered what he was thinking about down there.

Jack walked out of the brook just then, and she ran to check him up; not an easy task for little hands, as he preferred to nibble the grass on the bank. But she did it cleverly, smoothed the ruffled mane, and, dropping another curtsy, stood aside to let the little carriage pass.

"Thank you, child—thank you. Here is something for your bank, and good luck to it."

As he spoke, the old man laid a bright gold dollar in her hand, patted the rosy cheek, and vanished in a cloud of dust, leaving Marjorie so astonished at the grandeur of the gift, that she stood looking at it as if it had been a fortune. It was to her, and visions of pink calico gowns, new grammars, and fresh hat-ribbons danced through her head in delightful confusion, as her eyes rested on the shining coin in her palm.

Then, with a solemn air, she invested her first money by popping it down the chimney of the scarlet mansion, and peeping in with one eye to see if it landed safely on the ground-floor. This done, she took a long breath, and looked over the railing, to be sure it was not all a dream. No, the wheel-marks were still there, the brown water was not yet clear, and if a witness was needed, there sat the big frog again, looking so like the old gentleman, with his bottle-green coat, speckled trousers, and twinkling eyes, that Marjorie burst out laughing, and clapped her hands, saying aloud:

"I'll play he was the Brownie, and this is the good-luck penny he gave me. Oh, what fun!" and away she skipped, rattling the dear new bank like a castanet.

When she had told granny all about it, she got knife and basket, and went out to dig dandelions; for the desire to increase her fortune was so strong, she could not rest a minute. Up and down she went, so busily peering and digging, that she never lifted up her eyes till something like a great

white bird skimmed by so low, she could not help seeing it. A pleasant laugh sounded behind her as she started up, and looking round, she nearly sat down again in sheer surprise, for there close by was a slender little lady, comfortably established under a big umbrella.

"If there *were* any fairies, I'd be sure that was one," thought Marjorie, staring with all her might, for her mind was still full of the old story; and curious things do happen on birthdays, as every one knows.

It really did seem rather elfish to look up suddenly and see a lovely lady all in white, with shining hair and a wand in her hand, sitting under what looked very like a large yellow mushroom in the middle of a meadow, where, till now, nothing but cows and grasshoppers had been seen. Before Marjorie could decide the question, the pleasant laugh came again, and the stranger said, pointing to the white thing that was still fluttering over the grass like a little cloud:

"Would you kindly catch my hat for me, before it blows quite away?"

Down went basket and knife, and away ran Marjorie, entirely satisfied now that there was no magic about the new-comer; for if she had been an elf, could n't she have got her hat without any help from a mortal child? Presently, however, it did begin to seem as if that hat was bewitched, for it led the nimble-footed Marjorie such a chase that the cows stopped feeding to look on in placid wonder; the grasshoppers vainly tried to keep up, and every ox-eyed daisy did its best to catch the runaway, but failed entirely, for the wind liked a game of romps, and had it that day. As she ran, Marjorie heard the lady singing like the princess in the story of the Goose-Girl:

"Blow, breezes, blow!  
Let Curdkin's hat go!  
Blow, breezes, blow,  
Let him after it go!  
O'er hills, dales and rocks,  
Away be it whirled,  
Till the silvery locks  
Are all combed and curled."

This made her laugh so, that she tumbled into a clover-bed, and lay there a minute to get her breath. Just then, as if the playful wind repented of its frolic, the long veil fastened to the hat caught in a blackberry-vine near by, and held the truant fast till Marjorie secured it.

"Now come and see what I am doing," said the lady, when she had thanked the child.

Marjorie drew near confidently, and looked down at the wide-spread book before her. She gave a start, and laughed out with surprise and delight; for there was a lovely picture of her own little home and her own little self on the door-step, all



so delicate, and beautiful, and true, it seemed as if done by magic.

"Oh, how pretty! There is Rover, and Kitty, and the robins, and me! How could you ever do it, ma'am?" said Marjorie, with a wondering glance at the long paint-brush, which had wrought what seemed a miracle to her childish eyes.

"I'll show you presently; but tell me, first, if it looks quite right and natural to you. Children sometimes spy out faults that no one else can see," answered the lady, evidently pleased with the artless praise her work received.

"It looks just like our house, only more beautiful. Perhaps that is because I know how shabby it really is. That moss looks lovely on the shingles, but the roof leaks. The porch is broken, only the roses hide the place; and my gown is all faded, though it once was as bright as you have made it. I wish the house and everything would stay pretty forever as they will in the picture."

While Marjorie spoke, the lady had been adding more color to the sketch, and when she looked up, something warmer and brighter than sunshine shone in her face, as she said, so cheerily, it was like a bird's song to hear her:

"It can't be summer always, dear, but we can make fair weather for ourselves if we try. The moss, the roses, and soft shadows show the little house and the little girl at their best, and that is what we all should do; for it is amazing how lovely common things become, if one only knows how to look at them."

"I wish I did," said Marjorie, half to herself, remembering how often she was discontented, and how hard it was to get on, sometimes.

"So do I," said the lady, in her happy voice. "Just believe that there is a sunny side to everything, and try to find it, and you will be surprised to see how bright the world will seem, and how cheerful you will be able to keep your little self."

"I guess granny has found that out, for she never frets. I do, but I'm going to stop it, because I'm twelve to-day, and that is too old for such things," said Marjorie, recollecting the good resolutions she had made that morning when she woke.

"I am twice twelve, and not entirely cured yet; but I try, and don't mean to wear blue spectacles if I can help it," answered the lady, laughing so blithely that Marjorie was sure she would not have to try much longer. "Birthdays were made for presents, and I should like to give you one. Would it please you to have this little picture?" she added, lifting it out of the book.

"Truly my own? Oh, yes, indeed!" cried Marjorie, coloring with pleasure, for she had never owned so beautiful a thing before.

"Then you shall have it, dear. Hang it where you can see it often, and when you look, remember that it is the sunny side of home, and help to keep it so."

Marjorie had nothing but a kiss to offer by way of thanks, as the lovely sketch was put into her hand; but the giver seemed quite satisfied, for it was a very grateful little kiss. Then the child took up her basket and went away, not dancing and singing now, but slowly and silently; for this gift made her thoughtful as well as glad. As she climbed the wall, she looked back to nod good-bye to the pretty lady; but the meadow was empty, and all she saw was the grass blowing in the wind.

"Now, deary, run out and play, for birthdays come but once a year, and we must make them as merry as we can," said granny, as she settled herself for her afternoon nap, when the Saturday cleaning was all done, and the little house as neat as wax.

So Marjorie put on a white apron in honor of the occasion, and, taking kitty in her arms, went out to enjoy herself. Three swings on the gate seemed to be a good way of beginning the festivities; but she only got two, for when the gate creaked back the second time, it stayed shut, and Marjorie hung over the pickets, arrested by the sound of music.

"It's soldiers," she said, as the fife and drum drew nearer, and flags were seen waving over the barberry-bushes at the corner.

"No, it's a picnic," she added in a moment; for she saw hats with wreaths about them bobbing up and down, as a gayly trimmed hay-cart full of children came rumbling down the lane.

"What a nice time they are going to have!" thought Marjorie, sadly contrasting that merry-making with the quiet party she was having all by herself.

Suddenly her face shone, and kitty was waved over her head like a banner, as she flew out of the gate, crying rapturously:

"It's Billy! and I know he's come for me!"

It certainly was Billy, proudly driving the old horse, and beaming at his little friend from the bower of flags and chestnut-boughs, where he sat in state, with a crown of daisies on his sailor-hat and a spray of blooming sweetbrier in his hand. Waving his rustic scepter, he led off the shout of "Happy birthday, Marjorie!" which was set up as the wagon stopped at the gate, and the green boughs suddenly blossomed with familiar faces, all smiling on the little damsel, who stood in the lane quite overpowered with delight.

"It's a s'prise party!" cried one small lad, tumbling out behind.





"We are going up the mountain to have fun!" added a chorus of voices, as a dozen hands beckoned wildly.

"We got it up on purpose for you, so tie your hat and come away," said a pretty girl, leaning down to kiss Marjorie, who had dropped kitty, and stood ready for any splendid enterprise.

A word to granny, and away went the happy child, sitting up beside Billy, under the flags that waved over a happier load than any royal chariot ever bore.

It would be vain to try and tell all the plays and pleasures of happy children on a Saturday afternoon, but we may briefly say that Marjorie found a mossy stone all ready for her throne, and Billy crowned her with a garland like his own. That a fine banquet was spread and eaten with a relish many a Lord Mayor's feast has lacked. Then how the whole court danced and played together afterward! The lords climbed trees and turned somersaults, the ladies gathered flowers and told secrets under the sweetfern-bushes, the queen lost her shoe jumping over the waterfall, and the king paddled into the pool below and rescued it. A happy little kingdom, full of summer sunshine, innocent delights and loyal hearts; for love ruled, and the only war that disturbed the peaceful land was waged by the mosquitoes as night came on.

Marjorie stood on her throne watching the sunset while her maids of honor packed up the remains of the banquet, and her knights prepared the chariot. All the sky was gold and purple, all the world bathed in a soft, red light, and the little girl was very happy as she looked down at the subjects who had served her so faithfully that day.

"Have you had a good time, Marjy?" asked

King William, who stood below with his royal nose on a level with her majesty's two dusty little shoes.

"Oh, Billy, it has been just splendid! But I don't see why you should all be so kind to me," answered Marjorie, with such a look of innocent wonder, that Billy laughed to see it.

"Because you are so sweet and good, we can't help loving you—that's why," he said, as if this simple fact was reason enough.

"I'm going to be the best girl that ever was, and love everybody in the world," cried the child, stretching out her arms as if ready, in the fullness of her happy heart, to embrace all creation.

"Don't turn into an angel and fly away just yet, but come home, or granny will never lend you to us any more."

With that, Billy jumped her down, and away they ran, to ride gayly back through the twilight, singing like a flock of nightingales.

As she went to bed that night, Marjorie looked at the red bank, the pretty picture, and the daisy crown, saying to herself:

"It has been a *very* nice birthday, and I am something like the girl in the story, after all, for the old man gave me a good-luck penny, the kind lady told me how to keep happy, and Billy came for me like the prince. The girl did n't go back to the poor house again, but I'm glad I did, for *my* granny is n't a cross one, and my little home is the dearest in the world."

Then she tied her night-cap, said her prayers, and fell asleep; but the moon, looking in to kiss the blooming face upon the pillow, knew that three good spirits had come to help little Marjorie from that day forth, and their names were Industry, Cheerfulness, and Love.

## TROUBLE AHEAD.

By A. D. W.

MERRY Christmas! girls and boys.  
Santa Claus with team and toys  
Now is starting on his way,  
With his overlaid sleigh,—  
Never heeding cold or wetting,  
Not a single town forgetting.  
But a puzzled look he bears  
As he moves among his wares;

And I doubt if ever yet  
Was Santa Claus in such a pet.  
Now he purses up his lips,  
Snaps his rosy finger-tips;  
All in vain he scans his store,  
Names the children o'er and o'er,—  
*Just one boy* deserves a switch,  
And he has forgotten *which*.



## CHRISTMAS IN THE FAR EAST.

BY FANNIE ROPER FEUDGE.

CHRISTMAS in the East!—in a land where it never snows, and where the houses do not even have chimneys, as fires are not needed to sit by, and the cooking is done in little shanties built apart from the dwellings. But then it is always warm enough to leave doors and windows wide open, and dear old Santa Claus may take his

our little ones of the “trees” and “stockings,” or the feasting and presents, and the “good times” generally that belong to this cheery season. We had in our beautiful Eastern home, embowered in its wonderful tropic flowers so fragrant and so fair, a blue-eyed boy, with fair, rosy cheeks, and soft, wavy hair like a cloud of golden sunlight; and



THE LITTLE PRINCE AND HIS PLAYMATE.

choice of entering by either of these instead of a chimney, thus escaping the chance of getting burned or begrimed with soot.

The Orientals themselves do not know much about Christmas, either as a holiday, or the blessed anniversary that commemorates the birth of our dear, loving Saviour, who was born as a babe in Bethlehem, and who died for us on Calvary. But we who went from pleasant homes and happy firesides in this fair land did not forget the good old fashion of “Christmas-keeping,” nor fail to tell

there was another who came often to play with him—a little prince, of slight, graceful figure, with the rich, bronze complexion of that sunny clime, and beautiful dark eyes that flashed like diamonds. His glossy black hair was worn very curiously,—at the back cut close to the head, and in front, where it was almost a-foot long, coiled in a smooth knot on the top of the forehead, and confined by a long, golden pin set with very costly diamonds. Around this knot of hair was always twined a wreath of jessamines or tuberoses that were held in place by



jeweled pins. His simple costume consisted of only two flowing garments of silk or embroidered muslin, but the deficiency was more than made up by jewelry, of which he wore incredible quantities, in the varied forms of rings, chains, anklets and bracelets. There were half-a-dozen or more gold necklaces around his throat, and an equal number of chains across the left shoulder, passing under the right arm; a jeweled girdle of very great value was clasped about his waist; heavy gold bracelets, one above another, filled nearly the entire space between his wrist and elbow, and many more, just as massive and costly, were around the brown ankles, while every finger was literally loaded with rings.

But the most curious of all was a tiny talisman of quaint workmanship, suspended by a slender chain about the child's neck, and designed, so his mother told me, to keep off witches and evil spirits. The head nurse had placed this "charm" on the baby's neck at his birth, and, sleeping or waking, it was never removed. On his visits to my house, the little prince was always attended by thirty or forty servants, who crouched down about the halls and verandas, ready to wait on their little lord and see that he was kept out of harm's way. On first entering, the wee prince would step gravely forward and hold up his sweet face to me for the usual kiss, and then, seating himself on a low ottoman, would beckon one of his servants to come and remove his cumbrous ornaments, that he might the better enjoy a romp with my little son. So one costly decoration after another would be taken off, and as they were laid all together in one glittering pile there seemed almost enough to stock a small jewelry store. Thus relieved, the little prince would bound away with the joyous exclamation: "Now I can play ever so nice!" The two playfellows loved each other very dearly, and seemed never to weary of being together; yet they would look into each other's faces with questioning wonder, as if to ask why they were so different. The little prince would stroke fondly the soft, golden curls of his companion, and then run to a mirror and stand for minutes together, feeling and scrutinizing his own glossy locks of raven blackness; while my own fair boy would pat lovingly the bronze-tinted cheek of the handsome little prince, and then look at his own tiny, dimpled hand, white almost as a snow-flake, to see if the color had been transferred by touching. As different as possible they were in everything, yet both so very lovely and charming, one never knew which most to admire. One was round, chubby and dimpled, with cheeks like a fresh rose, and eyes blue; the other, pale, dark, slender and graceful—one all roughishness and fun; the other

noting everything about him, and strangely wise and dignified for his years.

They were very near of an age, the little prince being the senior by only a few months; and when the Christmas after their fifth birthday came round, I determined to give them a celebration—such an one as they had never seen in all their five-year lives. That they might enjoy to the full the pleasant surprise, I kept my own counsel and told them nothing, except that the young prince was to come and spend the day with me, and bring his little sister. My boy knew there was to be company, as usual, on Christmas-day, and that was all. On Christmas Eve, Santa Claus arrived with mysterious-looking parcels—enough to set Master Harry half crazy with curiosity, and render it extremely difficult to get him off to bed at his usual early hour. When relieved of his presence, we set to work in good earnest and soon had all things arranged to our minds.

At six o'clock on Christmas morning, our merry prattler was aroused by a bombardment of Chinese fire-crackers against the nursery door; and, before he could be arrayed in his simple dress of white muslin, more than half of the twenty little guests who had been invited were already in the reception-room. A few moments more brought the remainder, the little prince and his sister among them; and then the folding-doors that led to papa's study were thrown open, and Santa Claus stood revealed to the astonished group! Yes, there stood "His Excellency" dressed in fantastic garb of green and gold Chinese "knee breeches," and huge, glittering buckles on his white-soled shoes; while over all, as if the thermometer had been standing at zero instead of 102°, was thrown a bright crimson cloak, and his cap was surmounted by a crest of what seemed to be real, genuine icicles. From the capacious pockets of his fantastic cloak, Santa Claus scattered bonbons and fire-works profusely around, standing guard meanwhile over the beautiful tree that adorned the center of the apartment and towered in majestic height almost to the ceiling.

Not one of the children had ever seen Santa Claus before, and they were lost in wonder as to where he could have sprung from, with his long, white beard and frosty hair, so strangely opposed to his merry voice and frolicsome pranks. There is no telling how long the disguise would have been kept up, but in romping with one of the little ones, the false mustache dropped off, and could not be replaced, and the merry peal of laughter that followed betrayed the imposture, as with a scream of delight little Harry exclaimed: "Papa! my own papa!"

So cloak and crown were thrown aside, and



"papa" in his own person no longer guarded the tree, but invited all to approach and partake of its precious fruits. It was a gracefully formed orange-tree, alive and growing in a huge tub, every twig and branch loaded with the fragrant blossoms, and green and ripe fruit in the various stages. Among the branches were tiny Chinese lanterns of oiled silk, painted in fantastic pictures of angels and dragons, winged women and flying fish, and all the other impossible things that Chinese artists love to paint. The gifts and toys that decorated the tree were just as wonderful, but in quite a different way. There were toy sets of furniture of exquisitely carved ivory instead of wood; miniature steamboats and chariots that could be wound up like a clock, and made to run for half an hour; magic tumblers and jugglers acting like things of life; artificial basins of water with fish and ducks swimming in them, which by means of a magnetic needle could be made to gather around a pretty little maiden, whose call was expressed by raising her hands; miniature tea-sets of beautiful porcelain; curious ivory balls cut within balls, and various other things that I have not time here to describe, besides puzzles, games and bonbons in seemingly endless variety. On the topmost summit of the tree hung the American and Siamese flags with blended folds. The national banner of Siam is a white elephant on a crimson ground. The top of a light and graceful tree seemed a queer place for an elephant, but, I have no doubt, our youngsters thought the gay colors floating over the green leaves and golden fruit looked very handsome. Upon tiny twigs, that could support nothing more weighty, were hung small crystallized fruits, and among them floated a tiny, silken flag, on which were written these lines:

"Though mighty deeds by right,  
From older folks are due,  
Yet little ones should try  
Some good, at least, to do.

The gentle child, though small,  
May little favors show;  
And loving words to all  
From infant lips may flow."

The tree, with all it contained, was given up to the little ones to be disposed of just as they wished; and that they found in its fruits boundless stores of enjoyment no one would have doubted, after hearing their glad shouts of joy during all the hours of that happy Christmas-day. So busy and so merry were they over their treat that they could scarcely be persuaded to stop at nine o'clock long enough for breakfast; but when dinner came at four P. M. both curiosity

and the spirit of frolic were somewhat abated, and they sat down to the feast, prepared to do full justice to the good things set before them. Twenty high chairs had been collected from the neighboring families for the use of the little guests, and they sat around that long table, as beautiful a group of laughing, rosy cherubs as ever were collected under a roof. The eldest of the company was less than six, and the youngest—dainty, flaxen-haired little Blanche—scarcely three. Right merrily they chatted and joked, and talked baby nonsense—sometimes in English, more frequently in Siamese or Malay—for three-year-old linguists who talk half-a-dozen languages are often found in the East. But never a discord was heard, a word of impatience, or an angry retort from all that happy group.

At six (which is twilight within the Tropics), we had a grand display of fire-works: rockets, squibs and fire-wheels, tokas and Roman candles; and then the merry party broke up, to return to their several homes. Among all my tiny guests not one was more delighted than the little prince, as wonderingly he inspected all the arrangements of this *first* Christmas in which he had ever, really, taken any part. Santa Claus and the tree were very prodigies of beauty and skill in the eyes of the little fellow, and over and over again, as his parents told me, were all the details of that cheery Christmas festival reenacted within the broad halls of the grand palace royal, of which this beautiful boy was the most cherished ornament. He decked out one of his attendants as Santa Claus, and a dozen little half-brothers and sisters, all near his own age, served as guests. Not an important item of the celebration he so much enjoyed was omitted; and it shows the wonderful aptitude of the royal child, that after witnessing only for a single time these varied details he should be able to reproduce them with such accuracy. Now, in his young manhood, it is still the same intelligent aptitude applied to the introduction from other countries of many of the inventions and improvements of the day, that has given to Siam such a wonderful impetus in progress, and to the two youthful sovereigns of that fair land, the first place among Oriental monarchs. For that little head now wears a crown; the tiny, dimpled fingers so busy in plucking the fruits of the Christmas-tree, to-day grasp a jeweled scepter, and the boy folded so lovingly in my arms on that happy Christmas-day, now occupies the glittering throne of the "Sacred and great kingdom of Siam," and receives the loving homage of its ten millions of inhabitants.



## HOW WILLIE COASTED BY MOONLIGHT.

BY C. P. CRANCH.

"COME, Willie! I would n't be toasting  
My shins at the fire all night,  
When the snow is so splendid for coasting,  
And the full moon is shining so bright.

"I would n't be such a young napper,  
For anything under the sun.  
Come! on with your fur cap and wrapper!  
We are sure to have capital fun.

"Dobb's Hill is the place. You must hurry!  
The boys all are out in the snow!  
And tell your mamma not to worry;  
We'll be back by ten—as you know."

So Willie got up and bestirred him;  
But David had gone ere he woke.  
Said Willie: "I certainly heard him—  
Yes, surely 't was David that spoke."

Then off Willie started to find him,  
With his cap, and his mittens, and sled.  
"Stop, David!" he shouted behind him;  
But David heard nothing he said.

"He's gone to Dobb's Hill, where the coasting  
Is best—for the hill's very high;  
And David has always been boasting  
He could run his sled farther than I!"

Then up to Dobb's Hill Willie floundered,  
But lo! not a boy to be seen;  
And he stood in the snow there, and pondered,  
And wondered what David could mean.

"T was almost as clear as the noon-light—  
The trees towered tall overhead;  
He stood in the silence and moonlight,  
And mournfully looked at his sled.

"I'd better go back, then," said Willie;  
"There's little fun coasting alone.  
But then, it seems stupid and silly  
Not having some fun of my own."

Now while he took time for deciding,  
And this way and that turned his head,  
He saw a small figure come riding  
Straight *up* the hill-side, on a sled.

"Ho, David!" cried Will, "you've been hiding;  
But this is as strange as a dream,—  
For how in the world are you riding  
*Up hill* without horses or steam?"

But never an answer got Willie—  
The figure sat still as a gnome;  
He began to feel solemn and chilly,  
And wished he had never left home.

But slowly and slowly the figure  
Moved up o'er the snow and the ice;  
Then suddenly seemed to grow bigger,  
And leapt from his sled in a trice.

"Come, Willie!" he cried, "we'll together  
Coast down on my sled to the lake;  
There was never such glorious weather  
For a journey like that we shall take."

"But *you* are not David!" said Willie;  
With strangers like you I'll not go."  
Said the man: "You must go, willy-nilly,  
For I am your uncle, you know,—

"Your uncle, Cadwallader Biornson,  
From Lapland. It can't be denied:  
Your mother's half-brother, Luke Johnson,  
Was mine—on your grandmother's side.

"I was coming this evening to see you;  
But am glad that I met you just here.  
I was n't quite sure it could *be* you,  
Until I could see you quite near.

"It's a wonderful sled that I carry—  
'T will take you wherever you will;  
So get on behind me—don't tarry;  
We'll take *such* a ride down the hill!"

Here he loosened his cap and his wrappers,  
And showed him an honest old face.  
What a pity he told him such whappers,  
And talked with so winning a grace!

For Willie was coaxed to believe him,—  
He was sure such a twinkling eye  
Could never betray or deceive him,  
And yet he could hardly tell why.





"He looks like old Santa Claus, clearly!  
 Perhaps he will take me to see  
 Where he keeps all the toys that he yearly  
 Hangs up on the Christmas-tree!"

So off in the moonlight they started,—  
 "His uncle" before, he behind,—

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And Willie was gay and light-hearted,  
 As downward they flew like the wind.

Faster and faster and faster!  
 Far down on their slippery track;  
 And Will, he stuck on like a plaster  
 Behind the old gentleman's back.



But soon it grew colder and colder,  
No end to the hill anywhere,  
And he saw o'er the Laplander's shoulder  
That they seemed to be flying through air.

And round them the stars were all flashing,  
Auroras waved wild overhead,  
Till at last came a terrible crashing  
That shook him all over with dread.

And a blue flying meteor shot by him—  
He shrank from the glare and the heat,  
For it flamed and it thundered so nigh him,  
He started and fell from his seat!

He fell from his seat—and it woke him—  
Still there by the fire, it would seem!  
And David *will* tease him and joke him,  
Because he once told him his dream.

## LES AVENTURES DE CINQ CANARDS.

C'était une belle matinée de printemps; le soleil brillait, les oiseaux chantaient, l'herbe était toute couverte d'une fraîche rosée. Dans le ruisseau qui longe le jardin, un joli petit ruisseau qui coule doucement à travers des prairies émaillées de fleurs, Maman Cane donnait des leçons de natation à ses petits; vous savez bien que le premier devoir d'un canard est de bien apprendre à nager, et naturellement, Madame Cane soignait beaucoup cette branche de l'éducation de ses petits. Elle les corrigeait quand ils ne nageaient pas bien, leur faisait tenir la tête droite, et enseignait en outre aux deux aînés à plonger. Les canetons n'en étaient pas à leur première leçon et faisaient déjà bonne figure dans l'eau. Aussi, après avoir étudié quelque temps, les jeunes écoliers demandent à leur maîtresse la permission d'aller faire une petite promenade à la nage; elle le leur permet, et voilà nos canetons qui s'élançant gaiement avec le courant. Les deux aînés ouvraient la marche et servaient d'avant-garde; ensuite venaient les trois autres; c'était la première fois qu'ils s'en allaient seuls, et ils regardaient tous à droite et à gauche, parceque tout leur était nouveau et étrange. A mesure qu'ils nageaient, le ruisseau s'élargissait; de gais papillons voltigeaient parmi les fleurs, et de jolis oiseaux chantaient sur les buissons. Ils nageaient déjà depuis quelque temps, lorsque tout à coup un grand bruit se fit entendre; l'eau fut agitée; les canards effrayés, se retournèrent juste à temps pour voir les pattes de derrière d'un gros vieux crapaud disparaître sous l'eau.

"Ce n'était vraiment pas la peine de nous effrayer pour si peu de chose," dit le plus grand des canards, qui s'appellait Neptune; mais lui aussi avait bien eu peur. Ils rirent de leur frayeur, et continuèrent leur chemin; à ce moment, leur attention fut attirée par des cris piteux poussés par un des trois petits canards; il avait vu quelque chose au bord du ruisseau qu'il croyait être bon à manger et il était allé se fourrer le bec entre deux pierres et ne pouvait plus le retirer. Il se débattait comme un furieux quand les autres arrivèrent; les deux grands le saisirent, chacun par une aile, les deux

autres petits le prirent par la queue, et ils tirèrent tant qu'ils purent. Enfin, à force de tirer, ils finirent par dégager leur petit frère, le bec à moitié disloqué, et en proie à un mal de dents horrible. Il pleurait à chaudes larmes mais ses camarades réussirent à le consoler, et il les suivit à quelque distance, mais sans rire et sans jouer avec eux. Tout en nageant, ils arrivèrent devant une maison où il y avait un petit chien; aussitôt que celui-ci les aperçut, il fondit droit sur eux en aboyant de toutes ses forces, comme s'il eût voulu en gober au moins deux à la fois. Mais en arrivant au bord de l'eau, il s'arrêta, indécis, sans avoir le courage d'y entrer. Quand les canetons virent combien il était lâche, ils s'arrêtèrent, le regardèrent avec mépris, et joignirent leurs couacs de défi à ses aboiements furieux. Au bruit qu'ils firent, la porte de la maison s'ouvrit, un petit garçon sortit, et vint en courant vers nos canetons. Il n'avait pas l'air bien gentil, et quand, au lieu de chasser le petit chien, il se mit à ramasser des pierres, les canards commencèrent à se douter de ses intentions. L'avant-garde donna le signal de la fuite, et, tournant bec, ils filèrent à toutes pattes. Il était temps, car le petit garçon était déjà en train de leur jeter des pierres. Mais heureusement, plus il jetait de pierres, moins il réussissait à les atteindre. Quand ils furent hors de portée de ses attaques, ils se retournèrent pour voir ce qu'il allait faire. Le petit gamin pleurait presque de rage, et courait le long du ruisseau pour arriver plus près d'eux; mais sa colère l'empêchait de voir où il mettait les pieds; il fit un faux pas, pouf!—le voilà dans l'eau. En entendant ses cris de détresse, sa mère accourut, le retira de l'eau, et lui donnant deux bons soufflets, l'emmena dans la maison se sécher. La chute du petit emporté excita un rire fou chez les canards, mais ils pensèrent qu'il était plus prudent de ne pas continuer leur promenade ce jour-là, et se mirent en route pour aller retrouver la maman.

En revenant, il ne leur arriva rien qui vaille la peine d'être raconté, et ils passèrent le reste de la journée à causer de leurs aventures, et à les détailler à la Maman Cane.

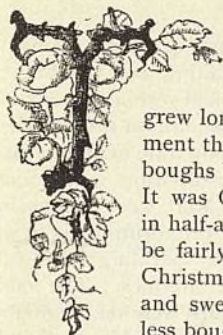
(Translations of this little story will be received until February 15th.)



## TOINETTE AND THE ELVES.

(A Christmas Story.)

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.



HE winter sun was nearing the horizon's edge. Each moment the tree-shadows grew longer in the forest; each moment the crimson light on the upper boughs became more red and bright. It was Christmas Eve, or would be in half-an-hour, when the sun should be fairly set; but it did not feel like Christmas, for the afternoon was mild and sweet, and the wind in the leafless boughs sang, as it moved about, as though to imitate the vanished birds. Soft trills and whistles, odd little shakes and twitters;—it was astonishing what pretty noises the wind made, for it was in good humor, as winds should be on the Blessed Night; all its storm-tones and bass-notes were for the moment laid aside, and gently, as though hushing a baby to sleep, it cooed and rustled and brushed to and fro in the leafless woods.

Toinette stood, pitcher in hand, beside the well. "Wishing Well" the people called it, for they believed that if any one standing there, bowed to the East, repeated a certain rhyme and wished a wish, the wish would certainly come true. Unluckily, nobody knew exactly what the rhyme should be. Toinette did not; she was wishing that she did, as she stood with her eyes fixed on the bubbling water. How nice it would be! she thought. What beautiful things should be hers, if it were only to wish and to have! She would be beautiful, rich, good—oh, so good! The children should love her dearly, and never be disagreeable. Mother should not work so hard—they should all go back to France—which mother said was *si belle*. Oh, dear, how nice it would be! Meantime, the sun sank lower, and mother at home was waiting for the water, but Toinette forgot that.

Suddenly she started. A low sound of crying met her ear, and something like a tiny moan. It seemed close by, but she saw nothing.

Hastily she filled her pitcher, and turned to go. But again the sound came, an unmistakable sob, right under her feet. Toinette stopped short.

"What is the matter?" she called out bravely. "Is anybody there; and if there is, why don't I see you?"

A third sob—and all at once, down on the

ground beside her, a tiny figure became visible, so small that Toinette had to kneel and stoop her head to see it plainly. The figure was that of an odd little man. He wore a garb of green, bright and glancing as the scales of a beetle. In his mite of a hand was a cap, out of which stuck a long-pointed feather. Two specks of tears stood on his cheeks, and he fixed on Toinette a glance so sharp and so sad, that it made her feel sorry and frightened and confused all at once.

"Why, how funny this is!" she said, speaking to herself out loud.

"Not at all," replied the little man, in a voice as dry and crisp as the chirr of a grasshopper. "Anything but funny. I wish you would n't use such words. It hurts my feelings, Toinette."

"Do you know my name, then?" cried Toinette, astonished. "That's strange! But what is the matter? Why are you crying so, little man?"

"I'm not a little man. I'm an elf," responded the dry voice; "and I think you'd cry if you had an engagement out to tea, and found yourself spiked on a great bayonet, so that you could n't move an inch. Look!" He turned a little as he spoke, and Toinette saw a long rose-thorn sticking through the back of the green robe. The little man could by no means reach the thorn, and it held him fast prisoner to the place.

"Is that all? I'll take it out for you," she said.

"Be careful—oh, be careful!" entreated the little man. "This is my new dress, you know—my Christmas suit, and it's got to last a year. If there is a hole in it, Peascod will tickle me, and Bean Blossom tease till I shall wish myself dead." He stamped with vexation at the thought.

"Now, you must n't do that," said Toinette, in a motherly tone, "else you'll tear it yourself, you know." She broke off the thorn as she spoke, and gently drew it out. The elf anxiously examined the stuff. A tiny puncture only was visible, and his face brightened.

"You're a good child," he said. "I'll do as much for you some day, perhaps."

"I would have come before if I had seen you," remarked Toinette, timidly. "But I did n't see you a bit."

"No, because I had my cap on," replied the elf. He placed it on his head as he spoke, and,



hey, presto! nobody was there, only a voice which laughed and said: "Well—don't stare so. Lay your finger on me now."

"Oh!" said Toinette, with a gasp. "How wonderful! What fun it must be to do that! The children would n't see me. I should steal in and surprise them; they would go on talking, and never guess that I was there! I should so like it! Do elves ever lend their caps to anybody? I wish you'd lend me yours. It must be so nice to be invisible!"

"Ho!" cried the elf, appearing suddenly again. "Lend my cap, indeed! Why, it would n't stay on the very tip of your ear, it's so small. As for nice, that depends. Sometimes it is, and sometimes it is n't. No, the only way for mortal people to be invisible is to gather the fern-seed and put it in their shoes."

"Gather it? Where? I never saw any seed to the ferns," said Toinette, staring about her.

"Of course not—we elves take care of that," replied the little man. "Nobody finds the fern-seed but ourselves. I'll tell you what, though. You were such a nice child to take out the thorn so cleverly, that I'll give you a little of the seed. Then you can try the fun of being invisible to your heart's content."

"Will you really? How delightful! May I have it now?"

"Bless me! do you think I carry my pocket stuffed with it?" said the elf. "Not at all. Go home, say not a word to anybody, but leave your bedroom window open to-night, and you'll see what you'll see."

He laid his finger on his nose as he spoke, gave a jump like a grasshopper, clapping on his cap as he went, and vanished. Toinette lingered a moment, in hopes that he might come back, then took her pitcher and hurried home. The woods were very dusky by this time; but, full of her strange adventure, she did not remember to feel afraid.

"How long you have been!" said her mother. "It's late for a little maid like you to be up. You must make better speed another time, my child."

Toinette pouted, as she was apt to do when reproved. The children clamored to know what had kept her, and she spoke pettishly and crossly; so that they too became cross, and presently went away into the outer kitchen to play by themselves. The children were apt to creep away when Toinette came. It made her angry and unhappy at times that they should do so, but she did not realize that it was in great part her own fault, and so did not set herself to mend it.

"Tell me a 'tory," said baby Jeanneton, creeping to her knee a little later. But Toinette's head

was full of the elf; she had no time to spare for Jeanneton.

"Oh, not to-night!" she replied. "Ask mother to tell you one."

"Mother's busy," said Jeanneton, wistfully.

Toinette took no notice, and the little one crept away disconsolately.

Bed-time at last. Toinette set the casement open, and lay a long time waiting and watching; then she fell asleep. She waked with a sneeze and jump, and sat up in bed. Behold, on the coverlet stood her elfin friend, with a long train of other elves beside him, all clad in the beetle-wing green, and wearing little pointed caps! More were coming in at the window; outside a few were drifting about in the moon-rays, which lit their sparkling robes till they glittered like so many fire-flies. The odd thing was, that though the caps were on, Toinette could see the elves distinctly, and this surprised her so much, that again she thought out loud, and said:

"How funny!"

"You mean about the caps," replied her special elf, who seemed to have the power of reading thoughts. "Yes, you can see us to-night, caps and all. Spells lose their value on Christmas Eve always. Peascod, where is the box? Do you still wish to try the experiment of being invisible, Toinette?"

"Oh, yes—indeed I do!"

"Very well—so let it be!"

As he spoke he beckoned, and two elves, puffing and panting like men with a heavy load, dragged forward a droll little box about the size of a pumpkin-seed. One of them lifted the cover.

"Pay the porter, please ma'am," he said, giving Toinette's ear a mischievous tweak with his sharp fingers.

"Hands off, you bad Peascod!" cried Toinette's elf. "This is my girl. She sha' n't be pinched." He dealt Peascod a blow with his tiny hand as he spoke, and looked so brave and warlike, that he seemed at least an inch taller than he had before. Toinette admired him very much; and Peascod slunk away with an abashed giggle, muttering that Thistle need n't be so ready with his fist.

Thistle—for thus, it seemed, Toinette's friend was named—dipped his fingers in the box, which was full of fine brown seeds, and shook a handful into each of Toinette's shoes, as they stood, toes together, by the bedside.

"Now you have your wish," he said, "and can go about and do what you like, no one seeing. The charm will end at sunset. Make the most of it while you can; but if you want to end it sooner, shake the seeds from the shoes, and then you are just as usual."



"Oh, I sha' n't want to," protested Toinette; "I'm sure I sha' n't."

"Good-bye," said Thistle, with a mocking little laugh.

"Good-bye, and thank you ever so much," replied Toinette.

"Good-bye, good-bye," replied the other elves, in shrill chorus. They clustered together, as if in consultation; then straight out of the window they

happened? She put on her best petticoat, and laced her blue bodice; for she thought the mother would perhaps take them across the wood to the little chapel for the Christmas service. Her long hair smoothed and tied, her shoes trimly fastened, downstairs she ran. The mother was stirring porridge over the fire. Toinette went close to her, but she did not move or turn her head.

"How late the children are!" she said at last,



THE ELVES VISIT TOINETTE.

flew like a swarm of gauzy-winged bees, and melted into the moonlight. Toinette jumped up and ran to watch them; but the little men were gone—not a trace of them was to be seen; so she shut the window, went back to bed, and presently, in the midst of her amazed and excited thoughts, fell asleep.

She waked in the morning with a queer, doubtful feeling. Had she dreamed, or had it really

happened? She went to the stair-foot, and called, "Marc, Jeanne-ton, Pierre, Marie! Breakfast is ready, my children. Toinette—but where, then, is Toinette? She is used to be down long before this."

"Toinette is n't upstairs," said Marie, from above. "Her door is wide open, and she is n't there."

"That is strange!" said the mother. "I have



been here an hour, and she has not passed this way since." She went to the outer door and called, "Toinette! Toinette!"—passing close to Toinette as she did so, and looking straight at her with unseeing eyes. Toinette, half-frightened, half-pleased, giggled low to herself. She really was invisible then! How strange it seemed, and what fun it was going to be!

The children sat down to breakfast, little Jeanneton, as the youngest, saying grace. The mother distributed the hot porridge, and gave each a spoon, but she looked anxious.

"Where can Toinette have gone?" she said to herself.

Toinette was conscience-pricked. She was half inclined to dispel the charm on the spot. But just then she caught a whisper from Pierre to Marc, which so surprised her as to put the idea out of her head.

"Perhaps a wolf has eaten her up—a great big wolf, like the 'Capuchon Rouge,' you know." This was what Pierre said; and Marc answered, unfeelingly:

"If he has, I shall ask mother to let me have her room for my own!"

Poor Toinette! her cheeks burnt and her eyes filled with tears at this. Did n't the boys love her a bit, then? Next she grew angry, and longed to box Marc's ears, only she recollected in time that she was invisible. What a bad boy he was! she thought.

The smoking porridge reminded her that she was hungry; so brushing away the tears, she slipped a spoon off the table, and whenever she found the chance, dipped it into the bowl for a mouthful. The porridge disappeared rapidly.

"I want some more," said Jeanneton.

"Bless me, how fast you have eaten!" said the mother, turning to the bowl.

This made Toinette laugh, which shook her spoon, and a drop of the hot mixture fell right on the tip of Marie's nose, as she sat with up-turned face waiting her turn for a second helping. Marie gave a little scream.

"What is it?" said the mother.

"Hot water! Right in my face!" spluttered Marie.

"Water!" cried Marc. "It's porridge."

"You spattered with your spoon. Eat more carefully, my child," said the mother; and Toinette laughed again as she heard her. After all, there was some fun in being invisible!

The morning went by. Constantly the mother went to the door, and, shading her eyes with her hand, looked out, in hopes of seeing a little figure come down the wood-path, for she thought, perhaps, the child went to the spring after water,

and fell asleep there. The children played happily, meanwhile. They were used to doing without Toinette, and did not seem to miss her, except that now and then baby Jeanneton said: "Poor Toinette gone—not here—all gone!"

"Well, what if she has?" said Marc at last, looking up from the wooden cup he was carving for Marie's doll. "We can play all the better."

Marc was a bold, outspoken boy, who always told his whole mind about things.

"If she were here," he went on, "she'd only scold and interfere. Toinette almost always scolds. I like to have her go away. It makes it pleasanter."

"It is rather pleasanter," admitted Marie, "only I'd like her to be having a nice time somewhere else."

"Bother about Toinette!" cried Pierre. "Let's play 'My godmother has cabbage to sell.'"

I don't think Toinette had ever felt so unhappy in her life, as when she stood by unseen, and heard the children say these words. She had never meant to be unkind to them, but she was quick-tempered, dreamy, wrapped up in herself. She did not like being interrupted by them, it put her out, and then she spoke sharply and was cross. She had taken it for granted that the others must love her, by a sort of right, and the knowledge that they did not grieved her very much. Creeping away, she hid herself in the woods. It was a sparkling day, but the sun did not look so bright as usual. Cuddled down under a rose-bush, Toinette sat, sobbing as if her heart would break at the recollection of the speeches she had overheard.

By and by a little voice within her woke up and began to make itself audible. All of us know this little voice. We call it conscience.

"Jeanneton missed me," she thought. "And, oh dear! I pushed her away only last night and would n't tell her a story. And Marie hoped I was having a pleasant time somewhere. I wish I had n't slapped Marie last Friday. And I wish I had n't thrown Marc's ball into the fire that day I was angry with him. How unkind he was to say that—but I was n't always kind to him. And once I said that I wished a bear would eat Pierre up. That was because he broke my cup. Oh dear, oh dear! What a bad girl I've been to them all!"

"But you could be better and kinder if you tried, could n't you?" said the inward voice. "I think you could." And Toinette clasped her hands tight and said out loud: "I could. Yes—and I will."

The first thing to be done was to get rid of the fern-seed, which she now regarded as a hateful thing. She untied her shoes and shook it out in the grass. It dropped and seemed to melt into the



air, for it instantly vanished. A mischievous laugh sounded close behind, and a beetle-green coat-tail was visible, whisking under a tuft of rushes. But Toinette had had enough of the elves, and tying her shoes, took the road toward home, running with all her might.

"Where have you been all day, Toinette?" cried the children, as, breathless and panting, she flew in at the gate. But Toinette could not speak. She made slowly for her mother, who stood in the door-way, flung herself into her arms, and burst into a passion of tears.

"Ma chérie, what is it, whence hast thou come?" asked the good mother, alarmed. She lifted Toinette into her arms as she spoke, and hastened indoors. The other children followed, whispering and peeping, but the mother sent them away, and, sitting down by the fire with Toinette in her lap, she rocked and hushed and comforted, as though Toinette had been again a little baby. Gradually the sobs ceased. For awhile Toinette lay quiet, with her head on her mother's breast. Then she wiped her wet eyes, put her arms around her mother's neck, and told her all from the very beginning, keeping not a single thing back. The dame listened with alarm.

"Saints protect us," she muttered. Then feeling Toinette's hands and head, "Thou hast a fever," she said. "I will make thee a *tisane*, my darling, and thou must at once go to bed." Toinette vainly protested; to bed she went, and perhaps it was the wisest thing, for the warm drink threw her into a long, sound sleep, and when she woke she was herself again, bright and well, hungry for dinner, and ready to do her usual tasks.

Herself,—but not quite the same Toinette that she had been before. Nobody changes from bad to better in a minute. It takes time for that, time and effort and a long struggle with evil habits and tempers. But there is sometimes a certain minute or day in which people *begin* to change, and thus it was with Toinette. The fairy lesson was not lost upon her. She began to fight with herself, to watch her faults and try to conquer them. It was hard work; often she felt discouraged, but she kept on. Week after week and month after month, she grew less selfish, kinder, more obliging than she used to be. When she failed, and her old fractious temper got the better of her, she was sorry, and begged every one's pardon so humbly, that they could not but forgive. The mother began to think that the elves really had bewitched her child. As for the children, they learned to love Toinette as never before, and came to her with all their pains and pleasures, as children should to a kind older sister. Each fresh proof of this, each kiss from Jeanneton, each confidence from Marc, was a comfort to

Toinette, for she never forgot Christmas-day, and felt that no trouble was too much to wipe out that unhappy recollection. "I *think* they like me better than they did then," she would say, but then the thought came, "Perhaps if I were invisible again, if they did not know I was there, I might hear something to make me feel as badly as I did that morning." These sad thoughts were part of the bitter fruit of the fairy fern-seed.

So with doubts and fears the year went by, and again it was Christmas Eve. Toinette had been asleep some hours, when she was roused by a sharp tapping at the window pane. Startled and only half-awake, she sat up in bed, and saw by the moonlight, a tiny figure outside, which she recognized. It was Thistle, drumming with his knuckles on the glass.

"Let me in," cried the dry little voice. So Toinette opened the casement, and Thistle flew in and perched, as before, on the coverlet.

"Merry Christmas, my girl," he said, "and a Happy New Year when it comes! I've brought you a present;" and, dipping into a pouch tied round his waist, he pulled out a handful of something brown. Toinette knew what it was in a moment.

"Oh, no!" she cried, shrinking back. "Don't give me any fern-seeds. They frighten me. I don't like them."

"Now, don't be silly," said Thistle, his voice sounding kind this time, and earnest. "It was n't pleasant being invisible last year, but perhaps this year it will be. Take my advice and try it. You'll not be sorry."

"Sha' n't I?" said Toinette, brightening. "Very well then, I will." She leaned out of bed, and watched Thistle strew the fine, dust-like grains in each shoe.

"I'll drop in to-morrow night, and just see how you like it," he said. Then, with a nod, he was gone.

The old fear came back when she woke in the morning, and she tied on her shoes with a tremble at her heart. Down-stairs she stole. The first thing she saw was a wooden ship standing on her plate. Marc had made the ship, but Toinette had no idea that it was for her.

The little ones sat round the table with their eyes on the door, watching till Toinette should come in, and be surprised.

"I wish she'd hurry," said Pierre, drumming on his bowl with a spoon.

"We all want Toinette, don't we?" said the mother, smiling as she poured the hot porridge.

"It will be fun to see her stare," declared Marc. "Toinette is jolly when she stares. Her eyes look big, and her cheeks grow pink. Andre Brugen



thinks his sister Aline is prettiest, but I don't. Our Toinette is ever so pretty."

"She is ever so nice, too," said Pierre. "She's as good to play with as—as—a boy!" he finished, triumphantly.

"Oh, I wish my Toinette *would* come!" said Jeanneton.

Toinette waited no longer, but sped upstairs with glad tears in her eyes. Two minutes, and

He came at midnight, and with him all the other little men in green.

"Well, how was it?" asked Thistle.

"Oh, I liked it this time," declared Toinette, with shining eyes. "And I thank you so much!"

"I'm glad you did," said the elf. "And I'm glad you are thankful, for we want you to do something for us."

"What can it be?" inquired Toinette, wondering.

"You must know," went on Thistle, "that there is no dainty in the world which we elves enjoy like a bowl of fern-seed broth. But it has to be cooked over a real fire, and we dare not go near fire, you know, lest our wings scorch. So we seldom get any fern-seed broth. Now, Toinette—will you make us some?"

"Indeed I will," cried Toinette, "only you must tell me how."

"It is very simple," said Peascod; "only seed and honey dew, stirred from left to right with a sprig of fennel. Here's the seed and the fennel, and here's the dew. Be sure and stir from the left; if you don't, it curdles, and the flavor will be spoiled."

Down into the kitchen they went, and Toinette, moving very softly, quickened the fire, set on the smallest bowl she could find, and spread the doll's table with the wooden saucers which Marc had made for Jeanneton to play with. Then she mixed and stirred as the elves bade, and when the soup was done, served it to them smoking hot. How they feasted! No bumble-bee, dipping into a flower-cup, ever sipped and twinkled more rapturously than they.

When the last drop was eaten, they made ready to go. Each, in turn, kissed Toinette's hand, and said a little word of farewell. Thistle brushed his feathered cap over the door-post as he passed.

"Be lucky, house," he said, "for you have received and entertained the luck-bringers. And be lucky, Toinette. Good temper *is* good luck, and sweet words and kind looks and peace in the heart are the fairest of fortunes. See that you never lose them again, my girl." With this, he, too, kissed Toinette's hand, waved his feathered cap and—whirr! they all were gone, while Toinette, covering the fire with ashes, and putting aside the little cups, stole up to her bed a happy child.



THE ELVES' SUPPER.

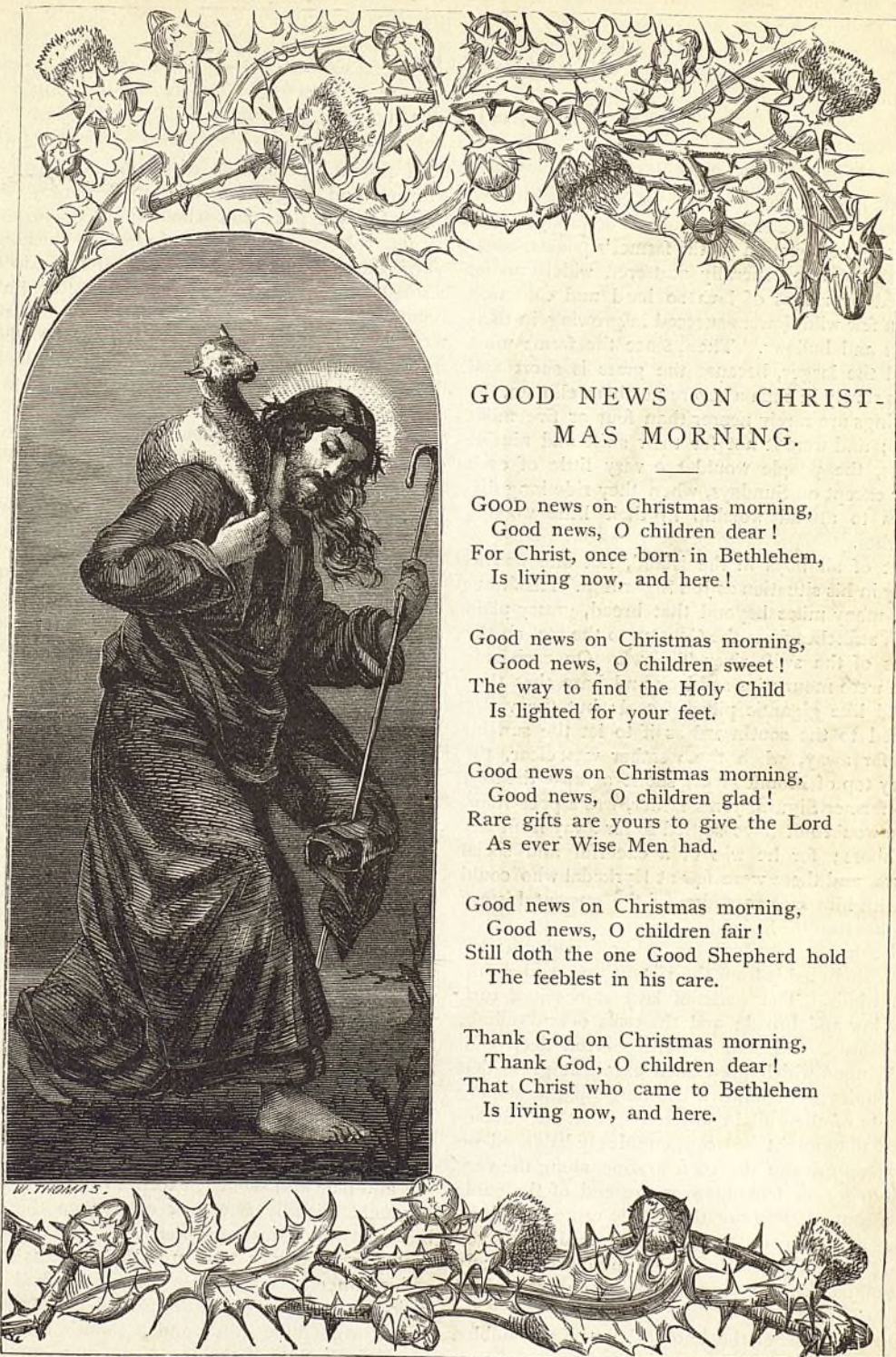
down she came again, visible this time. Her heart was light as a feather.

"Merry Christmas!" clamored the children. The ship was presented, Toinette was duly surprised, and so the happy day began.

That night Toinette left the window open, and lay down in her clothes; for she felt, as Thistle had been so kind, she ought to receive him politely.







### GOOD NEWS ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

Good news on Christmas morning,  
Good news, O children dear!  
For Christ, once born in Bethlehem,  
Is living now, and here!

Good news on Christmas morning,  
Good news, O children sweet!  
The way to find the Holy Child  
Is lighted for your feet.

Good news on Christmas morning,  
Good news, O children glad!  
Rare gifts are yours to give the Lord  
As ever Wise Men had.

Good news on Christmas morning,  
Good news, O children fair!  
Still doth the one Good Shepherd hold  
The feeblest in his care.

Thank God on Christmas morning,  
Thank God, O children dear!  
That Christ who came to Bethlehem  
Is living now, and here.



## THE STORY OF JON OF ICELAND.

BY BAYARD TAYLOR.

## CHAPTER I.

THE boys of Iceland must be content with very few acquaintances or playmates. The valleys which produce grass enough for the farmer's ponies, cattle and sheep, are generally scattered widely apart, divided by ridges of lava so hard and cold that only a few wild flowers succeed in growing in their cracks and hollows. Then, since the farms must be all the larger, because the grass is short and grows slowly in such a severe northern climate, the dwellings are rarely nearer than four or five miles apart; and were it not for their swift and nimble ponies, the people would see very little of each other except on Sundays, when they ride long distances to attend worship in their little wooden churches.

But of all boys in the island, not one was so lonely in his situation as Jon Sigurdson. His father lived many miles beyond that broad, grassy plain which stretches from the Geysers to the sea, on the banks of the swift river Thiörvá. On each side there were mountains so black and bare that they looked like gigantic piles of coal; but the valley opened to the southward as if to let the sun in, and far away, when the weather was clear, the snowy top of Mount Hecla shone against the sky. The farmer Sigurd, Jon's father, was a poor man, or he would not have settled so far away from any neighbors; for he was of a cheerful and social nature, and there were few at Kyrkedal who could vie with him in knowledge of the ancient history and literature of Iceland.

The house was built on a knoll, under a cliff which sheltered it from the violent west and north-west winds. The walls, of lava stones and turf, were low and broad; and the roofs over dwelling, storehouses, and stables were covered deep with earth, upon which grew such excellent grass that the ponies were fond of climbing up the sloping corners of the wall in order to get at it. Sometimes they might be seen, cunningly balanced on the steep sides of the roof, grazing along the very ridge-poles, or looking over the end of the gable when some member of the family came out of the door, as much as to say, "Get me down if you can!" Around the buildings there was a square wall of inclosure, giving the place the appearance of a little fortress.

On one side of the knoll a hot spring bubbled up. In the morning or evening, when the air was

cool; quite a little column of steam arose from it, whirling and broadening as it melted away; but the water was pure and wholesome as soon as it became cold enough for use. In front of the house, where the sun shone warmest, Sigurd had laid out a small garden. It was a great labor for him to remove the huge stones and roll them into a protecting wall, to carry good soil from the places where the mountain rills had gradually washed it down from above, and to arrange it so that frosts and cold rains should do the least harm; and the whole family thought themselves suddenly rich, one summer, when they pulled their first radishes, saw the little bed of potatoes coming into blossom, and the cabbages rolling up their leaves, in order to make, at least, baby-heads before the winter came.

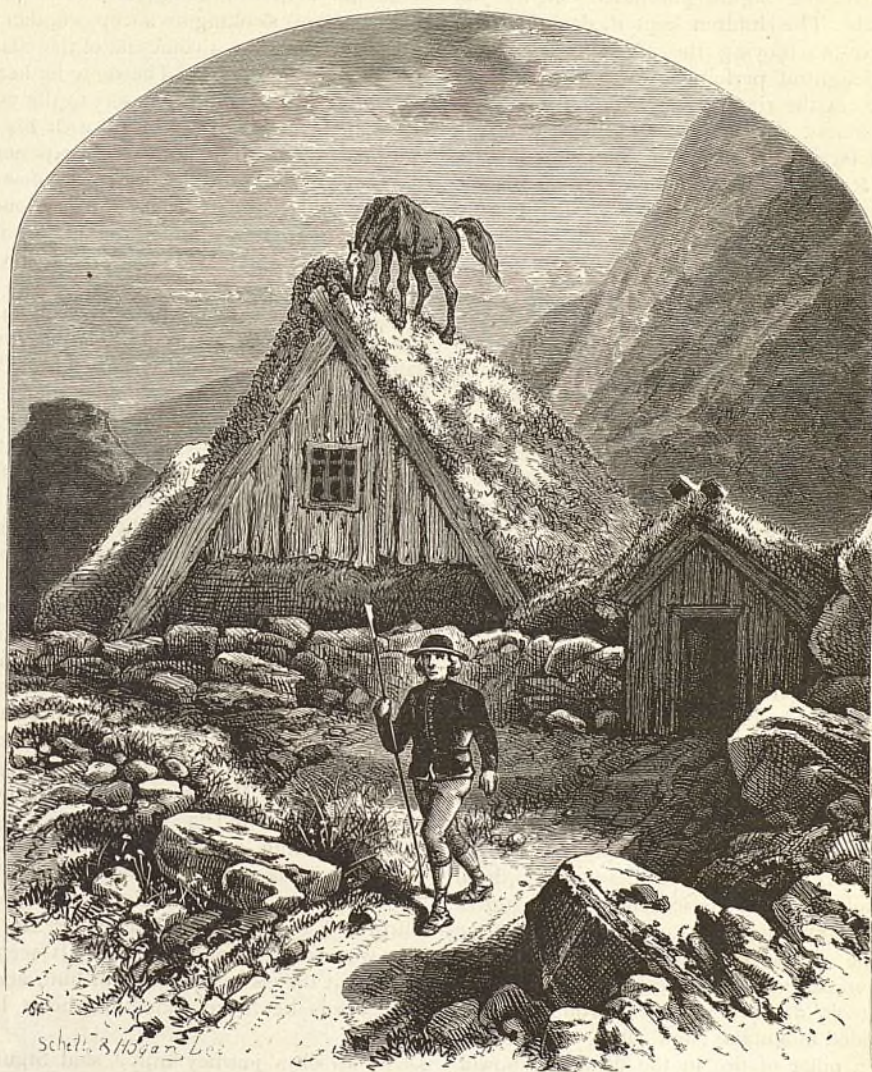
Within the house, all was low, and dark, and dismal. The air was very close and bad, for the stables were only separated from the dwelling-room by a narrow passage, and bunches of dry, salt fish hung on the walls. Besides, it was usually full of smoke from the fire of peat, and, after a rain, of steam from Sigurd's and Jon's heavy woolen coats. But to the boy it was a delightful, a comfortable home, for within it he found shelter, warmth, food and instruction. The room for visitors seemed to him the most splendid place in the world, because it had a wooden floor, a window with six panes of glass, a colored print of the King of Denmark, and a geranium in a pot. This was so precious a plant that Jon and his sister Gudrid hardly dared to touch its leaves. They were almost afraid to smell it, for fear of sniffing away some of its life; and Gudrid, after seeing a leaf of it laid on her dead sister's bosom, insisted that some angel, many hundred years ago, had brought the seed straight down from heaven.

These were Sigurd's only children. There had been several more, but they had died in infancy, from the want of light and pure air, and the great distance from help when sickness came. Gudrid was still pale and slender, except in summer, when her mild, friendly face took color from the sun; but Jon, who was now fourteen, was a sturdy, broad-breasted boy, who promised to be as strong as his father in a few years more. He had thick yellow hair, curling a little around his forehead; large, bright blue eyes; and a mouth rather too broad for beauty, if the lips had not been so rosy



and the teeth so white and firm. He had a serious look, but it was only because he smiled with his eyes oftener than with his mouth. He was naturally true and good, for he hardly knew what evil was. Except his parents and his sister, he saw no one for weeks at a time; and when he met other boys

the cows were warmly stabled and content with their meals of boiled hay; when the needful work of the day could be done in an hour or two, and then Sigurd sat down to teach his children, while their mother spun or knit beside them, and from time to time took part in the instruction. Jon



JON'S HOME.

after church at Kyrkedal, so much time always was lost in shyly looking at each other and shrinking from the talk which each wanted to begin, that no very intimate acquaintance followed.

But, in spite of his lonely life, Jon was far from being ignorant. There were the long winter months, when the ponies—and sometimes the sheep—pawed holes in the snow in order to reach the grass on the bottoms beside the river; when

could already read and write so well that the pastor at Kyrkedal lent him many an old Icelandic legend to copy; he knew the history of the island, as well as that of Norway and Denmark, and could answer (with a good deal of blushing) when he was addressed in Latin. He also knew something of the world, and its different countries and climates; but this knowledge seemed to him like a strange dream, or like something that happened long ago



and never could happen again. He was accustomed to hear a little birch-bush, four or five feet high, called "a tree," and he could not imagine how any tree could be a hundred feet high, or bear flowers and fruit. Once, a trader from Reykiavik—the chief seaport of Iceland—brought a few oranges to Kyrkedal, and Sigurd purchased one for Jon and Gudrid. The children kept it, day after day, never tired of enjoying the splendid color and strange, delightful perfume; so that when they decided to cut the rind at last, the pulp was dried up and tasteless. A city was something of which Jon could form no conception, for he had never even seen Reykiavik; he imagined that palaces and cathedrals were like large Icelandic farm-houses, with very few windows, and turf growing on the roofs.

## CHAPTER II.

SIGURD'S wealth, if it could be called so, was in a small flock of sheep, the pasture for which was scattered in patches for miles up and down the river. The care of these sheep had been intrusted chiefly to Jon, ever since he was eight years old, and he had learned their natures and ways—their simple animal virtues and silly animal vices—so thoroughly, that they acquired a great respect for him, and very rarely tried to be disobedient. Even Thor, the ram, although he sometimes snorted and tossed his horns in protest, or stamped impatiently with his fore-feet, heeded his master's voice. In fact, the sheep became Jon's companions, in the absence of human ones; he talked to them so much during the lonely days, that it finally seemed as if they understood a great deal of his speech.

There was a rough bridle-path leading up the valley of the Thiörvá; but it was rarely traveled, for it struck northward into the cold, windy, stony desert which fills all the central part of Iceland. For a hundred and fifty miles there was no dwelling, no shelter from the fierce and sudden storms, and so little grass that the travelers who sometimes crossed the region ran the risk of losing their ponies from starvation. There were lofty plains of black rock, as hard as iron; groups of bare, snowy-headed mountains; and often, at night, you could see a pillar of fire in the distance, showing that one of the many volcanoes was in action. Beyond this terrible wilderness the grassy valleys began again, and there were houses and herds, increasing as you came down to the bright bays along the northern shore of the island.

More than once, a trader or Government messenger, after crossing the desert, had rested for a night under Sigurd's roof; and many were the tales of their adventures which Jon had treasured up in his memory. Sometimes they spoke of the

*trolls*, or mischievous fairies, who came over with the first settlers from Norway, and were still supposed by many persons to lurk among the dark glens of Iceland. Both Sigurd and the pastor at Kyrkedal had declared that there were no such creatures, and Jon believed them faithfully; yet he could not help wondering, as he sat upon some rocky knoll overlooking his sheep, whether a strange little figure *might* not come out of the chasm opposite, and speak to him. The more he heard of the terrors and dangers of the desert to the northward, the more he longed to see them with his own eyes and know them through his own experience. He was not the least afraid; but he knew that his father would never allow him to go alone, and to disobey a father was something of which he had never heard, and could not have believed to be possible.

When he was in his fifteenth year, however (it was summer, and he was fourteen in April), there came several weeks when no rain fell in the valley. It was a lovely season for the garden; even the geranium in the window put forth twice as many scarlet blossoms as ever before. Only the sheep began to hunger; for the best patch of grass in front of the house was carefully kept for hay, and the next best, further down the river, for the ponies. Beyond the latter, the land belonged to another. So Jon was obliged to lead his flock to a narrow little dell, which came down to the Thiörvá, three or four miles to the northward. Here, for a week, they nibbled diligently wherever anything green showed itself at the foot of the black rocks; and when the pasture grew scanty again, they began to stare at Jon in a way which many persons might have thought stupid. *He* understood them; they meant to say: "We've nearly finished this; find us something more!"

That evening, as he was leading his flock into the little inclosure beside the dwelling, he heard his father and mother talking. He thought it no harm to listen, for they had never said anything that was not kind and friendly. It seemed, however, that they were speaking of him, and the very first words he heard made his heart beat more rapidly.

"Two days' journey away," said Sigurd; "and excellent pastures that belong to nobody. There is no sign of rain yet, and if we could send Jon with the sheep —"

"Are you sure of it?" his wife asked.

"Eyvindur stopped to talk with me," he answered; "and he saw the place this morning. He says there were rains in the desert, and, indeed, I've thought so myself, because the river has not fallen; and he never knew as pleasant a season to cross the country."



"Jon might have to stay out a week or two; but, as you say, Sigurd, we should save our flock. The boy may be trusted, I'm sure; only, if anything should happen to him?"

"I don't think he's fearsome," said Sigurd; "and what should happen to him there, that might not happen nearer home?"

They moved away, while Jon clasped the palms of his hands hard against each other, and stood still for a minute to repeat to himself all he had heard. He knew Eyvindur, the tall, strong man with the dark curling hair, who rode the swift cream-colored pony, with black mane and tail. He knew what his father meant—nothing else than that he, Jon, should take the sheep two days' journey away, to the very edge of the terrible wilderness, and pasture them there, alone, probably, for many days! Why, Columbus, when he set sail from Palos, could not have had a brighter dream of unknown lands! Jon went in to supper in such a state of excitement that he hardly touched the dried fish and hard oaten bread; but he drank two huge bowls of milk and still felt thirsty. When, at last, Sigurd opened his lips and spake, and the mother sat silent with her eyes fixed upon her son's face, and Gudrid looked frightened, Jon straightened himself as if he were already a man, and quietly said: "I'll do it!"

He wanted to shout aloud for joy; but Gudrid began to cry.

However, when a thing had once been decided in the family, that was the end of any question or remonstrance, and even Gudrid forgot her fears in the interest of preparing a supply of food for Jon during his absence. They slept soundly for a few hours; and then, at two o'clock in the morning, when the sun was already shining on the snowy tops of the Arne Mountains, Jon hung the bag of provisions over his shoulder, kissed his parents and sister, and started northward, driving the sheep before him.

### CHAPTER III.

IN a couple of hours he reached the farthest point of the valley which he had ever visited, and all beyond was an unknown region. But the scenery, as he went onward, was similar in character. The mountains were higher and more abrupt, the river more rapid and foamy, and the patches of grass more scanty—that was all the difference. It was the Arctic summer, and the night brought no darkness; yet he knew when the time for rest came, by watching the direction of the light on the black mountains above. When the sheep lay down, he sought a sheltered place under a rock, and slept also.

Next day, the country grew wilder and more for-

bidding. Sometimes there was hardly a blade of grass to be seen for miles, and he drove the sheep at full speed, running and shouting behind them, in his eagerness to reach the distant pasture which Eyvindur had described. In the afternoon, the valley appeared to come suddenly to an end. The river rushed out of a deep cleft between the rocks, only a few feet wide, on the right hand; in front there was a long stony slope, reaching so high that the clouds brushed along its summit. In the bottom there was some little grass, but hardly enough to feed the flock for two days.

Jon was disappointed, but not much discouraged. He tethered Thor securely to a rock, knowing that the other sheep would remain near him, and set out to climb the slope. Up and up he toiled; the air grew sharp and cold; there was snow and ice in the shaded hollows on either side, and the dark, strange scenery of Iceland grew broader below him. Finally, he gained the top; and now, for the first time, felt that he had found a new world. In front, toward the north, there was a plain stretching as far as he could see; on the right and left there were groups of dark, frightful, inaccessible mountains, between the sharp peaks of which sheets of blue ice plunged downward like cataracts, only they were silent and motionless. The valley behind him was a mere cleft in the stony, lifeless world; his sheep were little white dots, no bigger, apparently, than flowers of life-everlasting. He could only guess, beyond the dim ranges in the distance, where his father's dwelling lay; and, for a single moment, the thought came into his mind and made him tremble—should he ever see it again?

The pasture, he reflected, must be sought for in the direction from which the river came. Following the ridge to the eastward, it was not long before he saw a deep basin, a mile in diameter, opening among the hills. The bottom was quite green, and there was a sparkle here and there, where the river wound its way through it. This was surely the place, and Jon felt proud that he had so readily discovered it. There were several glens which furnished easy paths down from the table-land, and he had no difficulty, the next morning, in leading his flock over the great ridge. In fact, they skipped up the rocks as if they knew what was coming, and did not wait for Jon to show them the way into the valley.

The first thing the boy did, after satisfying himself that the sheep were not likely to stray away from such excellent pasturage, was to seek for a cave or hollow among the rocks, where he could find shelter from storms. There were several such places; he selected the most convenient, which had a natural shelf for his store of provisions, and, having dried enough grass to make a warm, soft



bed, he found himself very comfortably established. For three or four days, he was too busy to feel his loneliness. The valley belonged to nobody; so he considered it his own property, and called it Gudridsdale, after his sister. Then, in order to determine the boundaries of this new estate, he climbed the heights in all directions, and fixed the forms of every crag and hollow firmly in his memory. He was not without the secret hope that he might come upon some strange and remarkable object,—a deserted house, a high tree, or a hot fountain shooting up jets like the Great Geyser,—but there was nothing. Only the black and stony wilderness near at hand, and a multitude of snowy peaks in the distance.

Thus ten days passed. The grass was not yet exhausted, the sheep grew fat and lazy, and Jon had so thoroughly explored the neighborhood of the valley that he could have found his way in the dark. He knew that there were only barren, uninhabitable regions to the right and left; but the great, bare table-land stretching to the northward was a continual temptation, for there were human settlements beyond. As he wandered farther and farther in that direction, he found it harder to return; there was always a ridge in advance, the appearance of a mountain pass, the sparkle of a little lake—some promise of something to be seen by going just a little beyond his turning-point. He was so careful to notice every slight feature of the scenery,—a jutting rock here, a crevice there,—in case mist or rain should overtake him on the way, that the whole region soon became strangely familiar.

Jon's desire to explore the road leading to the northward grew so strong, that he at last yielded to it. But first he made every arrangement for the safety of the sheep during his absence. He secured the ram Thor by a long tether and an abundance of cut grass, concealed the rest of his diminishing supply of provisions; climbed the nearest heights and overlooked the country on all sides without discovering a sign of life, and then, after a rest which was more like a waking dream than a slumber, began his strange and solitary journey.

The sun had just become visible again, low in the north-east, when he reached the level of the table-land. There were few clouds in the sky, and but little wind blowing; yet a singular brownish haze filled the air, and spots of strong light soon appeared on either side of the sun. Jon had often seen these "mock suns" before; they are frequent in northern latitudes, and are supposed to denote a change in the weather. This phenomenon, and a feeling of heaviness in the air, led him to study the landmarks very keenly and cautiously as he advanced. In two or three hours he had passed

the limits of his former excursions; and now, if a storm should arise, his very life might depend on his being able to find the way back.

During the day, however, there was no change in the weather. The lonely, rugged mountains, the dark little lakes of melted snow lying at their feet, the stony plain, with its great irregular fissures where the lava had cracked in cooling,—all these features of the great central desert of Iceland lay hard and clear before his eyes. Like all persons who are obliged to measure time without a watch or clock, he had a very correct sense of the hours of the day, and of the distances he walked from point to point. Where there was no large or striking object near at hand, he took the trouble to arrange several stones in a line pointing to the next landmark behind him, as a guide in case of fog.

It was an exciting, a wonderful day in his life, and Jon never forgot it. He never once thought of the certain danger which he incurred. Instead of fear, he was full of a joyous, inspiring courage; he sang and shouted aloud, as some new peak or ridge of hills arose far in front, or some other peak, already familiar, went out of sight far behind him. He scarcely paused to eat or rest, until nearly twelve hours had passed, and he had walked fully thirty miles. By that time the sun was low in the west, and barely visible through the gathering haze. The wind moaned around the rocks with a dreary, melancholy sound, and only the cry of a wild swan was heard in the distance. To the north the mountains seemed higher, but they were divided by deep gaps which indicated the commencement of valleys. There, perhaps, there might be running streams, pastures, and the dwellings of men!

Jon had intended to return to his flock on the morrow, but now the temptation to press onward for another day became very great. His limbs, however, young and strong as they were, needed some rest; and he speedily decided what to do next. A lighter streak in the rocky floor of the plain led his eye toward a low, broken peak—in reality, the crater of a small, extinct volcano—some five miles off, and lying to the right of what he imagined to be the true course. On the left there were other peaks, but immediately in front nothing which would serve as a landmark. The crater, therefore, besides offering him some shelter in its crevices, was decidedly the best starting-point, either for going on or returning. The lighter color of the rock came from some different mixture in the lava of an old eruption, and could easily be traced throughout the whole intervening distance. He followed it rapidly, now that the bearings were laid down, and reached the ruins of the volcano a little after sunset.

There was no better bed to be found than the



bottom of a narrow cleft, where the winds, after blowing for many centuries, had deposited a thin layer of sand. Before he lay down, Jon arranged a line of stones, pointing toward the light streak across the plain, and another line giving the direction of the valleys to the northward. To the latter he added two short, slanting lines at the end, forming a figure like an arrow-head, and then, highly satisfied with his ingenuity, lay down in the crevice to sleep. But his brain was so excited that for a

long time he could do nothing else than go over, in memory, the day's journey. The wind seemed to be rising, for it whistled like a tremendous fife through the rocky crevice; father and mother and Gudrid seemed to be far, far away, in a different land; he wondered, at last, whether he was the same Jon Sigurdson who drove the flock of sheep up the valley of the Thiörvá—and then, all at once, he stopped wondering and thinking, for he was too soundly asleep to dream even of a roasted potato.

(To be continued.)

## A SOUTHERN CHRISTMAS EVE.

By E. M. S.

'T WAS Christmas in a Southern town,  
The air was soft and sweet;  
And the sinking sun looked brightly down  
On the gay and crowded street,  
While roses and violets blooming near  
Made my little girl say, "Is it Christmas here?"

"At home the snow is on the ground,  
The air is cold and clear,  
And greens and holly are hung around,  
To help the Christmas cheer.  
How can St. Nicholas come in his sleigh,  
If all the snow is melted away?"

"What will he do with his big fur coat,  
The icicles on his hair?  
The tinkling bells wont sound a note,  
With no Jack Frost in the air.  
'T would just be folly, O mother dear!  
To hang up my stocking—no Christmas here!"

But I said, "I see the Christmas star  
High in these Southern skies,  
And the Christmas light is streaming far,  
And shines in the people's eyes.  
I'm sure St. Nick will find the way  
Without Jack Frost and the reindeer sleigh."

Early my little girl went to bed,  
That the night might shorter seem;  
And scarce had she pillowed her curly head,  
Than she dreamed a beautiful dream,  
And wondrous music seemed to bear  
A message of joy on the balmy air.

Nearer and nearer it seemed to come,  
Sweeter and sweeter it grew,  
Till the Christmas light was in the room,  
And the Christmas glory too;  
While the angels' song rang from the sky,—  
"All glory be to God on high!"

"All glory be to God on high,  
And peace, good-will on earth!"  
Thus joyous rose the angels' cry,  
To hail Our Saviour's birth;—  
And ere the radiance passed away,  
The light had dawned on Christmas-day.





## BOBBY AND THE KEY-HOLE.

*(A Hoosier Fairy Story.)*

BY EDWARD EGGLESTON.



YOU think that folks in fine clothes are the only folks that ever see fairies, and that poor folks can't afford them. But in the days of the real old-fashioned "Green Jacket and White Owl's Feather" fairies, it was the poor boy carrying faggots to the cabin of his widowed mother who saw wonders of all sorts wrought by the little people; and it was the poor girl who had a fairy godmother. It must be confessed that the mystery-working, dew-drop dancing, wand-waving, pumpkin-met-

amorphosing little rascals have been spoiled of late years by being admitted into fine houses. Having their pictures painted by artists, their praises sung by poets, their adventures told in gilt-edge books, and, above all, getting into the delicious leaves of ST. NICHOLAS, has made them "stuck up," so that it is not the poor girl in the cinders, nor the boy with a bundle of faggots now, but girls who wear button boots and tie-back skirts, and boys with fancy waists and striped stockings, that are befriended by fairies whom they do not need.

But away off from the cities there still live a race of unflattered fairies who are not snobbish, and who love little girls and boys in pinafores and ragged jackets. These sprites are not very handsome, and so the artists do not draw their pictures, and they do not get into gilt-edge Christmas books. Dear, ugly, good fairies! I hope they will not be spoiled by my telling you something about them.

Little Bobby Towpate saw some of them; and it's about Bobby, and the fairies he saw, that I want to speak. Bobby was the thirteenth child in a rather large family—there were three younger than he. He lived in a log cabin on the banks of a stream, the right name of which is "Indian Kentucky Creek." I suppose it was named "Indian Kentucky" because it is not in Kentucky, but in Indiana; and as for Indians, they have been gone many a day. The people always call it "The Injun

Kaintuck." They tuck up the name to make it shorter.

Bobby was only four years and three-quarters old, but he had been in pantaloons for three years and a half, for the people in the Indian Kaintuck put their little boys into breeches as soon as they can walk—perhaps a little before. And such breeches! The little white-headed fellows look like dwarf grandfathers, thirteen hundred years of age. They go toddling about like old men who have grown little again, and forgotten everything they ever knew.

But Bobby Towpate was not ugly. Under his white hair, which "looked every way for Sunday," were blue eyes and ruddy cheeks, and a mouth as pretty as it was solemn. The comical little fellow wore an unbleached cotton shirt, and tattered pantaloons, with home-made suspenders or "gallowses." The pantaloons had always been old, I think, for they were made out of a pair of his father's—his "daddy's," as he would have told you—and nobody ever knew his father to have a new pair, so they must have been old from the beginning. For in the Indian Kaintuck country nothing ever seems to be new. Bobby Towpate himself was born looking about a thousand years old, and had aged some centuries already. As for hat, he wore one of his daddy's old hats when he wore any, and it would have answered well for an umbrella if it had not been ragged.

Bobby's play-ground was anywhere along the creek in the woods. There were so many children that there was nobody to look after him; so he just kept a careful eye on himself, and that made it all right. As he was not a very energetic child, there was no danger of his running into mischief. Indeed, he never ran at all. He was given to sitting down on the ground and listening to the crazy singing of the loons—birds whose favorite amusement consists in trying to see which can make the most hideous noise. Then, too, he would watch the stake-drivers flying along the creek, with their long, ugly necks sticking out in front of them, and their long, ugly legs sticking out behind them, and their long, ugly wings sticking out on each side of them. They never seemed to have any bodies at all. People call them stake-drivers because their musical voices sound like the driving of a stake: "Ke-wack! ke-wack!" They also call them "Fly-up-the-creeks," and plenty of ugly names besides.



It was one sleepy summer afternoon that Bobby sat on the roof of a beech-tree, watching a stake-driver who stood in the water as if looking for his dinner of tadpoles, when what should the homely bird do but walk right out on the land and up to Bobby. Bobby then saw that it was not a stake-driver, but a long-legged, long-necked, short-bodied gentleman, in a black bob-tail coat. And yet his long, straight nose did look like a stake-driver's beak, to be sure. He was one of the stake-driver fairies, who live in the dark and lonesome places along the creeks in the Hoosier country. They make the noise that you hear, "Ke-whack! ke-whack!" It is the driving of stakes for the protection of the nests of their friends the cat-fish.

"Good-morning, Bobby, ke-whack!" said the long, slim gentleman, nodding his head. He said ke-whack after his words because that is the polite thing to do among the stake-driver fairies.

"My name haint Bobby Ke-whack, nur nothin'," answered Bobby. The people on Indian Kaintuck say "nor nothing" without meaning anything by it. "My name haint on'y jeth Bob, an' nothin' elth."

But the slender Mr. Fly-up-the-creek only nodded and said ke-whack two or three times, by way of clearing his throat.

"May be you'd like to see the folks underground, ke-whack," he added presently. "If you would, I can show you the door and how to unlock it. It's right under the next cliff, ke-whack! If you get the door open, you may go in and find the Sleepy-headed People, the Invisible People, and all the rest, ke-whack!"

"Ke-whack!" said Bob, mimicking, and grinning till he showed his row of white milk-teeth. But the gentleman stake-driver must have been offended, for he walked away into the water and disappeared among the willows, saying, "Ke-whack! ke-whack!" in an indignant way at every step.

When once the stake-driver fairy had gone, Bob was troubled. He was lonesome. He had always been lonesome, because the family was so large. There is never any company for a body where there are so many. Now Bob wished that "Ole Ke-whack," as he called him, had not walked off into the willows in such a huff. He would like to see who lived under the ground, you know. After awhile, he thought he would go and look for the door under the cliff. Bobby called it "clift," after the manner of the people on the Indian Kaintuck.

Once under the cliff, he was a long time searching around for a door. At last, he found a something that looked like a door in the rock. He looked to see if there was a latch-string, for the houses in the Indian Kaintuck are opened with latch-strings.

But he could not find one. Then he said to himself (for Bobby, being a lonesome boy, talked to himself a great deal) words like these:

"Ole Ke-whack thed he knowed wharabout the key mout be. The time I went down to Madison, to market with mammy, I theed a feller dretht up to kill come along and open hith door with a iron thing. That mout be a key. Wonder ef I can't find it mythelf! There, I come acrost the hole what it goeth into."

He had no trouble in "coming acrost" the key itself, for he found it lying on the ground. He took it up, looked at it curiously, and said: "Thith thing muth be a key." So he tried to put it into the key-hole, but an unexpected difficulty met him. Every time he tried to put in the key, the key-hole, which before was in easy reach, ran up so far that he could not get to it. He picked up some loose stones and piled them up against the door, and



THE KEY-HOLE MOVES UP.

stood on them on his tip-toes, but still the key-hole shot up out of his reach. At last, he got down exhausted, and sat down on the pile of stones he had made, with his back to the door. On looking round, he saw that the key-hole was back in its old place, and within a few inches of his head. He turned round suddenly and made a dive at it, with the key held in both hands, but the key-hole shot up like a rocket, until it was just out of his reach.

After trying to trap this key-hole in every way



he could, he sat down on a stone and looked at it a minute, and then said very slowly: "Well, I never! That beats me all holler! What a funny thing a key-hole muth be."

At last, he noticed another key-hole in the rock, not far away, and concluded to try the key in that. The key went in without trouble, and Bob turned it round several times, until the iron key had turned to brass in his hands.

"The blamed thing ith turnin' yaller!" cried little Towpate. You must excuse Bob's language. You might have talked in the same way if you had been so lucky as to be born on the Indian Kaintuck.

Seeing that he could not open anything by turning the key round in this key-hole, since there was no door here, he thought he would now try what luck he might have with the "yaller" key in opening the door. The key-hole might admit a brass key. But what was his amazement to find on trying, that the key-hole which had run upward from an iron key, now ran down toward the bottom of the door. He pulled away the stones and stooped down till his head was near the ground, but the key-hole disappeared off the bottom of the door. When he gave up the chase it returned as before. Bobby worked himself into a great heat trying to catch it, but it was of no use.

Then he sat down again and stared at the door, and again he said slowly: "Well, I never, in all my born'd days! That beats me all holler! What a thing a key-hole ith! But that feller in town did n't have no trouble."

After thinking awhile he looked at the key, and came to the conclusion that, as the key-hole went up from an iron key, and down from a brass one, that if he had one half-way between, he should have no trouble. "Thith key ith too awful yaller," he said. "I'll put it back and turn it half-way black, and then we'll thee."

So he stuck it into the key-hole and tried to turn it in the opposite direction to the way he had turned it before. But it would not turn to the left at all. So he let go and stood off looking at it awhile, when, to his surprise, the key began turning to the right of its own accord. And as it turned it grew whiter, until it was a key of pure silver.

"Purty good for you, ole hoss," said Bob, as he pulled out the bright silver key. "We'll thee if you're any better'n the black one and the yaller one."

But neither would the silver one open the door; for the key-hole was as much afraid of it as of the brass one and the iron one. Only now it neither went up nor down, but first toward one side of the door and then toward the other, according to the way in which the key approached it. Bobby, after

awhile, went at it straight from the front, whereupon the key-hole divided into two parts—the one half running off the door to the right, the other to the left.

"Well, that'th ahead of my time," said Bob. But he was by this time so much amused by the changes in the key and the antics of the nimble key-hole, that he did not care much whether the door opened or not. He waited until he had seen the truant key-hole take its place again, and then he took the silver key back to the other key-hole. As soon as he approached it the key leaped out of his hand, took its place in the key-hole, and began to turn swiftly round. When it stopped the silver had become gold.

"Yaller again, by hokey," said Bob. And he took the gold key and went back, wondering what



BOBBY.

the key-hole would do now. But there was now no key-hole. It had disappeared entirely.

Bob stood off and looked at the place where it had been, let his jaw drop a little in surprise and disappointment, and came out slowly with this: "Well, I never, in all my born'd days!"

He thought best now to take the key back and have it changed once more. But the other key-hole was gone too. Not knowing what to do, he returned to the door and put the key up where the nimble key-hole had been, whereupon it reappeared, the gold key inserted itself, and the door opened of its own accord.

Bob eagerly tried to enter, but there stood somebody in the door, blocking the passage.

"Hello!" said Bob. "You here, Ole Ke-whack? How did you get in? By the back door, I 'low."



"Put my yellow waistcoat back where you got it, ke-whack!" said the stake-driver, shivering. "It's cold in here, and how shall I go to the party without it, ke-whack!"

"Your yaller wescut?" said Bob. "I haint got no wescut, ke-whack or no ke-whack."

"You must put that away!" said the fly-up-the-creek, pecking his long nose at the gold key. "Ke-whack! ke-whack!"

"Oh!" said Towpate, "why did n't you say so?" Then he tossed the gold key down on the ground, where he had found the iron one, but the key stood straight up, waving itself to and fro, while Bobby came out with his drawling: "Well, I never!"

"Pick it up! Pick it up! Ke-whack! You've pitched my yellow waistcoat into the dirt, ke-whack, ke-whack!"

"Oh! You call that a wescut, do you. Well, I never!" And Bobby picked up the key, and since he could think of no place else to put it, he put it into the key-hole, upon which it unwound itself to the left till it was silver. Bobby, seeing that the key had ceased to move, pulled it out and turned toward the open door to see the stake-driver wearing a yellow vest, which he was examining with care, saying, "Ke-whack, ke-whack," as he did so. "I knew you'd get spots on it, ke-whack, throwing it on the ground that way."

Poor Bobby was too much mystified by this confusion between the gold key and the yellow vest, or "wescut," as they call it on the Indian Kaintuck, to say anything.

"Now, my white coat, put that back, ke-whack," said the fly-up-the-creek fairy. "I can't go to the party in my shirt sleeves, ke-whack."

"I haint got your coat, Ole Daddy Longlegs," said Bobby, "less you mean this key."

On this suspicion he put the key back, upon which it again unwound itself to the left and became brass. As soon as Bobby had pulled out the brass key and turned round, he saw that the fairy was clad in a white coat, which, with his stunning yellow vest, made him cut quite a figure.

"Now, my yellow cap," said the stake-driver, adding a cheerful ke-whack or two, and Bobby guessed that he was to put the brass key in the key-hole, whereupon it was immediately turned round by some unseen power until it became iron, and then thrown out on the ground where Bobby Towpate had found it at first. Sure enough, the fairy now wore a yellow cap, and, quick as thought, he stepped out to where the key was lying, and struck it twice with his nose, whereupon it changed to a pair of three-toed boots, which he quickly drew on. Then he turned and bowed to Bobby, and said:

"Ke-whack! You've ironed my coat and vest,

and brushed my cap and blacked my boots. Good-day, ke-whack, I'm going to the party. You can go in if you want to."

Bobby stood for some time, looking after him as he flew away along the creek, crying "ke-whack, ke-whack, ke-whack!" And Bobby said once again: "Well, I never, in all my born'd days," and then added, "Haint Daddy Longlegs peart? Thinks he's *some* in his yaller wescut, I 'low."

When once the fly-up-the-creek had gone out of sight and out of hearing, Bobby started on his search for the Sleepy-headed People. He traveled along a sort of underground gallery or cave, until he came to a round basin-like place. Here he found people who looked like fat little boys and girls, rather than men and women. They were lolling round in a ring, while one of the number read drowsily from a big book which was lying on a boulder in the middle of this Sleepy-hollow. All seemed to be looking and listening intently. But as soon as those who sat facing Bobby caught sight of him, they gave a long yawn and fell into a deep sleep. One after another they looked at him, and one after another the little round, lazy fellows gaped, until it seemed their heads would split open, then fell over and slept soundly, snoring like little pigs. Bobby stood still with astonishment. He did not even find breath to say, "Well, I never!" For presently every one of the listeners had gone off to sleep. The reader, whose back was toward the new-comer, did not see him. He was the only one left awake, and Bobby looked to see him drop over at any moment. But the little fat man read right along in a drawling, sleepy mumble, something about the Athenians until Bob cried out: "Hello, Ole Puddin-bag, everybody'th gone to thleep; you'd jeth ath well hole up yer readin' awhile."

The little man rolled his eyes round upon Bob, and said: "Oh, my! I'm gone off again!" And then he stretched his fat cheeks in an awful yawn.

"Hey! You'll never get that mouth of your'n shet, ef you don't be mighty keeful," cried Bob; but the fellow was fast asleep before he could get the words out.

"Well now, that'th a purty lookin' crowd, haint it?" said Bob, looking round upon the sleepers.

Just at that moment they began to wake up, one after another, but as soon as they saw Bob, they sighed and said: "He's so curious," or, "He's so interesting," or something of the sort, and fell away into a deep slumber again. At last, Bob undertook to wake some of them up by hallooing, but the more noise he made, the more soundly they slept. Then he gave over shaking them and shouting at them, and sat down. As soon as he was quiet, they began to wake up again.



"Hello!" cried Bob, when he saw two or three of them open their eyes.

"If you'd only keep still till I get awake," said one of them, and then they all went to sleep again.

By keeping quite still, he got them pretty well waked up. Then they all fell to counting their toes, to keep from becoming too much interested in Bobby, for just so sure as they get interested or excited, the Sleepy-headed People fall asleep. Presently the reader awoke, and began to mumble

"I know a better thtory than that air!" said Bobby, growing tired of the long, mumbling reading of the dull book.

"Do you? Tell it," said the reader.

So Bobby began to tell them some of his adventures, upon which they all grew interested and fell asleep.

"Don't tell any more like that," said the little reader, when he awoke.

"What'th the matter weth it? Heap better



THE SLEEPY-HEADED PEOPLE.

a lot of stuff out of the big book, about Epaminondas, and Sesostris, and Cyaxeres, and Clearchus, and the rest, and they all grew a little more wakeful. When he came to an account of a battle, Bobby began to be interested a little in the story, but all the others yawned and cried out, "Read across, read across!" and the reader straightway read clear across the page, mixing the two columns into hopeless nonsense, so as to destroy the interest. Then they all waked up again.

thtory than that big book that you're a mumblin' over, Mr. Puddin'."

"We don't like interesting stories," said the sleepy reader. "They put us to sleep. This is the best book in the world. It's Rollin's Ancient History, and it hasn't got but a few interesting spots in the whole of it. Those we keep sewed up, so that we can't read them. The rest is all so nice and dull, that it keeps us awake all day."

Bobby stared, but said nothing.



"Can you sing?" said one of the plump little old women.

"Yeth, I can thing Dandy Jim."

"Let's have it. I do love singing; it soothes me and keeps me awake."

Thus entreated, little Bobby stood up and sang one verse of a negro song he had heard, which ran:

"When de preacher took his tex'  
He look so berry much perplex',  
Fur nothin' come acrost his mine  
But Dandy Jim from Caroline!"

Bobby shut his eyes tight, and threw his head back and sang through his nose, as he had seen big folks do. He put the whole of his little soul into these impressive words. When he had finished and opened his eyes to discover what effect his vocal exertions had produced, his audience was of course fast asleep.

"Well, I never," said Bob.

"The tune's too awful lively," said the little old woman, when she woke up. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Now, hear me sing." And she began, in a slow, solemn movement, the most drawling tune you ever heard, and they all joined in the same fashion:

"Poor old Pidy,  
She died last Friday;  
Poor old creetur,  
The turkey-buzzards ——"

But before they could finish the line, while they were yet hanging to the tails of the turkey-buzzards, so to speak, Bobby burst out with:

"La! that'th the toon the old cow died on. I would n't thing that."

"You would n't, hey?" said the woman, getting mad.

"No, I would n't, little dumplin'."

Whereupon the little woman got so mad that she went fast asleep, and the reader, growing interested and falling into a doze, tumbled off his chair on his head, but as his head was quite soft and puttyish, it did him no particular harm, except that the fall made him sleep more soundly than ever.

When they had waked up again Bobby thought it time to move on, but as soon as he offered to move, the sleepy-heads surrounded him and began to sing a drawling song, which made Bobby sleepy. He soon found that they meant to make him one of themselves, and this was not at all to his taste. He struggled to get away, but something held him about the feet. What should he do?

Suddenly a bright thought came to his relief. The sleepy-heads were now all standing in a ring around him. He began to tell a story at the top of his voice:

"My gr'an'pappy, he fit weth a red Injun. An'

the Injun he chopped my gran'pappy's finger off weth his tomahawk, and ——"

But at this point all the little people got intensely excited over Bobby's gran'pappy's fight, and so, of course, fell asleep and fell forward into a pile on top of Bobby, who had an awful time getting out from under the heap. Just as he emerged, the people began to wake up and to lay hold of his feet, but Bobby screamed out:

"And my gran'pappy, he up weth his hatchet and he split the nasty ole red Injun's head open——"

They were all fast asleep again.

Bobby now ran off toward the door, not caring to go any further underground at present, though he knew there were other wonders beyond. He reached the door at last, but it was closed. There was no key-hole even.

After looking around a long time he found the Fly-up-the-creek fairy, not far from the door, sitting by a fire, with a large, old owl sitting over against him.

"Give me the key to the door, Ole Ke-whack!" said Bobby.

"Oh, no! I will not give you my clothes, ke-whack! Do you think I would give you my party clothes? If you had n't sung so loud, the door would n't have shut. You scared it. Now, I can't give you my fine clothes, and so you'll have to stay here."

Poor Bobby sat down by the fire, not knowing what to do.

"Tell him about the Sleepy-headed People," said the owl to Bobby, solemnly.

"Shut up, old man, or I'll bite your head off!" said the Fly-up-the-creek to the owl.

"Do as I say," said the owl. "If you stay here, you'll turn to an owl or a bat. Be quick. The Sleepy-heads are his cousins—he does n't like to hear about them."

"Don't mind a word the old man says, ke-whack!"

"Give me the key, then," said Bobby.

"Do as I say," said the owl.

The Fly-up-the-creek tried to bite off the owl's head, but the "old man" hopped out of his way. Bobby began to tell the story of his adventures among the Sleepy-heads, and the stake-driver began to cry, "Ke-whack, ke-whack!" to drown his words, but as Bobby went on, the stake-driver's voice became weaker and weaker. Bobby was so amazed that he stopped.

"Go on!" cried the owl, "or you'll never get out, or I either."

So Bobby kept up his talk until the stake-driver was lying senseless on the floor.

"Put the key in the lock, quick," cried the owl.

"Where is the key?"



"His fine clothes. Take them off, quick! Cap first!"

Bobby began with the cap, then stripped off the coat and vest and boots.

"Put them in the key-hole, quick!" said the owl, for the stake-driver was reviving.

"Where is the key-hole?"

"There! There!" cried the owl, pointing to the fire. By this time the Fly-up-the-creek had already begun to reach out for his clothes, which Bobby hastily threw into the fire. The fire went out, the great door near by swung open, and the

big-eyed owl, followed by Bobby, walked out, saying, "I'm free at last."

Somehow, in the day-light, he was not any longer an owl, but an old man in gray clothes, who hobbled off down the road.

And Bobby looked after him until he saw the stake-driver, shorn of his fine clothes, sweep over his head and go flying up the creek again. Then he turned toward his father's cabin, saying:

"Well, I never! Ef that haint the beatinest thing I ever did see in all my born'd days."

And I think it was.



## BASS COVE SKETCHES.—A COUPLE OF CRUSOES.

BY J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

THE sea was inspiring to Mr. Augustus Bonwig's poetical feelings; and he began to declaim again, as he and Joe descended the ledges on the seaward side of the island.

"The breaking waves dashed high, on a stern—" But here a chasm in the rocks occasioned a hiatus in the verse.

"On the stern of a ship?" Joe asked.

"No; 'on a stern and rock-bound coast,'" said Mr. Bonwig, as he stepped over the chasm.

But here, again, he was interrupted; this time by Joe, who cautioned him against scaring the ducks with his poetry.

"Now, look a here, Mister! You notice, we're comin' to a sort of clift" (Joe meant cliff). "We can crawl right to the edge on 't, and look right

down into a little inlet, where we'll be purty sure to see suthin'."

"Crawl, is it?" said the portly Mr. Bonwig, wincing. "I'm not built for crawling. But no matter. Go ahead. I'll sacrifice the rest of my buttons in a good cause, if necessary."

Joe advanced to make an observation. He reached the edge of the cliff; and presently looked back at his companion with a laugh, and beckoned to him. Augustus came up with him, scratching the rocks with his remaining buttons, and looked over.

"Here's a splendid shot!" said Joe. "Two old wives close in shore!"

Bonwig saw with delight the pair of ducks, riding on the swells that poured into the inlet, or tipping



up and plunging their bills down among the cool, dark sea-moss, as the bright waves receded, leaving it half exposed and glistening in the early sunlight.

"Now," said Joe, "I'm goin' to let you have all the chance this time. I sha'n't fire at all, till you do. Don't show yourself, nor make a noise, but take aim right through this notch."

Bonwig obeyed; resting his ponderous stomach on the ledge, and thrusting his gun over it, he cocked both barrels, and took as deliberate aim as it was possible for a highly nervous sportsman to do, under the circumstances.

"Plenty of time," said Joe.

"I—know—it; but, bless my heart! how they do—bob up and down!"

The ducks were, in fact, constantly in motion, tossing on the swells, or tipping up and darting their bills hither and thither. Moreover, the light on the water was very deceptive. One has to get used to shooting at objects afloat, as Joe very justly observed afterward.

"I—I—rather think I'd better fire!" said Augustus, in a trembling voice.

"Seems to me, I would; I don't see what you're waitin' for," Joe replied.

Mr. Bonwig fired both barrels in quick succession. The startled ducks rose quickly and quietly from the water, as if to show a due respect for his salute; not a feather of either being injured.

"Bless my heart!" said Mr. Bonwig.

"You've had your chance; now it's my turn," said Joe.

He took aim with his old "Queen's arm," fired instantly, and brought down a bird. Then he fired his other gun, and the other duck whirled and fell into the sea.

"Now, I am—I am surprised!" said Augustus. "It's all a knack, as your father said; and you have got the knack! I *am* surprised!"

"I'll go down after 'em," said Joe, "while you go back and see if there aint some more ducks over t'other side, by this time. And haul the dory a little further up on the beach," he added, "for I'm afraid the tide will git it; it's comin' in fast."

Bonwig went, and returned, in a short time, saying that he had left the dory safe, and that he had seen no game.

"Where are your old wives?" he asked. "Have n't you been down after them yet?"

"No," said Joe; "I'm watchin' them loons," pointing out to sea. "If you'll do jest what I tell ye, I guess we can git 'em. Sure ye left the dory all right?"

"Oh, yes! The tide wont reach it this hour. I don't see your loons, though," said Augustus. "Yes, I do! Half a mile off! How do you expect ever to get them?"

"I'll git down on to that ledge that runs out into the water, and hide. Then I'll holler like a loon, and purty soon you'll see 'em steerin' right in toward me. But if they come near enough to find out I aint a loon, they'll stop. So, soon as you see 'em comin', you jest wave this 'ere hankercher on yer ramrod, so 's to take their eye. I carry it 'most a purpose for loons." Joe pulled a flaming bandanna from his pocket, and showed Mr. Bonwig how to manage it. "Loons is birds," he said, "that has lots of curiosity in their dispositions, and they'll 'most gener'ly allus come in nigh enough to see what a wavin' red hankercher means, so'st a feller can git a shot at 'em. Only," said Joe, eying his friend's gun wistfully, "it's hard carryin' two long, heavy guns down a steep clift, like this here; and now, if you don't care to go down and do the shootin'—for you'll be too fur off up here—"

"Bless my heart!" said Augustus, looking over the precipice, "I never could get down these rocks alive, in the world! I—I—must think of my wife and children!"

"Then if you would jest lend me the loan of your gun once," said Joe.

"Why yes—certainly," said Augustus.

"Then you wont be shootin' *me*, ye know," grinned Joe.

Leaving his companion on the top of the cliff, he dropped over the edge of it, and, taking advantage of the loons diving, slipped down from crevice to crevice, and from shelf to shelf, until he had made his way in safety to the bottom, and concealed himself on the point of rock he had mentioned. Then he began to halloo like a loon, with his hands behind his mouth to throw his voice out to sea—uttering a wild, lonesome cry, which soon attracted the birds' attention. They ceased their diving, and presently began to swim toward him.

Bonwig now waved the handkerchief on the cliff, remaining himself unseen; and the loons, tacking and turning occasionally, and rising and falling on the swells, continued to approach the shore, even after Joe had stopped calling.

Nearer and nearer they came, until Augustus grew impatient. "Why don't he fire? Why don't the fellow fire?" he kept saying to himself. But Joe knew what he was about. Aware of the difficulty of penetrating the loons' breast-feathers with bird-shot, he wished to get them as near as possible, and close together, or their two heads in range, in order to double his chances. At last, just as one was darting by the other on the top of a wave, he fired one of Bonwig's barrels. The nearest bird immediately went over on his side, and began to flop and turn on the water in a way that showed he had got a fatal hurt. His mate



was less severely wounded. She tried to dive, but could not remain beneath the surface, and a second shot dispatched her.

Then Joe climbed back up the rock.

"Why don't you get the old wives?" Augustus called to him. "They're tossing about in the cove there."

"We must bring the dory around to pick up the loons, anyhow," said Joe, handing the gun over the edge of the cliff, "and we can get the old wives then."

"Why did n't you shoot sooner?" Mr. Bonwig asked.

"Don't you see?" said Joe. "If I had n't wounded 'em both at once, soon as I fired at one, t' other'd have dove quick as wink, and most likely I should n't have got another shot at her. They're a terrible quick bird! They'll dodge the flash of a gun, without you're perty near 'em."

"Well, well! you *have* got the knack, I declare!" said Mr. Bonwig. "I don't know but I shall have to give in to you, after all!"

"This is a splendid gun of yourn!" said Joe, covetously. "If I could only have this with me alluz, then I *might* do suthin'! But I must go for the dory now. You stay here and watch the loons, and perty soon you'll see me come rowin' around the island."

"Now, why can't I shoot like that boy?" Bonwig said to himself after Joe had gone. "In the city, he was so green everybody laughed at him. But, bless my heart! if I don't find him my superior down here! I'm afraid, if anybody deserves to be laughed at to-day, he is n't the fellow, anyway!"

Mr. Augustus was beginning to be sick of duck-shooting.

Hearing a cry in the direction Joe had gone, Mr. Bonwig arose and listened. Another cry, full of anger and distress. Augustus started to find his young friend, whom he presently saw hurrying back to meet him.

"You critter, you!" shrieked Joe, forgetting all deference due to his companion in the rage and perplexity of the moment; "you old fat fool, you!"

"Bless my heart!" said Augustus, aghast, "what's the matter?"

"Matter, you lazy lummo! don't you know nothin'?" And Joe turned back again with gestures of fury and despair.

"Why! what on earth have I done?" cried Mr. Bonwig, following him, more alarmed than angry.

"The dory!" said Joe, chokingly.

"Hey? what's happened to the dory?" said Bonwig, turning pale. "I left it safe!"

"You did n't! You said you'd haul it up out

of reach of the tide, and you never touched it! Now look a there!"

They had reached a commanding point of the island, from which Augustus had the satisfaction of seeing the little skiff afloat, and drifting quietly and steadily out to sea.

"Bless my!—" gasped the astounded candy-maker. "Can't ye swim and get it?"

"Swim?" echoed Joe, with wrathful contempt. "I'd like to see any man swim for that! The wind has got into the north-west, and it's carryin' on her away faster'n anybody can swim! Why did n't ye haul her up, as I told ye?"

"I—really—I could n't see any necessity for it!" said poor Mr. Bonwig. "The waves did n't touch her."

"But I told you the tide was comin' in! And could n't you see yourself that once in a while there was a big swell, bigger'n the rest! 'Twas one o' them that started her off, and then the wind took her!"

"I *am* surprised!" said the pale Mr. Bonwig. "I don't see how we are going to get off this island! And I—I promised my wife—she'll certainly be looking for me to-night. I *must* get back to-night!"

"If you do, you'll have to swim." And Joe sat down sulkily on the ledge and watched the departing dory.

"What! you don't mean —?"

"You'll have enough of Robinson Crusoe 'fore you get through! That dory cost my father fifteen dollars!"

"It aint possible we shall have to stay here," faltered Augustus, casting his eyes about him, and feeling not a bit like spouting poetry just then, "and live on what we kill?"

"A feller could n't live very long on what *you* kill!" said Joe. "I don't care for sleepin' in the hut, I'd jest as lieve do that as not; and I can eat fish and wild ducks and hard bread as long as the next chap. But, by sixty! that dory! Dad'll skin me alive if I don't bring her back. See her go! see her go!" And Joe whipped his legs with his hands despairingly. "The coots are in her, too!" with a fresh wail. "And we can't get the loons without her; and mabby we can't get the old wives now."

"Then if no more ducks come around, what shall we do?" said Augustus, who was a man of excellent appetite, never careless about his dinner.

"I guess you'll have a chance to grow a little mite less pussy'n you be now," said Joe, beginning to see the humor of the situation, and to get the better of his despair.

"Can't we make a signal of distress?"

"You can try it, if you want to. But dad is



huskin' corn to-day; and even if he should see it, he'd think it was for loons. Besides, there aint another dory to the Cove, since Old Wansey's got stove up by the last gale; and dad could n't come off for us if he wanted to."

"Then," said Augustus, "I don't see but that we are in a fix!"

"Jes' so," said Joe. "But now, if you want to make a signal, I'll show you. It must be on the highest spot, where it can be seen from shore, as well as by fishin' boats outside."

can my coat, in this wind," said Joe; and he proceeded to divest himself of that useful, but not indispensable garment.

He thrust a gun-barrel into one of the sleeves at the wrist, and thence through the shoulders of the shirt into the other sleeve, which he tied into a knot over the muzzle.

"Now, there's your banner!" said he, waving it aloft.

"Well, I declare!" said Augustus, "you've done it! Long may it wave!" as Joe flourished



THE SIGNAL OF DISTRESS.

The thought of something to be done put Joe into a good humor.

"Here's where you was monarch of all you surveyed," he said, with a grin, as they walked over the ledges; adding, "I guess the deep and dark blue ocean will roll on fast enough for you now, without waitin' to be told! Here's the place!"

"We never can make ourselves seen from this distance," said Bonwig, with a heavy heart.

"We can try."

"But what can we make a signal of? A handkerchief is nothing!"

"Take my shirt,—I can spare that better than I

the pale ensign in the breeze. "Though there's a prospect of its waving long enough, without rushing it particularly. But, as a signal of distress, it seems to me there's something not quite right. Don't they usually have the union down?"

"Shirts ha' n't got no union," said Joe. And he began to sing: "*'T is the star-spangled banner,*" in a cheerful and enlivening manner.

Being one of those brave-hearted lads whose spirits always rise in the presence of danger and difficulty, and having recovered from the chagrin of losing the dory, he was now in a merrier mood than he had been at any time that morning.



"It wont take long for this wind to whip a shirt into ravelin's!" said he. "After it has flopped mine all to pieces, then we'll take your'n. Then, when that's gone, we'll run up our jackets, and then our trouse's, for we're bound to keep the signal flyin'!"

Mr. Bonwig could not see the fun of the thing, but kept a dismal countenance, thinking of his wife and children.

"You need n't be so anxious about suthin' to eat," remarked Joe. "It'll take you a good while longer to starve than it would most people. My uncle was in a ship that was lost once, and was three weeks on a raft in the Pacific Ocean, with seven other men, and he said three of the men died, and all the rest come within one of it; only there was a fat man with 'em,—weighed about two hundred and fifty when they took to the raft,—he stood it; he kept growing lighter an' lighter, and fresher and fresher; he weighed about a hundred, and was spry as a cricket when a vessel finally picked 'em up. He had lived all the while on his own fat; like a bear in winter."

This pleasant anecdote did not seem to afford Mr. Bonwig very much comfort. The idea of living on *his* fat for any length of time was not cheering. He had no doubt whatever of growing lighter and lighter on that diet; but as for growing fresher and fresher, that did not appear to him to be among the probabilities. No,—Mr. Augustus Bonwig could not indulge a hope of ever becoming spry as a cricket, in that way.

"Your father *must* grow anxious about you, if you don't come home; and he can find a dory somewhere," said he.

"My father never's anxious about me when I'm off duck-shootin'," replied Joe. "Once I got lost in a fog, rowin' from Pippin P'int. I got turned about somehow. I kept rowin' and rowin', but could n't find no land; and night come on, dark as Egypt—and there I was! No supper, no north star, no compass, no overcoat,—discouragin', I tell you! I rowed all night, to keep warm, and in hopes of touchin' land somewheres;—and it was n't half so comf'table as we'll find it in that house to-night, burnin' the Humane Society's wood and eatin' the Humane Society's crackers, and tellin' stories,—not half! Wal, mornin' come, but

the fog did n't lift, and I did n't know where I was any more 'n I did before; but I kept on rowin' and rowin', only when I stopped to rest, which was perty often now,—I was gittin' used up. No supper, and no breakfast! The sea was calm; the fog was so heavy it seemed to press it right down flat. I could n't see more 'n an oar's length or two ahead of me. So the forenoon wore on. By-m-by I give up,—no supper, no breakfast, no dinner,—it was beginnin' to tell on me. You've no idee how a feller'll shrink, without eatin' or sleepin' for twenty-four hours! It seemed to me I'd got dad's clo'es on. I'd hollered myself hoarse; but in that fog, it was like a man's hollerin' in his grave. You need n't look so sorry; why," said Joe, "this here island, in fine weather, is paradise to an open boat in a fog!"

"How did you finally get ashore?" asked Augustus.

"Wind changed, and fog lifted all of a sudden, jest afore sundown. And where do ye s'pose I was? Almost within gunshot o' the Cove! I jest rowed ashore, hauled up the dory, and walked into the house. There sot dad, a-smokin', comfortable as could be. 'Where's yer ducks, boy?' says he the fust thing. 'Did n't git none,' says I. 'Why, where ye been all this time?' says he; 'and ha'n't got nary duck!' 'O, paddlin' round in the fog,' says I. 'A'n't ye hungry?' says my mother,—she was gittin' supper. 'Wal, I be some hungry,' says I. And supper did taste mighty good that night, I tell ye!"

"Was n't your family concerned about you?" said Mr. Bonwig.

"What was the use of bein' consarned? There was no gale; and they knowed I'd come home agin some time," said Joe. "I did come home, and I brought the dory. Dad'll be dreadful worked, if I don't bring it this time! Look! it's most out of sight!"

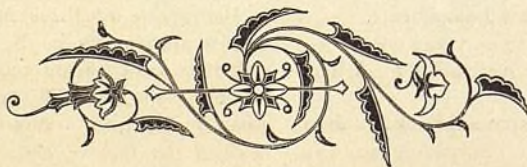
"That seems to be all you care about!"

"Why should n't it be? We'll do, well enough. It wont be many days before somebody'll be comin' off here a-fishin', and see us."

"Many days!" groaned Augustus. "I'm gettin' hungry already!"

"Wal," said Joe, "you keep the flag a-wavin', and I'll go and see what I can do for dinner."

(Concluded in next number.)





## GETTING UP IN THE WORLD.

BY ABBY MORTON DIAZ.

"MOTHER, do butterflies remember when they were worms and caterpillars?" inquired Natty.

"What puzzling questions you children do ask!" said his mother. "The idea never entered my head. You must ask your uncle Joe."

"Uncle Joe," asked Natty, again, "do butterflies remember when they were worms and caterpillars?"

"Why, no," said Uncle Joe. "I should say not, if all stories are true."

"What stories?"

"I happened to be reading one the other day which—but stay, just hand me that book, please; the thin, square, prettily bound one. That's it. Now we'll look for the story. I forget the name. Ah, here we have it. It's not a long story. Reading it will hardly take ten minutes. Listen."

A poor little worm was one day crawling slowly along the ground, seeking for food, while above her happy insects darted through the air, their bright wings flashing in the sunlight.

"Alas!" sighed the little worm. "What a toilsome life is ours! We move only by great labor, and even with that can never travel far. Kept near the damp ground, liable at any moment to be crushed, toiling up and down rough stalks, eating tough leaves—for it is only now and then we find a flower. Oh, it is truly a wearisome life."

"Yet none seem to pity our sorrows. Those proud insects flitting over head, the miller, the butterfly, the dragon-fly, the golden bumble-bee, they never notice us! Oh, but life goes well with them! Flying is so easy! Even easier than rest. Wherever they wish to be, they have only to spread their wings and the summer wind bears them on. Dressed out so gayly, at home with all the flowers, living on sweets, seeing fine sights, hearing all that is to be heard, what care they for us poor plodders? Selfish creatures! They think only of themselves. Now, for my part, if I had wings and could move about so easily, I would think, sometimes, of the poor worms down below, who could not fly. I would bring them, now and then, a sip of honey, or a taste of something nice from the flower gardens, far away. I would come down and speak a kind word, tell them something good to hear—in short, be friendly. Oh, if one only had wings, how much good one might do. But these selfish creatures never think of that!"

Not long afterward this complaining worm was changed into a butterfly. Spreading her light

wings, she passed the happy hours in flitting from field to field, rocking in the flower-cups, idling about where the sunshine was brightest, sipping where the honey was sweetest. Oh, a right gay butterfly was she, and no summer day ever seemed too long!

One morning, while resting upon an opening rosebud, she saw below her a couple of worms, making their slow way over the ground.

"Poor creatures!" she said. "Life goes hard with them. Dull things, how little they know! It must be stupid enough down there. No doubt their lives could be brightened up a trifle. Some few pleasures or comforts might be given them, and I hope this will be done. If I were not so busy—but really I have n't a moment to spare. To-day there is a rose party, and all the butterflies are going there. To-morrow the sweet-pea party comes off, and all the butterflies are going there. Next day the grasshoppers give a grand hop, and at sundown there will be a serenade by the crickets. Every hour is occupied. The bumble-bees and hornets are getting up a concert. Then there is a new flower blossoming in a garden far away, and all are flying to see it. The two rich butterflies, Lady Golden Spot, and Madame Royal Purple, have arrived in great state, and expect great attentions. The bees have had a lucky summer, and, in honor of these new arrivals, are to give a grand honey festival, at which the queen herself will preside. The wasps are on the police, and will, I trust, keep out the vulgar. The gnats and mosquitoes have formed a military company, called the flying militia, and will serve, if needed. It is to be hoped that no low creatures, like the two creeping along below, will intrude themselves. Poor things! If I had the time, I really would try to do something for them, but every sunny day is taken up, and stirring out in the wet is not to be thought of."

"Besides, one meets with so much that is not pleasant in mixing with low people! Their homes are not always cleanly. I might soil my wings. And if once taken notice of, they will always expect it. Why make them dissatisfied? They are well enough off, as they are. Perhaps, after all, it is my duty not to meddle with them. In fact, I have no doubt of it."

"Here comes Miss Gossamer! Welcome, Miss Gossamer! All ready for the rose party? How sweetly you look! Wait one moment till I have washed my face in this dew-drop. The sun has



nearly dried it up while I have been pitying those mean worms below there. Folly, I know, to thus waste the time. But my feelings are so tender! I actually thought of calling! What would Lady Golden Spot think, or Madame Royal Purple!

Have you seen them pass? They are sure to be there. Do you suppose they will take notice of us? If they don't, I shall be perfectly wretched. Come, dear Miss Gossamer, one more sip, and then away!"

## WAITING FOR THE SLEIGH.

By D. F. H.



NLY two days before New Year's! It should be a happy time for me; but when I think of all the good resolutions made this time last year, and so few of them kept, I can only feel sorry, and think I have wasted much precious time. One resolution was to help the poor, not only with kind words, but with substantial acts of bounty. And how little I have really done!

All this I thought, sitting in my easy-chair, before one of the most cheerful and comfortable of fires—an open grate, the coals all red hot. I had been very busy all day, but was only waiting for the sleigh, to go out and finish some holiday shopping. I had written for some little children to come and spend a week with me at this time, and had asked my aunt also to make one of the party, knowing how delighted the children would be to find her here to meet them, for she is an especial favorite of the little ones. The chair and the fire were both so luxurious, the heat of the room so delightful, and the cold wind and the snow both so uninviting, that I hesitated about venturing out. But, then, the toys and the last things—that lovely doll for Addie, that little set of doll's jewelry for little Effie, and quantities of other things—all must be bought. Then some good warm clothing for poor Mrs. Rooney, with her five children.

"If you please, ma'am, the sleigh is at the door." My wrappings were on in a moment, and I was soon gliding along, wrapped up well in the warm robes, and listening to the merry bells, jingling as we hurried along.

As we were driving through one of the poorer parts of the town, John the coachman said to me: "You told me, ma'am, to let you know of any very

poor people I might hear of. There *is* a poor woman they told me about to-day, and if you wish to see her, I know where she lives—not far from here."

I was hurried, having put off going out until late in the day; but here was a chance of doing a little good during this blessed holiday-time; so I asked John to drive to the woman's house.

How busy every one seemed to be! So many happy-looking people, all eager about something, which I could not help thinking was shopping. As we drove along, we passed groups of happy children, and, thank Heaven! I saw very few who looked poor. We were leaving the better class of even poor-looking houses, and at last came to a miserable-looking street or alley—for John could not drive near the door of the house he pointed out to me as the one I was looking for.

I should not have said *house*—that implies comfort, or at least shelter. The shanty—for it was nothing more—seemed almost to be tumbling down. It had a really ragged appearance. The window was very small, and several panes were out; and in these places were bits of old cloth, paper, or anything that could be found to keep out some of the bitterly cold wind.

I knocked, and hardly heard the feeble "Come in." My heart sank at what I saw. A poor woman, looking like the house—ragged—sitting on a broken stool before an old stove. Poor thing! I suppose she thought there was a *little* heat there; but indeed, when I went near it, I could not feel the least. She was leaning over, her elbows on her knees, and her head in her hands; and when she looked up at me, I saw she had been crying. There seemed to be nothing in the room but the woman, the stove, an old broken chair, the stool upon which she sat, and a bed in the corner. She did not speak, and I hardly knew what to say; but at last I told her I had heard she was in need,



and I came to do anything I could for her. Her looks of gratitude I can never forget.

"You need n't think of *me*—only do something, if you can, for Tom; that's all I ask."

"For Tom," I said—"your husband?"

"No, ma'am—my boy there, in bed."

I went to the corner where the bed was, and there saw this sad sight: A little boy, about seven or eight years old, was lying there, asleep; but such a look of suffering in his poor white face—I could hardly look at him.

"What is the matter? Is he ill?" I asked.

"Yes, ma'am, he is ill—he has a fever; but that is not the worst—he is lame. His father died when Tom was a little baby. I did very well for a time. I took in sewing, and some ladies were very kind to me. But at last one day, when Tom was six years old, playing with some rough boys, he was thrown down, and his hip put out of place. They brought him to me helpless, and so he has been ever since. I had a little money, which kept us for a few months from want. A doctor, who came, sent by one of the ladies who had helped me, did all he could for him, but at last he told me Tom could not be cured. God forgive me! but I could not help thinking, if I could only pay him well, he might have done something for him."

Here was a most pitiful state of things. The poor woman went on to tell me that she was completely discouraged. She had tried everything. She could not leave the poor boy for any length of time, so could not go out by the day to work. And now she was utterly without food or work, and almost in despair.

What should I do first? Where so much was to be done, what was the most important thing to do? "We must have a fire at once." So giving her a little money, I told her to go and get some wood, promising to sit by Tom until she returned. I placed the stool by his bed, and the woman went out. My mind seemed almost paralyzed. I looked at the poor little face before me, so wan and worn, in all the rags and dirt (for everything *was* dirty, but I could not blame the woman). He looked as though he really was a pretty child.

I was thinking very intently, when all at once a light seemed to fill the room. I turned toward the door, expecting to see the mother returning, but the door was not open—only it seemed there was no need of its being open; for coming through it, there were quantities of the tiniest people I ever

saw. And how busy they all were! They did not seem to glance at me; they were tugging something in with which they were having a great deal of trouble.

What can it be? A stove! In a moment the old one is gone, and a nice new one in its place. The window is mended, and the glass looks new and clean. The floor is mopped, and actually looks white; and yet I saw no mopping, only I *know* it has been done. Chairs are placed about the room, a good table by the window, and, most wonderful of all, without waking Tom, a sweet clean bed is in the corner, instead of the old one, and he is clean and sweet too; and his sleep seems very happy, for he is smiling.

What pretty little creatures these are! Bless me! I am on a new chair—how in the world could they have done that? What are they doing now? They are at a dresser—putting cups and saucers, plates, and other dishes in their places. They have forgotten nothing—not even a wood-box behind the door, filled with wood. They are certainly most thorough housekeepers. What *will* the poor woman think when she comes back? She has been away a long time. How much they have done (I knew them by this time to be fairies), while I have been sitting thinking what I should do!

Tom is waking. He looks at me with large blue eyes, and does not seem to wonder at the change around him, or at me, a stranger, sitting by him. Here is his mother. Before I can speak to him, she is opening the door. Why does she not come in?

"Ma'am, the sleigh is ready."

What! Why! Where is Tom? And where am I?

In my easy-chair, by my comfortable fire, and have had this dream—nothing more than a dream. This time the sleigh is really waiting for me, and I do go to get the toys and presents for the children.

And now, my little friends who read this, I must tell you, my dream did some good; for that very day, I *did* find out some very poor people, who needed a helping hand very much, and whose New Year's day I could make happy, by making them comfortable, and showing them they were thought of, and that their Father in Heaven had touched human hearts in their behalf, and that the fresh year would not be without hope and good cheer.





JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

CHRISTMAS is coming—and then, a brand-new year! Now a year is the greatest, most beautiful, most wonderful of Christmas presents, my darlings, and you're each to have one—a brand-new year! think of it. Soon it will lie fresh, white and shining before you, not a dark spot upon it—not a wrong thought, not a harsh word, nor a neglected duty. It seems to me that the best way to thank God for such a present as that is to take good care of it and keep it fair and shining to its very last moment.

But I'm only Jack-in-the-pulpit, so I'll just give my love to you all, and talk about

## A SENSATION AMONG THE FLOWERS.

"DEAR JACK," writes a little maid, who signs herself "Riderhood," "may I tell what I am almost sure happened last Summer?"

"Certainly you may," answers your Jack.

But the little maid, without waiting to hear this gracious permission, goes on:

The roses in the pretty schoolmistress's garden blushed deeply at their own insignificance; the violets, sorrowing, hung their heads; and the snow-white lilies trembled with despair on the day the gardener sowed the new seed with the big names.

"Oh, dear, dear!" said the rose, "the gentle schoolmistress will not care for us plain, old-fashioned flowers any more, after the *agrostemma coeli-rosea* and the *mirabilis jalapa* bloom."

"The gardener often writes their names with capitals, while he begins mine with a little *z*," said the lily.

"He might at least Frenchify yours with an *ie*," replied the wall-flower; "but I suppose we must just be prepared to accept the unenviable position of neglected flowers; no doubt we shall henceforth 'waste our sweetness on the desert air.'"

But Summer came, and with it the blossoms of the fearfully and wonderfully named *agrostemma coeli-rosea* and the *mirabilis jalapa grandiflora*.

And when the schoolmistress walked in the garden, she said:

"These weeds are so troublesome; I will pull them up, so that my dear violets may have more room to grow," and she threw the *agrostemma coeli-rosea superbum* over the fence!

Next she saw the *mirabilis jalapa grandiflora* in full bloom.

"Dear me," she exclaimed, "I wonder what Hans planted more four o'clocks for! I had plenty in the back part of the garden already. But they are sweet, old-fashioned flowers, and I will let them

grow here, if they don't overrun my jewels—the roses, lilies, violets and the dear old wall-flowers."

Then the rose smiled, and the wall-flower sent forth its sweetest fragrance, the violet peeped out shyly from its green leaves, and the snow-white lily shone like silver in the setting sun.

## THE WINK OF TIME.

YOU never heard of such a thing? Why, I'll warrant you've alluded to it often and often, without knowing it. Didn't you ever speak of such or such a matter coming, going, or happening just in "the nick of time?" Very well. The little School-ma'am says that nick comes from the German word *Nicken*, to nod or wink. So the nick of time, is the wink of time, or my name is not Jack.

## WHY SLED?

TALKING of words, and what the little School-ma'am says about them, it may interest my chicks to know that the sled that is to rush down hill with them so often during this winter, gets its name from its nature—that is, from ever so many queer foreign words, all signifying to *slide*. In Germany a sled is a *schlitten*; in Holland, the land of the Dutch, it's a *slède*; in Denmark, the country of Hans Christian Andersen, it is known as a *slaede*; but in Iceland, where the long-continued snow makes a boy familiar with his sledge, he very naturally calls it *sledi*, which I'm sure is quite proper and sociable.

## FINGER-NAILS SIX INCHES LONG.

AT first I could n't and would n't believe it, but when I heard the little fellow say that he read the statement in Governor Seward's book, I gave in, for of course a governor is expected to tell the exact truth on all occasions.

What was it?

O, did n't I tell you? Why the little chap said that rich Chinese mandarins wear long finger-nails, sometimes as long as six or eight inches, as a sign that they do not have to work. When nails are as long as this, they are protected by cases of bamboo or of gold. The nails are polished and stained like tortoise-shell.

This is good news for lazy boys. All they have to do is to work their way to China, make their fortune there, and let their nails grow.

## THE NAMELESS TERRORA.



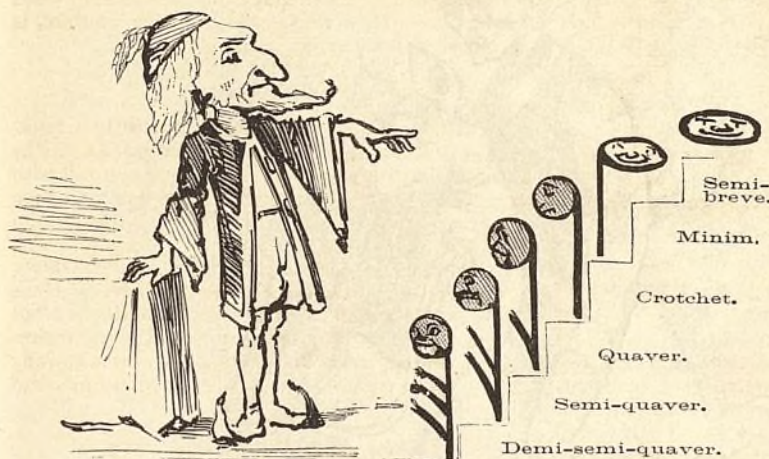
THE Nameless Terrora is not set down in the books, but he is a terrible creature, of small size—so small that you can't see him at all, unless you're frightened, and then he is prodigious. Timid little boys

of vivid imagination see him very often, especially when they're caught out after nightfall. Brave little boys never see him. It must be a dreadful thing to go through life in constant dread of the Nameless Terrora.



## THE SOUND BEARERS.

THE birds make great fun of human music. Do you know why? Because it has laws! Now, their music has laws, too, but the dear little things don't know it. A robin friend of mine, sitting on a window-sill lately, heard a music-master giving a little girl her music lesson. He thinks it the funniest thing in the world, and assures me, on the authority of the music-master, that human music is made entirely by little hobgoblins, who carry the sounds up and down the musical scale or



ladder, slowly or rapidly, according to orders. Mr. Semibreve, he says, is the slowest of them all. Next comes Mr. Minim, who is only half as slow as Semibreve; then Mr. Crotchet, who is half as slow as Minim; then little Quaver, who is half as slow as Crotchet; then Semi-Quaver, half as slow as Quaver, and finally, Demi-Semi-Quaver, the liveliest little chap of them all, who can run up and down the whole flight, while slow old Semibreve is rolling to the next step.

## HOPPERS AND WALKERS.

WELL, well! Little did I think when I asked some of you to find out the four mistakes in my absurd story, on page 54 of the November number of ST. NICHOLAS, that a tremendous uprising there would be among the observing young folks of this great country. Letters have poured in upon your Jack by hundreds and hundreds, and hundreds again. Even the little Schoolma'am says she never saw anything like it. It is delightful. Stacks of letters from East, West, North and South, and the jumping-off place. A prize book, you remember, was offered for the first letter received which should correctly point out the four mistakes. Well, on the 21st of October, by same post, came two that were right, and equally good—one from W. M. K. Olcott, and another from Mamie A. Johnson. Consequently, to each of these, the little Schoolma'am will send a book. But here comes the trouble: The answers of many other children who live far away from New York, were just as good

as those of W. M. K. Olcott and Mamie, who live close by, but of course they could not possibly be so early. This bothers your Jack, for he wishes to be very fair. Henceforth, the little Schoolma'am says some other plan of award must be adopted. Meantime she decides to send a book to the very best and earliest letter that came from a distance. So, Master Willie L. Brooks, of Sacramento, Cal., you are to have a book also. Special mention must be made of correct answers and fine letters from the following boys and girls:

Annie Gardiner, Susan H. Welles, May G. Holmes, Josie M. Brown, Nellie Breck, A. P. Folwell, Susie Garfield, Willie W. Ames, Edith Foster, Bessie Blair, Marion W. Losee, "Louise," Frank D. Russell, Silas B. Adams, Willie B. Jones, Annie T. Bridges, W. E. Graham, H. W. Lung, Ira U. Ingram, Frank O. Welcome, Mary Donaldson, Garrie W. Bailey, Fred. A. Walpole, Fred Collins, Bessie Plimpton, Nelly D. Marshall, F. F. Hildreth, Sallie B. Griggs, Edwin F. Walker, Mamie Hodges, Emily I. Smith, Harry N. Paul, Nellie Simpson, Jas. I. Weston, Philip S. Rust, Hester Dorsey, M. W. Collet, John C. Williams, Louise E. Gleim, Harry Bennett, Julia Emma Boyd, Annie Goodman, Lena Warren, I. Buford Hendrick, Willie Shattuck, Jennie E. Woodrow, Ada May Seely, Katie Pyle, Anne B. Webb, Mrs. N. H. Parker, Mary E. Walker, Bessie Thomas Lily Taylor, Carrie A. Abbott, R. E. Withers, Jr., Charles T. Thomas, Ida Graham, G. M. H., Sammy Chubb, Mamie T. Sturgis, Frank Turner, Alice Holbrook, Carrie French, Harry Newcomb, W. E. Taylor, Hattie M. Daniels, Mabel F. Hule, C. G. Helfelstein, Frank T. Chapman, R. K. Eastman, Simie Stein, Jr., Floy N. Markham, Herbert T. Bardwell, Helen W. Rice, Julia D. Hunter, Johnnie Knight, Johnnie Bachman, Alice M. Rowe, Wm. N. Tolman, Lucy V. Kerr, Etta C. Burt, N. Brewer, Jr., Mary L. Allen, Sarah Gallett, Gerie May Perry, "Atlanta Boy," Lucy Annie Whitcomb, Helen Paul, and Annie Todd.

Many others sent admirable answers; indeed, out of the great number of letters received, only about one hundred failed to be correct; but ST. NICHOLAS cannot give room to any more names. Jack thanks the writers, one and all, and hopes to hear from them again. Here is the first correct reply that was opened:

New York, Oct. 20th, 1875.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT:

In all my experience in the country, I think I have never seen crows or pigeons hop, nor robins and sparrows walk, but *vice versa*. I therefore conclude that the four mistakes in your story in the November number of ST. NICHOLAS, are the statements that the crow and pigeon hopped, and the sparrow and robin walked.—Yours truly,

W. M. R. Olcott, aged 13 years.

And here is an extract from Helen D——'s letter—a "big" girl, who does not compete for the prize:

Hearing that you were interested in "hoppers and walkers," I remembered that just a few days ago we came across something on that subject, in "Wake Robin," by John Burroughs. That close and loving observer of Nature says, page 222: "By far the greater number of our land birds are hoppers. The sparrows, thrushes, warblers, woodpeckers, buntings, &c., are all hoppers." On page 215 he says: "Robins belong to the thrush family. . . . See the robin hops along upon the ground. Plovers, sandpipers, and snipes run rapidly. Among the land-birds, the grouse, pigeons, quails, larks, and various blackbirds, walk. The swallows walk, also, whenever they use their feet at all, but very awkwardly."



## MY UNCLE JEHOSHAPHAT.



My Uncle Jehoshaphat had a pig,  
A pig of high degree ;  
And it always wore a brown scratch wig,  
Most beautiful for to see.

My Uncle Jehoshaphat loved that pig,  
And the piggy-wig he loved him ;  
And they both jumped into the lake one day,  
To see which best could swim.



My Uncle Jehoshaphat he swam up,  
And the piggy-wig he swam down;  
And so they both did win the prize,  
Which the same was a velvet gown.

My Uncle Jehoshaphat wore one-half,  
And the piggy-wig wore the other;  
And they both rode to town on the brindled calf,  
To carry it home to its mother.

---

BABY BO.

---

FLY away, fly away, Birdie oh!  
Bring something home to my Baby Bo;  
Bring her a feather and bring her a song,  
And sing to her sweetly all the day long.

Hoppety, kickety, Grasshopper oh!  
Bring something home to my Baby Bo;  
Bring her a thistle and bring her a thorn,  
Hop over her head and then begone.

Howlibus, growlibus, Doggibus oh!  
Bring something home to my Baby Bo;  
Bring her a snarl and bring her a snap,  
And bring her a posy to put in her cap.

Twinkily, winkily, Firefly oh!  
Bring something home to my Baby Bo;  
Bring her a moonbeam and bring her a star,  
Then, Twinkily Winkily, fly away far!





## YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS' DEPARTMENT.

(Henceforth we hope to be able to give space every month to a Young Contributors' Department, the articles in which are to be signed with their writers' initials only, though we must require in each instance the real name, age, and address of the author. We shall be happy to hear from our young friends, and shall be guided in selecting manuscripts by their individual merit, the relative age of the author, and the interest of the matter for the greatest number of our readers.)

## THE CURRENT OF DEATH.

NEARER and nearer we draw to thy side,  
Closer and closer as time goes by,  
Alas, that men dread thee and know not why,  
O wonderful River of shadowy tide!

How silently past us thou glidest along,  
Onward, still onward, thro' days and years;  
Thy current, O River, is swollen with tears,  
On thy bosom thou bearest the weak and the strong.

The aged and hoary, the young and fair,  
Thou bearest away from this sphere of pain;  
Care may exist but for them in vain,  
Woe and affliction are things that were.

Unending the peace of thine unseen wave,  
Unceasing thy journey to That from This;  
A glimpse of thy waters, O River, is bliss,  
Alike for the hoary, the young, and the brave.

C. D. D.

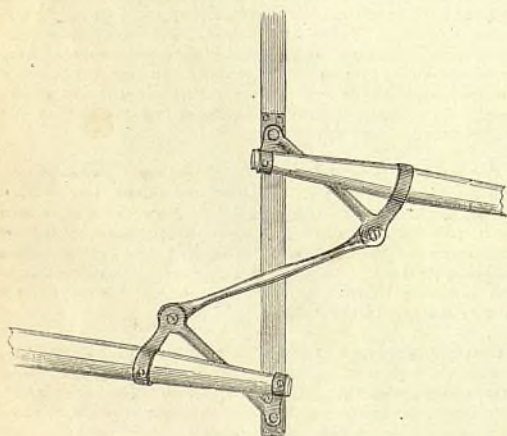
## A NEW WAY TO ROW A BOAT.

Our boy readers, we think, will be specially interested in the following personal account of a cruise on the Adirondack lakes, written by one of our young friends, who says he likes to see where he is going. "Be sure you're right as you go ahead," is evidently his motto; for he rowed himself over the lakes with oars of his own invention that enabled him to face the bow.

## THE EXCURSION.

This summer I spent a month in the Adirondacks. I had twice been there before, and was sufficiently acquainted with the woods to make my way through the lakes without a guide. I entered from Boonville, and went into camp with two friends on Seneca Lake of the Fulton chain. After several days of fishing and hunting, we went on to Long Lake, where I bought a new boat, to which I attached my rowing-gear.

This rowing-gear is a contrivance for rowing a boat which allows the boatman to face the bow, pulling in the same manner as with the ordinary oars. The reverse movement is obtained by dividing the



THE ROWING GEAR.

oar in two parts, each part having a ball and socket-joint fastened on the gunwale of the boat.

The arrangement is such that the oarsman applies his strength to the best mechanical advantage, and enables him to row faster and more easily than with the ordinary oar.

The oars can also be closed up out of the way, alongside of the



MY BOAT AND OARS (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH).

gunwale, without detaching them from the boat. While rowing, there is no noise from the bearings.

With these oars, the boatman makes no more effort in steering than in directing his course while walking, and this lessens greatly the effort of rowing. He sees the blade of his oar in front of him, and can easily avoid obstacles, while, if he chooses to float along lazily for awhile, the oars can be closed out of the way of the gunwale, without detaching them from the boat.

My boat is a double-bowed pine shell, fourteen feet long, and weighs 75 lbs., without the oars. For so short a boat, it is quite fast. After it was all ready to float, I took it down to the landing, accompanied by a curious crowd, and pulled off in fine style, as the rowing-gear worked much to my satisfaction. The guides, in their turn, all tried it and liked it.

I spent a few days at the village on Long Lake before beginning my cruise. One windy morning I started down the lake, in company with two other boats, on my way to the Saranacs. We made fine progress, as the wind was in our favor, and very soon crossed the sand-bar into the Raquette River. Here I fully realized how convenient it was to see where I was going without twisting my neck. Very soon we got to Johnson's Portage, commonly called "carry," which I crossed twice, first to carry my boat, and then to carry my two guns and bag. This was no easy matter, as the "carry" was a mile and a quarter long, and very muddy from the recent rains. After dinner I rowed down the river, changing my course at Stony Creek Brook, and that evening crossed Spectacle Lakes to Indian "Carry." At the landing, the people who saw me silently and swiftly approaching the shore, were quite astonished to see my position in the boat. I was now on the Upper Saranac, one of the finest lakes of the woods. The next day I rowed down to Bartlett's Hotel, and then on to Martin's. As I often rowed in company with other boats, my oar was well tested with theirs. I soon found that for hunting, this oar would take the place of the paddle in most cases. I went to Paul Smith's by way of the lakes, and the day I left St. Rige's was very pleasant, being neither too hot nor too cold; the lake was smooth as glass and nearly as clear. After spending a few days on Lake Tupper, I set out alone for the Thousand Isles, by way of Potsdam and Ogdensburg, running the rapids of the Raquette River as far as possible, and several times narrowly escaping a capsizing.

For two days I ran rapids and "carried" around falls. Often before losing the sound of the rapid above, I would hear the roar of waters below, and in a few minutes be gliding swiftly down, the noise of the waters drowning all other sounds, and the boat being enveloped in a cloud of spray. The intense excitement of a run down the rapids cannot be described.

On the St. Lawrence, while rowing through a heavy swell, my oars worked well, convincing me that they are well adapted for rowing in a heavy sea.

I stayed among the Thousand Islands for several days, and the boatmen all liked my oars.

I left Alexandria Bay for Montreal on a day boat, taking my canoe



with me. It was a fine day, and I enjoyed my sail down the rapids greatly. From Montreal I went directly on by rail to Bellows Falls, where I spent a pleasant Sunday. Tuesday morning, at ten o'clock, I left Bellows Falls in my boat to row home on the Connecticut River. That night I stopped at Vernon, Vt., having rowed thirty miles. The next day I rowed to Hatfield, Mass. Thursday I reached Thompsonville, Ct., and Friday afternoon, at four o'clock, found myself at Middletown, Ct., having made, in less than four days, a hundred and fifty miles.

Coming down the river I was often stopped by persons who wished to examine "the new-fangled oars." Once, a man on the bank shouted to me, "Young man, you are rowing the wrong way." I replied, "Perhaps you don't know which way I am going." I made but two "carries" on the Connecticut, and ran all the swift water below Holyoke. So ended a very pleasant and successful trip, during which I rowed about four hundred miles in my boat; and I certainly had seen far more than if I had been rowing backward all the way.

W. L.

#### A THRILLING NIGHT ADVENTURE AT A BOARDING-SCHOOL.

As the nine o'clock night-bell rang, I sauntered down the hall of our boarding-school, and stopped a minute to see that Nell and Anna were all right. Upon finding that they were sure that a man was in their closet, I investigated the three inches space between a trunk and the wall, and relieved their terror-stricken minds. Then I turned into my own room, laughing a moment with Eva and Louise Bishop, over our witty neighbor's last sally. The bell "for putting out the gas" rang, and darkness reigned, save where a teacher's kerosene

lamp illuminated her own apartment. Morpheus is generally kind to forlorn maidens, and in ten minutes the whole forty of us were asleep.

I dreamed of the prairies and all the dear faces—but is that our principal's? Yes; and white with terror, for she is shaking me and saying: "You must waken; one-half of this house is on fire. Hurry on your waterproof, and help Eva with Louise."

I rush to the hall—Louise has fainted—Eva is gray from fear, and the glare renders her almost corpse-like. We carry her sister's light form down to the side door; some one has sent for carriages, and there they are; the horses frantic with terror. I don't see Anna or Nell, and shut the back door with a snap. Those two children belong to me. I must find them. I go back—the smoke is stifling. They are alone, on a short hall. In the passage the principal stops me. I scream, yell the girls' names. She throws up her arms with an awful expression of horror, and sobs, "Great Heavens! I've forgotten them." I push past her and am pounding on their door. The two girls are shivering in their white night-clothes. Anna's great black eyes dilate, as she tries to say, bravely: "What can we do?" "Little Nell" moans "Mother." I look back—the flames are creeping up the stairs. There's only one chance. We tear the sheets in strips and fasten them around Nell; then warning her to "keep cool, dearie," we let her down inch by inch. Then Anna and I look at each other—only one can go—two girls, to whom life is just opening. "I promised to watch over you, and you must go, Anna," I manage to say, and I tie the cotton strips about her waist. "You know I am strong, trust in me; go back to dear old Illinois, and tell Carl I kept my promise." "Good-night." "The knots hurt my hands, and it is stifling. I can hardly hold any longer. At last, the weight is gone, and— I turn over, to find the sun shining full in my face, the sheet twisted round and round the bed-post, and the rising-bell ringing.

K. W. F.

## THE LETTER-BOX.

### BRIEF MENTION OF A FEW NEW BOOKS.

**NINE LITTLE GOSLINGS.** By Susan Coolidge. Boston: Roberts Bros.—A delightful book of stories and pictures. The first chapter tells how Johnny, who is not a boy, had a very narrow escape from something which was not an accident; the next and next, up to the ninth and last, give each an interesting history of events which seem as if they *must* have happened somewhere; while one and all are most originally and pleasantly told in the service of Mother Goose's melodies. We cordially advise all of our young friends of from eight to eighty years to read this book.

**HEADS AND TAILS.** By Grace Greenwood.—A profusely illustrated book about little animals, for very young readers, which, being by Grace Greenwood, is sprightly and entertaining from the first page to the last. J. B. Ford & Co., N. Y.

**DOINGS OF THE BODLEY FAMILY IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.** By the author of "Stories from My Attic;" "Dream Children," and "Seven Little People and their Friends." (With seventy-seven illustrations.) New York: Hurd & Houghton.—A book that will enchant you, young friends, little and big, and delight your parents—so good and rich throughout, so charmingly illustrated and so prettily and quaintly covered, that it is an honor to the Bodley Family as well as to the author.

**VICTORIAN POETS.** By Edmund Clarence Stedman. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co.—Boys and girls who are old enough to really crave a knowledge of modern English poetry, and young enough to require in their critic the warmth and sympathy of a true poet, will find this very thorough and scholarly work of Mr. Stedman's a treasure indeed. Being in no sense that dreary, bloodless thing, a condensed literary chronicle, it is compact as a manual, and yet so full and satisfactory, so suggestive, so like a long talk with just the right person on a subject upon which one is most eager to be informed, that its single volume, soon read, seems to have broadened out into a dozen, and the profitable time spent in reading it to have been expanded a hundred fold. We should be glad to see this book, with its very complete index and helpful side notes, introduced into our higher academies and colleges.

**TALES OUT OF SCHOOL.** By Frank R. Stockton. (With one hundred and fifty illustrations.) New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Co.—Knowing that young persons can gain information in other ways than by blackboards and text-books, Mr. Stockton, not long since, whisked away a host of American young folk on a holiday tour of "Roundabout Rambles." It was a delightful excursion, and for those who enjoyed it to bid good-bye to their jolly friend and resume their old studies was something like returning to school on the day after a picnic. But the sight-seeing and adventure of the journey must certainly have added a new zest to their studies, and turned many a dull page into an interesting one. It will be happy news, therefore, for them to learn that, during their school-hours, Mr. Stockton has himself been busy in collecting the materials for this charming series of "Tales Out of School," which are fully as interesting as the "Rambles," and will make the brightest winter-evening fireside grow even brighter still. Between the beautiful covers of this new volume are the most fanciful stories, and the most graphic descriptions of strange and wonderful things in nature and art, that Mr. Stockton has ever written.

**THE YOUNG SURVEYOR.** By J. T. Trowbridge. Osgood & Co., Boston.—Here we have, in book form, the capital story of Jack Hazard and his Western experiences. ST. NICHOLAS readers need not be told that this story will well bear reading again, while those who are not familiar with Jack, Vinnie, Wad, Old Peakslow, little Chokie and the rest of the lively people of the story, should lose no time in making their acquaintance. We think this one of the best books of the Jack Hazard series.

**EIGHT COUSINS,** now published in book form by Roberts Bros., Boston, met with such a cordial reception in ST. NICHOLAS, that it must become one of Miss Alcott's most popular books. Everywhere, the children, the girls especially, take the greatest interest in Rose. Each of her seven cousins has his admirers, to be sure, and there are people who almost worship Uncle Alec; but Rose is the queen of the story. We think, too, that "Jo" of "Little Women" will have a powerful rival in this delightful young girl, who is as pretty as she is good, and who is so very good. These stories of Mr. Trowbridge and Miss Alcott have gone side by side through ST. NICHOLAS, and now that they have separated and passed out into the wide world, we wish them the best of good fortune.



**THE BIG BROTHER.** By George Cary Eggleston. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.—This is a story of Indian war in the early part of this century. It is full of the adventures of brave whites—boys as well as men—with savage red men, and abounds in stirring scenes of frontier warfare. But the book will do more than give the boys pictures of Indian fights. It relates a history of a very important part of our country's experience, and will tell many a youngster a great deal that he never knew before.

**THE ROSE LIBRARY.** (Popular Literature of all Countries.) New York: Scribner, Welford & Armstrong.—These very tasteful little volumes, all illustrated, and only 50 cents each, will meet the needs of many young folk who wish to own standard story-books, yet cannot afford to buy expensive volumes. The works of this series, now before us, are: *UNDINE AND THE TWO CAPTAINS*, by De La Motte Fouqué (a new translation). *PICCIOLA, or THE PRISON FLOWER*, by X. B. Saintine; *THE FOUR GOLD PIECES, a Story of Brittany*, by Julie Gourand; *ROBERT'S HOLIDAYS*, by N. Danvers (founded on the French of Z. Fleuriot); *THE HOUSE ON WHEELS*, by Madame de Stolz; and *SEA GULL ROCK*, by M. Jules Sandeau.

**FRISK AND HIS FLOCK**, by Mrs. D. P. Sanford, is a bright account of a flock of girls and boys at a country school, and of the wise and funny way the dog Frisk helped Miss Agatha, the teacher, to manage her scholars. It is a large, handsome book, with pictures that will delight the young folks. E. P. Dutton & Co., N. Y.

*From American Tract Society, New York:*

**PROUD LITTLE DODY.** By Sarah E. Chester.—This is a story that little girls will read over and over again with ever fresh interest. Dody is a comical, lovable little creature, and there are so many portraits of her, from the time she locks herself into her mamma's room to the day she climbs the tree to show Tom what girls can do, that she seems like an old friend at the last.

**SPLENDID TIMES** is a handsome volume, and its pages are crowded with fine pictures. Its author, Mrs. Margaret Sangster, knows well how to tell tales that children like.

We have also received from the same publishers, *FIVE HAPPY WEEKS*, by Mrs. Sangster; *THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT, GRANDPAPA'S HOME, THE PRIZE MEDAL AND OTHER STORIES*, by S. Annie Frost; *THE RIVERSIDE FARM-HOUSE*, by Mrs. M. E. Miller; *BOUGHT WITH A PRICE*, by A. L. O. E.; *GOOD ANGELS, AND OTHER STORIES*; *HOW TIPTOE GREW*, by Catharine Williams; *THE HOLLY BOY*; *BURDOCKS AND DAISIES, AND OTHER STORIES*.

**FLOY LINDSLEY AND HER FRIENDS**, by the author of "A Summer in a Forest," is intended for older children than any of the above. It is an interesting sequel to that pleasant book, "A Summer in a Forest," and here we meet again with the Lindsleys, and the Round Point people—Abriatha, Dorrie, Cush, and all the rest. But

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Can you tell me the best thing to hold card-houses together in the Christmas City, as gum-arabic mucilage does not hold them firmly? W. F. BRIDGE, JR.

If you buy good mucilage, you will find it satisfactory. If you made the mucilage yourself, perhaps you made it too thin.

Lausanne, Suisse, Oct. 17, 1875.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have been taking your Magazine ever since it came out, but I never wrote but one letter to you, and that was about crystallizing flowers.

I do love your book so much, I took it when I lived in Washington, D. C.; and when we started for Europe, I thought I would have to give it up, but mamma said I might have it sent to me; so now it is sent to London, and from London to Lausanne, where I am at a French boarding-school; and I like it very much.

Please tell Miss Alcott I liked the "Eight Cousins" very much. I cannot think of any more to say, so good-bye.

I remain your loving and constant reader,

GERTRUDE CURNER.

Your book is such a pleasure to me!

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I want to ask some of the boys and girls, through you, why it is "darkest just before dawn." If you will ask them, you will very much oblige  
Your friend,

FLORENCE GARDINER.

those who have not read the previous volume will find the story complete in itself.

**THE SHINING RIVER.** From Oliver Ditson & Co., Boston.—A collection of New Music for Sunday-schools—by H. S. & W. O. Perkins—and a good collection, we should say. Although it contains many new pieces never before published, familiar and favorite hymns are not discarded. We wonder anew, at sight of this, why, with all due regard to economy, the covers of the Sunday-school song-books cannot be made just a little less ugly and uninviting.

**PRACTICAL HINTS ON THE SELECTION AND USE OF THE MICROSCOPE.** By John Phin. Industrial Publication Society, New York.

**THE TAXIDERMIST'S MANUAL.** By Capt. Thomas Brown. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

These are two excellent books, and though somewhat advanced for little people, will doubtless prove of interest and use to some of our older readers who care for microscopical investigations, or who stuff and prepare birds, squirrels, &c.

**HISTORY OF MY FRIENDS.** From the French of Emile Achard. G. P. Putnam's Sons.—This is a series of excellent stories about animals. Some of them are exceedingly interesting.

**MICE AT PLAY.** By Neil Forest. Roberts Brothers.—A story which is not only interesting, but teaches some good lessons to old people as well as young ones.

**SIX TO SIXTEEN.** By Juliana Horatia Ewing. Roberts Brothers.—This is an English story, which may prove of interest to older readers.

**CAPTAIN HATTERAS.** By Jules Verne. Osgood & Co.—Jules Verne is always astonishing, sometimes too much so; but this book of adventure at the North Pole is one of his best works.

**JOLLY GOOD TIMES**, by P. Thorne, is a fresh, lively narrative of child-life on a farm. The varied experiences that cluster around that existence are portrayed very faithfully in this neat little volume. The book contains several capital illustrations by Addie Ledyard. Roberts Bros., Boston.

**FAMILY RECORDS**, published by Henry Holt & Co., N. Y., is a large and handsome volume, with blank pages for all sorts of family records—accounts of births, weddings, tooth-cuttings, and various noteworthy events in the career of each member of the family. Such a book, when filled, will be a most valuable family treasure.

**SILVER THREADS OF SONG.**—By H. Millard. Gordon & Co.—A good music book, with many excellent songs, &c., suitable for schools and families. At the end of the book is a "Musical Charade," which ought to be interesting to children who can sing.

A LITTLE BOY, with original ideas, sends us a poem on Labor, which he says is of his "own composition." Here are two of the verses:

Even in Eden there was toil,  
And patience. Adam had to wait,  
And cultivate the fruitful soil,  
And labor for his mate.

And now there's labor in the world,  
To keep the world a-going;  
Each person has his proper share—  
Some reaping, and some sowing.

"A READER."—H. H. was mistaken, and Jack is right. The Rev. Charles Ludwig Dodgson, of England, wrote "Alice in Wonderland."

Stuttgart, Oct. 17.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We were all greatly interested in "Eight Cousins." Rose's "learning bones" reminds me of one of our studies at school. A physician comes into one of the higher classes once a week, and speaks of the construction of the human body, and of its various parts. He brings bones and pictures along to make it more easy for us to understand. He has models of the heart, lungs, and brains, of gypsum, fashioned so that they can be taken apart. They have the colors of the natural organs, and I find them very interesting. Recently, he brought an eye of "papier maché," which he says is a true work of art. Of course it is much



larger than a natural eye, but all the small nerves and muscles are given. I think such models give us a better idea of ourselves than pictures do.

The school was founded in 1818, by Queen Catharine of Württemberg, and it bears her name. About nine hundred girls go in and out daily. There are eight classes, each with two or three divisions. Two years ago, a higher school for the educating of teachers was added to the Catharinensstift. Every winter an afternoon course of study is opened, in which is taught that which the eighth class learns during the whole year. Twice a week lectures are held by a professor on the history of arts. Last year we had the history of painting; this winter it will be the history of architecture. French is taught very thoroughly, and almost daily, in all the classes; English is only a secondary study. Every Thursday we have to listen to a sermon. The rector wears his chancel-gown, and preaches upon the text of the following Sunday. I don't see the use of these sermons, for the girls don't pay much attention to them. While the last rector lived, they were obliged to write compositions about the sermons; but the present rector, although very strict in some things, takes this easy.

As a general rule, Stuttgart has very good schools, although the method of teaching is exceedingly slow. One girl counted up all the holidays during the eight years she passed at the Catharinensstift, and found that two whole years had been holidays.

Hoping to see your dear magazine soon, I remain your friend,  
ANNA HELMKE.

M. E. A.—Jack will print your clever story.

MAMIE A. JOHNSON.—Please send post-office address again to Little Schoolma'am, care of ST. NICHOLAS magazine, so that she may send you a book. (See "Hoppers and Walkers," page 199.)

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Hiram G—asks if there are any other of your readers who have seen live potato-bugs washed up on the beach. I live about nine miles from the Atlantic Ocean; and on Fire Island last summer I saw, you might almost say, hills of them, the greater part alive, washed up by the surf.—One of your constant readers and admirers,  
WILLARD P. REID.

Brooklyn, Oct. 29, 1875.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Mamma says to ask you if you think it is wise for me, a boy eight years old, to begin to read the ST. NICHOLAS as soon as I rise, and during all my play-hours?

I am so fond of it, and find so much of interest in it, that I think it is the best kind of play for me—don't you?

Papa has subscribed for all of the Abbott's Histories for me, if I will not tease my little sister; but you don't know what fun it is. I tell him boys will be boys; still I think I have improved a little. Mamma says, to put a big stroke under the "little."

Please write my name down among the Bird-defenders. We have birds in large numbers in the trees in front of our house.—Yours truly,  
FRANK C. HIGGINS.

JAMES E. W. writes: "Mamma thinks the information I get from ST. NICHOLAS is a good part of my education."

It seems that Sarah B. Wilson's riddle was also published in "Our Young Folks" for December, 1872, and the answers then elicited are substantially those that have been sent to ST. NICHOLAS. We print the following as a concise statement of the two answers generally given:

Springfield, Mass., Oct. 28, 1875.

EDITORS OF ST. NICHOLAS: The riddle sent by Sarah B. Wilson is not given correctly. The principal differences between it and the correct one are near the end. The tenth line should read, "The wife's ambition and the parson's dues," and in the next to the last, "By the first letters quickly will be shown." The puzzle was written by Miss Anne Seward, an English authoress, who left £50 in her will to any one who would solve it. An answer to it was published in "Our Young Folks" for March, 1873, page 190. It was as follows: Apollo Belvidere; Light; Evidence; X, the cross; Agriculture; Nuncupatory; Daystar (Venus); Redemption; Ingots; and Altarage, or altarage. The first letters of these make Alexandria. In the May number, of the same volume, page 315, was another answer, given by a lady, who said that her mother had given her this answer over sixty years ago. The words were: Laocoon; Eye (I); Time; Cornucopia; Hope; Fidelity; Idalis, or Venus; Ease; Lucre; Duty—the initials spelling Litchfield, the birthplace of Dr. Johnson, and known in the time of the Romans. I have not known whether the reward was claimed or not.

FRANK H. BURT.

One or both of the answers given in Frank's letter have also been sent in by Emile Low, E. N. Fussell, "Comus," A. E. Johnson, Mary W. Calkins, J. D. Early, "Winfried," Samuel Williston, Daisy Gill, and "Specia." Charles Hart Payne sends similar answers, and

explains that Altarage is "an emolument of priests arising from oblations through the means of an altar," and altarage is "the fostering of a child." The following three answers are inserted in full as being new and original. The first comes from J. P. B.:

*Apollo Belvidere*, fair work of art;  
*Diamond*, bright gem that nature doth impart  
*Retainer*, needful in the lawyer's case;  
*Iris*, fair rainbow, signal is of peace.  
A cheerful *air* the plowman's steps attends;  
The faithful soldier, *name* with honor blends;  
The lover's vow may in the very name  
A promise of a sure "remembrance" claim;  
The orb of night shines 'twixt the earth and sun;  
*Pardon* is granted, though it be not won;  
*Lucre* the miser loves, as do the Jews,  
Nor wits, nor parsons, *eulogies* refuse.  
By the initials of these words is shown  
"Adrianople," city of renown.

W. T. Prescott sends this:

The noblest object in the works of art,  
The brightest gem which nature can impart,  
The point essential in the lawyer's case,  
The well-known signal in the time of peace,  
The plowman's prompter when he drives the plow,  
The soldier's duty and the lover's vow,  
The planet seen between the earth and sun,  
The prize which merit never yet has won,  
The miser's treasure and the badge of Jews,  
The wit's ambition and the parson's dues.

*Apollo Belvidere.*  
*Genius.*  
*Retaining fee.*  
*Increase.*

*Grain.*  
*Engagement.*  
*New Moon.*  
*Throne.*  
*Usury.*  
*Money.*

Now if your noble spirit can divine  
A corresponding word for every line,  
By the first letters quickly will be shown  
An ancient city of no small renown.

By taking the first letter of each corresponding word, we have "Agrigentum," an ancient city of Sicily.

And, finally, here is an answer giving a new authorship and interpretation to the riddle:

EDITORS ST. NICHOLAS: The riddle sent by your correspondent concerning an ancient city, was written by the Rev. Solyman Brown, formerly of your city, and a Swedenborgian, also a dentist. The riddle will be found in a volume of his poems at least as far back as 1836. The answer is "Ierosolyma," the ancient name for Jerusalem. I leave your readers the rest of the solution. WM. WARD.

[No. 1260.]

South Branch, N. J., October 29, 1875.

EDITOR OF ST. NICHOLAS—DEAR FRIEND: You have printed in your valuable magazine almost everything that will amuse or instruct or benefit your many friends. Among my acquaintances there is quite a mania just now to see who can write the most words on a postal card. About the middle of this month I sent a postal card off with 600 words; I thought it was full, but since then have written one with 1055 words. I am 300 ahead of any one else that I know, and do not think it can be excelled.

Bear with me a little longer, and I will describe a plan I have followed for some years that is often of much value to me, and I think will be of interest to others. It is keeping an account of correspondence.

I commenced in 1863, when I sent ten letters and received nine; since then it has been increasing steadily, till last year (1874) I sent 279, and received 257, making a total for the twelve years of 1008 sent and 913 received. This explains the No. at the top of sheet.

During the year several letters were lost and detained by being wrongly forwarded by postmasters. By my book I have been able to furnish P. O. Department with exact date of sending the letter, receipt of word of non-receipt, and date of every letter sent in reference to the same to any postmaster on the route. Have found it very valuable, and been able to recover some of these letters which were quite valuable.

My book is six inches wide by seven and a half long; it has five spaces: first for date; second, number sent; third, name; fourth, date, and fifth, number received. See as follows:

1875.	LETTERS SENT.	RECEIVED.
Feb. 19.....	1 N. Y. Tract Society .....	Feb. 23, 1
Apr. 14.....	2 Jones, Brother & Co. ....	Sept. 9, 7
Aug. 25.....	6 Biglow & Main .....	Apr. 20, 2
May 11.....	3 Gov. S. J. Tilden .....	July 14, 5
Sept. 4.....	7 Wm. C. Bryant .....	May 26, 3
June 15.....	4 Willcox & Gibbs .....	June 28, 4
July 2.....	5 First Asst. P. M. General ..	Aug. 5, 6
1 inch wide.	1/2 in.	1 in. wide. 1/2 in.

Hoping you will receive this with favor, I remain, most respectfully yours,  
AMOS MORSE.



## THE RIDDLE-BOX.

## A MYTHOLOGICAL ENIGMA.

I AM composed of 14 letters. My 6, 2, 1, 2, 4, 7, was the goddess of orchards and fruit. My 1, 10, 8, 11, was the god of war. My 12, 7, 5, 3, 8, 9, was the god of time. My 1, 2, 1, 13, 14, was the god of wit and gay conversation. My 6, 10, 9, was considered as the inspirer of consternation, or panics. My whole was the favorite haunt of Pegasus.

M.

## BEHEADED RHYMES.

DICK Dobbin was mightily given to—;  
His tongue ran along at a terrible—,  
And e'en all the time that his victuals he—  
He chatted away just the same.

His father would scold, and his mother would—  
And vow that their son was an ill-mannered—  
But Dick would not stop till he'd had his talk—  
And *that* time, alas! never came.

A. B. C.

## ELLIPSES.

FILL the first blank with a certain word, and the second blank with the same word decapitated. 1. The ——— resulted in——. 2. A boy made a toy——in our——. 3. Did you have to——for the——? 4. Can the——eat an——? 5. The——belongs to this——. 6. This—— is full of——.

CYRIL DEANE.

## ACROSTICAL ENIGMA.

THE birthplace of a famous conqueror; the name of another who died 323 years before the Christian Era, and whose coffin, composed of a single block of Egyptian breccia, is still preserved in the British Museum; a renowned hunter, and the founder of a noted city, whose walls were a hundred feet high, and inclosed fifteen hundred lofty towers; a Grecian city, once famous for its learning and refinement; a renowned city in the mountains of Gilead, where one king of Israel died, another was wounded, and a third anointed king; and a city of Japan, now becoming noted for its rapid growth in Western civilization. Take the first letter of each of the above, and form the name of a cheery little inmate of many of our homes, and also of a group of islands celebrated for a volcanic peak more than 12,000 feet high.

F. R. F.

## SQUARE-WORD.

THIS puzzle is so good that we give it a place here, although we are not sure that it has never been printed before:

The first you do to shun a stone  
Flung at you in a passion;  
The next, for brilliant sights and sounds,  
Is sought by folks of fashion;  
The third, a friend will strive to do  
When your intent is wrong;  
But of the fourth there are but few  
Who to the fifth belong.

## EXCEPTIONS.

1. FROM the name of a tree except the middle letter, and make it masculine.
2. From a word of seven letters denoting well-known, except the middle one, and leave a tree; from this except the third letter, and make it icy cold.
3. From a heavy piece of wood, a noted river may be formed by excepting the letter "m."
4. Except the central letter from a wreath, and leave a mountain hut.
5. Drop the middle letter from a carousal, and leave

what often succeeds it. 6. Except the middle letter from a division of a poem, and you will see a noted Roman. 7. Except the middle letter from a small white cord, and leave an adjective indicating its use. 8. Except the middle letter from the Mexican cherry, and leave a species of fish. 9. By excepting the central letter from a favorite confection, a sacred mountain is left; from this except the third letter, and leave an animal which lives near it. 10. From a deep ravine except the fourth letter, and leave a law.

CHARL.

## SQUARE REMAINDERS.

BEHEAD and curtail words having the following definitions, and leave a complete word square. 1. Wounds. 2. Packages. 3. Encourages.

CYRIL DEANE.

## DIAMOND PUZZLE.

READING downward and across alike. 1. A numeral. 2. A boy's nickname. 3. A claw. 4. A number. 5. Damp. 6. A negative. 7. A consonant.

C. D.

## METAGRAM.

WHOLE, I am to strike a blow;  
Beheaded once, a coach I go.  
Change my new head, and I pass  
For an ensign or an ass.  
Alter head, and I'm a need;  
And again, a load indeed.  
Once more change, and I'm a frame;  
Still again, I'm a surname.  
Head anew, and I'm to hold;  
Yet again (if you're so bold),  
Make of me a bag, or wine,  
Or a garment neat and fine.  
Head anew, and I'm behind;  
Still again, a nickname find.  
Off my head and give me two,  
I'll look wise and wear a queue.  
Give others two instead of these,  
And I'm as dexterous as you please.

L. W. N.

## EASY SQUARE-WORD.

1. A GRACEFUL bird.
2. Crockery.
3. Parts of the human body.
4. A bird's habitation.

RUBY SEAL.

## TRANSPOSITIONS.

1. NAPOLEON thought it ——— that he should, as an exile, ———.
2. ——— procession could not well have been ———.
3. A debtor said, "Will you take ——— dollar when you have so much ———?"
4. I am ——— in dressing her hair; ——— and braid the rest.
5. She made a ——— to renounce the world long before she entered ———.
6. He has no time for ———, for he ——— with work.
7. They obey his ——— only at their ———.
8. Such ignorance of botany was not to be ———; he could not have ——— from a shrub.
9. His ——— had acquired a ——— through rust.
10. Immunity from mice was ——— by a ———.

B.

## HOUR-GLASS PUZZLE.

1. TRACKERS.
2. To divide.
3. A contemptible person.
4. In all towers.
5. To brown.
6. Part of your body.
7. Seen in cotton factories.

CENTRALS, read downward, name an officer.

CYRIL DEANE.



# ENIGMA



18. 9. 12. 2.



4. 17. 9. 18. 14.



2. 17. 8.



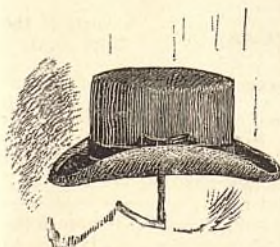
1. 13. 10. 15.



4. 9. 6. 2.



10. 17. 9. 19. 14.



7. 13. 15.



5. 13. 6. 7. 11.



3. 16. 17. 6. 7.

(The answer to above contains nineteen letters, and is to be obtained from the pictures and numbers given.)

## DIAMOND REMAINDERS.

BEHEAD and curtail words having the following significations, and leave a complete diamond: 1. A beverage. 2. Thrusts from a pointed weapon. 3. Workmen on slates. 4. Encourages. 5. A time. The following letters and words form the diamond: 1. A consonant. 2. A border. 3. Afterward. 4. A wager. 5. A consonant.

CYRIL DEANE.

## CHARADE.

I AM a word of three syllables. My first and second united, form what we all have been, what most of us love, yet what nobody likes to be called; my third has been always an important part of the great city of London; and my whole is the name of an ancient city in which the first astronomical observations were made.

F. R. F.