ST. NICHOLAS.

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SAM CLEMSON, THE SECOND.

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON.

SAM CLEMSON was called "The Second" because he had a cousin, several years older than himself, who was also Sam Clemson, and there had to be some way of distinguishing them. Samuel was a family name among the Clemsons, and, like many other favorite family names, it had created a good deal of confusion. These two Sams lived only a few miles apart, and that made the matter worse in their case; but the plan adopted worked very well indeed.

The only peculiarity about our Sam, apart from his name, was the fact that he owned a twenty-dollar horse.

From his earliest boyhood, a horse had been the dearest wish of Sam's heart,—a horse which should be all his own. So, when a neighbor offered this reliable family horse, warranted kind and gentle, and fearless of locomotives, for the trifling sum of twenty dollars, Sam never rested until he had raised the money and purchased the steed.

He had saved fourteen dollars; he sold his gun (hammer broken) for three dollars and a half; his sled went for a dollar; a pair of pigeons and an odd one, for another dollar; and his mother gave him fifty cents.

When Sam brought his horse home, he was proud indeed. Not another boy of fourteen in the neighborhood owned a horse. Even Sam the First was not so rich.

It was holiday-time, and there was a light carriage on the place, which seldom was used, and for days our young horse-owner did little but drive about, and take any one riding who cared to go, and who felt in a leisurely frame of mind. For it must be admitted that Ronald, the new horse, was not a fast animal. What once he might have been, I cannot say; but many years had certainly elapsed since he had done any very rapid trotting. However, he was a large, stout horse, and he had an air of having lived well.

Sam had asked some questions about his age, but his owner had replied:

"Now, I don't warrant him to be a young horse. If you want young horses, I have some that I 'll sell from a hundred and fifty dollars up. But there 's lots of life in that horse yet; and by the time he 's too old to work at all, you 'll be ready for a younger animal, at a higher price."

So Sam said no more on that subject.

After a time, Sam gave up driving out so frequently, though the horse did not seem to object to jogging along meditatively all day. But, as Sam was a boy who liked to feel that he was of use, he insisted on driving over to Rossville, a little town about two miles away, whenever anything was wanted from the store.

After one or two visits there, he made a discovery, and that was, that a buffalo-robe, which always hung at the door of a small store at the end of the town, was the only thing that old Ronald was afraid of. He never could pass it without getting frightened and trying to run away. But his aged legs and Sam's hard pulling interfered very much with that performance; and so he had never done anything more than caper and shy, and trot off at a fair pace with his head high in the air, whenever he happened to pass the store.

Sam thought it possible that in his youth he

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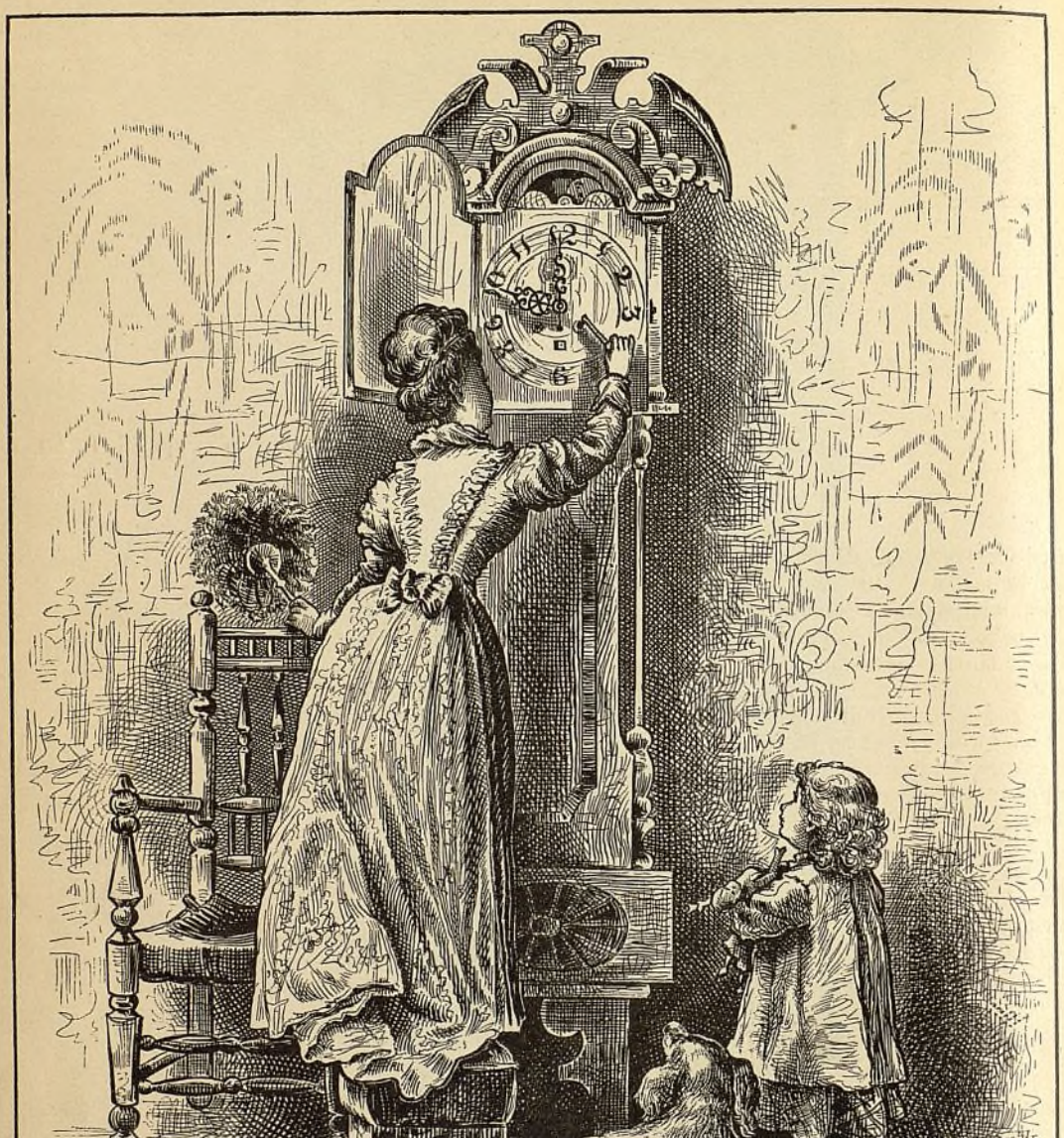

AUNT CARRIE WINDS THE CLOCK.

(See "Sam Clemson, the Second.")

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might have hunted buffaloes, and been injured by one; but this was difficult to prove. At all events, Sam took advantage of this weakness in Ronald, and as he found that he never became entirely unmanageable, he always drove past that small store before he went to the larger establishment in the center of the town. The post-office was in the latter store, and there were always people standing about as Sam came rattling up, holding in his spirited animal with all his might.

"Lively old beast!" a man said, one day. "What did you give for him?"

Sam told him, and the man stepped up and looked into Ronald's mouth.

"A dollar a year," said he, "or thereabouts."

Sam walked into the store without answering. He thought some men could say very foolish things.

Not long after the purchase of the horse, a younger sister of Sam's mother came to make them a visit. Aunt Carrie, as Sam and his sister Kitty called her, was about twenty years old, and a very sprightly and pleasant young lady.

Sam was glad to see her,—glad because he liked her, and glad to have some new person to take out to drive. He soon took her to look at his horse, but she did not seem anxious to go riding that day, as Sam suggested. He asked her frequently, during the next few days, but she always had some good-humored reason for staying at home.

But it was not very long before Aunt Carrie wanted to go and spend a day with the family of Sam the First; and then our Sam's chance came in. He promptly offered the services of his horse and himself; and as there was no very good way of doing otherwise, they were accepted cheerfully.

They were to start at ten o'clock, but long before that hour Sam was ready. He took the horse and carriage around to the front door, and having carefully tied Ronald, he went into the house to see if Aunt Carrie was prepared to start.

As he entered the sitting-room, he was astonished to see that young lady, with a feather-duster in one hand, standing on a stool, and winding the old family clock, while his little sister Kitty and the house-dog, Tip, were watching the operation with a vast deal of interest.

"Why, Aunt Carrie!" cried Sam, "have n't you begun to get ready yet? And it 's no use winding that old clock,—it don't go."

"From the dust in it, I should think it had n't been wound up since the days of Sam Clemson Minus Two," said Aunt Carrie.

"Minus two?" exclaimed Sam. "Why, who was he?"

"Don't you see," said Aunt Carrie, closing the clock, and getting down from the stool, "that if you are Sam the Second, and your cousin is Sam the First, that the Sams who came before you, your grandfathers and so forth, must have been Sams minus something? I hope the old clock will go. I set it at ten, because I knew it must be nearly that time, when I heard you bring the carriage around. And now I 'll be ready in three minutes."

And away she ran.

At about a quarter past ten, Aunt Carrie, whose three minutes had stretched themselves considerably, made her appearance, and Sam was not slow in helping her into the carriage.

They did n't exactly dash off, but still you could easily see that they were moving. Sam did not ply his whip. He knew that it would be of no earthly use, and he preferred to have his aunt Carrie think that he rather liked to go along gently, so as to enjoy the scenery and the weather. But he did not intend to jog along in that way all the time. He had his plans.

There were two roads to his uncle's house. One was almost direct, and the other went through the lower part of Rossville. Before they reached this road, Sam asked his aunt if she would like to go through the town.

"I 'm not particularly anxious to do so," she said; "but if it 's a better road, I don't object."

"Oh, it 's a good road," said Sam, and turned into it without further words.

Of course, Sam wanted to go by the buffalo-robe. He not only wished his aunt Carrie to see what a spirit still lived in his old horse, but he hoped, as his uncle's house was not far from Rossville, that some of the fire and dash might remain until they reached there; for Sam the First had never seen Ronald, and it was therefore desirable that he should make as fine a show as possible.

As he approached the little store, he looked out for the robe. It was there, but not in its usual place. Having hung out so long in summer as well as winter, and being a second-hand robe, any way, the owner might have thought he could never sell it if he did not dust it out sometimes. At any rate, it was hanging on a rope, tied to two posts near the road-side, and a small boy was banging it with a stick.

When they drew near, Sam tightened his hold on the reins, and old Ronald pricked up his ears and looked for the buffalo-robe.

There it was, close to his head, and shaking and wriggling dreadfully!

It had been many years since Ronald had given such a jump as he gave then! It astounded Sam, and made Aunt Carrie give a little scream. Away went the horse in a gallop.

"Whoa! Whoa!" cried Sam, pulling and tugging at the lines; but the animal would not

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"whoa." He plunged on, regardless of everything.

"He 's running away!" cried Aunt Carrie, extending her hands toward the lines. "Let me help you!"

"No! No!" said Sam, his eyes nearly starting from his head with his exertions. "I can hold him!"

Sam expected Ronald to cool down very soon, as he had done always before, after a buffalo scare; but he was mistaken. The horse was terribly frightened this time, and Sam's desperate struggles at the lines had no effect whatever. Aunt Carrie grasped the side of the carriage, as it rattled and banged along the road. She did not scream, but she expected every minute to be thrown out.

Fortunately, the horse kept on the road which led to Sam's uncle's place, and which branched off from the main street. Here the way was clear, and Ronald quickly left the town behind him.

As they reached a little hill, Aunt Carrie saw some straps flapping in the air, and she exclaimed: "Something is loose!" The next minute, a snap was heard, and just as they were at the top of the hill, Ronald burst away from the carriage, jerking the lines from Sam's hands and nearly pulling him over the dashboard.

"Mercy!" cried Aunt Carrie, grasping Sam by the coat.

Away went the horse, and slowly the carriage rolled backward down the hill, making a turn as it reached the bottom, and backing gently against the fence at the side of the road.

Aunt Carrie and Sam looked at each other, and then burst out laughing. Now that the danger was over, it seemed ridiculous to be sitting there by the road-side in a carriage without any horse.

"Well," said Aunt Carrie, when she had done laughing, "I suppose we may as well get out."

"Yes," said Sam, "I suppose so;" and out they got.

"Well, Sam," said his aunt, "you 'd better go after your horse. He will soon be tired of running, and I expect you will find him eating grass by the side of the road. I see we are near old Mrs. Campbell's little house. I will walk up that far with you, and wait there."

"All right," said Sam; "and when I catch him, I'll go on to uncle's, and get them to send for you."

So Sam left Aunt Carrie inside Mrs. Campbell's garden gate, and hurried on. He walked and walked, but no horse he saw.

At length he reached his uncle's place. The carriage gate was open. Looking back toward the barn, he saw Sam the First slowly leading old Ronald toward the stable door.

"Hello!" cried Sam the Second, running to the barn.

His cousin stopped, and looked back. "Hello!" he rejoined. "What 's the matter? Is this your horse?"

"Yes," said Sam; and when he reached the barn, he sat down on a log in the shade and told what had happened.

Sam the First, who considered himself quite a young man, stood gravely listening to the story, still holding old Ronald, who was puffing and blowing at a great rate.

"I had no idea this was your horse," he said. "He came walking in here as if he was glad to find a home. But I 'll put him up, and then we 'll get out the buggy and go for your aunt Carrie."

As Sam the First bustled about, our poor Sam sat rather dolefully on the log. Things had certainly turned out differently from what he had expected. His cousin pulled the buggy from the carriage-house, brought out a gray horse from the stable, and backed him up to the buggy.

"Sam," said he, "that horse is n't a safe one for you to own. I heard you had a horse, but I had no idea it was such a dash-away as this."

"Oh! he 's as quiet as a cow, generally," said our Sam.

"Yes, that may be; but you see he is n't to be trusted—for a carriage-horse. There 's no knowing when he 'd run away. I tell you what you 'd better do," continued Sam the First, as he hooked a trace to the whiffle-tree, "you 'd better sell him to me. He 's a big, strong horse, and would do very well on a farm. Father 's given me that field by the woods to work for myself, and I 'll want a horse. What 'll you take for him?"

"I don't know about selling him," said Sam the Second.

"Well, you 'd better think it over."

While Sam the First was in the house he saw his mother, and told her all about the mishap. When he came out, he walked rather slowly, apparently thinking about something.

"Sam," said he, "you had better jump in and go after your aunt."

Our Sam's eyes sparkled. He was another boy in a minute.

"May I?" he said, with his hand on the side of the buggy.

"Certainly," said his cousin. "You 're a good driver, with a safe horse like this. When you come back, I 'll send our man to take your carriage home."

Sam drove off joyfully, while his cousin, feeling very tall and manly, shut the stable door.

"It don't take much to please a boy," he said to himself, with a smile.

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The gray horse was a good traveler, and Sam soon drove up to Mrs. Campbell's gate.

On the way back to his uncle's, Sam told Aunt Carrie all about the buffalo-robe, and his reason for driving by it.

"That was a great risk to run," she said, "just for the sake of showing off a little. But I guess you're only a boy, aren't you, Sam?" and she laid her hand on his shoulder.

"I suppose so!" said Sam.

"But, Sam," said Aunt Carrie, "let me give you a piece of advice: Never try to make anything—especially anything that is old—exert itself beyond its strength."

A very pleasant afternoon was spent at the house of Sam's uncle, and before he came away, our Sam had sold old Ronald to his cousin for twenty dollars.

After an early supper, a four-seated carriage was brought around, and Sam the First drove Aunt Carrie and his cousin home, with Ronald's broken harness stuffed under one of the seats.

They reached the house before dark, and when the story had been told, and the excitement had cooled down, Sam the First went home.

After the matter had been talked over a little longer, Aunt Carrie went into the sitting-room, where a lamp had just been lighted.

"Why, I had no idea it was so late!" she said; "it's nearly ten o'clock!"

At this, everybody exclaimed that it was impossible, and little Kitty declared that it could n't be ten o'clock because she was not in bed.

"Well, you can go in and see for yourselves," said Aunt Carrie.

Sam walked into the sitting-room, and soon walked out again.

"It's the same old ten o'clock that it was this morning," said he. "That old clock has n't gone an inch."

"But something has gone more than an inch," said his mother. "Just after you left, I heard a snap and a crash of something falling. I expect the cord broke and the weight came tumbling down."

"I hope I have n't injured the dear old clock," said her sister.

Sam the Second arose from his seat and stood in front of his aunt.

"Aunt Carrie," said he, "let me give you a piece of advice: Never try to make anything—especially anything that is old—exert itself beyond its strength."

EASTER MORNING.

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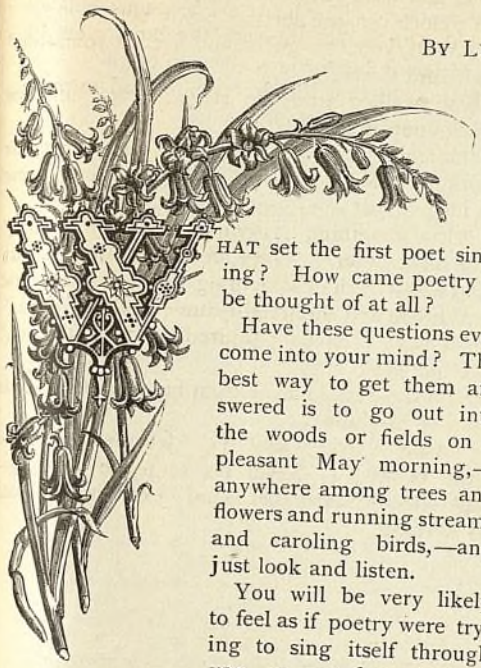
SONGS OF SPRING.

[Part I.]

By Lucy Larcom.



WHAT set the first poet singing? How came poetry to be thought of at all?

Have these questions ever come into your mind? The best way to get them answered is to go out into the woods or fields on a pleasant May morning,—anywhere among trees and flowers and running streams and caroling birds,—and just look and listen.

You will be very likely to feel as if poetry were trying to sing itself through you, as you hear it bubbling from the bird's throat, and lisped by the rippling brook.

I think that the birds were the very first poets. Certainly the sweetest poetry is like their singing,—free and fresh and natural,—the singer's soul pouring itself out in delight and rapture that nothing can repress.

Never does the unanswerable question, "What is poetry?" seem so foolish as it does in spring, when the air is laden with it,—when it floats upon the clouds, sifts through sunbeams and raindrops, and rises as incense from opening bud and bursting leaf and springing grass, and even from the brown earth itself.

Poetry? Why, you are living and breathing in it, and you can no more define it than you can define your own life. The beautiful smile of Nature is like the smile of a mother upon her child. How it gladdens the little one, who would be no wiser or happier for hearing a definition of its gladness, if there were one to be given! In the presence of the dear mother Nature we are all little children—happy in her beauty, and blessed with her blessedness, we know not how or why.

But if we cannot define poetry, we can recognize it, as we recognize a face or a voice that we love. Wherever beauty, strength, or joy is springing to life from sweet and natural sources, there is poetry. It may be found elsewhere, and there may be poetry which never gets expressed, as gems may lie hidden in unopened mines; but there is enough of it around us to make us every day as glad as heart could wish.

And a morning in spring is like the re-opening of Nature's book of pictures and poems, the more charming to us because of the blank white leaves of winter we have been turning; left blank for us to fill up with the poetry of heart-and-home life, which is even more beautiful than any Nature can write upon her tinted pages.

When the winds of March begin to blow open the leaves of this delightful picture-book, young and old are newly alive with joy.

Yes, even March — the windy, blustering month, that everybody finds fault with—has a poetry of his own. He is the advance-guard of Spring; his noisy trumpeters announce her approach, and his hurrying tempests sweep the earth clean, to make ready for the green carpet upon which her beautiful footsteps are to fall.

We all have learned to welcome March, in the old rhyme which must have made itself, since

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nobody appears to know just where it came from:

"March winds and April showers
Bring forth May flowers."

Wordsworth has a little poem about March, of which some lines run thus:

"The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising,—
There are forty feeding like one."

That is March as it is in England, where the fields are green earlier than is usual with us.

How is it possible that out of the frozen brown earth even the smallest blossom should rise like a star, or bring up its little cup of perfume? How marvelous that the colorless and shapeless clods beneath our feet should be transformed into flowers by the magical touch of spring! No tale of enchantment was ever half so strange as that which we read in the unfolding leaves of every returning May.

There is only one thing more marvelous than this new creation which we behold around us, and that is ourselves, who are so made that we can enter into it and enjoy it all. You, little child, whoever you are, looking out into the most glorious landscape, can sing for yourself this song:

"Great, wide, beautiful world,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast,—
World, you are beautifully drest!

"The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree;
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the tops of the hills.

"You friendly Earth, how far do you go,
With the wheat-fields that nod, and the rivers that flow,—
With cities, and gardens, and cliffs, and isles,
And people upon you, for thousands of miles?

"Ah! you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all.
And yet, when I said my prayers to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say:
'You are more than the Earth, though you are such a dot,—
You can love and think, and the Earth cannot!'"

Very early in spring comes the bluebird, that Tennyson calls

"The sea-blue bird of March,"—

the bluebird, forerunner of the violet, which nestles in the grass, and, bird-like,

"Curves her throat
Just as if she sat and sung:"

and of the azure harebell of summer-time, which has always a fluttering, winged look, as if it were a shred of the sky, ready at any moment to take flight upward.

Oh! the birds and flowers are first cousins to one another! The birds are blossoms with wings, and the blossoms sing with the birds,—only their music is too fine for mortal ear to catch.

It must be that the flowers are glad to come up out of their underground cells,

"Where they together,
All the hard weather,
Dead to the world, keep house alone,"

as good George Herbert says, and look into human faces again.

Another writer puts it in this pretty way:

"In the snowing and the blowing,
In the cruel sleet,
Little flowers begin their growing
Far beneath our feet.
Softly taps the Spring, and cheerly,—
'Darlings, are you here?'
Till they answer, 'We are nearly,
Nearly ready, dear.

"'Where is Winter, with his snowing?
Tell us, Spring,' they say.
Then she answers, 'He is going,
Going on his way.
Poor old Winter does not love you,
But his time is past;
Soon my birds shall sing above you—
Set you free at last.'"

And you remember how

"Daffy-down-dilly had heard underground
The sweet rustling sound
Of the streams, as they burst off their white winter chains,—
Of the whistling spring winds, and the pattering rains;"

and how, knowing that she was wished for, and waited for, and needed,

"Daffy-down-dilly came up in the cold,
Through the brown mold,
Although the March breezes blew keen on her face,—
Although the white snow lay in many a place;"

and the rest of Daffy-down-dilly's wise sayings and doings, all which are worthy to be heeded.

As one after another of the wild flowers comes back to greet us, peeping out of the grass or reaching toward us from shrub or spray, we feel as we do when dear old friends return to us after long absence. The flowers are our friends truly; for everything that has life in it is related to us in some way, and bears some message of love to us from Him without whom neither flowers nor human beings would be alive.

All true poets of nature have felt this, and ac-

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dress the flowers as if they were companions, neighbors, or teachers.

Scarcely a more beautiful out-of-door poem of this kind ever has been written than Horace Smith's "Hymn to the Flowers," from which these verses are taken:

"Your voiceless lips, O flowers! are living preachers;
Each cup a pulpit, and each leaf a book,
Supplying to my fancy numerous teachers,
From loneliest nook.

"'Neath cloistered boughs each floral bell that swingeth,
And tolls its perfume on the passing air,
Makes Sabbath in the fields, and ever ringeth
A call to prayer."

The songs of spring are none the less enjoyable for being old,—very old indeed.

"THE WONDERFUL AIR IS OVER ME."

In Palestine, thousands of years ago, they welcomed her coming just as we do now. A poet-king of that country wrote, rejoicingly: "For lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

Perhaps the violet has had more poems written about her than any flower except the rose. How can we help saying "her" of this lowly, sweet-breathed child of the meadow and road-side?

The air begins to be as sweet as if the breezes of another world were blown through ours, when the violets unfold. This, too, was noticed long ago. Shakspeare speaks of

"The sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor."

And Christina Rossetti writes to-day:

"O wind, where have you been,
That you blow so sweet?—
Among the violets
Which blossom at your feet.

"The honeysuckle waits
For summer and for heat;
But violets in the chilly spring
Make the turf so sweet!"

Do you know Willis's "April Violets?" Here is a part of it. The delicate odor of the flowers seems to steal up to you as you read:

"I have found violets. April hath come on,
And the cool winds feel softer, and the rain
Falls in the beaded drops of summer-time.
You may hear birds at morning, and at eve
The tame dove lingers till the twilight falls,
Cooing upon the eaves, and drawing in
His beautiful, bright neck; and, from the hills,
A murmur like the hoarseness of the sea,
Tells the release of waters, and the earth
Sends up a pleasant smell, and the dry leaves
Are lifted by the grass; and so I know
That Nature, with her delicate ear, hath heard
The dropping of the velvet foot of Spring.
Take of my violets! I found them where
The liquid south stole o'er them, on a bank
That lean'd to running water. There's to me
A daintiness about these early flowers,
That touches me like poetry. They blow
With such a simple loveliness among
The common herbs of pasture, and breathe out
Their lives so unobtrusively, like hearts
Whose beatings are too gentle for the world.
I love to go in the capricious days
Of April and hunt violets, when the rain
Is in the blue cups trembling, and they nod
So gracefully to the kisses of the wind."

Children who have long been grown up used to learn Jane Taylor's

"Down in a green and shady bed,
A modest violet grew;"

and nearly everybody knows Wordsworth's

"Violet, by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye."

Barry Cornwall says this lovely thing about the violet:

"She comes, the first, the fairest thing
That heaven upon the earth doth fling,
Ere winter's star has set;
She dwells behind her leafy screen,
And gives as angels give, unseen,—
The violet."

The New England flowers appear few and far between at first, as if they dreaded the east winds, for

"The spring comes slowly up this way."

Pussy-willows, furry mouse-ear, rock-saxifrage, hepatica, starry white blood-root, and anemones peep out one after another, or close together; and

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by that time the fields are white as snow with innocence-bloom, or Houstonia. There are blue patches of violets on the hill-sides; the gold of the marsh-marigold lies scattered along the brook-margins, with the yellow adder-tongue nodding close by. Jack-in-the-pulpit sits hidden under his green canopy; the columbines and wild geraniums flutter their purple and scarlet along the wood-paths; and, by and by, the wild rose awakens. But then it is June, and we are talking of spring.

summer, long after most other birds are silent, or have flown away.

The songsters gather in throngs, with their gay or tender ballads, each so different from the rest,—wren, swallow, linnet, thrush, oriole,—and none of them dearer or merrier than the bobolink, the Robert Burns among bird-poets, whose warble follows the track of the plow, and ripples along the edges of the corn-field.

The song of the bobolink has often inspired

"REACHING TOWARD US FROM SHRUB OR SPRAY."

Faster than the flowers, come the birds. As early as the bluebird, honest Robin Redbreast and his wife are here, hopping up and down the garden-walk, turning their heads this way and that, as they consider their prospects for house-building. High in the leafless tree-top,—out of a snow-cloud sometimes,—you hear the song-sparrow's heavenly carol, so full of hope and gladness! The sweetest and one of the most social of our field-minstrels, he has a song for all seasons, and everybody who listens to him is charmed. It is a comfort to know that he is going to stay with us through mid-

human minstrels to emulation, with its rollicking, talkative note. Wilson Flagg has some bright, wide-awake verses about the "O'Lincoln Family," which take you right into the midst of a meadow-ful of these saucy little singers. And Bryant's charming "Robert of Lincoln" gives you the bird's manners, travels, and history, to perfection.

Many of you will have a chance to listen to the "merry note" of the bird itself before reading next month's continuation of "Songs of Spring." Meantime, if you have not the whole of Mr. Bryant's beautiful poem, you may at least enjoy this extract:

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"Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
'Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink!
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee!'

"Robert of Lincoln is gayly drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
Hear him call in his merry note:
'Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink!
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee!'

"Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
'Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink!
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee!'

"Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:
'Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink!
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
Chee, chee, chee!'"

CÉCILE ET LULU.*

PAR A. A. CHAPMAN.

"QUELLES sont ces drôles de marques noires, Cécile, que nous voyons partout sur les murs?"

"Des lettres, Lulu; ne les sais-tu pas?"

"Non, Cécile, personne ne me les a jamais apprises."

"Hélas! que tu as été négligée, ma pauvre petite! mais quand il faut travailler toute la journée pour gagner son pain, on ne trouve pas très-facilement l'occasion pour enseigner ou pour étudier. Moi-même j'ai beaucoup oublié de ce que je savais lorsque nous étions heureuses. Mais ce que je me rappelle encore, je te l'enseignerai, petit à petit, selon que je trouve le temps."

"Pourquoi sommes-nous si pauvres, Cécile?"

"C'est notre malheur, mon enfant: il faut le souffrir avec patience jusqu'à ce que le ciel nous envoie de meilleurs jours. Seulement, si nous pouvions trouver notre oncle, tous nos malheurs finiraient."

"Pourquoi n'allons-nous pas à sa recherche tout-de-suite, Cécile?"

"Mon enfant, je l'ai cherché partout jusqu'à ce que tout mon argent fût dépensé. Mais ne songeons plus à cela. Tu vas prendre une leçon, tu le sais. Voici une affiche qui nous servira très-bien de livre de lecture."

"Cette lettre-ci," dit-elle en l'indiquant de son aiguille à tricoter, "s'appelle 'M.' Regarde-la bien; t'en souviendras-tu?"

"'M,'" répéta Lulu, je m'en souviendrai. 'M,' —je le sais déjà."

Et ainsi Cécile apprit à sa petite sœur les lettres M-A-I-S-O-N.

"Qu'est-ce que veut dire tout cela?" demanda enfin la petite Lulu.

"Ces lettres épèlent le mot *maison*—le vois-tu? M-a-i-s-o-n—*maison*. Mais voilà l'heure qui sonne. Je n'ai plus le temps de t'enseigner. Je dois aller à l'usine. Voici un petit panier de fruit que j'ai acheté pour ton goûter. Partons!"

"Oh, Cécile! ne me renferme pas dans cette pièce sombre et étroite! Je la déteste. Permets-moi de te suivre, ou bien laisse-moi ici, où je sens l'air frais, et où il y a quelquechose à voir, je t'en prie!"

"Me promets-tu de ne pas quitter ce lieu, pour t'égarer dans les rues?"

"J'y resterai jusqu'à ton retour, Cécile."

*This little French story is for the benefit of our young readers who are studying French. All translations received before April 15 will be credited in the June number.

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"Rappelle-toi, Lulu, que si je te perds, je serai toute seule au monde."

"N'aie pas peur, Cécile, sois sûre j'en prendrai bien garde."

"Je demande seulement que tu te tiennes où tu peux voir toujours le mot *maison*. Sois sage, mon enfant, et n'oublie pas ce que je t'ai enseigné—au revoir!"

LA LEÇON.

Elle embrassa sa petite sœur, les larmes aux yeux, et s'en alla.

Lulu s'assit bien contente, et se mit à examiner le contenu de son panier; ne songeant pas, heureusement, qu'il avait coûté le diner à sa sœur. Mais son attention fut bientôt divertie de son occupation agréable par les diverses choses qui se passaient dans la rue. Elle les trouvait si nouvelles et si charmantes!

Enfin Lulu prit son goûter, puis elle relit deux ou trois fois le mot *maison* qu'elle venait d'apprendre, et puis elle commença à s'ennuyer de l'endroit où elle était, qui devint maintenant fort tranquille, car tout le monde avait tourné ce même coin de rue, qui lui semblait l'entrée dans un lieu mystérieux où se trouvaient toutes sortes de jolies choses. Pour revoir ces merveilles perdues, Lulu courut au coin, d'où elle regardait le long d'une large rue, bordée de magasins magnifiques, et remplie de belles voitures, d'enfants richement habillés, qui s'amusaient avec jolis jouets de toutes espèces, et d'une foule de ces petits drôles que nous appelons gamins.

Pendant quelques minutes, elle eût bien soin de ne pas perdre de vue le mot *maison*, qu'elle pouvait toujours entrevoir. Mais elle n'avait pas encore six ans, et d'ailleurs, elle était bien inexpérimentée, étant récemment venue de la campagne où elle fût née. C'est pourquoi il n'est pas très-surprenant qu'elle oubliât bientôt le mot, et qu'elle ne pensât plus qu'aux objets intéressants qu'elle avait sous les yeux.

Petit à petit, elle se rapprocha de ces merveilles, qui l'attiraient irrésistiblement par leur éclat, jusqu'à ce qu'elle eût complètement tourné le coin, et se trouva au milieu de son nouveau paradis.

Le temps se passa. De plus en plus entrainée par ces charmantes nouveautés, Lulu tourna beaucoup de coins, sans se rappeler combien, lorsque tout-à-coup l'heure sonna quand sa sœur avait l'habitude de revenir chez elle! Ainsi éveillée de son rêve de plaisir, elle comprit qu'elle était perdue dans la grande ville sans savoir où diriger ses pas.

Triste et effrayée elle tourna coin après coin, traversa rue après rue, à chercher le lieu qu'elle avait quitté, sans savoir comment le reconnaître si elle réussit à le retrouver, tant il y en avait qui lui ressemblait. Après beaucoup de détours, elle se souvint du mot *maison* qu'elle serait certaine de reconnaître et qu'elle résolut à chercher.

Enfin elle le revit sur un mur de l'autre côté de la rue.

"Ma maison!" s'écria-t-elle, "je l'ai retrouvée; bientôt ma sœur me retrouvera."

Un monsieur qui passait à ce moment, s'arrêta et dit:

"De quelle maison parles-tu, mon enfant? Celle-ci est à moi."

"Je parle du *mot* maison, que voici sur le mur."

"Et peux-tu lire ce mot-là?"

"Oui, monsieur, ma sœur me l'a appris."

"Et comment s'appelle cette bonne sœur?"

"Cécile."

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"Et ton nom, petite?"

"Je m'appelle Lulu."

"Cécile et Lulu!" répéta le monsieur; puis il dit vivement: "Comment s'appelle ton père?"

"Mon père n'est plus. Il s'appela M. Henri Jolivet, mais ——"

"Mon enfant," dit le monsieur d'une voix très-émuée, "tu as vraiment trouvé ta maison, car désormais c'est à toi, comme tout ce que j'ai au monde. Mon pauvre petit agneau perdue que j'ai vainement cherchée depuis si longtemps, viens dans mes bras,"—et il l'embrassa tendrement.

À ce moment une jeune fille, d'une mine effarée, tourna le coin d'un pas rapide.

"Oh, Lulu!" s'écria la nouvelle venue d'une voix impatientée, "comment as-tu pu être si méchante? Voilà plus d'une heure que je te cherche!"

"Mais pourquoi n'es-tu pas venue ici me chercher tout-de-suite?"

"De quoi parles-tu, Lulu? Ce n'est pas l'endroit où je t'ai laissée."

"Mais si, Cécile, ne vois-tu pas le mot *maison* que tu m'as enseigné?"

"Tu te trompes, Lulu, c'est le même mot, mais c'est un autre lieu."

"Elle ne se trompe pas," dit le monsieur, "c'est le lieu qu'elle devait trouver. Ne me connais-tu pas, Cécile?"

Elle le regarda fixement un instant, puis elle poussa un cri: "Mon oncle!"

Lulu sait maintenant lire, écrire et faire beaucoup d'autre choses; mais elle n'oubliera jamais la leçon que sa sœur lui avait donnée et qui avait un résultat si heureux!

FOURTH MONTH DUNCE.

By H. M. M.

THE curious custom of joking on the first of April, sending the ignorant or the unwary on fruitless errands, for the sake of making them feel foolish and having a laugh at them, prevails very widely in the world. And whether you call the victim a "Fourth month dunce," an "April fool," an "April fish" (as in France), or an "April gowk" (as in Scotland), the object, to deceive him and laugh at him, is everywhere the same.

The custom has been traced back for ages; all through Europe, as far back as the records go. The "Feast of Fools" is mentioned as celebrated by the ancient Romans. In Asia the Hindoos have a festival, ending on the 31st of March, called the "Huli festival," in which they play the same sort of first of April pranks,—translated into Hindoo,—laughing at the victim, and making him a "Huli fool." It goes back even to Persia, where it is supposed to have a beginning, in very ancient times, in the celebration of spring, when their New Year begins.

How it came to be what we everywhere find it, the wise men cannot agree. The many authorities are so divided, that I see no way but for us to accept the custom as we find it, wherever we may happen to be, and be careful not to abuse it.

Some jokes are peculiar to particular places. In England, where it is called All Fools' Day, one favorite joke is to send the greenhorn to a bookseller

A VICTIM TO THE "STRAP OIL" JOKE.

to buy the "Life and Adventures of Eve's Grandmother," or to a cobbler to buy a few cents' worth of "strap oil,"—strap oil being, in the language of the shoe-making brotherhood, a personal appli-

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cation of the leather. The victim usually gets a good whipping with a strap.

There was an old superstition in England that prayers to the Virgin at eight o'clock on All Fools' Day would be of wonderful efficacy, and it is seriously mentioned by grave writers of old days.

In Scotland the first of April fun is called "hunting the gowk," and consists most often of sending a person to another a long way off, with a note which says, "Hunt the gowk another mile." The recipient of the note gives him a new missive to still another, containing the same words; and so the sport goes on, till the victim remembers the day of the month, and sits down to rest and think about it.

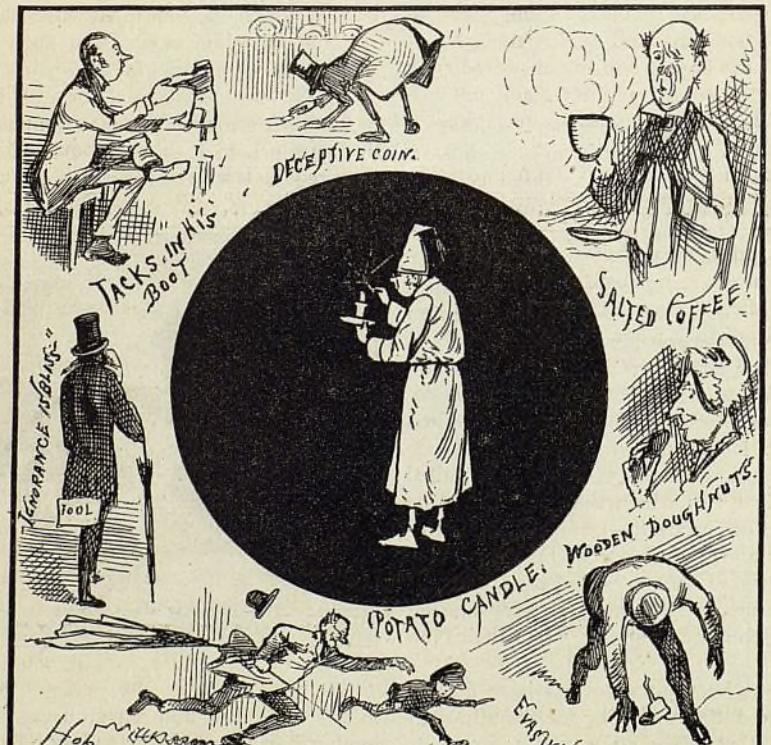
In France, where the custom is very ancient, the jokes are much the same; but the victim is called an "April fish," because he is easily caught. In one part of France there is a custom of eating a certain kind of peas which grow there, called *pois chiches*. The joke there is to send the peasants to a certain convent to ask for those peas, telling them that the fathers are obliged to give some to every one who comes on that day. The joke is as much on the monks as on the peasants, for there is often a perfect rush of applicants all day.

A more disagreeable custom prevails in Lisbon on the first of April, when the great object is to pour water on passers-by, or, failing in that, to throw powder in their faces. If both can be done, the joker is happy.

I need not tell you the American styles of joking: nailing a piece of silver to the side-walk; tying a string to a purse, and jerking it away from greedy fingers; leaving tempting-looking packages, filled with sand, on door-steps; frying doughnuts with an interlining of wool; putting salt in the sugar-bowl, etc. You know too many already.

But this custom, with others, common in coarser and rougher times, is fast dying out. Even now it is left almost entirely to playful children and the uneducated classes. This sentiment, quoted from an English almanac of a hundred years ago, will, I'm sure, meet the approval of "grown-ups" of the nineteenth century:

> "But 't is a thing to be disputed,
> Which is the greatest fool reputed,
> The one that innocently went,
> Or he that him designedly sent."



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PATTIKIN'S HOUSE.

By Joy Allison.

Chapter VI.

THIRZA'S HOUSEKEEPING.

The minister's wife was n't well. The doctor said she needed rest and a change. The sea-air would do her good.

"You must go to Boston and visit Matilda," said the minister.

"Who 'd take care of the house?" asked she.

"I would," said Thirza, boldly. "I am 'most eleven; I can keep house!"

"Who 'd take care of us?" asked Pattikin.

"I would," said her father. "Mother would take the baby, of course, and I hope I 'm to be trusted with the rest."

"Who 'd make the bread?" asked Seth.

Now, raised bread was yet one of the mysteries to Thirza. She could mix up biscuit, and had a general idea how a good many other things were done, but not much experience in doing them. Nevertheless, her ambition was fired at the thought of being mistress of the house, and she answered, but not so boldly: "I would; mother could tell me how. Oh! I shall get along first-rate, I know. I like to keep house."

Her experience in that line was limited to such half days as her mother had been able to devote to parish visiting.

So it was decided that the minister's wife should spend at least four weeks in Boston.

There were endless instructions given to Thirza—so many, indeed, that when she came to want them she could remember scarcely one.

How desolate the house seemed, when having caught the last possible glimpse of the stage, the minister and his children went in! They looked at the empty "mother's chair," and then at the empty cradle, and then, rather wistfully, at one another, as a homesick feeling began to creep over them. Then the minister boldly lifted the cradle and set it in the farthest corner of the room.

"It's quite a decent-sized kitchen," said he, in a cheerful tone, "when the cradle is out of the way; and Robbie will soon be old enough to do without it."

The spell thus broken, every one instantly felt their courage rise and their spirits revive.

"I can get the dinner, father," said Thirza. "It's only boiled meat and vegetables, and I 've often prepared them for mother. Tilda will help, and we shall not need anybody else."

"That 's my brave little woman!" said her father; and after a few cheery words to Pattikin and the boys, he went off to the study, to come out no more till dinner was on the table.

Thirza remembered, as soon as he was out of sight, that her mother had said she would better ask him to get out the meat for her.

"Never mind," she said to herself, "I guess I can get it well enough. I wont call him back."

Tilda went down cellar with her to hold the lamp. By vigorous pulling, Thirza got a piece of corned beef up from the brine and into her pan. Then she had to run up and warm her fingers; the brine was so cold!

She washed the meat in warm water a good while to get her fingers warm. Looking up at the clock she saw that it was nearly eleven.

"It's time it was in; mother always boils it a long time, I know," said she, and plumped it into the pot, which she half filled with cold water.

"Now for some pork," said she. "Oh, how I hate to put my hands into cold brine again!"

But she went down, and took off the lid of the pork barrel, and lifted out the stone that held the meat down. After feeling about in the brine for a while, she got hold of a piece of pork. She could only get a very little hold, because it was packed in so tightly, and her fingers would slip off, and the pork would n't come up.

"Oh dear! oh dear! my fingers are freezing! What shall I do? I 'll take the carving-knife and pry it up!"

She ran up for the carving-knife, and stopped a little to warm her fingers again. Then she went back and pried at the pork with the knife.

"Crack!" and the minister's folks had for a carving-knife only a broken blade, and a handle with a piece about two inches long. Thirza sat down on the potato bin and cried.

"Never mind," said Tilda, who was getting the potatoes, "I guess carving-knives don't cost very much. Pa 'll get another, I know."

Thirza was pretty sure it would cost much. But she dried her eyes, and prepared for another plunge for the pork. She tugged away again with no better success.

"I would n't get any pork to-day," said Tilda. "Mother does n't, always."

So Thirza concluded she would n't try any more

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to get the pork up, but would get the cabbages and beets and potatoes on as soon as she could.

When she got upstairs again it was half-past eleven and the pot was n't boiling.

"What's the matter that it does n't boil yet?" said she, puckering her forehead into little wrinkles.

"I guess the fire 's 'most out," said Tilda.

The fire was not only almost, but altogether, out.

They hurried to rebuild it, and at twelve the pot began to boil. It stopped, though, when they put in the vegetables. But it began again soon.

Then Thirza and Tilda set the table.

At half-past twelve their father came out to dinner. The table was all ready. The bread was cut, and the glasses filled with water. The pot was yet boiling on the stove, with a cheerful bubbling, and things looked very promising.

"Dinner 'most ready?" asked the minister, rubbing his hands together before the fire.

"I guess so, father!" said Thirza, cheerfully. Then, recollecting her accident, she said, with a trembling voice, "I broke the carving-knife, father."

"Broke the carving-knife?" said he, looking concerned. "How did you break it?"

Thirza explained about the pork. Her father looked at the knife, put the two pieces together, and then, as they would n't stay so, laid them down on the sink-board, and, taking a fork, lifted the lid of the dinner-pot. Just then Seth, Samuel, Simon, Sandy, and Pattikin came in to dinner.

"You did n't call us, Mrs. Housekeeper," said Seth, "so we took the liberty to come. Hope no offense, mum!"

"I did n't call you, because dinner was n't ready," said Thirza. "The potatoes don't seem to be quite done. How blue you look, Patty! Come to the fire. It's growing colder, is n't it?"

"Guess 't is!" said Pattikin, warming her fat fingers. "Going to have another winter, I s'pose."

"I should think so," said Thirza. "It 's the last of March now."

The minister was trying the potatoes and meat, with his fork, to see how nearly they were done.

"The meat seems very hard; what time did you put it on, Thirza?"

"It got to boiling about half-past, I believe," said Thirza.

"Half-past ten?" said her father.

"No, sir; half-past eleven," said Thirza. She really thought it was but little later than that, for she had n't kept watch of the clock.

Her father laughed. "I might have known it would n't get done," said he. "The stage went at a quarter past ten. I know your mother boils the meat almost all the forenoon."

"What shall we do?" said Thirza, looking in dismay toward the group of impatient brothers.

Her father opened the cellar door and took down a great ham that hung in the cellar-way, and began to cut it with the bread knife, after he had whetted it a minute or so. At this sight the faces of the whole family grew brighter.

Thirza tried the potatoes once more. They were done now, and by the time she had peeled them, the cabbage was done and the ham was cooked. The beets seemed as hard as ever, but that was no matter. They were left to boil with the beef, while the family sat down to their dinner.

"I hope things wont go so every day," said Thirza, looking up at the clock, which told a quarter past one.

"I hope so, too," said Seth. "Though all is well that ends well."

CHAPTER VII.

MORE OF THIRZA'S HOUSEKEEPING.

SUPPER went off well enough. There was plenty of bread, and a gingerbread, baked yesterday.

Breakfast went pretty well, too, only that there was a little too much soda in the johnny-cake, which gave it a greenish hue.

"There is n't bread enough left for dinner," said Thirza, after breakfast was over. "I guess I 'd better put some to rising."

"It will not get raised to bake for dinner," said her father. "You need n't expect it. You can make biscuit, can't you?"

"Yes, sir. I 'll bake biscuit for dinner, then. The bread will get raised for supper, I suppose."

"I should think so; though it seems to me your mother puts it to rise the night before. I 'm not sure, but I have some such impression."

"Sometimes she does, and sometimes she does n't," said Seth. "I know, for I 've seen her."

It was a relief that somebody knew, for Thirza only "believed," and Tilda "could n't be sure," and a great deal depended on the raised bread. Thirza could n't keep such a family on biscuits.

"You 'd better set it going just as soon as possible, Thirza."

Thirza ran down to the cellar and brought up the jug in which her mother kept the yeast.

"The cork is tied down with a string, and the knot is a hard one. Wont you untie it, father?"

The minister gave the jug a shake or two, saying: "There seems to be plenty in it. That 's a good thing, for I am afraid we should n't be equal to making yeast. I wonder why she ties it down that way?" said he, as he picked at the knot.

He soon found out why. The knot being untied and the cork loosened a little ——

Bang! It went clear to the ceiling overhead,

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while a stream of yeast followed, flowing over upon the minister's hands, on the table and on the floor.

"Get a pan!—quick!—we 're losing it all!" he exclaimed. A pan being brought, the overflowing was directed into that and saved.

"Well, really! your mother is a remarkable housekeeper! That 's what I call lively yeast. Do you know how much to use?"

"Yes, sir; a cupful. Mother told me." And Thirza proceeded immediately to mix the bread.

cutter. Thirza was very happy about the work, and sang all the time she was doing it.

When they were in the oven, she began to set the table, still singing.

"Have you looked at your biscuits since you put them in?" asked Tilda, presently. "The fire is pretty hot. Perhaps they will burn."

Thirza hurried to the oven. "What in the world ails them?" said she, with the little fretful wrinkles puckering her forehead all at once.

MAKING READY TO BOIL THE MEAT.

BIBLIOTECA MUNICIPAL MADRID

"I suppose this ought to be tied down again," said her father. "But I shall be careful how I open it next time."

Thirza's bread rose like a puff. In fact, it was ready for a second mixing just as she began to get dinner.

"I can't attend to it now, anyway," said she. "It will have to wait."

Tilda chopped meat and vegetables for a hash, while Thirza made biscuits. It was fun to mix and mold and cut them out with the pretty round cake-

"Are they burned?" asked Tilda, looking over her shoulder into the oven.

"No; but they 're such nasty, flat, black looking little things! They don't rise a bit like mother's," said Thirza, wrathfully. "I put everything in just exactly as she told me"—still surveying the cakes with a frown. "Why *don't* they rise?"

"I 'd shut the door and let them be a while longer. May be they will, by and by," said Tilda, comfortingly.

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Thirza shut the door, looking discontented enough; for she had no hope of the cakes rising by and by. "I don't care if they burn black now," she said.

She resumed her work of setting the table, but not her singing. She had used one of the drinking-cups to mix soda in. She went to the pantry for it, as there were not enough without it. There was a little water in the bottom. She poured it out. As she did so, some white powder stuck to the cup.

"What 's this, I wonder!" And then it all came to her in a minute. She had never put the soda in at all. She leaned her head against the old wooden pump and cried a little. It was such a little bit of forgetting that should cause her such trouble! Then she went and looked into the oven again, but mournfully, hopelessly, as at something quite spoiled and lost.

Then she thought of the long table full of hungry, disappointed children. Would there be hash enough? A mountain weight of care seemed settling down upon her heart. She visited the bread-box. There was a little old bread and a few bits of cold johnny-cake. She arranged these on a plate, and then took out her biscuit, and put them on a plate. They were as heavy as her poor little heart, and her poor little heart was like lead in her bosom. They were sour, too, and had got quite brown, being left in the oven so long.

"I don't believe they will be very bad," said Tilda, in a vain attempt to cheer her sister. "There—the hash is done. I'm going to call father."

She called him, and then ran out to the barn where the boys were working, to call them, too.

The minister came out, cheerful and smiling. He noticed Thirza's downcast face, and naturally looked at the dinner-table to find out the cause.

"Bad luck with the biscuits, my little maid? What ails them? They are a *leetle* poor, I am afraid, taking up one, and breaking it in halves, and testing it by taste and smell.

"They are n't fit to eat! I 'm so sorry! I forgot to put in my soda!" said Thirza, crying again.

"Oh, well! never mind! If you know what was the trouble, it is n't half so bad as it might be, because you will have them all right next time," said her father, encouragingly. "Don't cry. We 'll get along with the hash and the cold bread."

"There 's all there is!" said Thirza, disconsolately.

The boys, having been privately admonished by Tilda, made no complaint. They were a hungry little set, and even the leaden cakes went down, and were converted into good rosy blood and sturdy sinews, causing never a twinge of dyspepsia. Their father dined on hash and cold johnny-cake, telling his most amusing stories all the time to cheer Thirza, whose heart grew sensibly lighter as the biscuits disappeared, though she could n't eat much.

After dinner Seth followed her into the pantry, and said: "Anything will do to eat, Mrs. Housekeeper, if you 'll only keep a jolly face. But look as doleful as you do to-day, and we shall all be crying for mother. Can I help you any?"

"Oh, Seth! I 'm so tired of being housekeeper! I never can stand it four weeks! I work all the time, and then I can't make things decent. I wish I might never have to get another dinner!"

Seth put his arms round her and kissed away the tears, and promised to come up to the house an hour before dinner to-morrow and help; and if things did n't turn out well, the responsibility should be his.

CHAPTER VIII.

LEARNING BY EXPERIENCE.

AFTER the boys were gone, the minister came out into the kitchen. He wore a very droll face, and went straight to the row of nails behind the pantry door, where a big linen apron hung, and tied it round his waist.

"Now you 'll see how a minister can cook! I 've finished my sermon, and I am going to help you this afternoon. If we get our work done in season, we 'll have a ride before supper. What is there to do, Mrs. Housekeeper?"

Thirza actually laughed to see her father with a kitchen apron on, setting about housework.

"Come," said he, "lay out the work, and then we 'll divide it up, and get it done in no time." And he looked intent upon business.

"Well," said Thirza, "in the first place there 's this bread to mold. It ought to have been done before, but I could n't, because you see it was dinner-time. I 'm afraid it 's sour."

"Well, what else? I want the work all before my mind, so I can go at it intelligently."

"All these dishes to wash. Tilda can do them. Then there 's that basketful of clothes. Mother had n't time to iron them, and I meant to have done it yesterday; but the day slipped away somehow, and I did n't get it done. And we 've nothing for supper. I suppose mother would make apple pies, and I would if I knew how; but everything she told me seems to have gone out of my head."

"Oh, I know how to make a pie," said Tilda. "You just cut up the apples and roll out the crust and put it in and put sugar on it, and cover it up with the other crust and bake it. It 's just as easy!"

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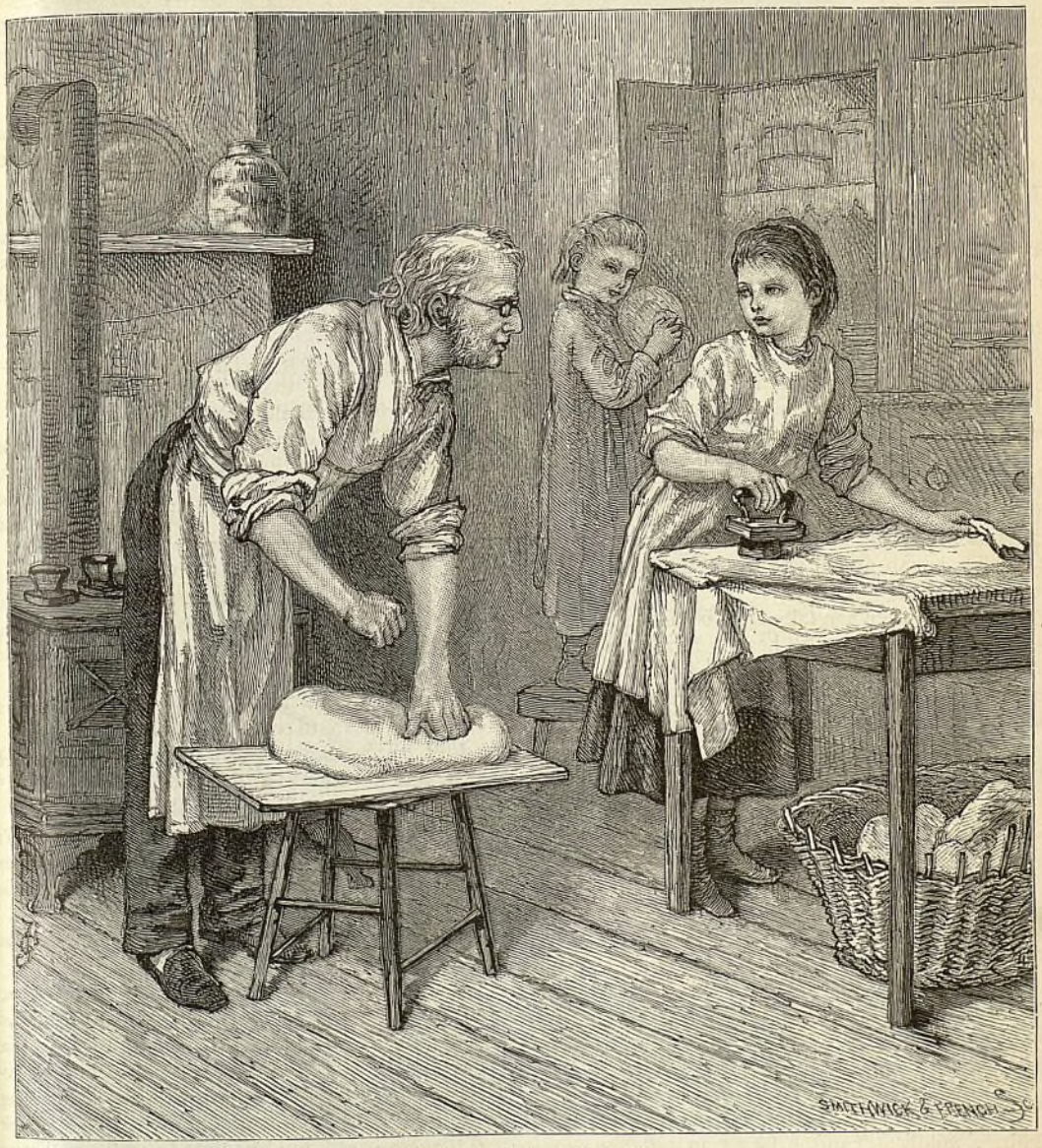
"But the crust—how do you make the crust?" said the minister.

"With lard and flour and water—or milk, I forget which," said Tilda.

"Any soda?" asked Thirza. Tilda didn't know.

"We will try, anyway. We are not going four weeks without an apple pie!" said her father. "If we fail the first time, we'll try again, and keep trying till we get it right. I'll mold the bread and make the pies. You, Thirza, shall do the ironing, and Tilda can wash the dishes. Then we will all go for a grand drive while the pies are cooling."

The bread ought to have been good, after such a vigorous molding as it got at the minister's hands. And when it was in the pans, it did rise in a wonderfully short space of time. Tilda washed dishes with marvelous zeal and rapidity, and Thirza so far forgot her troubles that she hummed a little over her ironing-board. It was such an inspiration to have father working with them.



LEARNING HOW TO KEEP HOUSE.

As for the pies, the minister shortened and sweet-

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ened and spiced as if he had always been used to it. He made crust enough for five or six, so he had to send for more apples; but Tilda brought them from the cellar, and pared and sliced, and at last they were all in the oven.

It was encouraging to see four great loaves of new bread arrayed on the pantry shelves, and the pies beside them. The little girls went off to ride with light hearts.

They came home in fine spirits, but the minister noticed Thirza's flushed face and slow movements.

"We ought to divide up the work," said he; "I see that the girls have too much on their hands. How many things are there, Thirza, that have to be done every day?"

"Oh, no end!" said Thirza, laughing. "I could n't begin to tell them. A great many of them are such little things, and only take a few minutes."

"And yet, altogether, they keep you at work about all day, don't they? Tell all you can think of, large or small."

Thirza began, and the minister took his note-book from his pocket and wrote them down. There was quite a long list.

"Then I know there are other things that are always needing to be done once or twice a week, but which don't come regularly every day," said he; "let us have a list of these also."

Thirza began again, and again quite a long list was the result.

"Now, we each can take upon ourselves a part of these duties, and not be heavily burdened either. In the first place, let every one make his own bed, and take care of his room. It is very easy work, and it will not hurt a boy to know how to do such work properly. I think I can make mine up so handsomely as to be a pattern for you. At any rate, I 'll try, and if Seth can put me to shame, the girls may cheer him roundly."

"Then I will take it upon myself," he resumed, after a moment's consultation of his note-book, "to see that the lamps are filled and kept in order. Seth may cut the meat, and bring up the vegetables for dinner, every morning, before he goes out to his work. Samuel may sweep down the chamber stairs, and the front entry, and steps. Simon may see that both pails are filled with water, and the wood-box with wood."

"Why, I always do that!" said Simon.

"I thought you forgot it, sometimes," said Thirza, mildly; "and I forget to tell you, so I have to run for wood pretty often, some days."

"If I forget again I 'll eat raw potatoes for my dinner," said Simon, resolutely. "But give me some other work, too."

"I will give you nothing else for every-day," said his father, "but twice a week, say Tuesday and Friday evenings, you may bring up a pan of apples, and pare them for me to make pies next day. You and Sandy have to churn twice a week already, so I think that will be your share of the work."

"And I 'll help cut the apples," said Sandy.

"Father, we can't trust him!" said Thirza. "He never thinks to wash his hands, and ——"

Sandy had a quick temper, and he flared up at once.

"You better not say much about that, Miss Taze, when you forgot to put something or other in the biscuits, and made 'em real bad and sour, yourself."

"Hush, Sandy! For shame! Thirza did n't say that to provoke you, but because it was a solemn and awful fact," said Seth, "and necessary to be taken into consideration."

Sandy showed signs of another outbreak at this, but his father interposed.

"There, Sandy! that will do. I will tell you what your work shall be. You can grind the coffee for Thirza every morning, and Saturdays you may sweep out the shed-room. That will be your share."

"And now mine!" said Pattikin.

"I will teach you to set the table for me, if you will be in the house at the right time," said Thirza.

"I truly will!" said Pattikin.

"And you know the dusting is always your work, only you are 'most always out-doors when it ought to be done," continued Thirza.

"I 'm truly goin' to stay in my house all the morning for future to come!" said Pattikin. "You need n't laugh, 'cause I 'll do it, see if I don't."

"It 's quite time Pattikin was making herself useful!" said the minister. "She 's been a plaything a good while. So if the chairs are found covered with dust at dinner-time, nobody shall be blamed but Patty. Nobody must do it for her, or remind her. And she may learn to set the table, too. Mother will be pleased when she comes to see that her little gypsy girl has turned into a neat little housemaid. We all will begin our new tasks to-morrow, and Saturday we must write to mother, and tell her how we are getting along."

"I 'm sure Tilda and I will not have hard work to do what is left; you have taken so much off our hands," said Thirza, gratefully.

"I guess it was my bed-time 'bout 'leven hours ago," said Pattikin, gaping; on which hint she was bundled off to bed with small ceremony. And it was not long before the rest followed, for they kept early hours in Pattikin's house.

(To be continued.)

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Illuminated Texts.

By Susan Coolidge.

There are two ways in which texts can be illuminated. You can buy a square or oblong of perforated paper at a fancy-shop, with the text outlined upon it in pale gray, and, with floss and split zephyr worsteds, you can work the letters, shade them, and produce very pretty effects. Or you can take a bit of Bristol board, measure and sketch your own letters, and make them of any beautiful colors you like with a camel's hair brush and water-paints. Some people practice still a third method with oil-paints and a wooden panel; but this is more difficult, and so few of you boys and girls who read St. Nicholas have oil-paints, or know how to use them, that it is not worth our while to speak further on this method. Neither is it worth while to say much about the first way, for however pretty the perforated embroidery may look when it is done, and however neat the stitches may be, it can never have the freedom or value of a text done in the second way; nor can the doing of it ever give the same pleasure. Still, since some of you may like to try it, I will add that all the rules for grouping and distributing the colors, according to their symbolic meanings, apply to the embroidered as well as to the painted illuminations, and it will be quite safe to follow them in laying out your work.

Texts Painted in Water-Color.

The paints absolutely necessary for illuminating purposes are four in number: Black, white, vermilion, and cobalt, or ultramarine blue. Most paint-boxes contain these four; but for any of you who do not happen to have a paint-box, I would recommend buying what are called the "half-moist" colors, which are the pleasantest and easiest to use. Buy half a cake of each of those mentioned, and, besides, lemon yellow, carmine, gamboge, Prussian blue, and burnt-umber. If you want to make your list very complete, you may add sepia, sap-green, rose-madder, cadmium, neutral tint, and violet carmine; but these are luxuries, not necessaries, and you can do very well without them. Gold and silver paints are, however, indispensable. The best are those which come in tiny shells or saucers; but these are also the most costly. A good substitute is the preparation known as "Bessemer's Gold." It is a fine dry powder, sold in small bottles, with larger bottles of a liquid which dissolves it, the price of the two bottles being seventy-five cents. They last a long time, and are much cheaper than the little shells, which cost twenty cents apiece, and barely hold gold enough for a single capital letter.

The Bristol board should be thick and smooth. A pale tint of gray or cream is better in most cases than white. Two brushes are needed, a large and a small, besides a third brush kept exclusively for the gold paint. For other implements, you will want only a lead pencil and ruler; but, above all, you want that care and patience so indispensable for producing anything really fine, delicate, or worth having. There is no royal road to anything, remember. All our little successes must be earned step by step, slowly and faithfully, with nothing shirked, nothing hurried, and we must be willing to give the time which is needed to make each step perfect in its way before we pass on to another.

After the materials, the next thing to be considered is the design. Pretty patterns for letters can be picked up almost anywhere—from signs, newspaper headings, book-covers, or the ornamental work in churches. A little practice will make it easy to vary and combine them. There is a "Book of Alphabets" also, published by Mr. Prang of Boston, which it would not be a bad idea for boys and girls who live near each other to club for and buy. Its price is two dollars and a half; it contains an alphabet of capitals in color, and of small letters in a dozen different styles, ancient and modern, and is a great help to young beginners.

The first step after trimming the Bristol board to its proper size, is to measure the spaces and draw parallel lines, between which the letters can be sketched in with lead pencil. Make the pencil lines *very light*, that they may not show through the color. Next, paint in all the small letters, being careful to keep the edges neat and distinct, to dot the i, and to add the commas and period. A mixt-

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ure of white with the other paints makes it much easier to put them in smoothly. This mixture is known to artists as "body color." After the small letters are finished and shaded, paint the capitals in the same way; and, last of all, add the gold and the ornamental touches, the flowers, vines, arabesques, and little hints of contrast, which add so much to the richness of the effect. I cannot tell you what colors to use, or what designs, for these depend on your own taste and fancy, and every worker must make them out for himself. But if you begin with simple things,—with a single line, for instance,—a line which says something brave or sweet, or comforting (the Bible is full of such lines), painting it in plain gray letters, shaded on one edge with black, and one vivid capital in scarlet, or blue and gold, you will have done a valuable and delightful thing; and going on little by little, your powers will increase, till by and by you produce work which is beautiful for its own sake as well as for that of the thought which it enshrines.

I will add a list of rules for the choice and placing of the colors. Every color has a meaning; did you know that? and there are certain words which must always be painted in certain colors, and no other.

General Rules for Coloring.

Rule 1. Capitals and initials should always be of a different color, or ornamented differently, from other letters of the text.

Rule 2. Letters belonging to words which do not begin with a capital must all be of one color.

Rule 3. It is not necessary that all the letters should be shaded, but the shaded letters in the same sentence should be shaded on the same side. Black or dark brown shading makes a red letter appear more brilliant. If one letter in a sentence is lightened with gold or bright color, the other letters must be lightened to correspond.

Rule 4. Never paint an unimportant word in a striking color.

Rule 5. Sacred names, such as Christ, God, Lord, Savior, Creator, should always be painted in red, black and gold. The letters I. H. S. should also be in red, black and gold, and all personal pronouns referring to Deity, such as Him, His, Thy, Thine, must be in the same colors, which are called *canonical.*

Rule 6. Do not use these colors combined except in words denoting the Deity, or pronouns referring to Him. Ever since the first gospel was illuminated this rule has been observed, red being used to signify love, and sometimes also creative power; gold, to signify glory; and black, awe or majesty. If you notice, you will find these colors constantly used in the decoration of churches.

Rule 7. It is not desirable to use gold and silver in the same word. Never put a blue letter next to a purple or green one. Gold harmonizes with all colors.

Meanings of Colors.

Various nations hold traditions about the meanings of colors. Even our North American Indians have ideas upon this subject, and, strangely enough, these traditions agree in the main all the world over. These are some of them:

Red is the color of life and happiness. It is from this idea that the expression "Red-Letter Days" comes.

Blue is the color of heaven, and should be used for words which denote heavenly things, such as piety, truth, constancy, divine contemplation.

Yellow or gold means not only glory, but faith, goodness, marriage.

Green symbolizes spring, youth, mirth, hope in immortality; also victory, as in the palm and laurel, which are emblems of a conqueror.

Violet means suffering.

Gray, the color of ashes, means humility, mourning, and penitence.

Purple was the color of pomp and royal state. Kings and emperors allowed this color to be used in churches, otherwise it would have been sacred to imperial use. In former days, princes, even in their cradles, wore this color, hence the phrase "Born in the purple."

White denotes innocence, light, faith, joy, religious purity. Sometimes silver is employed in place of white.

Black typifies night, darkness, death, sin, mourning, and *negation.* It is proper to use black in such words as no, never, not, nevermore.

You understand that I do not prescribe these colors to be used always exactly after these rules; but it is well to know the rules, and, as they may be helpful to some of you, I give them. The best rule is *taste,* and that is a thing that grows by using. So don't be discouraged, any of you, if you chance not to succeed the first time, but remember Robert Bruce and the spider, and "Try, try again."

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APRIL SNOW.

By Virginia F. Townsend.

"What do you say to the snow to-day?"
"Oh, the robins and roses are coming.
For South-wind and Sun will find the old way;
And the brown bees soon be humming.

"You 've had your revel—you 've had your day!
Oh, snow, it is time for leaving!
For never 'round paths of warm, sweet May
Should the winter's ghost be grieving!"

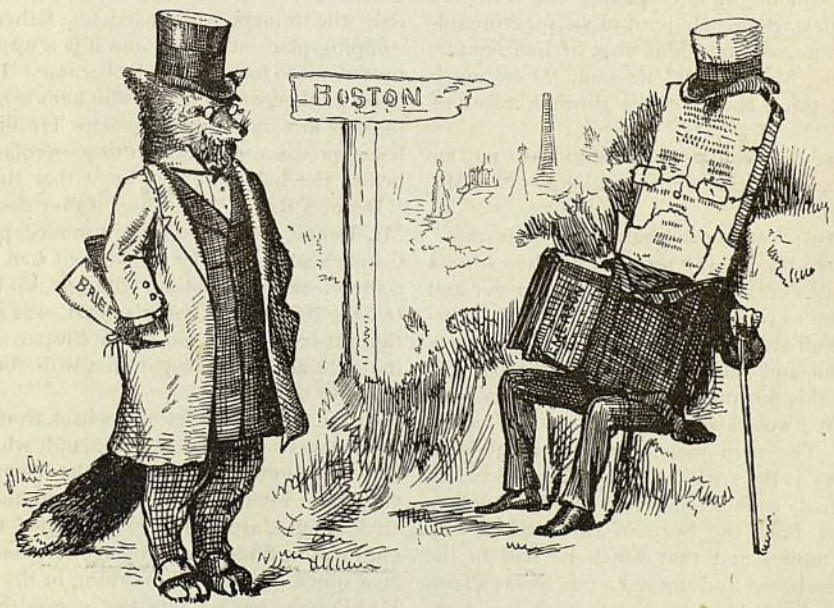
"What do you say to the snow to-day?"
"Oh, the red in the maples is glowing,
If still in the heart of old woods you delay
The pale anemone's blowing.

"You 've held your revel—you 've had your day,
To the tune of the North-winds' humming;
But there never was June yet that lost her way,
And the robins and roses are coming!"

THE FOX AND THE TABLET.

By P. Howard.

A tablet, from Boston, with wise thoughts of Mr. Emerson engraved upon its hard substance, while lying by the road-side, saw a fox passing by.



"Ho! you poor creature!" cried the tablet, filled with an exalted opinion of its own wisdom, "men call you wise and cunning, do they? Behold me! I have more wisdom in one sentence of the thoughts I bear, than all your experience and cunning added together."

"That *may* be very true," replied the fox, "but recollect, if you please, that my wisdom is original, and my own, while yours are the thoughts and ideas of another, and only impressed upon you by vast labor at that."

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CASPAR DEANE AND THE "CINNAMON."

By C. D. Clark.

CASPAR DEANE lived in California, upon the border of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. He had been brought up in this wild region, for his father, when a young man, had been one of the miners who drifted from the old "States" when gold was first discovered in California, in the year 1849. Mr. Deane had tried mining in every shape, and had at last satisfied himself that it did not pay very well after all, and that steady labor at fair wages was the best method for getting rich. He was a man who made up his mind slowly, but when he *had* decided, did not easily change. He worked for two years in a quartz-crushing mill, running the stationary engine by which the machinery was moved. He saved money and soon had a thousand dollars in the bank at Marysville. One day he detected a leak in the "battery" through which the gold passes after being separated from the quartz. It was a very small leak, perhaps a quantity of "dust" equal in size to a bean might have passed out each day since the leak started. He went to the superintendent of the mine, and told him what he had seen.

"Nonsense, Mr. Deane," he said, "how much gold do you think could be lost through a leak of that size?"

"Will you give me permission to wash out for my own benefit the clay under the battery?" Mr. Deane asked.

"Of course; but you will only waste your time."

Mr. Deane said nothing more; but when his six hours of duty were over, and another engineer and fireman came to relieve him at the engine, he borrowed a wheelbarrow, and took four or five heavy loads of sand and clay from beneath the battery. He scraped this dirt up clean, for he knew that gold was heavy and would work through any soil except hard pan. The men looked on and laughed as they saw him at the work, but were not so scornful when he had washed fourteen hundred dollars in gold-dust from the heap of earth taken out. With this money and that which he had in the bank, he purchased and stocked a ranch—as a farm is called on the Pacific coast—of about two hundred acres, in the bottom lands above the Yuba River. He had been a farmer in New York State, and knew the best land to choose for stock-raising. He wanted grass, water and shade, and a better plot than he had selected could not have been found in that region. Then he found a wife, which was easily done, for a certain pretty girl in Marysville had promised to wait for him until he was ready to establish a home. When his house was built he went to Marysville, and was married; and the two took their horses and rode away, under the beautiful Californian sky, to their home in the shadow of the snowy mountains. Starting at the right time, Mr. Deane grew rich, and at last became one of the most extensive stock ranchers in that part of the State. He had added to his farm year by year until he had nearly fifteen hundred acres of the best land. He raised cattle and horses for the San Francisco and Sacramento markets; and every year great droves from his corrals went down to Marysville, and thence down the Yuba to the sea.

He had two children—the older a boy called Caspar, who was a sort of prince upon his father's land. In stock ranches a great many hands are employed, mostly Mexicans and native Californians. Some of these attend to the cattle, but the Californians in general prefer to work among the horses. Caspar grew up among these rude men, seeing only the miners who made his father's house a stopping-place at times; and it is a wonder that he turned out so fine a boy as he became. But he had a good mother, and a father who knew when and how to stop him in any wrong act. He did not allow his vaqueros and stockmen to use profane language before the boy, and *they* knew that their time on "Deane's Ranch" was short if they disobeyed him. Mr. Deane, for the present, attended personally to Caspar's schooling, for he himself had had a good common-sense education. Maggie, his little daughter, the delight of Caspar's heart, was a sweet little thing, twelve years old when Caspar was fifteen—the date at which Caspar met with the adventure about to be related.

In the foot-hills, a few miles back from his father's ranch, was an elevated table-land, which was the favorite hunting-ground of the people of that vicinity. Living, as he did, upon the border of civilization, Caspar had early learned the use of a gun, and at fifteen years of age few could beat him at a quick shot. One morning in the wet season, Mr. Deane, having business across the foot-hills, invited Caspar to go with him, and, as Maggie pleaded hard, she was allowed to go too.

The vaquero, José, quickly brought their horses. Caspar was at home in the saddle, and even Maggie

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was a good rider, for at that time every one on a ranch in California early learned to ride. Mr. Deane rode a large gray "American" horse, as Californians term an animal brought from the East; Caspar, a light-colored mustang, which he had named Fleetfoot,—a fiery animal, but one which Caspar knew how to manage; while Maggie had a beautiful white pony which had been trained especially for her use.

They cantered away past the stock corrals and sheep runs, stockmen's huts and the cabins of squatters, Caspar riding at the right hand of his father and Maggie at the left. They passed the mill where Mr. Deane had made his lucky strike, and Caspar looked seriously at the sand and clay, wondering whether he could do as well as his father had done if he chose to try. A solemn-faced Chinaman, with a big umbrella-hat and a long pig-tail, was washing clothes by the side of the road, and looked up with a sickly grin.

"How are you, John?" asked Caspar, who knew the man.

"Ah!" said the Chinaman, "I welly good all 'ee time; how you?"

"I'm first-rate, John," replied Caspar; "I'm going through the foot-hills with father, and if I get more game than I want, you shall have some. How will you like that?"

"Welly good," said John, with the same meaningless smile. "You no got gun; how can shoot when no have gun?"

"My gun is down to Ranger's," Caspar explained; "I'm going to get it as I go down."

Ranger kept a store a short distance below the mill, and Caspar rode up to the door and shouted to a boy inside, who quickly brought out a handsome rifle, with bullet-pouch and powder-flask.

"It takes you a great while to get ready, Caspar," said Mr. Deane. "What do you mean to do with your rifle?"

"I'll tell you, father. You are going across the table-land, and Job Fisher tells me that it is just running over with game now. I want you to leave me there and take Maggie with you wherever you are going, and I'll have a load of hares and grouse before you get back."

"That is the reason you brought the gun, is it?" asked Mr. Deane, smiling. "Suppose I should refuse to let you stop there alone?"

"Then," said Caspar, looking blank for a moment, "I suppose I would give it up and go with you."

Mr. Deane did n't know that he had any objections to his son's having a hunt, only adding: "You must promise to be careful."

"I'll be very careful, father."

They were now riding through the passes of the foot-hills, as the elevations of land always seen at the bases of mountain chains are named. Up they went through range after range, each somewhat higher and steeper than the one before, until they came out upon a scene so beautiful that Maggie clapped her hands with delighted surprise.

It was a vast table-land, fringed with sage-bushes and aromatic shrubs; but the center, as far as the eye could see, was a mass of flowers of every shape and hue. The air was heavy with the mingled perfumes of the blossoms which a month hence, when the sun had scorched them, would lie withered and brown upon the ground.

"I'm going to picket Fleetfoot here, father," Caspar remarked, "and then skirt the sage-brush. Then, you understand, everything will run into the center and I can get a good shot."

"I shall be gone about two hours; don't forget yourself, and go too far."

So saying, Mr. Deane rode away with Maggie, leaving Caspar to his own devices.

Fastening one end of his rawhide lariat firmly to the pommel of the saddle, he drove the iron pin attached to the other end deep into the sod, where the grass was rich. Then he slung his game-bag over his back, took his rifle and ammunition, and started on a tramp.

For nearly an hour the boy started some sort of game at short distances, and his game-bag was soon full to overflowing. Not caring to make useless slaughter, he sat down to rest upon a mossy knoll, and was wondering when his father would come back, when a peculiar shadow fell upon the grass beside him—a shadow which caused him a thrill of horror, for it outlined the figure of a gigantic bear.

He looked about and could see nothing. The bear must be behind him, and he slipped silently down the knoll on which he sat. There was a shuffling sound in the grass, the shadow moved away, and when he ventured to look up, a large cinnamon bear was trotting slowly across the plain, a hundred feet away. Luckily, the animal had not seen him, and if Caspar could have let him alone there would have been no trouble. But Caspar was proud of his shooting, and made up his mind that he could easily kill the brute, and show the skin as a trophy. He knew the cinnamon bear was a variety of the dreaded grizzly, and that to conquer one in open fight would be no small honor. Sighting across the knoll, he took steady aim and fired. The bear turned a sort of somersault and fell, and Caspar leaped to his feet with a shout of triumph; but, to his horror, the bear also rose, slowly, and, with a wicked look in the small, twinkling eyes, came after him in that shuffling, deceitful, loping gait which diminishes distance so rapidly and yet

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seems so slow a pace. Caspar knew his danger, and if he ever ran in his life he ran then.

One thing he thought he had learned to perfection, and had practiced in leisure hours,—to load a rifle while running. He tried to do it now, but seeing that he lost ground fearfully, gave it up, and bringing his rifle to a trail dashed on at his best speed. He was a noble runner, and for a little time actually seemed to gain upon the bear; but his breath was beginning to come in quick gasps, while the bear could keep up that long, rolling gait for hours. He began to wish that he had let the creature alone, but the wish was too late. At this moment, when he had almost lost hope, he heard a distant neigh. It was Fleetfoot, anxious for his return. The sound gave him new courage, and raising his fingers to his mouth, he uttered the sharp whistle with which he had been wont to call his horse. But he did not slacken his speed,—nay, he even increased it, dashing forward, with wild eyes, heaving chest and beating heart, repeating his whistle as he ran. Still the bear gained, when the rush of hoofs was heard, and Fleetfoot, trailing the lariat, which he had dragged from the ground at his master's call, dashed through the sage-brush to his side. A moment after, Caspar was in the saddle, and the bear, seeming to realize that the horse could outrun him, paused with an angry growl.

"Now then, old fellow!" cried Caspar; "I'll pay you Just wait until I load!"

He swiftly rammed down a charge, and put on a cap, while the bear stood waving his head from side to side. The rifle was loaded, and throwing his bridle across his arm, Caspar took steady aim and fired. Crack!

The cinnamon rose upon his hind paws, struck wildly at the air, and fell with a crash. Caspar loaded again, rode very near the prostrate beast, and gave him another shot from the saddle. But the huge body lay motionless. Then he knew that he was surely dead, and uttered a shout of triumph which made the foot-hills ring again, and with his arms about the neck of his beloved Fleetfoot, he thanked him for the life which he had saved.

When, an hour later, Mr. Deane came back, he found his son calmly seated upon the body of his giant game, as coolly as if shooting cinnamon bears were an every-day event. But I am afraid Caspar bragged a little that evening among the workmen at the mill and the stockmen in the ranch.

"THROWING HIS BRIDLE ACROSS HIS ARM, CASPAR TOOK STEADY AIM, AND FIRED."

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THE STARS IN APRIL.

By Richard A. Proctor.

In the northern heavens we now see the Little Bear passing above the horizontal position which, last month, he had not quite reached. The Great Bear is now overhead, but inverted. The triplets of stars ψ, μ, λ and θ, ι, κ represent his paws, and I fear there is nothing better for his head than the small group υ, θ, and 23. The dreary constellation Lynx occupies the position shown. It was not one of the ancient constellations, but was invented by Hevelius, just as Cameleopardalis, the Giraffe, was invented, to fill up a waste place in the star-charts. King Cepheus is now immediately below the pole, but in a very unkingly attitude. The stars γ and κ represent his feet, flourishing wildly upward; ζ, ε, and δ, as I mentioned last month, represent his head; and ι marks the place of his left hand, in which he bears a regal scepter. Admiral Smyth, in whose "Bedford Cycle" there is much curious information about the constellations, gives the following doggrel account of the true position of Cepheus, according to Aratus and Ptolemy:

"Near to his wife and daughter see,
Aloft where Cepheus shines,
That wife, the Little Bear, and Swan,
With Draco, bound his lines;
Beneath the pole-star twelve degrees
Two stars your eye will meet,—
Gamma, the nomad shepherd's gem,
And Kappa mark his feet.
Alphirk (β), the Hindu's Kalpeny,
Points out the monarch's waist;
While Alderamin (α), beaming bright,
Is on the shoulder placed;
And where, o'er regions rich and vast,
The Milky Way is led,
Three stars, of magnitude the fourth,
Adorn the Æthiop's head."

The story of Cepheus and his wife Cassiopeia, their daughter Andromeda, and Perseus, the gallant knight who rescued her from the sea monster (Cetus), does not belong to astronomy. But if it did, I should not venture to tell it here; for has it not been told already in Kingsley's charming poem "Andromeda?" How Perseus found means to gorgonize the sea monster with a petrifying stare is even more charmingly told in the "Tanglewood Tales" by your own prose-poet, Hawthorne.

Cassiopeia is following Cepheus, a little to the left, or west, of the north. You can always find Cassiopeia by noticing that it is almost exactly opposite the Dipper, regarding the pole as a center. Thus δ of the Great Bear, and α of Cassiopeia, are at the two ends, and the pole at the middle of a mighty arc on the heavens. Cassiopeia passes under the pole star in the same undignified position as her husband's. For you are not to suppose, as many (I find) do, that ε, δ, and γ form the back of Cassiopeia's chair, γ and κ the seat thereof, and ζ and β the ends of the chair's legs. These last are at ε and ψ, while ζ and β mark the place of the top rail. Still, in its present position, the group forms a very fair picture of a rocking-chair, θ, α, β, and 4 forming the rockers. Next month I shall speak more particularly about this constellation.

The portion of the Milky Way now under the pole is very irregular. In the constellation Cygnus you will see a great opening in the Milky Way. This opening is sometimes called the Northern Coalsack, though it is not nearly as black as the opening in the Southern Milky Way near the Cross, which is the real Coalsack.

The region in which the northern coalsack lies is shown in the map of the northern sky. But a special map is added on page 388, for another purpose. Since first this paper was written a new star has appeared in the constellation Cygnus (the Swan). On the evening of Nov. 24th, Professor Schmidt, director of the Athens Observatory, noticed a star of the third magnitude at the place shown by the skeleton star in the special map. Not only was no star of that brightness there before, or any star visible to the naked eye, but it was found when catalogues and charts came to be examined, that no star had ever been noted there, even in lists meant to include all stars down to the tenth magnitude. For instance, Argelander has made such a list, and charts from it, showing no less than 324,000 stars,—that is, a hundred times as many as we can see on the darkest and clearest night; yet his list showed no star where the new one had appeared. Astronomers do not, however, suppose the new star is really new, except in the sense of being seen for the first time. They know that when last a new star appeared in this way it was found to be one of Argelander's army of 324,000 stars, and watching that star (which had appeared in the constellation of the Northern Crown in May, 1866), they found that though it faded gradually out of sight to ordinary vision, the telescope could still follow it, until it had sunk to the tenth magnitude, at which degree of luster it remained and still remains. No doubt if we had had full lists of all stars down to the fifteenth, or perhaps the twentieth, magnitude, we should have found that the new star in Cygnus

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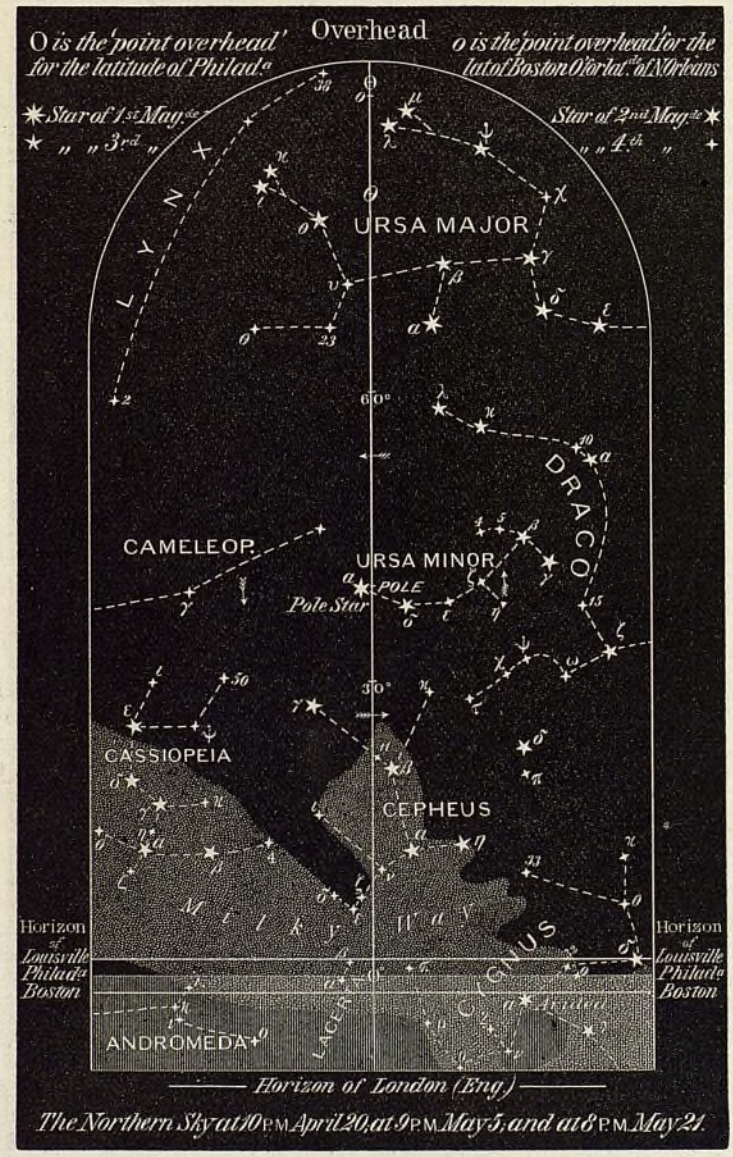
was simply an old faint star which had brightened up suddenly, and remained for a time as one among the stars adorning our skies.

Examined with an instrument called the spectroscope the new star gave a very strange account of itself. It was found to be emitting the same sort of light as other stars; but, besides that light, it emitted such light as comes from intensely heated vapors. Among the vapors in that star thus (for the time) intensely hot, were hydrogen, the vapors of the metals sodium and magnesium, and a vapor known to be present in enormous quantities in our sun's outer atmosphere, as seen during times of total eclipse. All these vapors surround our sun; and it is very probable that if anything caused our sun to blaze out with greatly increased light and heat, folks living on a world circling round some other sun would find the same peculiarities in our sun's light as we have found in the light of the new star in the Swan. What caused that star to blaze out in that strange way, we do not know. We should like to know, because we might then determine whether the cause which had so disturbed that sun might not be one from which our own sun



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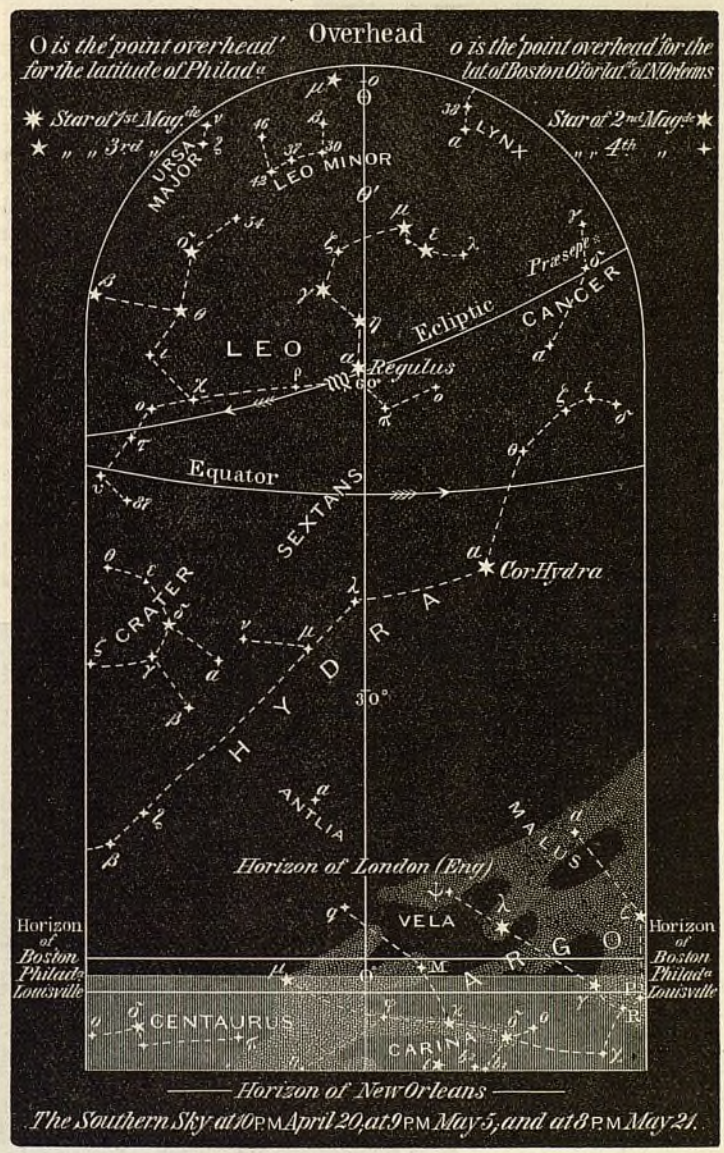
may one day suffer. Whatever the cause was, its effects did not last very long. In a week the new star had sunk to the fifth magnitude, in another week to the sixth, in yet another to the seventh, since which time (December 15th) it has very slowly diminished, and is still (January 5th) above the eighth magnitude. But although the unusual light and heat of that remote sun faded thus quickly away, yet if inhabited worlds circled around that sun, the cooling of their sun must have come far too late to save those creatures' lives. If our sun were to shine even but for twenty-four hours with several hundred times its usual heat, it is certain that every creature on the earth would be destroyed, and when the sun returned to its usual luster it would shine on a system of worlds on which not a single living creature was left.

In the southern sky, we find the great Sea-serpent, Hydra, occupying the leading position. This is the longest, and nearly the largest, of all the constellations. It began to show itself in our southern region last month, and you will not quite see the end of it for three months yet to come; so that it shows itself in no less than five of our southern maps.



The Southern Sky at 10 P.M. April 20, at 9 P.M. May 5, and at 8 P.M. May 21.

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This is another constellation which has changed in position owing to the mighty reeling motion of our earth. When the constellation was first formed,

THE CONSTELLATION OF THE LION.

the Sea-serpent extended along the equator; and I think originally represented the great serpent which was supposed to gird round the ocean. I have sometimes thought that when this constellation was framed (and Cetus, too), there may still have remained some few of those long-necked, paddling sea-monsters whose skeletons are found from time to time in various parts of the earth. You know that Mr. Gosse, in a sketch called the "Great Unknown," maintains that there are still a few of these monsters left, who, being seen from time to time with their long necks reared above the sea, have been regarded as sea-serpents. But though this may be unlikely or impossible, as Professor Owen seems to think, one may well believe that such monsters were either known or remembered, three or four thousand years ago.

The bright star Cor Hydræ (or the Serpent's Heart) is also called Alphard (or the Solitary One). The head of the Sea-serpent is marked by the stars ζ, ϵ, and δ, which may be remembered conveniently, though absurdly, by the aid to the memory which I mentioned in the case of Cepheus's head last month.

The constellation Crater, or the Cup, is a very neat one, and really like a rather damaged claret-cup. It is now tilted on one side, but formerly came to the south upright, as a well-filled cup should be. It has been regarded as the original goblet out of which Noah first took his wine, though since put to this higher use.

The ruling ecliptic constellation this month is the Lion. You will know it at once by the magnificent sickle, formed of the stars α (Regulus or Cor Leonis, the Lion's Heart), η, γ, ζ, μ, ϵ, and λ. This group is sometimes conveniently called the Sickle in Leo. It is an interesting region of the sky for many reasons, but especially for this, that the wonderful shower of falling stars known as the November meteors, radiates always from this part of the heavens. The constellation of the Lion has been greatly reduced from its former noble dimensions. The figure shows how it is now presented in our charts; but if you look at the heavens, you will see nothing in the least degree resembling a lion. Still, if you allow your survey to range over a much larger space, you will see a very fine lion, his head lying on Cancer, his mane reaching to Leo Minor, his fore-paws on the Sea-serpent's head, his hinder paws on the two bright stars, shown in the figure (behind his hind-paws), which really belong to the Virgin, and his tail well represented by the constellation Coma Bĕrĕnīces, or Queen Bĕrĕnīce's Hair (shown in the figure, but not in the southern map). That this was formerly the real extent of the constellation, is shown by the fact that the star-cluster forming the knot of Coma Bĕrĕnīces is still called by Arabians the Lion's Tail; and there are vague traditions showing that Leo formerly extended to the constellation Gemini.

THE NEW STAR.

The Lesser Lion is one of Hevelius's absurd constellations. It occupies a space between the Great Bear and the Lion, which might have been

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divided quite readily between these two constellations. Sextans is another idle addition to the constellation figures. It is so called, apparently, not because there are any stars, even small ones, forming a shape like a sextant, but because over a space not unlike a sextant there are none but very small stars.

Antlia, short for Antlia Pneumatica, the Air-pump, occupies another desert region. It was invented by Lacaille.

GOOD-WILL.

By J. T. Trowbridge.

In one of my walks, the other day, I saw two boys of my acquaintance, whom I shall call Orson and Robin, playing a game of barn-ball. I suppose every country boy knows what that is. The ball is thrown against the unclapboarded side of a barn, or any other suitable building, and as it rebounds, the thrower, who stands behind the knocker, tries to "catch him out." Of course, there must be no windows to knock the ball through, or, the first you know, there will be a pane to pay for, and, quite likely, somebody very cross about it. A nice little game it is for two; and as I used to be fond of it when I was a boy, and am something of a boy still, I stopped to watch my young friends Orson and Robin.

They played very well, and I sympathized so much with their enjoyment, that I was myself a little disappointed, when Orson's aunt appeared with a letter which she said must go to the post-office at once, and asked Orson to carry it.

Now, Orson was her favorite nephew, and I have no doubt she had given him the very ball and bat he was playing with at the moment. She is always making him presents or doing him favors. So, hard as it was for him to leave his sport, I expected to see him, nevertheless, run with the letter, to please one who was constantly doing things to please him. On the contrary, however, he grumbled out, "Can't go now,—I 've got Rob here to play with me," and continued pitching the ball.

"It is very important the letter should go to-night," pleaded the aunt. "Come, Orson, dear; then you can play when you come back."

"I don't want to! I can't!" And bounce went the ball again, tossed against the old barn.

"Oh yes, go!" said Robin. "I 'll go with you."

But Orson still refused, while the aunt turned back sadly toward the house.

"I 'll go alone, then," cried Robin. "Mrs. Woodman! I 'll take the letter!" And he ran after her to get it.

"Oh, come, now! You 'll spoil all the fun!" growled Orson, who was so angry that he would not go with Robin, but stayed about the barn and sulked,—flinging the ball occasionally, and trying to knock it himself,—until his companion returned.

I was walking by again when Robin came back; and I think that if my readers could see what I then saw in the faces of those two boys, it would be a great deal better than anything I can write. I thought of it a few days later, when I received the editor's kind invitation to "talk" to the boys of St. Nicholas; and I wished that I could paint for them that picture instead:

Orson, sullen, gloomy, selfish, unhappy;

Robin, bright, cheerful, radiant with satisfaction and good-will,—until he came within the shadow of Orson's discontent.

As I cannot paint this contrast, I may as well make it a text for my "Talk." The world is full of *Orsons*, boys and men; there is, moreover, an *Orson* and a *Robin* in almost every one,—a spirit of selfishness and a spirit of good-will; and I am going to ask each of my young readers to look for these two fellows in himself,—to get rid of the bad company of the one, and to cultivate the society of the other.

There are many subjects which I should like to talk with the boys about; but it seems to me they may be nearly all summed up in that one golden word—*Good-will.* Robin has this beautiful gift, and it makes him helpful and happy. Orson lacks it; and the opposite quality not only renders him miserable, when things do not go to suit him, but gives him the dreadful power of making others uncomfortable. The good spirit will make a brave, generous, upright, manly man of Robin; the bad spirit—if it be not cast out—will make a selfish, unaccommodating, hard, ill-natured man of Orson. Need I ask you, my dear boy, which *you* would rather be?

I have called the good spirit a *gift:* are those,

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then, to blame who have it not? But I have also said—or meant to say—that every one has it in a greater or less degree, and that all can cultivate it. Easy enough it seems for Robin to give up for the moment his own pleasures, and hasten to do a good action; his joy is in it, and he knows that his sports are all the sweeter when, after it, he comes back to them. It is not so easy for Orson, because he thinks too much about himself, in the first place; partly, also, because he is not wise, and does not know the satisfaction there is in generous conduct. Ah! if I could only show him his own portrait, and convince him that even he has a Robin side, which he can show to the world when he will, and make sunshine with it for himself as well as for others!

I suppose you all, my boys, are looking for some sort of success in life; it is right that you should; but what are your notions of success? To get rich as soon as possible, without regard to the means by which your wealth is acquired? There is no true success in that: when you have gained millions, you may yet be poorer than when you had nothing; and it is that same reckless ambition which has brought many a bright and capable boy like you, not to great estate at last, but to miserable failure and disgrace,—not to a palace, but to a prison. Wealth, rightly got and rightly used, rational enjoyment, power, fame,—these are all worthy objects of ambition, but they are not the highest objects, and you may acquire them all without achieving true success. But if, whatever you seek, you put *good-will* into all your actions, you are sure of the best success at last; for whatever else you gain or miss, you are building up a noble and beautiful character, which is not only the best of possessions in this world, but also is about all you can expect to take with you into the next.

I say, good-will in all your actions. You are not simply to be kind and helpful to others; but, whatever you do, give honest, earnest purpose to it. Thomas is put by his parents to learn a business. But Thomas does not like to apply himself very closely.

"And what's the use?" he says. "I'm not paid much, and I'm not going to work much. I'll get along just as easy as I can, and have as good times as I can."

So he shirks his tasks; and instead of thinking about his employer's interests, or his own self-improvement, gives his mind to trifles,—often to evil things, which in their ruinous effects upon his life are not trifles. As soon as he is free from his daily duties, he is off with his companions having what they call a good time; his heart is with them even while his hands are employed in the shop or store. He does nothing thoroughly well,—not at all for want of talent, but solely for lack of good-will. He is not preparing himself to be one of those efficient clerks or workmen who are always in demand, and who receive the highest wages. There is a very different class of people, who are the pest of every community, workmen who do not know their trade, men of business ignorant of the first principles of business. They can never be relied upon to do well any job they undertake. They are always making blunders which other people have to suffer for, and which react upon themselves. They are always getting out of employment, and failing in business. To make up for what they lack in knowledge and thoroughness, they often resort to trick and fraud, and become not merely contemptible, but criminal. Thomas is preparing himself to be one of this class. You cannot, my dear boy, expect to raise a good crop from evil seed.

By Thomas's side works another boy, whom we will call James. A lad of only ordinary capacity, very likely. If Thomas and all the other boys did their best, there would be but small chance for James ever to become eminent. But he has something better than talent; he brings good-will to his work. Whatever he learns, he learns so well that it becomes a part of himself. His employers find that they can depend upon him. Customers soon learn to like and trust him. By diligence, self-culture, good habits, cheerful and kindly conduct, he is laying the foundation of a generous manhood, and of genuine success.

In short, my dear boy, by slighting your tasks, you hurt yourself more than you wrong your employer. By honest service, you benefit yourself more than you help him. If you were aiming at mere worldly advancement only, I should still say that good-will was the very best investment you could make in any business. By cheating a customer, you gain only a temporary and unreal advantage. By serving him with right good-will,—doing by him as you would be done by,—you not only secure his confidence, but also his good-will in return. But this is a sordid consideration compared with the inward satisfaction, the glow and expansion of soul which attend a good action, done for itself alone.

Fifty years ago, a young man opened a small dry-goods store in New York. He had been a school-master, but having loaned his money to a friend, in order to start him in business, he was obliged, by his friend's illness, to assume the business himself. On the morning of the opening, he heard his clerk tell a woman that the colors in a piece of calico he was selling would not wash out. He reproved him for the falsehood on the spot.

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"You know they are not fast colors. Then why do you say they are?"

"I thought I was here to sell goods," was the clerk's poor excuse.

"So you are," said the employer. "But you are to sell goods for just what they are, not for what they are not. Don't misrepresent anything, though you never make a sale. Treat every customer just as you would wish to be treated yourself. Ask a fair price for everything, and do not deceive anybody. I believe that is a true principle of business, and I am going to carry it out."

"It is a fine theory," replied the clerk; "but it can't be carried out in any line of business. If you are going to try it, I may as well look for another place, for you wont last long."

The employer did try it, however; and when he died a short time ago, he left one of the three largest fortunes in America. His name was A. T. Stewart. What became of the clerk I do not know.

Now, I do not mean to hold up Mr. Stewart as an example to be followed by the boys I am talking to. But he is a striking illustration of the fact that deception in trade is not necessary to success. He believed, on the contrary, that in the long run it could only lead to failure. Here is a golden saying from the lips of a man who in fifty years amassed more than fifty millions of dollars:

"I CONSIDER HONESTY AND TRUTH AS GREAT AIDS IN THE GAINING OF FORTUNE."

If such a man, with such wealth, should go still farther, and make *good-will* to his fellow-men the leading motive of his life, what a power he might become, and what a halo of glory would crown his name!

Ah, my boys, what a world it would be, if this spirit prevailed in it,—if on every side we met those ready to help and cheer, instead of being compelled always to be on our guard against selfishness and fraud! Now, every one can do his share toward making his own little world such a world. I have known a single brave, manly, generous boy to influence a whole school, so that it became noted for its good manners and good morals. I have also seen a vicious boy taint a whole community of boys with his bad habits, and set them to robbing orchards and birds'-nests, torturing younger children and dumb animals, using bad language and tobacco, and doing a hundred other things which they foolishly mistake for fun.

Good-will should begin at home. How quickly you can tell what sort of spirit reigns among the boys or in the families you visit! In some houses there is constant warfare; at any time of day, you hear loud voices and angry disputes.

"You snatched my apple and eat it up!"

"Touch that trap ag'in, Tom Orcutt, and I 'll give ye somethin' ye can't buy to the 'pothecary's!"

"Ma! sha' n't Sam stop pullin' my hair? He 's pulled out six great handfuls already!"

"He lies! I ha' n't touched his hair!"

"Who 's been stealin' my but'nuts?"

"Pete shot my arrow into the well,—and now sha' n't he make me another?"

Then go into a house where you find peace instead of war, innocent and happy sports instead of rude, practical jokes,—and, oh, what a difference!

You may always tell a boy's disposition by noticing his treatment of his sisters. A mean and cruel boy delights in tyrannizing over smaller children: but in the presence of stronger boys, he can be civil, and even cringing. A cowardly fellow like that is pretty sure to exercise his ill-nature upon the girls at home.

Now, I know that many of the boys I am talking to have far more good-will than they ever show. Their disagreeable ways are the result of long habit and want of thought. The spoiled child is pretty sure to form such ways. He is accustomed to think only of himself, and to have others think chiefly of him. That is the trouble, I suspect, with Orson. Will he, when he reads this, resolve to break up the old, bad habit, and cultivate the better spirit that is in him?

By good-will I do not mean simply good-nature. *Good-nature* may sit still and grin. But *good-will* is active, earnest, cheering, helpful.

Ah, my boys, I have told you many stories,—and I have no doubt some of you wish I had made this a story instead of a talk. But the real motive of all my stories—the lesson I have always wished to teach in them, but which I am afraid some of you have overlooked—has been this which I am trying to impress upon you now. If I were to write as many more, the hidden moral lurking in every one of them would be the same. Or if I were now to take leave of you forever, and sum up all I have to say to you in one last word of love and counsel, that one word should be—GOOD-WILL.

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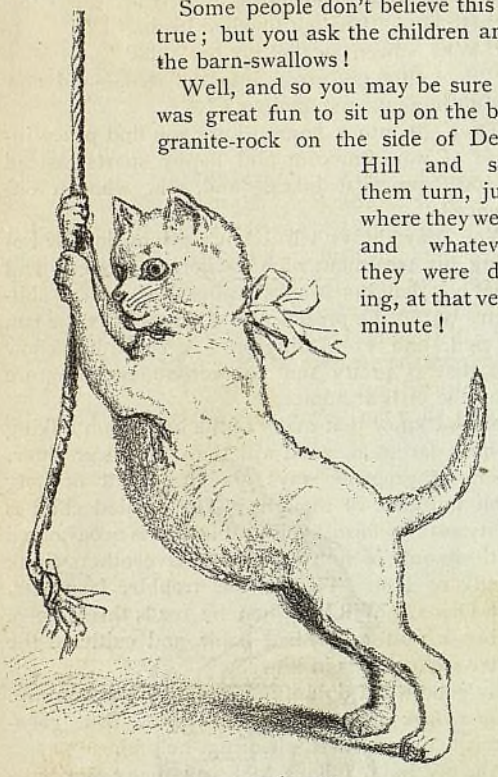
TURNING INTO CATS.

By Frances Lee.

Once there was a law that, on a certain day, when the meeting-house bell rang for noon, everybody should turn into a cat.

Some people don't believe this is true; but you ask the children and the barn-swallows!

Well, and so you may be sure it was great fun to sit up on the big granite-rock on the side of Deer Hill and see them turn, just where they were and whatever they were doing, at that very minute!



MR. FADYON'S FOOL.

The minister's son had come into the study, with his hat in his hand, and said:

"Shall Cornelius and I, sir, take our scythes, sir, and go out and mow a little while, sir?"

And then Mr. Fadyon's fool caught hold of the bell-rope.

Mr. Fadyon's fool knew some things as well as anybody; and he knew how to ring the bell exactly when the sun-dial and the noon-mark and his grandmother's eight-day clock said it was noon.

So "ding, dong!" went the bell, and—it was only a Maltese kitten that had hold of the rope!

Just at that hour, Aunt Patty was out in her garden hoeing weeds, with an old hat of Uncle Rodney's tied on her head; and she began to turn, first her nose and then her chin. They were very long and sharp when she was Aunt Patty, and they grew short and snubby, and whiskers began to start, and her ears pricked up as though she heard something, and then, quicker than you could say "scat!" she was a spotted cat chasing Deacon Davis's hens, that were trying to sneak through the garden fence with the old rooster's spurs on. After scaring them half out of their feathers, she kept on through Mrs. Deacon Davis's cat-hole, and up in the back chamber, where she prowled about and sniffed in all the dark corners and behind the old tea-chests and barrels.

When she was Aunt Patty she always had mistrusted whether or no Mrs. Deacon Davis had n't some cobwebs and poke-holes out of sight, for all that she kept everything looking neat as wax on the outside.

And then the minister's son jumped with one spring on the minister's shoulder, and began to bite the minister's hair and claw off his glasses, for he liked rough ways and mischief as well as any boy, only he had to be proper because he was the minister's son.

The minister looked around solemn and dignified, a good deal astonished; and then his glasses grew rounder and rounder, and his arms grew

AUNT PATTY.

slenderer and slenderer; and then he seemed to wink all over; and then there was a great black cat, with a white spot on his throat and a white

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face and four white feet, sitting in the study-chair, snapping at the flies, with one paw on a volume of Jonathan Edwards' sermons.

THE MINISTER AND HIS SON.

It was a great change for the minister. But as for Mrs. Deacon Davis, she did n't seem to need to alter hardly a bit. Her eyes were the mildest skim-milk before, much more faded than an old cat's eyes; and her hair was pale buff and sort of furry. And she had a way of rubbing herself against the side of her chair as she talked along in a kind of purr-purring tone. She stopped work for the first time in her life, though, and taking her yellow paws out of the wash-tub, went to chasing dandelion-down.

But as soon as ten clocks anywhere in town struck one at the same second, all the cats turned back to people again; and you ought to have seen how surprised they were to catch themselves doing such odd things.

Aunt Patty was rummaging through the minister's wife's bureau-drawer among her best clothes; and, bad as that looked in a cat, it looked a thousand times worse in Aunt Patty, with Uncle Rodney's hat still on her head and a hoe under her arm.

Mrs. Deacon Davis was curled up asleep in the rocking-chair, and she rubbed her eyes and put her hands in the wash-tub again, and did n't know anything had happened. She would n't believe it now if you should tell her. Only, when her clock struck one (it was always a little slow), she felt grieved to see a few cat's hairs on her chair-cushion, and to find she had lost so much good time right out of the heart of the day. "But then," she thought, "my nap has rested me up completely, and with such poor health as I enjoy, I do suppose I needed it. And, all *is*, I must work the smarter to make up."

The minister looked most astonished to find himself playing with a large brown, limp rat. "It is very extraordinary! Most remarkable!" said he. "Gloriana!" he continued, turning to the black serving-maid, who was swinging herself down from the cherry-tree, where, a moment before, she had been a black kitten, chasing a squirrel. "Gloriana! you may take this dead animal and bury the creature in the garden. It will act as a fertilizer."

And then he began to walk up and down the footpath, from the door to the gate, with his hands behind him, and to think over the heads of his next sermon.

AUNT PATTY IS HERSELF AGAIN.

On the whole, it was funnier when the cats

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became people than when the people became cats; they were so surprised and shocked to find where they were and what they were doing.

Now, you just think, some night as you are dropping off to sleep, how the folks you know, one after another, would look turning to cats, and what they would fall to doing.

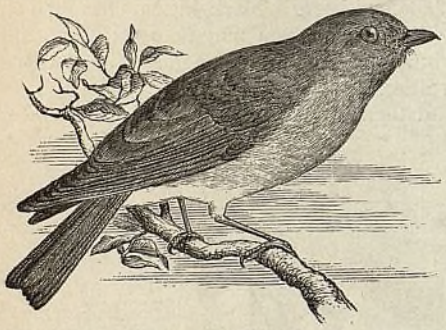
And the next thing, if you don't believe my story ever happened, you will be believing some story not a bit more true.

SOMETHING ABOUT BIRDS.

[FIRST PAPER.]

BY W. K. BROOKS.

THIS morning, the 9th of March, as I was arranging the papers upon my table, my attention was caught by the notes of the first bluebird of the season. You all know what a welcome sound this



THE BLUEBIRD.

is, and how anxiously we look forward, as spring draws nearer, to the time when our song-birds shall return from their long winter journey to the south. The migrations of birds, their departure in the fall to a milder region, and their return in spring as soon as the weather has grown warm enough to make our northern latitudes suitable, are some of the most wonderful facts in their history, and I hope that a few words upon this subject will form an interesting introduction to what I have to say about "Birds."

WINTER BIRDS.

Those of us who spend our winters in the city are apt to think that all our wild birds desert us during the cold weather, for the only birds which are found in our parks and gardens at this time are the domesticated pigeons and sparrows. In the country, however, many birds are to be met with during the whole winter, and some of them, such as the hawks, seem to be more abundant at this time than at any other; but this, probably, is owing to the fact that the bare branches do not hide them as does the foliage in summer. Another reason why they are more often seen in winter is, that at this time their hunger drives them to hunt for food in open fields, and sometimes even in barn-yards. Besides the hawks, owls are found at all seasons; and the familiar "caw" of the crow is often heard in the dead of winter. Quails and partridges are also abundant at this time, and as they can be followed by their footprints upon the snow, they are readily taken for market. Although most of our smaller birds migrate in the fall, a few do not. The blue-jay, after his winter stores of nuts and acorns are exhausted, is often glad to make a meal upon the few frozen apples which still cling to some of the topmost branches of the trees, and occasionally a large band of noisy jays gathers in the orchard for this purpose. In the woods the little nut-hatch is found, even in the coldest weather,

THE NUT-HATCH.

tapping the trees with his bill, and examining every crevice in the bark for hidden insects. This little bird does not seem to suffer from the cold of our

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most severe winter days; but when in warmer weather icy rain and sleet cover the branches and trunks of the trees with a thick varnish of ice, he is no longer able to obtain his food in the woods, and is sometimes driven by hunger to the farmer's barn-yard to pick up a little of the food which is thrown to the poultry. Sometimes in the dead of winter we find a stray robin, or bluebird, or blackbird, looking very forlorn, but still able to endure the cold and to pick up a scanty living. These are supposed to be stragglers, prevented by some accident from accompanying their companions in their flight southward.

THE SNOWY OWL.

There are a few winter birds which are not found here at any other season, but spend the rest of the year much farther north. The large snowy owl is a native of those Arctic regions where the ground is covered with ice and snow all the year; and explorers meet it far beyond the Arctic circle. Occasionally in winter it wanders down into the United States, and as there are no towns or villages in the frozen deserts among which it lives, it has never learned to shun them, but often flies into cities without understanding its danger, until it falls a victim to its ignorance. Wilson, the ornithologist, tells of two which alighted upon the court-house in Cincinnati; and I once obtained the dead body of one which had entered the town of Geneva, N. Y., flying about the streets as quietly as a dove, and finally attacking some meat hanging in front of a butcher's shop, where it was killed. These which I have mentioned are by no means all our winter birds, but they are enough to show that we are not entirely deserted by birds at this season, although it is true that by far the larger number of them do migrate to a warmer climate.

Why do Birds Migrate?

Inability to stand the cold of our winters is generally supposed to be the reason of this migration, and in many cases this is true. A humming-bird or a summer yellow-bird would die very soon if it should be exposed to a winter storm; but we often have very cold and stormy weather after our earlier spring birds have returned, yet they live through it without appearing to suffer very greatly. Birds are very well protected from the cold by their feathers and their warm blood, and the stray robins and blackbirds which occasionally winter with us do not have any difficulty in withstanding the cold.

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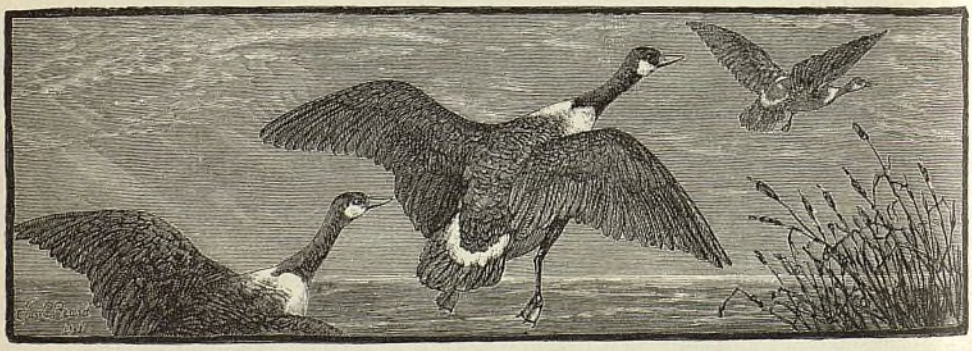
Hence we must look for some other reason for their migration. Most of our migratory land-birds feed upon insects, worms, and small fruits and seeds, and as these cannot be obtained in the winter, the birds must either move southward when the home supply begins to fail, or starve. Lack of food, not the cold, is the reason of their migration. Water-birds seem to be able to endure any amount of cold; a duck will swim contentedly for hours, entirely surrounded by ice, and not seem to mind the cold at all. Many of our common water-birds are met with in summer far beyond the Arctic circle, so that inability to stand the climate cannot be the reason why they leave us in the fall for the south. Marsh-birds, like the snipe, the coot, and the plover, and many of our water-birds, such as the wood-duck, feed upon the small animals and plants which they find in shallow water, or in the mud; but as soon as the frost comes, all the shallow water is changed to ice, so that this supply of food is cut off, and the birds must go to a warmer country.

We can see, then, that birds migrate from lack of food, and not on account of the cold weather, for those water-birds which, like the gull, are able to catch fish in deep water, stay with us through the whole winter. The lower great lakes, Erie and Ontario, are so wide and deep that they usually freeze only around the shores, and the gulls have plenty of open water on which they can fish. Sometimes, however, the winters are so very cold that these lakes are covered with ice as far as the eye can reach, and the gulls then gather in great numbers upon the open water of Niagara River, below the falls, and live upon the fish which they find there.

Every one has heard of the ice-bridge which is formed upon this part of Niagara River during very cold winters. For a mile below the falls the river is wide and deep, and although there is an exceedingly rapid current at the bottom, the water at the top has very little forward motion, part of it actually moving up toward the falls. You will easily understand how this comes about if you watch the water driven down from a faucet into a tub. You can see from the air-bubbles that the falling stream does not stop when it reaches the surface of the water in the tub, but goes down to the bottom. Now, if you throw a little coarse sand or shot into the water, it will be driven away from the point where the stream is falling, and toward the sides of the tub; but if you put a few chips or straws upon the surface of the water, they will be drawn toward the falling stream. This shows that there is a current away from the fall at the bottom of the tub, and another, toward the fall, on the surface. So at Niagara there is a strong current down the river at the bottom, and another flowing toward the falls on top. About a mile below the falls, near the point where the railroad suspension bridge is placed, the river suddenly grows very narrow; and from this point down to the mouth there is a rapid downward current on the surface as well as below. The ice which is carried over the falls plunges down with the falling water to the bottom of the river, and then starts down the stream with the lower current; but as ice is lighter than water, it soon comes to the top again, and drifts slowly back toward the falls, like the straws on the water in the tub. As more ice is constantly being carried down by the water, this portion of the river soon becomes pretty well covered with large blocks, which at length become wedged together, and frozen so that they form what is called a bridge, reaching from shore to shore. This bridge continues to grow during the cold weather, and at last forms a solid sheet of ice, nearly a mile long, and thirty or forty feet thick.

Of course this stops all fishing upon this part of the river, and as not all the gulls which have gathered here are able to obtain sufficient food upon the open part of the river below the bridge, many are compelled to join the crows in searching the fields



WILD GEESE: THE RISE.

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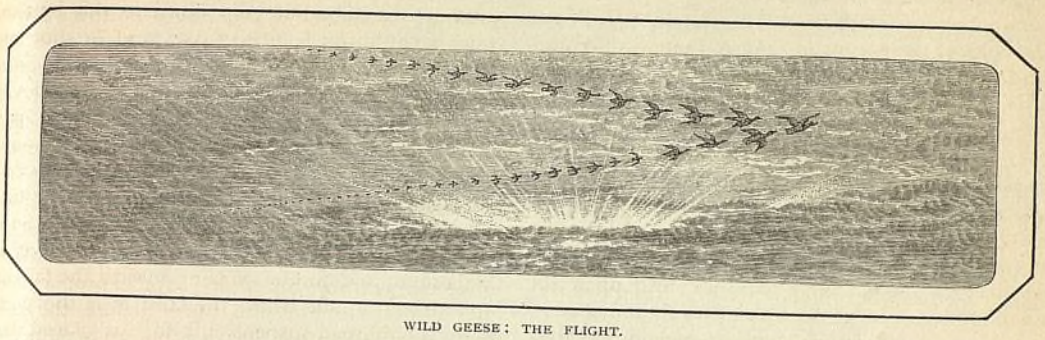
and woods for stray squirrels or birds; and a large mixed flock of black crows and white gulls hunting in company, apparently on the most friendly terms, is not an uncommon sight at this time.



WILD GEESE: THE FLIGHT.

Besides the gulls, many other water-birds gather upon the open part of Niagara River in the very cold weather; but they are all fish-catching birds, such as the loon and sheldrake. None of our shallow-water or marsh birds are found there, for all these have migrated to the south, very clearly because of a lack of food.

How do Birds Migrate?

So much about the reason why birds migrate. Now a few words as to the way in which the migration is performed.

Some birds fly only in the day-time; others, such as the fly-catchers, king-fishers, whip-poor-wills, and night-hawks, do their traveling at night. Many journey alone or in pairs, although most unite into flocks and travel in company. The migrations of the wild goose are especially interesting. When the time for migration has come, the wild geese assemble, and spend some time in a loud and animated discussion of the journey. Then they all rise into the air, and arrange themselves in two long lines, meeting like the sides of the letter V. The leader takes up his position at the point where the lines meet, and the birds begin their flight, the point of the V going first, so that the leader is in advance of all the rest of the flock. He is always an old gander; only as this position is very fatiguing, one leader does not occupy it very long, but, as soon as he becomes tired, falls back to the rear, and allows another to take his place. Geese, while upon their migrations, fly very rapidly —according to some estimates, at the rate of one hundred and twenty miles an hour, or two miles a minute. They generally rest by some pond or river a part of the night, but sometimes they fly all night as well as all day. In the day-time, when the weather is clear, they fly at a great height, often so far up that they are invisible to us, and their loud clamor is the only sign we have that they are passing. At night, or in foggy weather, they fly much nearer the earth, and when the air is very foggy they often become lost, and settle to wait for the mists to clear away. At such times they sometimes guide themselves by following the courses of rivers; and occasionally a flock, going south along the Niagara River on a dark, foggy night, flies directly into the falls, mistaking for a cloud the mist which rises in front of them. Of course they are instantly killed, and their dead bodies are sometimes found thrown on the rocks at the sides of the river. They often become bewildered by the bright light from a blast-furnace, and fly round and round it till daylight, calling to each other all the time, and keeping up such a constant and loud noise that they can be heard a mile or more away. Many of them become suffocated by the gases from the furnace, and fall to the ground so dizzy and helpless that they may be caught without difficulty. Young ones caught in this way, or in any other way which does not injure them, are easily tamed, and soon associate with the ordinary tame geese on the most friendly terms, appearing to entirely forget their wild life. But when the wild geese begin to fly north again in the spring, these partially tamed ones hear their calls, and all their wild instincts awaken. They become very uneasy and restless, and, unless their wings are clipped, soon bid farewell to their tame companions, fly up into the air, and join some passing flock. Nuttall gives the following story, which could hardly be believed if something similar to it were not narrated by others: "A Mr. Platt, of Long Island, having wounded a female wild goose, succeeded in taming it, and left it at large with his other common geese. Its wound healed, and it soon became familiar and reconciled to its domestic condition; but in the following spring it joined a party of Canada geese, and disappeared until autumn, when at length, out of a passing flock, Mr. Platt observed three geese to detach themselves from their companions, and, after wheeling round several times,

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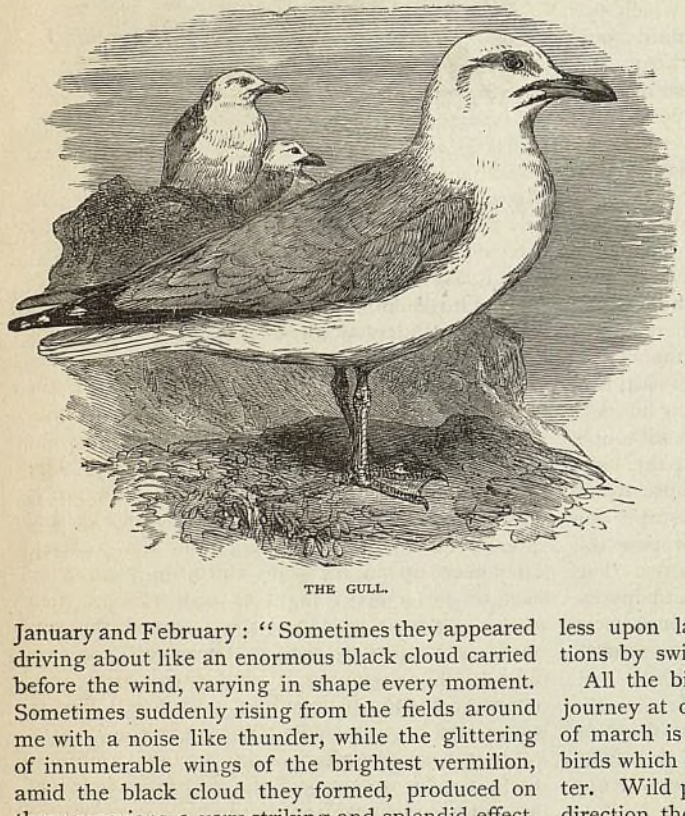
alight in the barn-yard, when, to his astonishment, he recognized in one of the three his long-lost fugitive, who had now returned, accompanied by her offspring, to share the hospitality of her former acquaintance."

The distances traveled by different birds vary very much. The robin, red-winged blackbird, and the like, go only far enough to find warmth and food, and one or two warm days in early spring are enough to call them back, after which they often go south again. The red-winged blackbird is found during the whole winter as far north as Virginia, particularly near the sea-coast and in the vicinity of large rice and corn fields.

Wilson gives the following account of the abundance of these beautiful birds in Virginia during January and February: "Sometimes they appeared driving about like an enormous black cloud carried before the wind, varying in shape every moment. Sometimes suddenly rising from the fields around me with a noise like thunder, while the glittering of innumerable wings of the brightest vermilion, amid the black cloud they formed, produced on these occasions a very striking and splendid effect. Then descending like a torrent, and covering the branches of some detached grove or clump of trees, the whole congregated multitude commenced one general concert or chorus that I have plainly distinguished at the distance of more than two miles; and when listened to at the intermediate space of about a quarter of a mile, with a slight breeze of wind to swell and soften the flow of its cadences, it was to me grand and even sublime."



THE GULL.

Other birds travel much farther in their annual journeys. In the summer the humming-bird is found as far north as Hudson's Bay, but it spends its winters in those tropical, or almost tropical, regions, where the flowers bloom the year through. As spring advances, this bird travels northward from Mexico by short journeys, keeping pace with the opening flowers, which afford it an unfailing supply of honey and insect food. The distance from the shores of Hudson's Bay to the regions of perpetual summer is nearly as great as that which separates New York from San Francisco, and what can be more wonderful than that a delicate bird, weighing less than an ounce, should be able to make such a journey twice a year; and not simply be able to make the journey, but to do it at the proper time, leaving the north before the cold weather has set in, and returning only after the summer is enough advanced to supply all its wants?

Many other birds also make their journey in short flights. This is the case with the robin and the blue-bird, although each is able to fly a great distance without rest, for they are said to visit Bermuda, about three hundred miles from the nearest land.

Most birds make their migrations by flight, but a few do not; our coots and rails perform at least part of the journey on foot. The penguin is a water-bird, with short wings, which are almost bare of feathers and are useless for flight, although they serve as excellent fins for swimming. In order that the feet may be more useful in swimming, the legs are placed so far back upon the body that the bird is almost helpless upon land, and therefore makes its migrations by swimming.

All the birds so far spoken of undertake their journey at certain definite seasons, and their line of march is north and south; but there are some birds which make migrations of a different character. Wild pigeons, for instance, move in whatever direction they are likely to find food, as often east or west as north or south, and these journeys take place at any time when there is a scarcity of food. About fourteen years ago wild pigeons were very abundant over the Western States, and as it did not take them a great while to eat up all the food in any district, they were migrating in large flocks almost continually. No one who has not seen them can form any conception of the numbers which travel together. The approach of a flock is like

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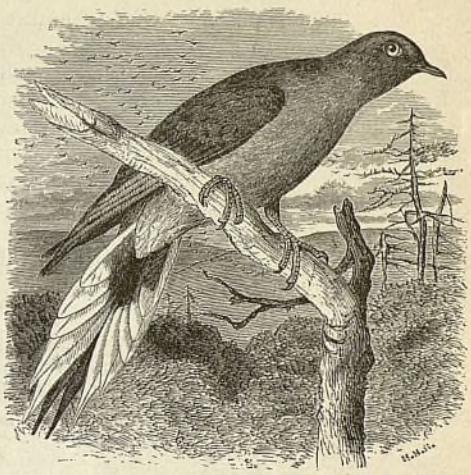
the coming of a thunder-cloud; the sky is clouded by them so that it suddenly grows dark, and the noise of their wings is like that of an approaching tornado. At the time I have spoken of, I think it was in 1864, they were so abundant in northern Ohio that millions of them were forced to cross Lake Erie to Canada every day for food, and to return at night to roost. The lake opposite Cleveland, where I saw them, is about seventy-five miles wide, and their roosting-place was about twenty-five miles from the shore of the lake, so that they must have flown at least two hundred miles each day. The lake shore, at Cleveland, rises abruptly from the water's edge to a height of nearly eighty feet, and on their return in the evening, the birds flew very close to the surface of the water until they reached the shore, when they rose just far enough to clear the top of the bluff, which was lined with men armed with guns, clubs, nets, stones and fish-poles, standing ready to attack them. The flocks were so dense and the birds flew so near the ground that many were killed with long poles; and although thousands were slaughtered every day this did not make any visible diminution of their numbers. So many birds were killed and wounded at this time, that no one tried to collect those which he himself had killed, but each one gathered all that he could find. Some did not even load their guns, but only fired off caps, thus saving their ammunition, and claiming their share of the birds. In the corn and wheat fields in the vicinity of Cleveland, pigeons were so abundant that two men and a dog could kill enough in a few hours to load a wagon; and I have seen a man without a gun, but with a retriever dog, gather all the birds he could carry, simply by collecting those which others had wounded and allowed to escape and hide themselves. The destruction of crops which such an abundance of pigeons gives rise to is nearly as great as that caused by the grasshoppers, and it is very fortunate that these immense flocks do not return to the same region year after year.

What Guides the Birds?

We have now seen the reason why birds migrate, and the manner in which the journey is made. Now, the question will be asked, "How are the birds guided upon their journey?" It is hard to answer. Naturalists know something about it, but very little indeed.

We know that many birds, the geese for instance, put themselves under the direction of a leader, and we know that this leader is an old bird which has made the journey often before. Many birds are hatched so late in the season that they are too young and feeble to make the journey at the time their friends start for the south. Therefore, they are left behind, and although they soon grow up and become strong enough to migrate, they do not know the way, and as there is no old bird to show them the path, they are compelled to stay through



THE WILD PIGEON.

the winter, and live upon such food as they are able to find. We see from this that the journey is not directed merely by instinct, but that some experience is also necessary, for if it were not, young birds could find their way as well as old ones. Then, we cannot understand how it is that geese become confused and lost in stormy weather, unless we believe that they find their way by memory of the landmarks. No one who watches a troop of swallows, when they are preparing to leave us in the fall, can doubt that the knowledge of the older birds is very important. As the time for migration draws near, these birds gather in large flocks, and spend several days in preparing for the journey. They keep up an incessant twittering, and often start off for a short flight in order to try their wings; when at last they have learned the surrounding country so well that they will have no difficulty in recognizing it when they return, they mount into the air together, at a signal from a leader, and begin their long voyage to the south.

These noisy consultations and preliminary flights would not be necessary if the migration were entirely due to instinct; and those who have examined the subject the most carefully, conclude that both instinct and experience have part in it.

Migration not Confined to Birds.

Birds are not the only animals which migrate. The journeys of the salmon are as regular and remarkable as those of birds. The salmon lays its eggs in small, shallow streams of fresh water, often a thousand miles or more from the ocean. These

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eggs are left to hatch by themselves; yet when the little fish reach the proper age, they abandon the small streams where they were born, and begin their long trips to the ocean. When they reach salt water they find abundance of food, and grow very rapidly. They remain in the ocean until the time comes for them to lay their eggs. Then, in some wonderful way, they find the mouth of the river by which they reached the ocean, and travel up it, through lakes and over rapids, falls and mill-dams, sometimes leaping over obstructions which are more than ten feet high. Having reached the shallow streams where they were born, they lay their eggs, and then return to the sea, but so thin and haggard that the fishermen at the mouths of the salmon rivers call them by a different name, and it is hard to believe that they are of the same species with those which are caught while ascending the rivers. Once in the ocean again, they quickly recover their lost strength.

The great migrations of insects are so well known that I need say very little about them. You all remember the army of locusts told about in the Bible. Within a few years we have learned that our country is not free from dangers of the same kind, for in the Western States swarms of grasshoppers may come up before the wind, and sweep over the country, changing verdant fields into a brown desert, and leaving no green thing behind them. These insect migrations, like those of the wild pigeon, do not occur at any particular season, and are caused by lack of food.

It is not generally known that our gray squirrels sometimes assemble in great troops and migrate to a better country. This does not occur very often; but occasionally, when the squirrels are very abundant in a region where food is scarce, they band together and move straight forward, through forests and fields, until they find a place where food is abundant. These, and the journeys of many other animals, show that the tendency to migrate is not confined to birds.

HANS GOTTENLIEB, THE FIDDLER.

By Howard Pyle.

A long time ago, in the good old days, when the world was fresher than it is now, when fairies were abundant, and when, were one bold enough to climb the breezy hill-tops, one might see scores of little red-capped dwarfs and mannikins dancing in the magic circle of the moonlight,—a "Nix," a mysterious water-spirit, had his home in a pond adjoining an old, ruined mill near Westerhausen.

When spring came, and the yellow-stockinged storks laid dead sticks crosswise on the high roofs of Westerhausen houses, and so built their nests, —when the frogs at night piped in the lowland marshes, and lambs capered in the moonlight on the misty hill-tops,—the Nickleman of Westerhausen would rise to the surface of the water, and beguile the sleepy echoes of the old mill to strange responses by the magic music of his violin. It was a music that no man with safety to himself might hear,—so piercingly sweet, yet so wild withal, that to listen to it was to be possessed by a strange madness; and the unfortunate being so bewitched would haunt the mill-pond night after night until his body wasted away and he died. This is what some of the good folks said; others affirmed that the music was so gay and rollicking, and yet so enchanting, that when one heard it, one was compelled, by an uncontrollable desire, to dance; and instances were even known where men had died from the effects of such uncanny waltzing.

Now, there was a certain fiddler in Westerhausen, Hans Gottenlieb by name, that used to play the violin at all the fairs and weddings.

Although Hans was an excellent performer, he was never contented with his own music; but when the young men would crowd around and thank him for his fiddling, he would say, sadly:

"Ah, yes! it's all very well, this playing waltzes, but if I could only fiddle one-quarter as well as the Nix of Westerhausen, now that would be something like!"

At length, Hans's continued complaints were overheard by a swineherd, who was a wise man, and saw strange sights, and knew curious things that no other man knew.

"So you would like to fiddle a-quarter as well as the Nix, would you?" said he.

Yes, Hans would.

"Very well! On the next St. John's Eve, at midnight, carry a jet black cock to the mill-pond, and, standing with your back to the water, throw

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it in. Then ... these words: 'Nix! Nix! black cock in water. ... land, thou in water. Come, teach me to ... one-quarter as well as thou.' After this, tak... our violin and play upon it, and you shall see what will happen."

Hans was delighted. He could hardly curb his impatience until St. John's Eve should arrive. As soon as the old church bell in the ivy-covered belfry tolled the hour of midnight, he sallied forth, with the black cock in a sack, and did as the cunning swineherd had directed. No sooner had he commenced to play upon his violin than he heard a splash in the water, and the next minute a cold, clammy hand was laid upon his own.

From that time, Hans Gottenlieb could play better than any man in the region.

Every one said that Hans surely would be contented now that the Nix himself had taught him; and he was contented—for a space. But one might as well expect to see a sieve filled with water as an unwise man satisfied with what he possesses, no matter to what extent his wants may be relieved. So it was with Hans; in two months' time he had begun to grumble as loudly as ever.

The wise swineherd having assisted him once,

THE SWINEHERD WHO KNEW CURIOUS THINGS.

Hans hoped that he could, and expected that he would, help him again. Accordingly, he applied to him once more.

"If I could only play one-half as well as the Nix," said he, "I feel sure I should be satisfied."

"I doubt that very much," said the swineherd; "you had better hold what you have, without grasping for more. Still, if you will have it, catch a black cat and do as I told you before."

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Hans was overjoyed. The next St. John's Eve, having caught the cat, he did as the swineherd had before directed him. This time the Nix griped him by the wrist until it was black and blue.

From that moment Hans could play as no man in the world was able to. Every one listened in astonishment, and even the young men and girls forgot to dance, and stood still in an ecstasy while he played,—and music must be magical indeed that could have that effect upon dancing youths and maidens.

GOTTENLIEB'S MUSIC WORKS A CHARM.

"Surely," said every one, "*now* Hans Gottenlieb is satisfied."

But no! Three months had scarcely passed by, when Hans began to grumble more than before.

"Why did I not ask to play as well as he himself?" said he. "Fool, that I was! While I was about it, I might as well have completed my request, and satisfied myself altogether."

At length, he concluded to ask the advice of the swineherd once more.

"You fool!" said the swineherd, when Hans presented his request. "Do you know what you ask?"

"Yes," said Hans; "I want to play as well as the Nickleman."

He then so begged and besought the swineherd, that the other at length yielded.

"Take," said the swineherd, impatiently, "a black calf, and do as you did before; and may your folly alight on your own head!"

The next St. John's Eve, Hans took the calf and proceeded to the mill-pond as before. When he approached, the water boiled and bubbled, lashing the sedge and rushes as though in a rage. Hans was somewhat daunted by this appearance, but at length, gathering together the remnants of his courage, he hurled the poor calf into the troubled waters.

He took out his violin and commenced to play with a trembling hand, and scarcely had the first note been evoked from the instrument, when a loud splash in the water was instantly followed by such a blow upon his elbow that Hans thought for the moment that his arm was broken. At the same time, the music changed [illegible]rain so wild, so piercing, that Hans himself [illegible]ed for breath, and commenced to caper and [illegible]ce furiously. The twigs and branches of the [illegible]wamp willows tossed and swayed; the stones rolled hither and thither, and a great oak that stood near at hand heaved and snapped to its very heart.

Hans became terrified at these appearances, and would have stopped, but he now found, to his horror, that he could not. In vain he strove to hold his arm; his elbow jerked and twitched in spite of himself, and the music continued. With a wild cry, poor Hans leaped over the rugged ledge that bordered the pond, and ran home as fast as his legs could carry him. Through the moonlight he flew, the music streaming after him like the tail of a meteor. As he scampered through the yard, the old sow and the two little pigs caught the sound of the music, and, starting up on their hind-legs, they danced after him with shrill squeals.

Hans burst into the house, carrying the music and pigs along with him. Frau Gottenlieb was asleep, looking as sweet as a cherub; but no sooner did her sleeping senses catch the cadence of the music, than, starting up and only half awake, she joined in the dance with Hans, the sow, and the two little pigs.

"Stop!" cried she, dancing and capering, while her night-cap and starched frills bobbed and shook. But Hans could n't. Then she commenced scolding him at the top of her voice; but, though her scolding would have stopped almost anything that possessed the power of locomotion, it had no effect upon the poor bewitched fiddler.

At length, daylight broke, and the neighbors, hearing Frau Gottenlieb's screams, the squealing of the pigs, and the shuffle and tread of dancing feet, came to see what all the ado was about. But they, too, were soon drawn into the vortex of the dance, until, at length, the whole village was waltzing, capering, and screaming at the poor fiddler, who, half distracted, and wholly terrified, fiddled as though for dear life.

One old woman, however, who was so deaf that

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she could not hear even a word of scandal, was the only one who did not join in the unwilling revel; and, although she wept bitter tears at having mislaid her ear-trumpet, it was lucky for her as well as the rest of the good folks, as after-events proved, that she was deaf to the alluring cadence; otherwise there might have been a number of dancing skeletons waltzing in Westerhausen to this day.

The dancing community finally made the old woman understand that they desired her to consult the wise swineherd in regard to their case, for since he had been indirectly the cause of all the hubbub, he was, in all likelihood, the only one that could know the proper remedy.

The swineherd, who had shown his wisdom by keeping away from the bewitched music, made the old woman understand that he did know the proper remedy, but that he would not apply it until the town council had guaranteed to pay him the sum of two thousand guilders.

The members of the town council, who at that time were dancing with the others, freely consented to pay the required sum. They complied the more readily with the swineherd's demand when they considered that the money was to be paid from the city treasury, and not from their own pockets.

The wise man then stopped his ears with wool, so closely that he could not hear a sound. He then made his way to where lord and lady, burgher and beggar, priest and people, pigs and all,—the great butcher beside the little tailor, every now and then treading on his toes,—were dancing and screaming.

The swineherd drew his terrible, flashing war-knife, and, walking up to the now more than ever terrified Hans, he cut—the strings of the fiddle across. The music instantly ceased, and every one stopped dancing.

They immediately paid the swineherd his two thousand guilders from the city treasury, and from that time he was a rich man.

Poor Hans could never play upon the violin afterward. He died a poor man, while, if he had been contented with his natural talent for music, he never would have been at a loss for notes to his last day.

"GOD KNOWS."

By Julia C. R. Dorr.

["Perhaps your young readers will be interested in this incident connected with the wrecking of the emigrant ship 'Northfleet.' The baby's grave is in the church-yard of Lydd, near Dungeness, England."—*Extract from Author's note.*]

Oh! wild and dark was the winter night,
When the emigrant ship went down,
But just outside of the harbor bar,
In the sight of the startled town!
The winds howled, and the sea roared,
And never a soul could sleep,
Save the little ones on their mothers' breasts,
Too young to watch and weep.

No boat could live in the angry surf,
No rope could reach the land;
There were bold, brave hearts upon the shore,
There was many a ready hand:
Women who prayed, and men who strove
When prayers and work were vain,—
For the sun rose over the awful void
And the silence of the main!

All day the watchers paced the sands—
All day they scanned the deep;
All night the booming minute-guns
Echoed from steep to steep.

"Give up thy dead, O cruel sea!"
They cried athwart the space;
But only a baby's fragile form
Escaped from its stern embrace!

Only one little child of all
Who with the ship went down,
That night, when the happy babies slept
So warm in the sheltered town!
Wrapped in the glow of the morning light,
It lay on the shifting sand,
As fair as a sculptor's marble dream,
With a shell in its dimpled hand.

There were none to tell of its race or kin,
"God knoweth," the Pastor said,
When the sobbing children crowded to ask
The name of the baby dead.
And so when they laid it away at last
In the church-yard's hushed repose,
They raised a stone at the baby's head
With the carven words,—"God knows!"

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WHY NELLIE WAS NOT POPULAR.

By Constance Marion.

"Well, Nellie, what is the matter?" asked Miss Percy, as she seated herself in a straw rocker on the piazza, where Nellie sat, chin in hand, pouting over a portfolio of prints that lay outspread before her.

"I 'm mad!" was the reply.

"Mad! That is distressing. I hope you don't bite."

"Oh, of course I don't mean *that!*" said Nellie, turning away from the pictures with an injured air. "I am vexed!"

"Then why did you say *mad?*"

"Oh, you are too particular, Aunt Alice! What do you think Kate Sibley has done?"

"I cannot imagine."

"Her mother gave her leave to invite three of the girls to go with her to the picnic in Cedar Creek, and she asked the Morrisons, and Minnie DuBose, and left me out, though I have worked every one of her examples ever since we have been in Denominate Numbers. It is just the way with them all. I do everything they ask me to do, and they all hate me. I 'll be even with them, though, —I 'll hate them, too."

And the future misanthrope began to sniffle and use her pocket-handkerchief.

"Don't you think it would be a wiser plan to make them love you?" asked Miss Percy, gravely.

"I can't do it," replied a chokey voice from behind the handkerchief.

"I have tried, but I ca-an't. They all like Rosa Guignard, who never does anything for anybody, but—but——"

As Nellie did not seem able to finish what she wished to say, Miss Percy came to her relief by observing, quietly:

"The girls all like Rosa on account of a very rare gift which she possesses."

"Rose Guignard gifted!" exclaimed Nellie, surprised into forgetfulness of her wrongs. "Why, Aunt Alice, she is 'way down in all her classes, and you know she is n't pretty,—that is, until you get used to her."

"But it is a much rarer gift than either intellect or beauty, that which Rosa possesses," returned Miss Percy.

Nellie's red-rimmed eyes asked a question to which Miss Percy replied with brevity, "Tact."

"Tact? What is that?" asked Nellie.

"I don't know any better definition of the word than one a great novelist has given: 'Tact is knowing what not to say.'"

"Don't *I* know what not to say, Aunt Alice?" asked Nellie, after a short silence.

"No, my dear; I don't think you do. You will take offense, probably, if I give you a few examples as proofs of this; but as I am in your mother's place this summer, I shall take the liberty of speaking plainly. Do you remember who were in the company yesterday when you coolly asserted that 'the Roman Catholic religion was nothing but mummery,' and went on to observe that, for your part, you looked upon a Romanist as no better than a Mohammedan, or a Jew?"

"There were so many—such a roomful—that I cannot—— Oh, Aunt Alice! I do remember now! Mademoiselle Durand was here, and she is a Romanist. I am so sorry!"

"And Miss Lyons was here also, and she is a devout Jewess. Did you notice that she kissed Kate Sibley when she went away, and did *not* kiss you?"

"Yes; and I wondered what was the matter. But mademoiselle kissed me."

"Yes, mademoiselle kissed you, although the flush had not died out of her cheeks which your thoughtless words had called up; and thereby showed herself to be, what Miss Lyons is not, a follower of Him who, *when He was reviled, reviled not again.*"

"Well, Aunt Alice, I did n't *mean* any harm; and you know everybody makes mistakes once in a while."

"But you make mistakes a great deal oftener than other people do. Shall I give some other instances of your not setting a watch on your lips?"

"If you like."

"Don't be sulky about it. I am 'cruel only to be kind.' When we were told the other evening that Miss Collins had small-pox, you immediately declared that if you were in her place you would rather die at once than get well and be a fright all the rest of your life. It was too dark on the porch to see the expression on Miss Adger's deeply scarred face, but I remember that lady's next remark was, 'I can't endure pert children.'"

"You can't expect me to see in the dark," muttered Nellie.

"No; but you ought to have remembered Miss Adger's presence. And you have not darkness for an excuse for what you said yesterday before Miss Pratt—that you believed all red-haired persons had bad tempers."

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"Of course I meant present company excepted."

"It would have been better not to mention red hair at all in Miss Pratt's presence, as her hair, though beautiful, is decidedly of a reddish tint. You made another blunder yesterday, and I think if old Dr. Manning had had Elisha's power, you would have stood in considerable danger of being torn to pieces by the bears after your facetious remarks on the subject of bald heads."

"Oh, I never thought about *his* being bald!"

and get Minnie DuBose to play that, as Nellie says *she* does play it beautifully.'"

"Resentful creature! Well, at any rate, I have never said anything against Kate's *looks*."

"No; on the contrary, I once heard you remark in the presence of a dozen of her schoolmates that she was *by far* the prettiest girl in Mr. Radford's school; but then you went on to qualify your praise by coolly observing, 'However, I don't think that is saying *much* for her.' You showed more temer-

NELLIE.

"But, my dear child, these are matters that *ought* to be thought about. Let me give you one plain, simple rule, Nellie: *Never remind any one of his or her personal defects.*"

"I'll try to remember that."

"There is another thing you would do well to remember—that comparisons are odious. When Kate Sibley played the 'Beautiful Blue Danube Waltzes' for me the other evening, it was scarcely polite in you to exclaim as soon as she had finished, 'Oh, Aunt Alice, you ought to hear Minnie DuBose play that! She does play it *beautifully!*' Later in the evening, when I asked Kate for the 'Étude Mazurka,' she replied, 'Oh, you must wait

ity than I imagined even *you* were possessed of in giving so many young girls to understand that you did not consider them at all pretty."

"Well, I *don't* think them pretty."

"Nor interesting either. At least so I judged the other night when, as they were going away, you observed, yawningly, 'Only ten o'clock.' I thought it was a 'great deal later than that.' You are an unselfish child, Nellie, and always ready to give up your own pleasure to oblige your friends; but you will never be popular until you learn to bear this in mind, that although it is always wrong to tell falsehoods, it does not follow that it is always right to tell uncalled-for truths."

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CURIOUS CUSTOMS OF EASTER.

By Olive Thorne.

DOUBTLESS all you young folks know why Easter is kept with rejoicings all over the Christian world. I am not going to tell you *why*, but *how*; for though all Christian nations celebrate it, each has its own peculiar customs for the occasion.

I suppose your idea of Easter celebration is to decorate the church with flowers, have extra-fine music on Sunday, and on Monday have colored eggs—you hardly know why. But if you were a little fur-clad Russian, you would look forward to Easter-time as you here do to Christmas. You would expect to have, on Palm Sunday, presents of flowers and fruit, birds and angels, all made of wax, and tied with ribbon to a palm-branch (or a stick representing one). And not only these, but books and playthings, and whatever nice gifts Santa Claus brings to you here in America. The play-things you would use at once, and the palm, or rod, you would keep carefully till the next morning, when it would be your duty, or at least your privilege, to go about the house and whip all the lie-a-beds, who were too sleepy, or too lazy, to go to early church. And when Easter arrived, you would have more eggs than you ever saw. Not only old Biddy's snowy-shelled baby-houses, but wonderful and beautiful things that grew in the glass-house or the porcelain-works. These would be of different sizes, ornamented with gold or colored flowers, and stuffed with candies and other nice things; or eggs made of gilt and silver paper, holding raisins and sweetmeats,—things to be hung up with ribbons, and kept with your treasures.

And funny sights you would see in St. Petersburg, though they would n't look funny to you, seeing through Russian eyes. You would see the whole city burst out into kisses! Every one kissing all his friends, at home or abroad, in the house or in the street, wherever he chanced to meet them; every general in the army kissing his officers; every captain his men. Every merchant saluting his clerks; every man his household. Even the Emperor kissing, not only his private family and his noblemen, but the generals of his army and a few private soldiers, enough to imply that he kisses the whole army. This would be a curious sight to American eyes, would it not?

But if, instead of Russia, your home were in the Emerald Isle (as poets have called Ireland), you would be careful to get up early on Easter morning, to see the sun dance when rising! You can do it in America just as well, by the way, and see it just as well, too. You need only a great deal of faith, and a small spring or bit of clear water to look into. Try it, and see.

Very different would be your Easter if your mother wore a mantilla over her head, and your father was a dark-haired Spaniard, and lived in Seville. You 'd be a Roman Catholic, of course, and you would go with mamma to the grand Cathedral to see the paschal candle—a monster of the candle family, nine yards high, made of wax, and standing on a marble pedestal, and lighted by brand-new fire, struck from a flint by a priest.

Then you would hear high mass, beginning behind a great veil or curtain, and at a certain point in the ceremony, you would see the curtain snatched off, and fire-works burst out of the upper

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gallery, and all the twenty-four bells of the tower would ring out together in a lively peal, and all the bells of the city would join in. Then you would go into the streets, and see people shooting at stuffed figures of Judas Iscariot, hanging from ropes stretched across the street. And if you were near the ocean, and could see the ships, you would see the effigy of this same Judas hung to the ship's yard-arm, dipped in the water, and beaten over the head and shoulders when it came up.

A stranger festival you would see at this time if you were so unhappy as to belong to the Turks. At break of day, the Pacha goes to an open place, away from the city, where he thrusts a sharp knife into the throat of a ram, laid on an altar. Instantly a Jew snatches up the victim, throws it over his shoulders, and runs for a mosque. If the poor animal is alive when he reaches the sacred building, the omen is good, and every devout Turk believes that the year will be a fortunate one; but if the ram is dead, groans and laments arise—the year will be bad. That matter settled, begins a strange celebration, which I feel sure must be a painful sight to many. Every man sacrifices one or more sheep, as he is able, in the open street; the blood of the victims streams down the street, and the people dance and sing, shout, and discharge guns. This lasts for eight days.

Vastly different would be your customs if your name were Victor or Marie, and your home Paris. On Good Friday you would go with the grown-ups (if you were big enough) to the fine churches in the city, every one of which you would find decorated with flowers and other ornaments, and brilliantly lighted with hundreds of wax candles. There you would meet all your friends, also on a tour of sight-seeing. And on Easter-day you would see—*mamma come out in a new bonnet!*

Something not very unlike this you can see in our own fashionable churches, where it has been introduced among other French fashions, I suspect.

Another French custom, originated by so great a man as Charlemagne, was that of allowing every Christian to give an Easter-box (on the ear) to every Jew he met, as a mark of contempt. The world has nearly outgrown this barbarism, but relics still are seen in Paris, where Jews are often chased through the streets with stones, and their windows broken, on Easter-day.

Much more agreeable would be Easter among the Alps, where the joyful day is announced by beautiful hymns, accompanied by guitars, and sung by bands of musicians adorned with flowers. On hearing the music at the door, every family comes out and joins in the chorus, all rejoicing together in the happy day; then the wandering singers go on to the next house.

But in Rome you would see the most imposing Easters. Hundreds of strangers go to that city every year, to see the grand procession,—the Pope carried through the streets on the shoulders of men, sitting in his crimson chair of state, dressed in gorgeous robes, with silken canopy over his head, and preceded by two men bearing immense white fans of ostrich plumes. After celebrating high mass in St. Peter's, the Pope comes out on a balcony, and blesses the people; and in the evening, the grand dome, and all parts of the grandest church in the world, are brilliantly illuminated.

But as you are neither Spaniard nor Turk, French nor Italian, but American, you will like to know some of the queer things done about Easter-time, by our cousins over the water. In London, public festivals are nearly as rare as in our sober American towns; but in the country some of the old customs still linger.

Ceremonies begin with Palm Sunday (the last Sunday before Easter), when many Londoners "go a-palming." That is, into the country for branches of willow (since they have no palms). They come home with the soft yellow sprigs in their hats and button-holes, and bits held in their mouths. What becomes of the willow, after it has done duty as palm branches, history does not tell; but I do not suppose it is hung over the door to keep away evil, as it was of old in England, nor nailed to a balcony to preserve the house from lightning, as in Spain.

The next celebration is on Good Friday, when nearly all England is waked by the cry of "Hot cross buns!"

"One a penny buns,
Two a penny buns,
One a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns!"

In the old times, every family would send out and buy some of the hot, spicy cakes with a cross stamped on the face, for the breakfast-table. This, like other old customs, is fast dying out, and buns are neither so plenty nor so nice as they used to be.

This usage has been traced by some to the pagan custom of worshiping the Queen of Heaven with cakes, which still prevails in China, Mexico, and other countries. In past days, in England, bread was baked on Good Friday to keep through the year, in the belief that a little of it in water would cure any disease. This may be the origin of the buns, which some ignorant people nowadays keep hung up in their cottages.

Easter is the great festival, and what relics of old-fashioned observances still remain, are different in different parts of the kingdom.

Long ago, tansy cakes and tansy puddings were eaten at Easter, in memory of the bitter herbs at the paschal feast. In the same days the clergy

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and people played ball and danced in the churches. The highest dignitaries of the church—even the archbishop—joined in this ceremony. A dean, or other official, would begin it by starting a chant, and gravely dancing around to the tune, tossing the ball to others of the clergy who were dancing also. When this ceremony was over, the performers retired for refreshment, of which bacon—to show contempt of Jews—was a standard dish.

Another custom in Durham, is for men to go about the streets and take off a shoe from every woman they meet, unless she will pay a small fee to prevent it. The next day, as is but fair, the women retort by doing the same to men.

In some parts a still more ridiculous custom is found, called "heaving" or "lifting." On Easter Monday the men "lift" women, and on Tuesday the women are the lifters. It is done thus: two

EASTER HYMNS IN THE ALPS.

Of Easter Monday rites various curious relics still linger. One, called "clipping the church," is performed by children of the charity schools, amid crowds of people and shouts of joy. They place their backs against the outside of the church, and join hands till the circle is complete and the building surrounded, when the ceremony is over, and they go to another church.

strong men cross hands in the way we used to call "making a chair," in my school-days, or they carry a chair lined with white, and decorated with flowers and ribbons. On meeting a woman in the street, they invite her to take a seat, and, in fact, insist upon it. They then lift her into the air three times, when she must kiss each of her lifters, and give them money besides. In the time of Edward I.

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this custom was so general that even the king was "lifted."

In Kent, the young people on Easter Monday "go a pudding-pieing." That is, go to public-houses to eat pudding-pie, a dish about the size of a saucer, with raised paste rim, and custard inside.

And everywhere, and all the time, are eggs, eggs, eggs; boiled and colored; striped and mottled, and gilded; ornamented with names, or mottoes, or pictures. Common ones are variously adorned with designs drawn with a bit of tallow, which keeps the dye from taking on those parts. A better kind of decoration is to scratch the design with a sharp knife on an egg after it is dyed; landscapes, mottoes, etc., can be made very neatly.

A common game—which, perhaps, you know—is played with Easter eggs. The owner of a hard-boiled Easter egg challenges any one he meets to strike eggs with him. If his egg breaks the other, it is called "the cock of one," and its owner has the broken one as a trophy. When it has broken two, it is "cock of two," and so on. If an egg which is cock of one or more is broken, the conqueror adds the number of trophies won by the victim to his own score.

The custom of making presents of eggs is said to be Persian, and to bear allusion to the "mundane egg," from which the world was fabled by certain nations to have been derived. It is a custom among Jews, Egyptians, and Hindoos, and was adopted by Christians to symbolize the Resurrection.

This feast of eggs, therefore, very properly occurs at Easter.

HIS OWN MASTER.

By J. T. Trowbridge.

Chapter XVI.

REFUGE.

The peddling philosopher ate his supper by greedy snatches, while he listened to the boy's broken narrative.

At the close, he appeared chiefly struck by the fact that the drowned person had money in his belt.

"That makes it worth your while to look for him. Otherwise, and aside from that," he said, stirring a fresh cup of coffee, "I don't see that it matters much. I take a philosophical view of it. We 're made up of nat'ral elements. We use 'em for a while, then they return to nature. Just how they return, after we get through with 'em, don't make a particle of difference to the parties most interested. I mean me and you, after we 've shoveled off this mortal coil."

Jacob confessed that he was unable to take quite so philosophical a view of the subject.

"For my part," he said, "I should n't like to see anything that ever belonged to my friend, and seemed a part of him,—not even his clothes,—thrown away, and treated without respect."

"That 's a nat'ral prejudice," said the proprietor of the Ark. "Not many persons have got above it. But science shows us what we 've come from and what becomes of us, and cures prejudice. Do you see that?" holding up the skeleton of a fish.

Jacob saw it.

"Every creatur' that 's got a backbone is a vertebrate animal. Man has a backbone; so has a fish. Man is the highest of the vertebrates; the fish is the lowest. In nature, the lowest forms came first, and the higher were developed out of 'em. Next to fishes come reptiles, then warm-blooded creatur's, up to monkeys; then comes men. Your great-great—'way-back—great-grandfather was a fish. Before the fish there were lower and lower forms, 'way down to the first little simple speck of a living thing that we 've all come from. That 's the doctrine of *Evolution*. Darwin didn't invent it any more than I did. But he demonstrated it. I can't demonstrate it so well as he does, for I have n't the book-knowledge. He makes a good deal out of *nat'ral selection*, and what he calls *survival of the fittest*. Forms of creatur's all tend to vary, and conditions are always changing; and when there comes a variation that 's best adapted to a new condition, that is preserved, while those that aint adapted die off; at the same time the strongest kill off the weakest; and in this way Nature has built on and built up till she 's got to man. Whether she 'll have time to go any further, and make something as much ahead of man as man is ahead

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of a monkey, before the planetary system cools off, is a question I have n't made up my mind about. The earth has cooled off already, so that she is supported by the heat of the sun; and the sun can't keep on throwing off heat into the universe many million-million years longer without losing so much that we shall finally all freeze up here on this little planet; just as the moon froze up long ago, when the earth cooled down. Now, I 've told you what we 've come from," Sam Longshore added; "would you like to know where we go to?"

"I should like to know where I am to go to-night," replied Jacob, less interested in the remote past or the far future, than in the immediate question of bed and shelter.

The philosopher came back to practical matters. He regretted that he could not accommodate his visitor on board the Ark.

"I 've only just a bunk for myself to tumble into. But you 'll find farm-houses a little ways up the crick. There 's a village further on, which I 'm going to run up to in the morning. If you hurry, you 'll find some house where the folks aint yet abed. If you propose to look for the belt of money, may be I 'll see you in the morning."

Jacob waited only for a few simple directions as to the course he was to take, and started. The peddler called him back.

"There 's so many tramps and impostors traveling through the country, telling big stories to excite sympathy, that may be you wont find anybody to believe you. I believe you, because I 've got the science of human nature. I 'll lend you a little money. Here 's half a dollar,—that ought to pay your lodgings somewhere and breakfast into the bargain. If you find the belt you may pay me back. I suppose you 'll offer a reward for it, wont ye?"

"I 'd willingly give all the money I have in it to have *him* found," said Jacob.

"That 's too much," replied the peddler. "Say twenty-five dollars—that 's a handsome offer. Well, good-night! you 'd better hurry."

Keeping on up the creek, by a rough sort of wagon-road, Jacob passed a stump-lot, some cleared fields, a house or two in which all was dark, and at last came to one in which there was a light.

Before he had time to knock at the door, it was opened, and a woman with a pale and rather large face looked out at him with a start of surprise.

She was evidently expecting some one else, when she saw this boy.

"Can I stop here overnight?" said Jacob.

"I do not know," she answered, regarding him intently, but not unkindly. "Where does thee come from?"

Notwithstanding his unfavorable opinion of friend David, the boy felt a thrill of hope at the sound of the gentle voice and the Quaker form of speech.

He set out to tell his story; but before he had got half through she made him come in, and took his hat from his hand, and brought him to the kitchen fire, where she made him sit down and pull off his shoes, and warm his feet and dry his clothes.

She did not betray either much astonishment or much sympathy; but her voice kept the calm and even tone of a person accustomed to constant self-control. Her words were kind, however, and her acts were still more kind.

She offered to set out a supper for him, but he assured her that he was not hungry.

"Thee must not avoid telling the exact truth for fear of giving me trouble," she said, with a simple, earnest smile. "We have had many persons in distress in this house before, and it is our duty to do for such."

Jacob replied that he had supped with the river peddler.

"I think I know the man," said she. "A rather vain person in his talk; one who has drunk a little of the new wine of knowledge, and it has gone into his head. But he deals in excellent fabrics, and we sometimes trade with him."

She saw how haggard Jacob looked, and added: "Since thee will not have food, thee shall have a bed, for thee is very weary; and the sooner thy wet clothing is put off, the better."

"Oh, I am almost dry now; walking has warmed me," Jacob replied. He was glad to accept her offer, nevertheless.

With a heart warmed and grateful, he followed her to an upper room, where there was a comfortable bed; also a little stand, on which she placed a candle and left him. He quickly undressed and got into bed; then she came and took his damp clothes, to hang them by the fire, and carried away the candle, bidding him a pleasant good-night.

He could not remember that any woman had ever been so much like a mother to him. Such kindness was a balm to his heart, after his intense sufferings; and, soothed and comforted, he fell into a troubled sleep.

CHAPTER XVII.

A STRANGE BEDFELLOW.

HE was living over in frightful dreams the events of the evening, when there came again a sound of footsteps to the house.

The woman, who was still waiting and listening below, once more hastened to open the door. Again she was disappointed. A second stranger stood before her.

"Is there a hotel near here?" he inquired.

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"There is none nearer than the village," she replied,—"about two miles up the creek."

As he hesitated before speaking again, she observed him closely. He wore his coat buttoned tightly across his chest; he had a youthful face, and his manners were pleasing.

"I find myself in an awkward situation," he said at length, turning frankly toward her. "I have been out in the storm, and walked I don't know how many miles, having lost my way. Would it be possible to get somebody, at this time of night, to carry me to the village?"

"Nay, I fear that will be difficult," the woman replied. "But we can give thee shelter, and at least part of a bed, if thee will accept so much. We have already one stranger guest, a lad, who came but half an hour ago; and he has our only spare room. But thee can share it with him."

"This is unexpected kindness!" exclaimed the young man, gratefully. "I ought not to trouble you." And yet he could not resist her urgent request that he would walk in.

"I am expecting Matthew, my husband, to come home soon," she said. "If thee will not take the bed, then thee can sit by the fire and dry thy garments till he comes. Thee has had no supper?"

"I got something at a log cabin," he said,—"all I need to-night. I am so tired, I think I will, if you please, accept the bed you kindly offer me."

"Then come with me." Taking the lamp, she showed the way to the chamber. "I think he is asleep," she said in a whisper, "and it would be a pity to waken him. I have put his clothing by the fire; if thee will place thy garments on a chair outside the door, I will take them too."

Moving silently, she set the lamp on the stand, and withdrew.

The stranger, left alone, glanced curiously about the room, and at his bedfellow buried to the eyebrows under the coverlet; then he began to undress.

"SHE TOOK HIS DAMP CLOTHES, TO HANG THEM BY THE FIRE."

For some reason his eyes kept glancing at the bed, as if, being a fastidious gentleman, he felt some misgivings about sleeping with a stranger. At length, having got off his outer garments and his wet boots, he took up the lamp, and stepped cautiously to the bedside.

To protect himself from a mosquito or two which he heard buzzing about the chamber, Jacob had covered his head, leaving only a breathing-place under the folds of the sheet. Just the tip of a nose was left visible, with a few locks of light hair.

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The stranger lowered the lamp, and gazed for some seconds with curiously excited interest. Then he cautiously laid hold of the sheet about the head, and drew it down until an ear was exposed to view. It was the ear that had the scar upon it. His countenance lighted up with a strange smile. Then, having gazed a moment longer, he softly laid back the sheet, and stepped stealthily away.

Having quickly put on his garments again, he took the lamp in one hand and his boots in the other, and went down-stairs. He found the woman in the kitchen; and as she looked up at him with a mild questioning gaze, he said:

"I should like to place my boots near your fire; but my clothes will be dry by morning if I leave them in the room. I forgot to tell you that I shall have to take a pretty early start. I will pay for my lodging to-night, so that I can get off in the morning without disturbing you."

He was opening his pocket-book as he spoke.

"Nay, thee is welcome to thy entertainment, such as it is," she answered. "We never take money of wayfarers. I am sorry that thee must go so early; but if thee cannot await breakfast, I will leave something on the board for thee."

"Do you often entertain strangers in this way?" he asked, with a smile.

"Not of late years," she said. "But there was once a time when many a poor wayfarer found refuge in this house."

He glanced at Jacob's clothes and little black bag by the fire, and remarked:

"My bedfellow was out in the storm too, I take it."

"Nay, worse than that; he was in the river."

"Ah! How happened that?"

"The Cincinnati boat got aground above the bend, and some of the passengers had been ashore, when, as they were returning to the steamer, their skiff was overset by the raising of the cable, and one of their number was drowned. It was a dear friend of this boy's, and he left the steamboat—which went on its course—to search for him."

"Was the drowned person recovered?"

"Nay; there was a tug-boat employed to search for him, but with no success. It leaves the lad in a deplorable situation. The drowned man was his only friend in the world, he says."

"How distressing!" said the sympathizing stranger.

"To make the matter worse," she continued, "all the boy's money was in a belt which his friend wore about his body."

"And that is lost too!"

"I fear so. He will get help in the morning, and make further search. But, to do the lad justice, it does not seem to be the loss of the money that troubles him, but the loss of his friend. I never saw any person more devoted to another. He can scarcely speak of him without tears."

The stranger seemed a good deal affected by this account of his bedfellow.

"I regret that I have business engagements which will take me away so early," he said. "I would stay if I could, and join him in the melancholy task of seeking for his friend. If I don't see him before I start, tell him, if you please, how much I sympathize with him in his misfortune."

Just then he who had been so long expected came to the door. The wife started to meet her husband. The stranger did not wait to make his acquaintance; but, having gracefully uttered the sentiment which did so much credit to his heart, he returned to the chamber.

There, having put out the light, he undressed noiselessly in the dark, and got into bed, taking care not to disturb his weary bedfellow.

Chapter XVIII.

On Board the Ark.

Thanks to youth and health, and fatigue of body and mind, Jacob slept well, in spite of bad dreams. They waked him once or twice in the middle of the night; then when he opened his eyes again it was day.

A flood of anxious and painful thoughts rushed upon him, and he started up. It was a moment before he could make out just where he was. Then he remembered everything, and had also a strong impression that when he woke at midnight he had felt somebody in bed with him.

He found his clothes dry and hanging on a chair just inside the door; his shoes and bag beside them. The sight of them brought back upon his heart all the good woman's kindness to him, and made him catch his breath and wink hard as he thought, "Oh, if I had had such a mother!"

He hurried down-stairs to meet her, and met instead a gravely smiling girl,—a sweet young Quakeress of fourteen. She was placing dishes on the table, when she turned and greeted him with demure composure.

"My mother bade me tell thee that breakfast will soon be ready," she said, in accents which gave a peculiar charm to the Quaker form of speech.

For a moment Jacob forgot his impatience to be back by the river-side, searching for his friend. He never in his life had heard so sweet a voice, or seen a face and form of such simple grace. She made him think of Florie, not because the two were alike, but because they were so different. The little Quakeress was a gracious lily; Florie, a red rose, with all a rose's thorns.

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Jacob was trying to frame a reply to her, when the mother entered the room.

"I know thee will be in a hurry, and I have hastened thy breakfast," she said, after a motherly greeting.

"You are too good to me!" was all Jacob could say, and that in a broken voice.

"We used often to get earlier breakfasts than this for our guests," she replied. "But until last night it is some time since strangers have tarried with us. I see that thy bedfellow is gone."

"Then I had a bedfellow?" said Jacob. "I was wondering whether I dreamed it."

"Yea, a wayfarer like thee; a civil-spoken young man, who seemed touched when I told him thy story. He bade me say to thee how gladly he would have tarried to aid thee in the search for thy dear friend, but that important affairs prevented. I left food on the board for him; he must have taken it, and gone when it was hardly day."

JACOB AND THE YOUNG QUAKERESS.

"I wish I could have seen him and had his help!" said Jacob. "Whom can I get to help me?"

"Matthew, my husband, will find some person to go with him in a boat. But he came home late and weary last night, and he will not be so soon ready as thee. So if thee likes thee can take thy meal and go on down to the shore, and he will find thee there. Be seated; Ruth will help thee."

So Jacob sat at breakfast, waited upon by the sweet young Quakeress. It seemed to the homeless, friendless lad as if he were being entertained by angels; and he felt, as he took leave of them and started for the shore, that, though he should never see them again, he must always be a better boy, and a better man, for having known them.

He looked for the peddler on his way, and, not seeing him, concluded that he had gone up the creek. But, keeping the bank of the river, he soon spied the little Ark moving away under full steam, about half a mile farther on. At that distance it looked like a large tub, with a smoke-pipe.

The morning was beautiful after the rain. The trees shook their sunlit tops in the fresh breeze, the shore-grass waved, the river glanced and glittered in the early light. Jacob felt his heart leap with the gladness of youth. Then he thought of his friend, and wondered how he could be happy even for a moment.

The tub was turning and zigzagging along near the shore, and by running on the bank he soon came abreast of it. Sam Longshore, with his dog beside him, was on the bow, holding with one hand the tiller-wheel, which was behind him, and looking over intently at the water. Evidently his philosophical mind was for the time interested in Mr. Pinkey's money-belt.

Hearing a shout from the shore, and seeing Jacob, he headed the Ark to the sloping edge of the bank, and called to him to come aboard. Jacob stepped upon the bow as it struck.

The peddler had changed his position, and was now standing in a little pit-like place under a projection of the cabin roof. One hand was on the tiller-wheel before him, while the other reached back to a lever of his little engine in the hold. Ripper, the dog, watched and growled; but Jacob was not afraid of him now.

As soon as he was aboard, the bit of a steamer backed water, fell off into the slow, smooth current, then breasted it again, puffing and panting at an amusing rate, up the river.

"You see, I had a sort of kind of hankering for that belt of money," said the peddler, maneuvering his tub. "I 've been up once to the tow-head and the trees you told about. Now I 'm just scooting round a little at random. It 's a poor show. I calc'late it 's got lodged on the bottom somewheres; if the water was clear there 'd be some chance of finding it. Did ye spend the half-dollar I lent ye last night?"

"I have n't paid it away yet," replied Jacob. "I stopped with some people who were so good to me that I was ashamed to offer 'em pay. But I left my bag with them, and when I go back for it, I mean to make them take the money if they will."

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"What sort of folks? Ye did n't stumble on to Quaker Matthew's house, did ye?" said the peddler. "Well, I want to know! If you 'd been black, I should have sent you there. Being as you 're merely white, I never thought on 't."

Jacob looked puzzled.

"Don't ye understand? Matthew Lane," said the peddler, with a dry pucker meant for a smile, "used to be station-master on the underground railroad."

"What 's that?" said Jacob.

"You an Ohio boy, and don't know what the underground railroad is?—or rather used to be, for it 's gone up since the war."

"I guess the tracks were never laid in the part where I lived."

"Mebby not. But there was a pretty extensive branch down here. Some say Quaker Matthew brought his family on from Pennsylvany expressly to take charge on 't. So ye don't know what the underground railroad was! Well, I 'll tell ye."

Jacob expected to hear one of those curious scientific explanations in which the peddling philosopher delighted. But he was mistaken.

"In the first place, there wa' n't no railroad about it. It was just a private arrangement for running off fugitive slaves. They used to escape across the river from Virginny and Kentucky; a good many got captured and carried back, but some that fell into the right hands got off to Canady. Quaker Matthew and his wife had the name of helping a good many. They did n't seem to be fanatical on the subject, and it was never proved that they induced slaves to run away from their masters. But if one came to their house they would harbor him, and Matthew would help him on his way to some other station-master of the underground railroad, as it was called, who would take him in his team and give him another lift. It was against the law of the land; and when Matthew was hauled up for it, he simply said he was obeying a higher law, and doing as he 'd be done by. He was sent to jail, and fined for different offenses about two thousand dollars. That 's what makes him a poor man to-day. They wont take any money of ye, so I guess you may as well hand me back that half-dollar."

Jacob produced it promptly.

"On the hull, though," said the proprietor of the Ark, after stooping down and throwing a small scoopful of coal into the little furnace of his engine, and taking time to reconsider the subject, "you 'll want it some time, and you may as well keep it. Though it 's like looking for a needle in a haymow, to try to find that belt. This river is always riled,—digging out its channel and carrying away the earth. It has cut through strata of rocks and beds of coal and iron ore, as you can see in some places. You think the country is high along the shores, don't ye?"

"It looks so," said Jacob, absently, fingering the half-dollar.

"But when you get up there, you see that the country aint high at all. It 's the bed of the river that 's low. Go back a piece, and you find a higher country beyond, which used to be the shore, ages ago. Since then the river has cut this big ditch for itself, sixty or seventy feet deep, and in some places half a mile wide. It 's flowing now just along the bottom of the channel; but high-water fills it clean up. When you go to Cincinnati, you 'll see on the river-front of the city a long row of immense posts, fifty feet above the present level of the river. You 'll wonder what they 're for. I 'll tell ye beforehand. When the river is high, it comes right up to the street, and these posts are to tie up the steamboats to."

The peddler seated himself on the side of the bow-deck, with one hand on the wheel and his legs hanging in the hold, and continued:

"You must know, a pretty considerable volume of water flows through such a channel, time of freshets. The river rises and falls a monstrous sight quicker, late years, than it used to. Do you know the reason?"

Jacob did not, nor did he care much for it then. He stood holding on to the projection of the deck, looking with sadly wistful eyes over into the water, while the philosopher at the wheel explained.

CHAPTER XIX.

MORE OF SAM LONGSHORE'S PHILOSOPHY.

"YOU see, the country was once all forests on both sides. Then, when there came heavy rains or great thaws, the water run off slower, and it kept running longer. Now, a big part of the forests has been cut away, and the land sheds water like a duck's back. The river is up brim-full, then down again in a few days. I can't make headway against a very strong current. Curious," added the philosopher, "how the force of the stream and the force that works a steamboat up against it, both come from the same source. Did ye ever think of that?"

Jacob never had.

"Of course not. Only a few men of science have. Up to the village, a little above where you stayed last night," the philosophical peddler went on, "they 've got some mills. They 've dammed the crick, shet back the water, and got what they call a power. Now, not one person in ten thousand knows the origin of that power. Tell 'em it's the heat of the sun, and they 'll laugh at you. But

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that 's just what it is. It 's the heat of the sun that makes evaporation. A vapor goes up from seas and wet places, and makes clouds. Clouds make rain. Rain fills the streams, and the streams turn the mills. To put it differently,—the sun lifts the water, and the water falling again, turns your machinery."

Jacob saw the force of the argument, and smiled with surprise. Though not a great philosopher, like Sam Longshore, he was, like all intelligent boys, interested in tracing the reason of things.

"In a good many parts of the country," said the peddler, "they 're going back to the old fashion of using wind-mills. On the prairies of Indiany and Illinois, partic'larly, they 're sticking up the new patent wind-mills that tend themselves, and pump water for locomotives at railroad stations, and do a hundred other things. Well, ask any man you see what the power is that does the work, and he 'll say, 'You fool, you! don't you see it 's the wind?' A man said that to me once. Says I, 'It 's you that 's the fool, and I can prove it.' And prove it I did, to his satisfaction,—or rather dissatisfaction, for it made him as mad as a hopper, if anybody knows how mad that is. 'The sun,' says I, 'warms the atmosphere, more in some places than others.' He admitted that. 'Heated air,' says I, 'tends to rise.' He owned up again. 'If air rises,' says I, 'more air must rush in to fill its place.' He could n't deny that, either. 'So,' says I, 'it 's the sun that makes the current of air,—what you call wind,—and turns the wind-mill. Now, who 's the fool?' Oh, I tell ye, I 've done a pile of thinking in my day!"

And the peddler smoked and shook his head in pleased astonishment at his own vast and profound understanding of things.

"If I should tell you of a man who heated his shop by water-power, you 'd smile, perhaps."

"I think I should," said Jacob.

"Well, he did, and he did n't. He did—in this way. The water turned his machinery, and he made his machinery turn a great iron plate which rested on another iron plate; the friction heated the plates, and they warmed his shop like a stove. But was it water-power? Strictly speaking, no. But the heat of the sun that raised the vapor that made the water that turned the wheels was changed again into heat by the friction. Queer, aint it?"

Jacob thought it was.

"Now, coming back to what I said of the steamboat working up against the stream. You call it steam-power. I call it sun-power again. For what makes steam? Water heated. What heats the water? Burning a little wood or coal. Now, coal is a vegetable product, like wood. It 's the sunlight that makes vegetables grow. And it 's the heat of the sun stored up ages ago in this little shovelful of carbon,"—he brought up a specimen from his coal-bin,—"that will make steam for me, and propel my boat for the next half-hour. Aint it curious?"

So saying, he chucked the coal under the little engine-boiler, slammed the furnace-door, seated himself on the top of the bow-deck, and laid hold of the wheel again.

"Now you see how the same power that lifts vapor and makes rivers, makes vapor again and drives the steamboat up-stream. I tell you, there 's only one great source of power for us,—and that, after all, aint heat."

The peddler smiled quaintly on Jacob.

"What do you suppose it is?"

Jacob was puzzled to decide.

"It 's gravitation, probably. Every particle of matter attracts every other particle. Hold up a piece of steel, let go of it, and it falls. The piece of steel and the earth rush together. The steel falls down to meet the earth, and the earth falls up—just a little ways—to meet the steel. When they come together, they make heat. If the steel hits stone, it strikes fire. So we see gravitation makes motion; motion checked makes friction; friction produces heat,—which is only another kind of motion. All the heat in the sun and planets has been produced by the rushing together of the particles of matter of which they are composed. So you see there is only one kind of force, whether you see it in the wind, or in water, or in steam, or in this hand which I lift,—for I get my strength from the same source; I eat the animal, that eats the plant, that grows by the light and heat of the sun, that's produced by gravitation."

"But what is gravitation?" said Jacob.

The peddler smiled his wisest and quaintest smile as he made answer:

"Young man, you beat me there! Some things neither I, nor you, nor no other man don't know."

With which sentence, strong as negatives could make it, he headed his craft toward the shore.

"Now, yender are the trees, I take it, 'longside of which your boat was upset. I propose to land, take an observation, and see what we can see."

This proposal suited Jacob better than philosophy just then; and taking the end of a line which the peddler passed to him, he stepped ashore with it as the Ark grounded, and made it fast to the root of one of the fallen trees.

(To be continued.)

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THE LION.

If any of you ever saw a lion, I am quite sure that he was in a cage. Now a lion in a cage is a noble-looking beast, but he never seems so grand and king-like—you know some people call the lion the King of Beasts—as he does when he is free. Of course, almost any living creature will look happier and better when it is free than when it is shut up; but there is another reason why the lions we see in cages do not seem so grand as those which are free.

We almost always go to see wild animals in the day-time, and animals of the cat-kind, of which the lion is one, like to take the day for their sleeping time. So, when we see them, they are drowsy and lazy, and would much rather take a good nap than be bothered with visitors. If we could go and look at them at night, it is likely we should find them much more lively.

Lions are natives of Africa and Asia, and there they roam around at night and are not afraid of any living creature. They sometimes stand and roar as if they wished all other animals to know that a lion was about, and that they would do well to behave themselves.

When a lion is hungry, he kills a deer or an antelope, or some such animal, and eats it. But sometimes he comes near to men's houses and fields, and kills an ox or a cow, and carries it away. A lion must be very strong if he can even drag away a great ox.

The male lion is much handsomer and finer looking than the female, or lioness. He has a large head, with a great mane of hair hanging down all around his head and over his shoulders. This gives him a very noble look. The lioness has no mane at all.

Baby lions are funny fellows. They look something like clumsy dogs, and are quite playful. But long before they are full-grown they begin to look grave and sober, as if they knew that it was a very grand thing to be a lion.

Two half-grown lions that I saw not long ago, looked just as quiet and sedate as their old father, who was in the next cage. But perhaps they had their play and fun at night, when there was nobody there to see.

Some lions are quite easily tamed, and often learn to like their keepers. I suppose you have seen performing lions in cages. The keeper goes into the cage and makes the lions, and sometimes leopards and other animals, jump about and do just as he tells them.

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As the lion seems to have a better disposition than most other savage beasts, he sometimes becomes so tame that his keepers do not appear to be at all afraid of him.

But he is really a wild beast, at heart, and it would never do to let the very tamest lion think that he could go where he pleased, and choose his

THE LION.

dinner for himself. It would not be long before he would be seen springing upon a cow or a horse—if he did not fancy some little boy or girl.

So, after all, there are animals which have much nobler dispositions than the lion, and among these are elephants and dogs—who not only are often trusted servants of man, but also seem to have some reasoning powers, and are known to do actions that are really good and kind.

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JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

WHENEVER I hear country folk rejoicing that the days soon will be getting longer, and laying half of their short-comings to poor Winter because its days were *so* short, I wink slyly at the birds, and set them tittering. Bless your heart! these cute little creatures never trouble themselves about the approach of short days. Why? Simply because most of them make it a rule to go where the days are longer. Birds have the same intense desire for sunshine that flowers have. Like flowers, they turn their backs to the dark and their faces to the light. When the days shorten in the north, the birds go south. There are other reasons for their going, but this surely is one.

Runeberg, the Swedish poet, during a long illness, occupied himself by observing the habits of birds; and at the end he declared that, like good men and women, birds always are seeking the light. (I get all this partly from the birds and partly from a newspaper scrap that flew about me one day until I caught it for the children.) "When days shorten," he writes, "the birds go to southern climes, where the nights recede. But as soon as the long northern days set in with their luminous long-drawn hours, the wanderers return to their old haunts. It is generally supposed that they move southward to get more abundant food; but why do they leave the rich southern feeding-grounds to return northward? Simply because one thing is richer there; and that is, light. The bird of passage is of noble origin; he bears a motto, and his motto is, *Lux mea dux*."

As neither the Deacon nor the dear Little Schoolma'am happens to be around, Jack prefers not to translate the Latin—if it *is* Latin. May be it 's only bad spelling, and really means "luck 's mere ducks." But there is n't much sense in that. Some of you little chaps who send translations of the Latin stories in ST. NICHOLAS may be able to make something out of this motto of the birds. In my opinion, however, the birds around here don't take the trouble to lay out rules for themselves in the dead languages.

A PAPER-MAKING SPIDER.

SPIDERS have been noted so long as spinners of the finest of silk, that it strikes one a little oddly to think of one as a paper-maker. But hear this true story that has just been told to me.

In the heart of the African Continent, where no other paper is manufactured, the spider paper-maker does her quiet work. Back and forth, over a flat surface about an inch and a half square, on the inside wall of a hut, the spider slowly moves in many lines until the square is covered with a pure white paper. Under this she places from forty to fifty eggs; and then, to fasten the square of paper more securely to the wall, she makes a strip of paper about a quarter of an inch broad, and with this glues the square carefully around the edges.

When all is done, the spider—which is quite a large one—places herself on the center of the outside of the little flat bag so carefully made, and begins a watch, which is to last for three weeks without intermission. Apparently the young spiders would have many dangers to fear, did not their anxious mamma wage a fierce war upon the cockroaches and other insects that come near. After three weeks of unremitting watchfulness, the mother-spider leaves her nest in the day-times to hunt food, but she always returns at night, until her young are strong enough to take care of themselves.

AN APE'S DEATH.

DEAR JACK: We are so used to looking upon monkeys and apes as frisky, playful creatures, with no thought beyond their mischievous pranks, that we forget how, in some circumstances, they show real distress, and even a pathetic sorrow that is almost human. Lately, at the Zoölogical Gardens at Dresden, a fine ape named "Mafuka," from being full of life and playfulness, suddenly began to droop. It was evident that some mortal ailment had seized her, and that she dimly realized the hopelessness of her condition. She would fully respond to any kind office in a way that seemed to say plainly: "You are kind, but you cannot help me." "This state of things," says the London "Echo," "lasted until within a few hours of her death. Then, as Herr Schopf (the director of the gardens) leaned over his favorite, the ape drew him toward her, placed her arm around the neck of her friend, and looked at him for some time with clear and tranquil eyes; she then pressed her cheek against him, motioned to be laid upon her couch, gave her hand to Schopf,—as though bidding farewell to a companion of many happy years,—and slept never to wake again."

Thinking that some of my ST. NICHOLAS cousins, dear Jack, might be interested in poor Mafuka, I have written you this brief letter.—Your sincere friend, ROBBY D——.

A GOOD "BLOWING-UP."

I 'VE heard country folk speak of "blowing up" their children in the hope of curing them of laziness and other bad qualities, but never until lately have I heard of blowing up lazy grape-vines by way of improvement. Yet, a new contributor to ST. NICHOLAS says that the thing is done, and a very sensible plan it seems to be. Yes. Some enterprising grape-growers in Austria have lately used dynamite, a very explosive material, in cultivating their vines. In order to loosen the soil

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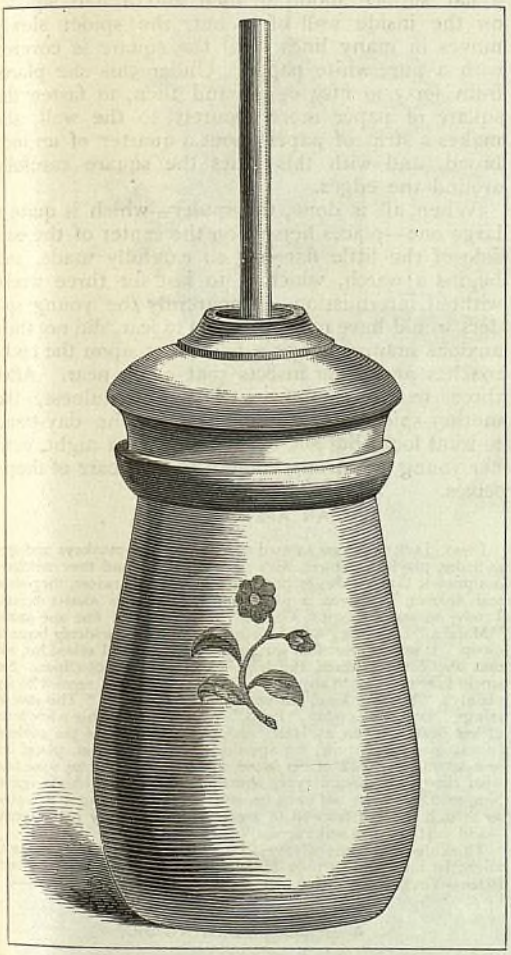
and let in air and moisture to the roots, holes are made in the ground near the vines, and in them small quantities of this substance are exploded, loosening the earth to the depth of about *eight feet*. How much better than any spading and digging, and how much more easily and quickly done! I cannot conceive of anything more likely to give grape-vines a good start.

HOW TO MAKE BUTTER.

Saratoga Springs, January 29.

DEAR LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM: I send you an original recipe for butter. When I was in the country, I saw them making butter, and thought that as I had a dolly's churn, I would like to make some



too. I succeeded, and so I wrote down the recipe. I send you a picture of my churn, full size.—Yours truly,

RUBY H. WALWORTH.

First, you must be sure that the top of your churn will come off; then get some sour cream and fill the churn about half full, and churn till the butter comes. Take it out and put it on a saucer; get a tea-spoon and some water, and put the water with the butter, and press and work it well; put on fresh water several times to get all the buttermilk out; then put a little salt in the butter. Scald the churn before putting it away.

Note.—A churn three inches high will give a thimbleful and a half of butter. It takes about an hour to churn it. R. H. W.

ROYAL, BUT NEVER A KING.

A SCHOOL-GIRL sends your Jack a nice letter, in which she tells of a man whose life was "almost made of thrones, and who yet never sat upon a throne himself." It was Philip the Handsome, of Burgundy, she says, who died just 371 years ago. He was the son of Maximilian I. of Germany, the father of Charles V. and Ferdinand I. (successively Emperors of Germany), and of Eleanor, dowager Queen of Francis I. of France, and Mary dowager Queen of Hungary. Husband of Joan, afterward Queen of Castile; son-in-law of a king and queen (Ferdinand and Isabella), he was never a sovereign in his own right.

A NEW WAY OF COMFORTING.

THERE 'S nothing like a comforting word when we are in trouble, and the least thing one can do when one has a necessary hurt to inflict, is to thrust in a bit of consolation at the same time. Jack heard, the other day, of a bright little four-year-old girl in Ontario who has discovered this principle for herself, and who carries it out in a most original manner. A nice long letter, telling of her odd ways, says:

"Mamie—that 's her name—was death on the potato-bugs last summer. She would stamp on one, and, with a pitying shake of the head, say, soothingly: 'Poor sing! Mamie 'll never hurt oo any more!' Then straightway she would look for others, treating them one by one in the same way, and each time with the same assurance: 'Mamie 'll never hurt oo any more!' Very consoling to the striped victims, was n't it?"

JACK-STONES.

DEAR! Dear! What curious things people do find out! Now, what do you say to your pet game of Jack-stones being a very ancient Greek game? Yes; pictures have been found in Pompeii of children playing it. They did n't call them "Jacks,"—no, indeed!—they had a dignified name,—Astragaloi. And the pieces were not glass, like the young Roman's, nor stones, nor cast-iron, like yours,—but the small-joint bones of sheep. They used five of them, though,—just as you do. In England, this game is called "dibbs;" and in Scotland, "chucks."

Now, Jack does n't know, but being a Yankee, he has a right to "guess,"—and he guesses that your name of Jacks comes from that same word "chucks." "Chuck-stones" easily might have been corrupted to "Jack-stones." What do you think about it?

There 's a statue in Berlin, I 'm told, of a young girl playing "Astragaloi."

AN OLD FLAME.

TRAVELERS tell a great many strange stories. I heard one telling, not long ago, of a fire in Persia that had been kept steadily burning by the Fire-worshipers for over three thousand years, without being allowed to go out during all that time.

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YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS' DEPARTMENT.

HOW TO MAKE A BIRD-HOUSE.

A BIRD-HOUSE like the one shown in the picture can be made easily and quickly. The materials for its construction can be collected, if need be, from the mere scraps of boards and slats usually to be found in any work-shop, and the only tools needed are hatchet, nails, and saw.

First, take the widest board you can find, of not more than an inch in thickness, and saw off a piece some two inches wider and longer than you desire your house to be. This is for the bottom or floor of your house. Then take the slats and saw off a number of pieces, making their length equal to the height you have chosen for the sides of your house. Place as many of these edge to edge as, when closely joined, will make up the length of the house from front to rear, and nail a wider strip of wood across the top, on the outside. Repeat this process with exactly the same measurements, and the two sides of your house are ready.

Now for the front and back, which will require more care, as you have here, in each case, to form a gable. As easy a way as any, perhaps, is this: After placing edge to edge as many of the slats as are necessary to make up the width of your house from side to side, nail them to a cross-piece, placed on the inside a little below the middle. Now take one of the two sides which you have already finished, place it edge to edge with the new layer of slats, their bottoms on an exact level, and mark the spot on the edge of the new layer where the topmost point of the completed layer touches it. This, you see, is an end of the gable where one of the eaves will be, and of course, must be of exactly the same height as the sides of the house; therefore, the above way of measuring is safest, unless you are an expert with the rule.

You have now one of the starting-points for your gable. The one on the other side of the house will be on an exact horizontal with it, or can be obtained by the same measurement which was employed to find the first. From these two points you can mark the top lines of the gable to their point of meeting, using any slant you choose, but remembering that the top of the gable should be in a direct line above the center of its base. Saw out your gable along the slant lines which you have drawn, and, along the edge of each on the outside, nail a piece of molding. The way in which these pieces will have to be joined at the top, is shown in the picture more readily than described. This done, all the process must be repeated, as with the sides, to form the other surface, though with this advantage, that you can, if you are very careful, take the completed end as your guide and thus save trouble and delay in measurement.

Having made the four sides of the house, select the one for the front and nail a slat across the *bottom* of it on the outside. A little above this, make a round or square hole for an entrance, adding, if you choose, a small porch over it as shown in the picture.

The four sides are now ready to be joined together, and the joining is an easy task. If your slats are thick enough, and you are skillful with the hammer, you can simply nail the side of the corner slat of one surface to the edge of that of the other; or, you can place a piece of molding (as long as the side is high), in each corner and nail the corner-slats to its sides. Then set this hollow, box-like house in correct position upon your bottom-board (which, you will remember, is so large that there will be a margin of two inches on every side), and mark on the bottom-board the dimensions of the inside of the house. Along the inside of each of the four lines thus made, nail a piece of molding firmly to the bottom-board; then set your box over these again (if you have done this part well, the four sides will fit closely over the molding), and nail the sides of your house to these pieces of molding inside it. Then your house is ready for the roof.

If you can join them closely enough, this may be formed of slats, screwed to, and projecting slightly beyond, the pieces of molding which you have fastened already along the slopes of the front and rear. If these fail, a wide, thick shingle, or a piece of thin board, sawn to the proper size, will do for each side of the roof, and the two easily can be made water-proof where they join. Indeed, as good a bird-house as that shown in the picture can be constructed with less labor, by using a single thin board for each slope instead of the slats. In that case, however, the boards for the front and back should be thicker than those for the sides (or the reverse) in order that it may be nailed together the more easily and securely. Only seven pieces are needed for a house of this kind, and after these have been joined together, pretty pieces of bark and lichens can be tacked to the outside of the house so as to cover it completely.

THE BIRD-HOUSE.

The best and fittest support for the house is a small, stout limb of a tree, with projecting branches; and, probably, one of the proper size can be obtained in any woods. Saw off the main trunk at a point a little above the crotch, and the branches at a somewhat greater distance: place your house upon the end of the trunk, and by bending the branches notice what point of each branch touches the margin of

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the bottom-board, when the house is on a level. Saw off each branch at that point. Then place the house in position for the last time and fasten the margin of the bottom-board to the projecting branches with screws.

Set the support firmly in the ground, as you would a post, by digging a hole, inserting the support, and then filling up and packing with earth until it stands straight and firm.

It only remains to plant vines and flowers around the support, and, in time, you will have the gratification of beholding a real and substantial castle in the air.

C. G. L.

THE LETTER-BOX.

Providence, R. I., January 13, 1877.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I heard the other day, from a lady who is staying with us, a story, which may interest some of your readers. When a little girl, this lady had a myrtle-tree, of which she was very fond. One day, a clothes-pole fell upon one of the branches and split it clear to the trunk, and the trunk itself nearly to the roots, completely separating it into two parts, though it did not break it off. The plant was one which she valued very much, and being very unwilling to let it die, she hit upon this way of healing it: Fitting the two halves carefully together, she wound a rag round and round the split part, plastered this well with mud and water, and outside this bound another rag. Every one said that the plant must die, and that neither her method nor any other could save it. But it never even withered, and before long healed completely, and grew as before.—Your constant reader,

CHARLES HART PAYNE.

Penn Yan, Jan. 1, 1877.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I would like to tell about some puddings; they will not rival Mother Mitchel's tart, but they were pretty large. In New England, before the Revolution, the farmers used to make enormous corn-puddings. It took about ten bushels of corn to make them, and once, one of them fell over and knocked down two men, so a law was made, that none containing over four bushels of corn should be made. It is impossible to say how I like ST. NICHOLAS.—Yours respectfully,

X.

MORE ABOUT THE REAL GIANT AND GIANTESS.

Dyersburg, February 1, '77.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a new contributor, twelve years old, and I thought I could write something that would please the young folks. I will tell that little girl who spoke of the giant and giantess, Captain Bates and his wife, that I have seen them thrice at fairs here in Dyersburg. They were very pleasant people, indeed. I talked with them frequently. Mrs. Bates showed me a most beautiful set of diamonds that the Queen of England gave her. It was so massive that even a giantess could not wear them but a few hours at a time. We had a gentleman boarding with us who had to stoop when coming through the door. We children thought he must be a giant; but when Captain Bates came, our tall man could walk under his arm easily. I was ten years old at the time, and was thought large for my age; still I only came to Mrs. Bates's knees.—I am yours truly,

MADGE CHILD.

Washington, Indiana.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little boy nine years old. I like the ST. NICHOLAS,—oh, so much! I wait as patiently as I can for it to come. When I get it, mamma, and auntie, and I scrabble to see which will read it first. Finally, whoever gets hold of it has to read aloud to keep peace. I want to tell the girls and boys in the ST. NICHOLAS about a splendid old dog I had, that died last summer, from old age. He was seventeen years old, and weighed one hundred and forty pounds. You ought to have seen him. When I was a little fellow, he took care of me. When I went out to play or walk, if another dog would come toward me, he would stick up his ears and growl, as much as to say, "Don't you come near my boy;" and he was so large and fierce, they generally took the hint, and let me alone. He never hurt me. I used to ride on him, and sit on his side and play by the hour; but no one else could do it. He was such a good dog to watch the house! No stranger could come in unless we spoke to him first. He was so kind to all his friends! When any of us went away on a visit, when we came home he would be so glad, he would run and jump,—show in so many ways that he loved us! Before he died, he lost his hearing and eyesight. Poor fellow! just before he died, he wandered off into another part of town, and we had to bring him home. Every one in town knew "Towser." We miss him very much; and I wish all the bird-defenders would be dog-defenders too. Please put my name down as a bird-defender.

Now, Mr. Editor, will you please publish my obituary notice? because I am sure Towser has gone to dog-heaven, and I want every one to know he was good enough to go there; and I want the children and you to know that we boys in Indiana read the ST. NICHOLAS, and love it so much!—Yours truly,

FRANKIE VAN TRUE.

New York.

DEAR JACK: In again looking over the ST. NICHOLAS for December, we found a description of the Moravian Christmas Putz. Now, I merely wish to tell you that it is not necessary to go to Bethlehem, Pa., to see such a Putz, as there is one, and a very handsome one, too, in this city at the present time. My brother made such a miniature landscape, and if you or the dear little School-ma'am would like to take a look at it, we would be only too glad to show it to you. I doubt if Mamie H. has seen a prettier one than ours, and only wish that she could see it. I cannot describe it to you, as it would take too much time: I will only say that it covers a space of 10 ft. by 6 ft., and the larger part of our back-parlor, and contains everything to make a perfect landscape.

Yours truly,

EDWARD B. MILLER.

AMONG THE BOOKS AT THE CAPITOL.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: With your permission, I would like to give the little folks a few items about the National Library, or Library of Congress, which has grown to be a wonderfully big collection of books. It is now the largest in the country, containing more than 283,000 volumes, besides from fifty to seventy-five thousand pamphlets. Within the short space of five years, it has added one hundred thousand volumes; so that now the alcoves are all full and overflowing—crowding every available place, corner, perch, and table. One sees, upon entering the central library, long tables at which are seated, in the hottest summer days, numerous students, and literary and eager people, searching books of reference, consulting authorities, examining volumes of fine arts, or reading lighter literature. There are two wings, each as large as the central library, and containing more books, as they have four galleries each, and that has but three. The first floor of this middle room—extending the whole length of one side—is devoted to poetry. Another side of another gallery is filled with scientific works, another with histories, another with works on philosophy, and so on. Ascending the steep iron stair-ways to the third and fourth galleries, there are books to the right and books to the left of you; books before you, and books behind you, whichever way you look. Here are eight hundred Bibles, in eighty different languages. One quaint, curious Chinese Bible is almost without weight, and wrapped around in silky blue covers, fastened with little wooden pegs slipped through loops at top and bottom. Then there are Bibles too big to be handled—ponderous, illustrated, illuminated books; one of these was printed by hand.

The library does not contain a copy of every book published in the country, as many suppose, but of every book that is copyrighted. Sometimes a book is not copyrighted till it has been published four or five years.

The National Library was first called The Library of the United States, and was founded in 1800, with the purchase of $1,000 of books, which was increased by the valuable library of ex-President Jefferson, who in his old age, becoming involved in debt, sold his 6,700 volumes to Congress.

Two fires have occurred in its history; the first in 1814, when the British burned our national capital; and the second resulting from some defective flue, when the collection had reached fifty-five thousand volumes; of these, only twenty thousand were saved. Con-

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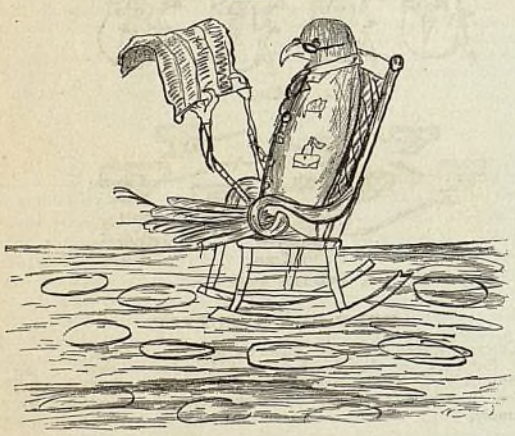
gress then appropriated $75,000 for books, and $92,500 for rebuilding the library in solid iron, adding the two wings, also of fire-proof material. The new building was quickly filled, as the Smithsonian Library, rich in scientific works, and the historical library of Peter Force, were added then to the remnant of the national collection.

The general appearance of the library is very attractive and tasteful; there is perhaps an excess of gilt ornamentation; the prevailing tints are soft-wood browns, which combine with the lighting up of the gilt, and the wrought-iron work, to make a very agreeable effect.

An independent building is greatly needed for the accommodation of this vast collection in all its different departments; and although the public is freely admitted to the privilege of consulting books here during the ordinary business hours, there is much dissatisfaction because Congress does not make it available for the large number of persons who can only go there at night, or outside of business hours. Only senators and representatives in Congress, with their families, are permitted to take out books.—Yours truly, C. N. F.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I like to read your stories very much indeed. Papa bought me a baby-doll last Saturday, and it is real cunning. I went out Saturday and took my baby for a walk; and it was slippery, and I fell down in the mud and got my baby's shawl very dirty; and I got my new red stockings a little dirty too. I thought people tied strings around their fingers to make them remember things. When I tied a string around *my* finger, I could not remember my geography lesson a bit better. Do you know the reason why? I got mamma to write this for me, because I can only *print*. That 's all. MABEL FARR.



A LITTLE GIRL sends us this comical drawing, made by herself, as a portrait of the "Parrot-Professor" of Mr. Boyesen's story "Mabel and I," published in our January number.

OUR boys, especially, will be glad to know that Colonel Higginson is issuing his Young Folks' Book of Explorers in America, containing narratives of discovery and adventure told in the precise words of the heroes themselves. What with its traditions of Norsemen and strange voyagers, its accounts of military exploits, and its stories of peaceful attempts at civilization more adventurous, perhaps, than even war itself, this will be a book well worth reading.

Kansas.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I send you a puzzle which is every word my own composition. It is hard work to make them, but I would rather do it than be a girl and have to wash dishes. Mother does not make me do any the day I make puzzles.

I am in my tenth year. I do not have a school to go to both winter and summer, as some boys do. But our district has voted bonds, and we will have a nice new school-house this winter. I will be glad when school begins, for then I will not have the dishes to wash. It is the worst job I have to do.

I have a little brother Joel. One day he said: "Ma, do you know when our chickens grow up they will be turkey gobblers? Uncle John has some, and of course they were chickens when they were little." They had set a hen on turkey eggs, and he did not understand it. We had a big laugh, and he does n't like to hear turkey gobbler mentioned.

PUZZLE.

My first is in road, but not in lane;
My second is in suffer, but not in pain;
My third is in trumpet, but not in horn;
My fourth is in night, but not in morn;
My fifth is in read, and also in spell;
My sixth is in spring, but not in well;
My seventh is in fail, but not in succeed;
My eighth is in blood, but not in bleed;
My ninth is in rat, but not in mouse;
My tenth is in dwelling, but not in house;
My eleventh is in bay, but not in sea;
My twelfth is in piano, but not in key;
My thirteenth is in round, and also in square;
My fourteenth is in cage, but not in lair;
My fifteenth is in home, but not in abroad;
My sixteenth is in cheating, and also in fraud;
My seventeenth is in bridle, and also in rein;
My eighteenth is in window, but not in pane;
My nineteenth is in hill, but not in mound;
My twentieth is in land, but not in ground;
My twenty-first is in my, and also in your;
My twenty-second is in upper, and also in lower;
My twenty-third is in skillet, but not in pan;
My whole is the name of a popular man.
So, boys and girls, please guess if you can.

ARTHUR S. HILL.

P. S.—Here is the answer: Rutherford Birchard Hayes.

Ishpening, Mich., Jan. 22, 1877.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am going to subscribe for ST. NICHOLAS. I will send you the money with this letter; here it is. I fixed my cart to-day. I am trying to learn "Sheridan's Ride." I have a dog named U-Know. Every time he hears the least noise, he will bark and growl, night and day. Now I will tell you something about the country. It is fine weather; the sun is shining brightly. This city was once a swamp, surrounded by hills. There are three lakes to be seen by standing on a hill. Mine and ma's plants are very pretty; the ivy covers the window. I have a brother, Ben Hill; but he is not the U. S. Senator from Georgia. Will you please send me the January ST. NICHOLAS right away, as I want to read "His Own Master." I was nine years old the last of December.—Your friend,

FRED D. HILL.

P. S.—I forgot to tell you something. I had a mug for my birthday, with buds on each side. F. D. H.

North Woodstock, Maine, Feb. 3, 1877.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: To you first, and then to my dear uncle, who lives in New York, do I send my thanks for the delightful ST. NICHOLAS. It is one of my greatest pleasures, for I live among the mountains, and do not have many playmates. My father is a doctor; he was sick, and came up here to stay a year or two, hoping to get well. He is better, but he has found a gold and silver mine, and I don't know how long I shall have to live here. They hope to start the mill next summer, and mother says I may send you a piece of the silver as soon as they work some out. Father says it is a true fissure vein, and will surely be rich. On one side of the vein it is polished smooth as glass. Mother says when we get rich, I may send many litttle girls ST. NICHOLAS; and then I hope I can live in the village again. Mother says this is a beautiful place to live in, and girls and boys brought up here can make noble men and women; but it is rather lonesome for me sometimes, as I have no sister. Father has been telling me about geology; he says all the matter of which the earth consists was once held suspended in vapor. If you are willing, I would like to tell the Young Contributors something about this wonderful study. I will close by saying, Long live ST. NICHOLAS and its dear editress!

ABBIE L. BRADBURY.

Louisville, Ky.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: As I was looking over some old numbers of ST. NICHOLAS last night, I happened to see a letter from a little girl, in which she sent you a double pansy, and I thought I would tell you about a double flower in our garden. It was a double rose; I mean, two perfectly formed roses growing from the same calyx (I believe that is the right name; I mean the little cup from which the flower grows). The rose was a deep crimson velvet one; I don't know any other name for it. The flower, or flowers, were not quite as large as the others (the single ones, I mean), but appeared as perfectly formed as any.

Give my love to Jack-in-the-Pulpit, and tell him I think a great deal of him, and have got much valuable information from him by following up the hints he gives sometimes.—Your affectionate friend and constant reader,

KITTIE B. WHIPPLE.

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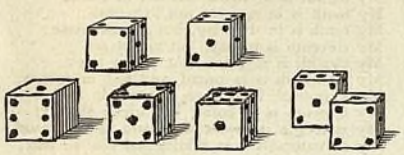
THE RIDDLE-BOX.

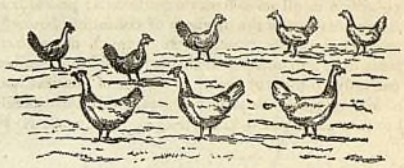
PICTORIAL NUMERICAL TRANSPOSITIONS.

A New Puzzle.

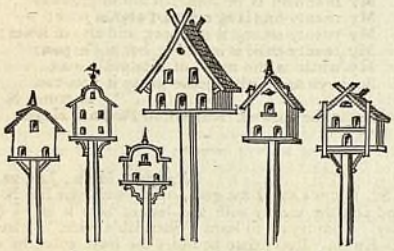
Transpose the letters of the two words expressing the number and name of the objects in each group into a single word which will answer to the definition given below the picture. Thus: No. 1 represents *seven dice*, which can be transposed into *evidences* (or *proofs*).



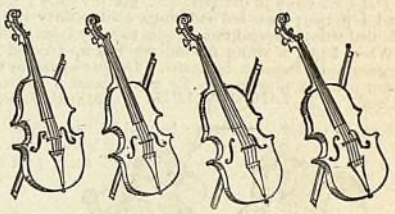
1. Proofs.



2. Increases.

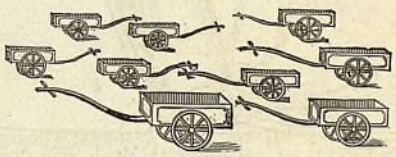


3. Lives at the same time with another.



4. Trifling.

5. Feasts.



6. Delicious fruits.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

Composed of twenty-six letters. The 1, 22, 13, 11, 15 is a shrub common in Great Britain. The 3, 16, 9, 13, 23 was a female deity, fabled to preside over rivers and springs. The 8, 4, 9, 14, 1 is a woman's name, signifying happiness. The 10, 12, 24, 2, 14 is a young domestic animal. The 14, 6, 2, 19, 11 is an article of food. The 18, 9, 2, 17, 13 was the goddess of hunting. The 21, 6, 20, 5, 25 is an animal of the deer kind. The 26, 11, 8, 16, 7 is a motive power. The whole is a proverb. ISOLA.

SQUARE-WORD.

1. Deceitful. 2. Fragrance. 3. A French coin. 4. An expression of pleasure. 5. A painter's implement. JACKIE D. W.

ANAGRAMS.

1. A girl stole 2. To mice in a pan. 3. I can get pride. 4. Bind in asleep. 5. Mere prison coat. 6. Sid is fast in a cot. J.

DIAGONAL PUZZLES.

I.—Diagonal from left to right: A girl's name, and also the surname of an American general. Words across: Each a girl's name.

II.—Diagonal from left to right: A boy's name, and also the given name of an American general. Words across: Each a boy's name. B.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The initials and finals are the names of two cities of Italy.

1. A toy. 2. One of the muses. 3. A color. 4. What merchants dislike to write. 5. A girl's name. B. P.

EASY DIAMOND PUZZLE.

1. A consonant. 2. A garden vegetable. 3. A river in the United States. 4. A part of the body. 5. A consonant. ISOLA.

HOUR-GLASS PUZZLE.

Centrals, read downward, name the inflection of verbs.

1. Surmises. 2. Compounded. 3. A kingdom or state. 4. An army officer. 5. An engraved block. 6. A consonant. 7. A heathen deity. 8. A kind of cement. 9. A sick person. 10. Captives. 11. Durably. X + Y.

WORD-SYNCOPATIONS.

Take one word from out another, and leave a complete word.

1. Take a staff from a burlesque, and leave to reward. 2. Take to free from a scepter, and leave a covering. 3. Take to fasten from a sick person, and leave to gasp. 4. Take to fit from a ship of war, and leave fortune. CYRIL DEANE.

CHARADE.

My first contains corn,
  Or draws you and me;
You may call it a coin,
  Or fowl of the sea.
My last may be coarse,
  Or fine as a hair;
A membrane it is,
  Or cloth that you wear.

My whole is a snare,—
Little insect, beware! L. W. H.

HIDDEN DOUBLE DIAGONAL PUZZLE.

Fill the blanks in their order with, first, diagonal from left to right, then diagonal from right to left; then each word across, in its order from the top downward.

One rough day in —— or ——, —— said to her brother ——, "If I am not as rich as a ——, I will yet give a —— to every beggar, and the —— of my door shall not be fastened against the needy." B.

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