

ST. NICHOLAS.

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FRANK.

BY FRANCES E. BEALE.

"MOTHER!"

The loud, boyish voice rang through the quiet house. The mother, sewing in her sunny chamber, heard but did not answer; she knew by long experience that the call was only a courier, sent on in advance to announce the coming of him whose feet were even then bounding up the stairs, and who burst into the room with all the noise it is possible for an active boy of fourteen to make in that simple act.

"Mother, Uncle Charlie is going blue-fishing, and wants me to go with him; may I?"

Her eyes rested upon him a moment before she gave consent. He was "the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." His father, and several others of his kindred, lay beneath the waves. Perhaps she thought of them as she gazed so fondly upon his face, glowing with health and animation. But he had spent half of his summer life in and upon the water; she did not think of refusing his request—only added to her consent a hope that he would be careful.

"Oh, mother! there is n't a bit of danger with such a sailor as Uncle Charlie; besides, if I do get tipped over, I can swim ashore; why, I could swim from here to the Neck!"

"I should not want you to try such a swim as that, Franky."

Frank turned to go, but paused; perhaps the mother-look drew him back; he stole shyly to the back of her chair, and leaning over her, kissed her forehead hurriedly, and then ran away. The unusual caress warmed her heart, and the thought of it was a comfort to him before the day was over.

VOL. IV.—34.

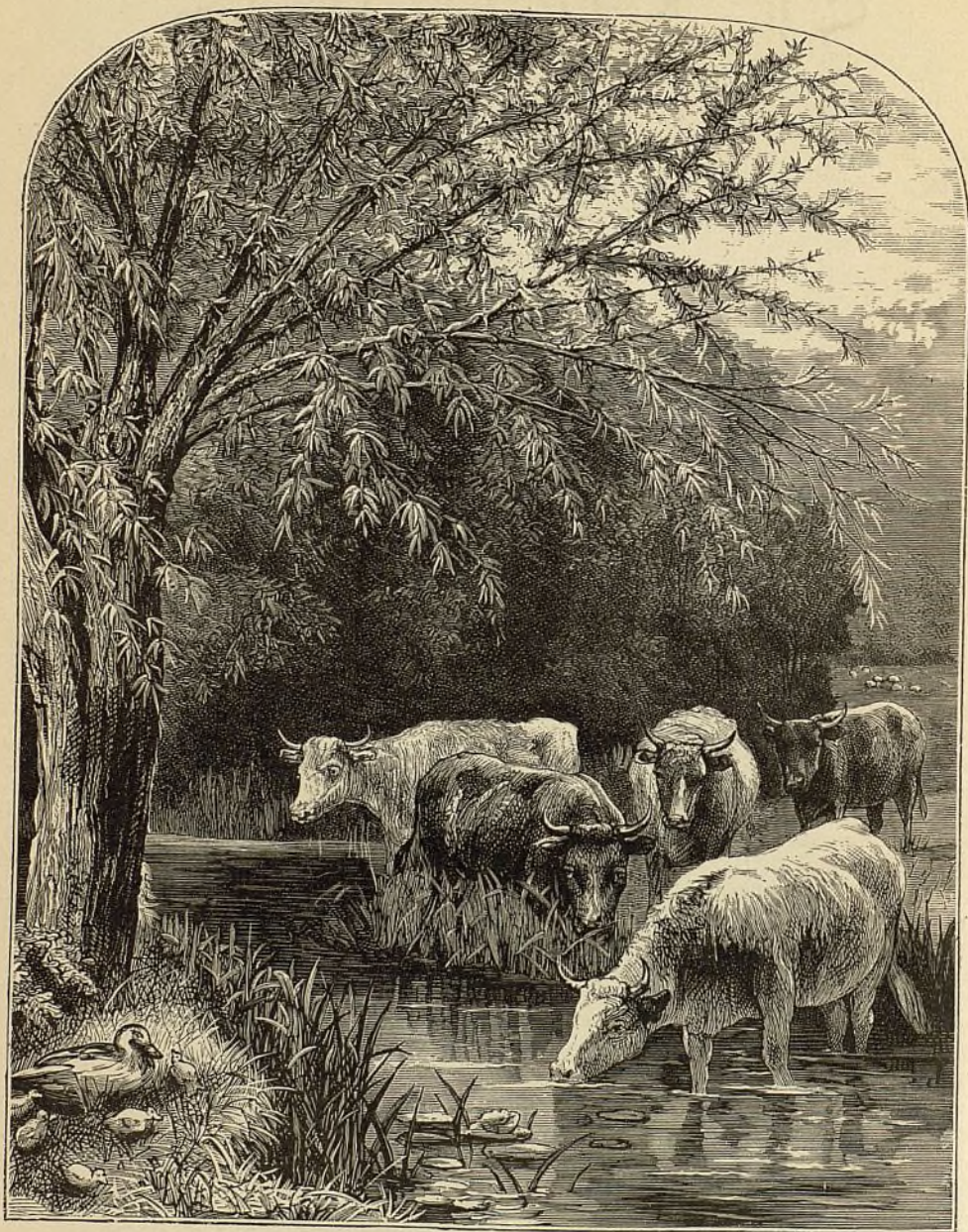
Captain Charlie was waiting, and they started briskly for their walk of a mile to the shore. The captain was a young man still, but a sun-stroke, received while on duty in a hot climate, had disabled him from active service, and indeed from prolonged or violent exertion of any kind. Frank liked nothing better than to be with him, he had so many stories to tell of foreign countries and hair-breadth escapes at sea; besides, he could tell him stories of his father,—his brave, noble father,—of whom his mother could not speak without tears. Frank had seen very little of his father; he could remember a few brief visits, when he had come like a good providence with wonderful gifts, and the few weeks of his stay had been one joyful holiday time, with visits and merry-makings, the little boy always at his father's side, "to get acquainted," the captain said. Then had come the parting, and the counting up of months, and weeks, and days, until his return. Alas! the last reckoning had ended in the bitterness of despair.

But sorrow, thank God! cannot stay long with the young; and Frank, walking by his uncle's side, with many a skip and bound of overflowing life, was as happy as he could be. Before reaching the shore, they saw a man with lines, apparently bent upon the same errand as themselves. They recognized him as one Josiah Smith, a man of many occupations beside that of a fisherman.

"Going blue-fishing, 'Si?" said the captain, as they overtook him.

"Ya-as, ef I can find a boat; it's a good day for 't," drawled shiftless 'Si.

Captain Charlie thought of the wife and two



A JUNE MORNING.

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little children to be supported by his uncertain earnings, and good-naturedly offered him a place in his boat, which was accepted, and they were soon off and ready for business.

Boys, did you ever go blue-fishing? If so, you would have said there could not be a finer day for the sport than that which Frank and his uncle had taken. It was a cool day in early autumn; the sky was deeply blue, the sun often obscured by flying clouds, and the north-west wind blowing briskly. On such a day step into your boat, give her all the sail she will carry, let out your lines astern, then, as the boat bounds along, the greedy fish jump at the bait, and you have nothing to do but take them in as fast as you please: is not this better than to float lazily about, hour after hour, in the common way of fishing?

The sport proved to be all that the day had promised. Back and forth through the bay the boat flew—the fish shoaled behind; the fishers had all they could do to attend to the lines, and did not notice that the clouds became darker and more threatening, until a gust of wind tipped the boat so much that the water poured over her side.

"We must haul in sail!" cried the captain, springing up and shouting out orders to Frank unhooking a fish, and the slow-moving 'Siah.

Too late! Another and a stronger gust completely capsized the boat, and her three late occupants struggled in the water. Of course they could swim,—no boy nor man in the little sea-coast town of Dunkirk could not,—and they made for the boat, which floated keel up, and supported themselves as well as they could upon the sloping bottom. The next thing to do was to take a review of the situation, and determine what was best to be done. They were in the channel, distant about three-quarters of a mile from the main shore, and somewhat nearer the "Neck" (a long, sandy cape, inclosing the bay upon its northern side). The water was intensely cold, and so was the wind, as it blew upon them wet to the skin. No other boat was out—their only hope seemed to be that some one might see them from the shore and come to their rescue. But how long would this faint hope sustain them? how long could they keep their hold with this icy numbness creeping over them?

They waited—at first full of impossible plans for escape, then silent. Who can tell what thoughts came to their minds in those fearful minutes? Did not the captain think of his brothers, yes, and his father before them, to wonder if the sea would be his grave as it was theirs?—and the poor fisherman—did he not feel, in a mocking dream, the warm, clinging arms of his babies around his stiffening neck? But Frank's thoughts were all of his mother, swelling his boyish heart till it seemed

ready to break, as he fancied the bitterness of her grief if he never came back to her. The townspeople often called him "mother's boy," not only because he had grown up under her sole care,—and it was evident that he was the one precious thing she had still to live for,—but also because of a certain neatness in his dress at all times, and gentleness and refinement in his speech and manners, which might have come from that constant womanly influence. Many feared that his character might lack the manly virtues of courage and decision; and even his schoolmates, when the love of teasing was very strong, would call him "mother's baby," and "Franky," laying an insulting emphasis upon the last syllable, so that he had begged his mother to call him *Frank*, which she did, unless in a moment of tenderness the old baby name slipped from her tongue. If the veteran seamen of the place could have known the situation of this forlorn and shivering trio, what hope of rescue would they have found in the disabled captain, the inefficient Smith, or the boy who, according to their prophecy, "would never be good for much brought up so soft by women?"

The clock in the steeple of the village church struck; the sounds were faint, but they could count the strokes.

"Uncle Charlie," said Frank, "is that twelve o'clock?"

"Yes."

"Don't the tide turn about this time?" asked Josiah.

"It has turned," replied the captain; "it is ebbing now."

"Then," cried Frank, "we'll drift out to sea; everybody will be home to dinner now; no one will be likely to come to the shore for an hour, and perhaps no one will see us to-day!"

"Frank," said his uncle, earnestly, "keep up your courage,—don't give up. My miserable head is beginning to whirl, and I may drop off soon; but hold on,—think of your mother, Frank, and keep afloat as long as you have your senses."

But even while he spoke, he felt how slender was the chance that the poor mother would ever see her living darling again.

The mention of his mother called up before the boy her gentle face as he saw it last, smiling at his boast of swimming from the "Neck" to the shore. He had never heard that any one had ever performed that feat; but would it be possible to swim from the boat to the shore, through the icy water and the wide belt of entangling eel-grass? It did not seem so far to the "Neck," and there was no dreaded eel-grass on that side to catch his feet and pull him down; but the nearest point was fully two miles from the light-house, the only inhabited

house there. He might reach it alone, but could he be so mean as to leave his 'uncle without an effort to save him, and poor 'Siah too?

"Uncle," said Frank, "I am going to swim ashore; here we are right opposite Captain Wentworth's; I can swim ashore, get his dory, and come after you and 'Siah. I think I can do it; at any rate, I can't hold on long in this wind, and I shall soon be too numb to swim."

The captain was silent,—what could he say? To go or to stay seemed equally dangerous; but Frank, loosing the hold of one hand, was already working his stiffened fingers, and trying to throw off his boots in readiness for a start.

"Go!" said his uncle; "and God help you!"

the house for the key and return; twenty minutes lost, when every one was precious! He seized something heavy which lay at hand, and showered frantic blows upon the cruel door; at last it yielded, and there was the boat, with oars all in readiness; he had dreaded that the oars might have been taken away. Yes, there was the boat, but it was many feet from the water, and it would be a hard task for a man to drag it through the deep sand, while he was but a boy, nearly exhausted already by extraordinary efforts; but he hardly thought of all that,—he laid determined hands upon the boat, and it moved.

Impossible as it would have seemed to him at any other time, the boat was launched; then he took



FRANK LAUNCHES THE BOAT.

And God did help him as he threw himself into the angry waters and struck out for the shore. He felt resolute and confident, wasted no strength in uncertain, hurried movements, but with deliberate and steady strokes went on. The tide being almost at the flood, he passed through the entangling eel-grass with less trouble than he had feared; on, on, stroke after stroke, the shore seeming to grow no nearer, until at last, with one final desperate effort, he reached the shallow water; his feet touched bottom, he staggered forward, and fell upon the sand.

Hardly a minute would he take for rest,—the others must be saved. He sprang up, waved his hands toward the distant boat to show the men that he was safe, and looked about,—no boat in sight; he ran up the sands to the boat-house and pushed at the door,—it was *locked*!

Here was a difficulty that he had not foreseen; it would take at least twenty minutes to run up to

up the oars,—his work was almost done, but he must not rest yet, and with straining muscles, he retraced his way over the rough water. His uncle almost fell into the boat, with the words:

"Frank, you have saved my life. I could not have held on a moment longer."

"But where is 'Siah?" asked Frank.

"Poor fellow! I'm afraid he's gone. He declared that if you could swim ashore, he could. I begged him to wait until you could take us off, but I could n't keep him. I think he went down just on the bar yonder."

Frank shed bitter tears; it was hard to give up a life he had done so much to save.

They took up the oars and pulled slowly to the shore. Frank went directly home, sending what men he met at once to the shore; while the captain walked to the nearest house, borrowed dry clothes, and returned to the shore to direct the efforts made to recover their unfortunate com-

panion. Accordingly, the neighbors were startled from their afternoon quiet by the sight of Frank, a few wet garments clinging to him, running at full speed toward home. There, of course, he was received with great surprise, and his story heard with exclamations of deep sympathy and thanksgiving, while grandmother and mother rubbed him, and brought dry clothes and hot drinks, and finally put him to bed among soft blankets, where, tired out, he soon fell asleep. His mother watched him for a short time as he lay warm and rosy, his yellow hair curled by the dampness into hundreds of little rings upon his dear head, safe upon the pillow at home, instead of on the sea-weed under the waves; then, reluctant to leave him, she went forth upon her sad errand of sympathy to poor Mrs. Smith; and the two widows,

each with a baby upon her lap, wept together. In a day or two, Frank was quite well. Of course he was a hero among his playmates, and, indeed, in all the village; but he bore his honors modestly, well pleased that the boys never again called him by the old insulting names.

And is this all? No; his mother keeps as a priceless treasure, shining out from a bed of satin in its case, a silver medal, awarded by the Massachusetts Humane Society to Frank P——, for courage and perseverance in saving life. She showed it to me last summer; and as I looked into her face, with its habitual look of sadness, but glowing then with pride in her good boy, I felt that I should like to add to the inscription after the name so deservedly honored, these words: "A MOTHER'S BOY."



TELL me, Daisy, ere I go,
Whether my love is true or no.
One leaf off: He loves me. What?
One more leaf, and he loves me not.

Three leaves: Will he? Four leaves: So,
He never will love me—oh no, no!
I don't care what a daisy says;
I'm *sure* to get married one of these days!

PATTIKIN'S HOUSE.

BY JOY ALLISON.

CHAPTER XI.

THIRZA'S PLAN.

ON the evening of the day when the Pattikin family visited the menagerie, Thirza slipped away, after supper, as they all sat around the table, and going to her corner of the bureau-drawer, took out her little hoard of money from a small pasteboard box with a glass lid.

She picked out just what she wanted, and came and laid it on her father's knee.

"There's my part of the money for the menagerie," said she; "and I'm very much obliged to you, father, for giving me so much pleasure."

"Keep it, dear. I did n't intend to take your money, or the boys' either. You're all welcome to your pleasure," said her father.

That night Thirza disclosed to Tilda and the boys the plan she had hinted to them when in town. They would put together all they had, and buy father a new hat. He needed one. His last summer's hat was quite too shabby, and fit only for the garden. The old garden hat ought to have been burned up, or used to scare the crows with, before now.

They all consented, willingly. Seth was commissioned to make the purchase, as his head was quite as large as his father's. Having obtained the new hat, he was to put it in place of the other, giving that in turn the place of the garden hat, which he was to abstract and hide in the garret, or somewhere out of sight and recollection. It was all done successfully, and their father's surprise and pleasure fully equaled their expectations.

It was some days before the old hat that had been such an eyesore to Thirza came to light. The minister came down one morning from a rummage in the garret, with it in his hand.

"Here's a kettle for you, mother dear!" he said, advancing toward the stove, where she was busy with her cooking. "Take off the cover and let me set it in."

As she only smiled, he took it off himself, and set the old hat in over the burning wood.

"Bring some water, Thirza, child,—quick! It spoils a kettle to stand empty over a hot fire without water in it! Why don't you run? Why will you stand there and laugh when the kettle is spoiling?"

The children gathered around, much amused at their father's well-counterfeited distress. The flames

burst through the old crown, and the sides began to cave in.

"It's melted down, I declare! Well, we may as well let it all go in, now;" and he poked the old brim down into the fire, and put on the cover. "You might have had it for a kettle, as well as not, mother, if Thirza had n't been so slow about bringing the water."

"What *are* these children all laughing at?" And he went off into the study.

"Is n't father a jolly minister?" said Thirza.

CHAPTER XII.

TAKING A PAPER.

IT must be confessed that the children of the Pattikin family were models of patience while their mother was absent, for they never complained so long as there was johnny-cake enough for breakfast, beef and potatoes enough for dinner, and warm biscuit for supper, with now and then a taste of maple sirup for sweetening.

But Samuel and Simon, and Thirza and Tilda had another kind of hunger, which even mother's arts could not abate, and which seemed as if it could never be satisfied. It was a hunger for books. They had been supplied with just enough to keep the hunger well whetted. Uncles and aunts knew well what sort of presents were most appreciated in "Pattikin's house," and though the minister had to calculate closely enough, to make the ends meet, still he would, sometimes, buy books for himself, and books for his children.

But Ida Iturbide had shown Tilda some copies of a paper published on purpose for children, full of stories and pictures, and Tilda had printed out the address of the publisher; for from the moment she set eyes on it she was determined to have it.

It was a dollar a year, and a dollar was a great deal of money for her to save; but she was strong of purpose, and sooner or later, have it she would.

For one day and night she kept her purpose a secret, never so much as hinting that such a paper existed. It would be so glorious to have it come, some day, directed to "Matilda Melissa Jones." Very likely it might even be "Miss Matilda Melissa Jones." The very thought was rapturous.

But after she had lain awake half a night studying ways and means, and could contrive no way of increasing her cash capital, which, after the purchase of the new hat for her father, consisted of

three big red cents, a solitary dime, and a half a cent, she concluded to tell Thirza. Their united resources amounted to nineteen cents. And they studied and contrived, and ended by admitting a third and then a fourth partner. Then the capital of the whole company amounted to forty-one cents.

It was hard to see where the rest of the dollar was coming from. In fact they had to wait a good while, and now and then a penny was added to their pile, but it grew very slowly, till blueberry time came.

To be sure, there was no market for the blueberries, but their Aunt Matilda, who lived in Boston, had told them if they would pick some and dry them for her, when she came to visit them she would pay them ninepence a quart. Ninepence, you ought to know, is twelve and a half cents.

It took a good many berries to make a quart of dried ones, but they picked, day after day, and Simon built a platform out over the south door to spread them on; and when the season was over they had fourteen quarts. Fourteen ninepences! How many cents? It took a slate and pencil to solve that problem. Thirza and Tilda and Samuel looked over, while Simon did the ciphering.

One hundred and seventy-five cents!—A dollar and three quarters was the amount.

They had to wait several weeks for Aunt Matilda's visit, but they concluded it would be best to let their papers begin with the new year, and this resolve lessened their impatience. Simon was a splendid penman. He could write almost as handsomely as the school-master. But he could n't spell. He always spelled his words the shortest way. Thirza was a good speller but a poor writer. The letter to the editor would be an affair of much importance. It might as well be begun in season. So, as soon as the blueberries were dried and measured, and put up carefully in a paper bag, and suspended from the rafters in the garret, the letter was begun.

Thirza's spelling, Simon's penmanship, and the united wisdom of the four were to produce a letter fit to send to an editor.

It was written on a slate three times over, and then they tried on paper. It took a week of evenings. When it was done they showed it to their father, and he laughed!

I leave it to you if that was n't a little too bad! Simon looked proud and angry,—Samuel turned his back and walked hastily to the window, where he stood looking out at nothing. Thirza pouted, and Tilda blushed like a peony, and then asked meekly:

"What's the matter, father? Is n't it right?"

"Right! yes, indeed! I beg everybody's pardon! It's well written! nicely written! I guess

you would have got your paper, though, if you had n't made your request quite so humbly,—that's all."

That was all he would say; and, after talking it over, they concluded they would send it just as it was. No matter if it was humble; better so, than impudent. And I think so, too. Don't you?

So they laid it away till Aunt Matilda came. She was so pleased with her berries, when she came, that she paid them two dollars, because, as she said, one dollar and seventy-five cents does n't divide by four so well. How rich they felt!

They set the door open between the two chambers that night, and laid awake hours talking and trying to agree what they should do with so much money. Thirza and Samuel thought it best to send for two years. Simon and Tilda were opposed to this plan, being inclined to get all the pleasure possible this year, and let the next take care of itself. And their counsels prevailed.

Then there were other plans, and the next time Samuel and Simon were arrayed against Thirza and Tilda, and both sides were obstinate. The boys wanted "The Arabian Nights," and the girls Hans Christian Andersen's story-book. And not being able to agree, they concluded to go to sleep, and decide it in the morning by lot, especially as their father shouted up to them just then:

"Children!—must n't talk any more to-night! Time to go to sleep!"

In the morning they drew cuts with some splinters of pine. And the lot fell in the girls' favor. So Hans Andersen's story-book was sent for; which occasioned the writing of another letter.

"I should think you might know how to spell some words after this," said Thirza, when she had spelled the second letter through for him from beginning to end.

"Write it all over by yourself, and see how many words you will get right," suggested their mother.

Simon did, and he actually got thirteen words right, and there were thirty-four in the letter.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAIN.

PATTIKIN pattered out into the barn, one warm day in midsummer, and came in—her eyes "as big as saucers"—without the egg she had been sent to fetch for the johnny-cake for breakfast.

"What's the matter, child? Could n't you find any eggs?" asked her mother.

"I was a-walkin' along," said Pattikin, with her most dramatic air, for she fully appreciated the importance such news as she had to tell would give her in the eyes of the family, "and I stopped to

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look into the pony's crib, 'cause the red hen lays there, and what should strike my eyes but a little bit of a mouse-colored colt, lying right down close to the gray pony!"—and having finished her story, Pattikin dismissed her dignity and capered about for joy.

The breakfast was forgotten, and they all made a rush for the barn. There was n't half so much excitement in the family when the baby came. But, then, they had never had a colt before.



CAIN'S CAPERS.

They searched the dictionary, and the "Ancient Mythology," and the "Hand-book of Biography" for a name. And then it was called "Cain" at last. That was because he turned out to be such a mischievous fellow.

He would chew up the boys' hats or the little girls' bonnets when they left them out on the grass, and he would put his head in at the pantry-window, and if there was a pie, or johnny-cake, or gingerbread, or even butter within reach, he would help himself. He stepped on Pattikin's toes, and kicked Mr. Iturbide's old Prince in the face, and "cut up Cain" generally, and so earned the name.

But they loved him! Oh, I guess they did! And one night when he was sick, not a child of them could be induced to go to bed, but sat on the hay beside him half the night while their father

worked over him, they helping what they could to rub him and pour all sorts of doses down his throat out of a long-necked bottle. Of course he got well.

The minister often told his children that the colt was to be sold some day, to pay an old debt. This was a very sad thought to them, so they forgot it as soon as they could, and went on loving naughty, frolicsome Cain just as well as ever, till at last the day came. The minister told them

of it beforehand, and that the man was coming to take the colt away. He wished them to be quite prepared for what must be done, but it seemed as if they could not be prepared. They hung about Cain to the last possible minute, and when they were obliged to let go, and he went trotting off behind the wagon to which he was tied, Thirza and Tilda and Pattikin hid their faces in their aprons and sobbed, and Sandy wiped his eyes and nose on his jacket sleeve till they were royally red, and Seth and Samuel and Simon trudged off, each a separate way, with their hands in their pockets and lumps in their throats, and a terrible hatred of the old ogre Debt in their hearts. They "would never allow

themselves to get into his clutches—never!"

And it is to be hoped they kept this resolution.

CHAPTER XIV.

FIRE! FIRE!

"COLD weather, this!" said the minister, as he raised his night-capped head from the pillow one morning late in September.

"Yes," said his wife, "I felt that it was growing colder last night. But we must be stirring, or the children will be late at school."

This suggestion brought the minister's head up from the pillow, and his night-cap off. He reluctantly released himself from the comfortable clinging of the warm bedclothes, and began to dress.

The fire was soon snapping and crackling in the kitchen stove, and by ones and twos the family made their appearance. The kitchen was not a warm room or a pleasant one in winter. There were none but north windows, and when cold weather came these were thickly covered with frost, so thickly that curtains were quite needless except for keeping out cold.

"This morning makes me think of winter," said Sammy, disconsolately. "I don't see why they could n't have put the kitchen on the south side of this house. It's an awful gloomy lookout this way in winter-time."

"I don't think there is any lookout at all on very cold days," said his mother. "But winter's a long way off yet. Still, if all consent, you might build the fire in the study, Sammy, and then we can sit there after breakfast."

All agreed to this proposal with delight.

"We can appreciate our good dry wood these chilly mornings," said Seth. "We thought there was no use preparing such a lot more than we could use last season."

"You never can have too much dry wood ahead in this latitude," said the minister, speaking with pins in his mouth, for he was dressing Pattikin.

Thirza and Tilda were setting the table. Their mother was putting a great broad pan of buck-wheat cakes into the oven. Seth was grinding the coffee, and Simon held the baby. Sammy had gone to build the fire in the study. Sandy did nothing but sit on the wood-box behind the stove, and warm his nose and fingers.

The tea-kettle began to send forth great puffs of white steam.

"Thirza, you can make the coffee," said her mother.

So Thirza took the coffee which Seth had finished grinding, and put it into the coffee-pot and took it to the stove to give it its portion of boiling water.

The minister was in his slippers, with one foot on the stove hearth, and the mother said: "Take care! That tea-kettle is very full!"

But the caution came too late. There was an outcry, and then the minister was hopping about the room on one foot, uttering exclamations of pain, and the family were all beside themselves with fright. The mother brought a pail of cold water.

"Put your foot in there, father! Woolen holds heat so long, it will burn deeper and deeper. That'll stop it quickest."

The foot was thrust into the pail, and a short relief afforded. Then the stocking was taken off. The minister groaned as he looked at his foot.

"It will be six weeks before I shall walk out-doors with that, and who'll preach, I should like to know?"

It was a serious burn, and day after day the minister sat in his chair by the kitchen fire, or lay upon the bed in the adjoining bedroom, helpless,—taking an involuntary vacation from his work. I don't know who preached, but I do know that the time seemed very long to him, and he beguiled it with many devices. He played games of skill with the children, or made verses, taxing their ingenuity to supply rhymes or adjust meters. He astonished them with such philosophical experiments as he could command materials for; and if his dexterity at sleight-of-hand performances did not rival those of the famous Peter Potter, they delighted his children, and confirmed them in the belief that their father was something quite above the average of mankind, and that they were highly favored in being the minister's children.

Poor Thirza, who could never be done repenting of her carelessness, hung about him and waited on him, and racked her brains to think of ways to please him. But she could not help enjoying, with all her heart, the jubilee he made of those four weeks of confinement to the house.

It was about a week after the accident happened, before he had even ventured to hobble across the floor by the help of a crutch,—though he had that day made one, in anticipation of the time when he might use it,—that the family were awakened one night by a vigorous pounding at the front door.

"What's the matter? Who's there?" shouted the minister, raising his night-capped head.

"Fire!—fire! We want your help!" came the reply.

The minister threw back the bedclothes, and was about to spring from the bed. But a twinge of pain and the quick hand of his wife brought him down on his pillow again, and it was she who sprang out and went to the door.

"The Willoughby house is burning up! We want the minister to come, and bring his axe."

"He can't come. He has scalded his foot, and has n't walked a step for a week. Go to the shed and take the axe, if it will do any good," she answered through the crack of the door.

"Water-pails! Give us all you have!"

She brought them quickly, and passed them out, and the men were gone immediately. Then she slipped on her stockings, wrapped a warm garment about her shoulders, and went to the study window to look out. The Willoughby house was but a few rods distant, on the same side of the street. It had been the pride of the village for years, with its grand old halls and stately portico, its magnificent garden and greenhouse, its ebb and flow of city visitors, the children and grandchildren of the aged lady who alone called the place home.

Vainly they had coaxed and entreated the old

mother to leave the house to which she had come as a bride full sixty years before, and to dwell with them in their distant homes. Her reply was always, "Here I have lived, and here I will die!"

And now!—this was the sorrowful thought of the minister's wife as she saw from the window the flames already bursting through the roof. She stayed to look but one moment. Then she hurried back to her restless and impatient husband, to whose eager questions she replied:

"There is no hope of saving it. I'll go over, if

only go!" he said, again and again, as he moved restlessly about, now resting his poulticed and clumsy foot upon a chair, now holding it down till its painful throbbing warned him to raise it again; now submitting to have it incased in the blanket which Thirza remembered to fetch him, and then allowing it to drop on the floor, as he hurried back to the window.

Seth and Simon were gone, to help if they could; if not, to look on. Thirza would have gone but for the notion that she was taking care of father,



"FIRE! FIRE!"

you'll lie still, and see if I can help to comfort Grandmother Willoughby. I can't bear to think what she will feel."

She was dressed very soon, and calling up the children, and charging them to dress themselves warmly before they came down-stairs to see, she ran away.

Everybody disobeyed her instantly, and most innocently. Half-clad, shoeless, stockingless, they hurried down-stairs and crowded about the study windows. Wrapped in his dressing-gown, the minister hobbled, leaning on his crutch, from one window to another, lamenting his helplessness.

"They'll think I might come! Oh, if I could

who might seriously injure himself, in his distress and excitement, if she left him.

"Why-e-e! what will Grandmother Willoughby do if her house burns all up?" said Pattikin, standing on one foot, and trying to pull on a stocking and keep her eyes on the burning house at the same time; and the minister answered with a groan.

The blows of the axes, cutting away the sheds that the barn might be saved, resounded on the still night air, and the crash of the falling timbers, could be plainly heard. There was timber enough in one of those old mansions to build half a dozen of our modern houses, and the rare spectacle lasted longer than similar ones do now.

But it was over at last. The minister went back to his bed, and the children huddled about the kitchen stove, which was not yet cold, waiting for their mother to come back.

When she came, and told her pitiful story of the grief of the poor old lady, and how they had to force her out of the burning house, they were quite overcome, and Pattikin said:

"It's too bad! and to-morrer mornin' I'm just

going to carry her over my Willie book,"—which was very generous in Pattikin, since this was her most precious possession.

By the time the boys came home, their mother had ready a two-quart pailful of boiling hot ginger tea, of which everybody had to drink a portion, to keep them from taking cold. And then they were sent back to bed, and silence and peace reigned again in Pattikin's house.

THE END.

THE MOTHER IN THE DESERT.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

MANY, many centuries ago, in a far-away country, whose laws and customs were different from ours, and allowed men to have several wives at a time, if they liked, there lived an old man who had two. One of these wives was a very aged woman, but she was still wise and beautiful, and the old man loved her very much. The other wife was young. She had been a slave in her husband's family, and was still treated as an inferior by the older wife, once her mistress. This younger wife had a little boy, a fine hardy fellow. He was the only child in the house,—or rather in the tents,—for there were no houses in those days. I will not tell you the names of these persons, but I think most of you will guess them, for you all have heard about them or read of them in that most beautiful book of stories which we call "The Old Testament."

One of the mischiefs of putting two wives into the same home is, that they are almost sure to quarrel with each other. It was so in this case. The wife who had been a slave, was proud of her motherhood, and now and then would say provoking things to the other wife who had no boy to be proud of. Then the older woman would feel jealous and unhappy, and be in her turn unkind and harsh, till the tent resounded with bitter words, sobs and cries. At last a marvelous event happened. God pitied the childless wife, and to her, also, sent a boy, a dear little baby, soft, and sweet, and helpless as our babies are to-day, and just as much loved and rejoiced over as they. For a time the brown tent, standing close to the green pastures where the white, bleating sheep nibbled and wandered, was a happy place. A great feast was given in honor of the baby. Friends and relations came

on horseback and camelback from far away. Kids were roasted, rich milk, herbs stewed with butter, and all the dainties known to the time, prepared; and the proud mother was never weary of showing her child, and boasting of his size and strength and goodness, as mothers have done from that day to this. But after the feast was eaten and the company dispersed, the old disturbances began again. Each wife was jealous; the children quarreled with each other; the good old man tried in vain to keep the peace between them. At last, matters came to a crisis. The old wife said she would dwell no longer under the same tent with the other, and would not let her boy be brought up with his big domineering brother. Both must go away, she said,—the mother and the child,—and she persisted, and stormed, and urged, till her husband did not know what to do.

And, indeed, it was difficult to know what to do. There were very few people in the world in those days, and those few were scattered about at long distances from each other. The brown tents beside the sheep-pastures were miles and miles from any other tents. One could travel for many days without meeting a human being. There was no particular place to send any one to, saying, "There you will find shelter and food;" and it seemed hard and cruel to say "Go" to a poor woman, without telling her where to go. So the old man went to bed unhappy and puzzled,—and no wonder.

But in the night God spoke to him in a dream, as often happened in those times, and told him not to fear, but to let the mother and child go, for He would take care of them and preserve their

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lives, and the boy should grow up to be the father of a great multitude. I do not think, except for this promise of the Lord's, that the old man could have said "Go," for he was a just and wise man, and tender-hearted. There is a tradition among the people of his nation, that he was the first man

For, rising with the dawn, he called the younger wife, filled a bag with bread, tied a bottle of water to her back, pointed to the desert, and bade her "Go." Poor thing, her heart must have been heavy enough as she turned her face away from the tents. She had not been always happy there.



"WITH A GREAT SOB, SHE WENT AWAY."

in all the world whose beard became white, and that he asked of God, "What is this?" and the Lord replied, "It is a token of gentleness, my son." The old man's beard was very white as he lay dreaming that night, and his heart had grown gentle with the blanching of his hair; so that it was not cruelty or unkindness, but faith in the Heavenly Promise, which, when morning broke, led him to comply with his old wife's request.

There had been quarrelsome hours and sad hours,—hours of complaining and hours of tears,—but still, the tents were home, there was food in them and shelter, and the wilderness was desolate and lonely. She went, however,—there was nothing else left for her to do. Husbands in those days were masters as well, and had power of life and death over their wives. There were the barley-loaf and the water-bottle; there was the desert track;

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and taking her child by the hand, she walked away, going she knew not where or to what.

A long time they wandered in the rough sandy wilderness. When they were tired, they lay down to sleep under the thorn-bushes; when they were hungry, they broke a piece off the loaf and drank from the bottle. Gradually the loaf grew less, the last drops were drained, and still they were in the desert wilds, and as far from human help as ever. The poor boy cried with thirst, and the mother was thirsty too, though she suffered in silence. At last, the boy lay down. He could go no farther. His hands were hot, and his head burned with fever. Each moment he grew more ill. His mother tended him, but what could she do without food or medicine? At last, his eyes closed, he no longer moved or spoke, and gradually the conviction grew in her that, unless aid came from somewhere, he must die.

Where could she hope for help? The hot sand gave none, the blue sky looked pitiless. All she could do was to draw him beneath the shadow of some bushes, put a stone under his head by way of pillow, kiss him, call his name; and for neither kiss nor call did he open his eyes. At last, with a great sob, she went away,—quite a long way off,—and sat down with her back to him. "Let me not see the death of the child," she said within herself; and with the words came thoughts of what a dear baby he had been; how brave and bright always; how pretty and coaxing in his ways; and she began to cry, gently at first, then loudly, with moans and sobs, as if, in that inhospitable spot, some one might hear and come to her relief. There was no chance of that, she knew; still, the tears seemed to relieve, in part, the misery of her heart.

But some one did hear. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity," a good man has said; and in this poor mother's extremity, help came to her. A voice called her name. She looked up, and there above her head was the shining form of an angel.

"What aileth thee?" the angel said. "Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift the lad and hold him in thy hand, for I will make of him a great nation." Then the angel vanished.

"Oh!" gasped the poor mother, "what can he mean. 'A great nation,' when I have not even a drop of water to give him to drink!"

She arose, however, for the angel was not to be disobeyed. It seemed as if God led her, for, as she went back to where her son lay, her feet, as if of themselves, turned aside in the thicket, and there, shining out from the sand, was a cool, bubbling spring of water. There it had been all the time, while she sat despairingly with her back to

the dying lad,—there, close by; but she had not guessed it until God's moment came.

I think, do you know, that there is a beautiful thought here for all of us. Almost every one, at some time or other in his life, has unhappy days when hope seems dead, and all things go wrong. If our eyes were opened to see, on such days, or our faith were stronger, perhaps for us too would be revealed some bright fountain of refreshment which God has set for us to drink from, and which, pretty soon, we shall come to, if only we have patience to bear our trouble and to wait His pleasure.

You can guess how glad the poor mother was when she saw the water. She ran to her boy, lifted him in her arms, and laid him down beside the spring, where the ground, carpeted with fresh herbs, made a soft bed. Then she bathed his head with water and gave him drink; and when he felt the cool touch on his lips, he opened his eyes and smiled, and she knew that he was saved.

We don't know much about the history of the mother and boy after that day. The Bible tells us no more, except that "God was with the lad, and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer." Later, when he was a man, he married an Egyptian girl. It is from him that the Bedouins of the desert and the wild tribes of Palestine and India are descended. "Ishmaelites" they are called, from the boy's name; for now that you have guessed, as I think you must, I don't mind telling that the story is about Hagar and Ishmael, and the old man who sent them forth into the wilderness was Abraham, the friend and servant of God, about whom such wonderful and beautiful things are told in the Old Testament.

I have heard just one more curious little story about Ishmael, which I will tell you. It is not given in the Bible, and may not be true; but the Jews accept it as a tradition, or unwritten story, handed down from one generation to another:

"Ishmael lived a wandering life with his wife and cattle, and the Lord blessed his flocks, and he had great possessions. But his heart remained the same; and he was a master of archery, and instructed his neighbors in making bows.

"After some years, Abraham, whose heart longed for his son, said to Sarah, 'I must see how my son Ishmael fares.' And she answered, 'Thou shalt go, if thou wilt swear to me not to alight from off thy camel.' So Abraham swore. Then he went to Paran, over the desert, seeking Ishmael's tent; and he reached it at noon, but neither Hagar nor her son was at home. Only Ishmael's wife was within, and she was scolding and beating the children.

"So Abraham halted on his camel before the tent-door, and the sun was hot, and the sand white and glaring beneath. And he called to her, 'Is thy husband within?'"

"She answered, without rising from her seat, 'He is hunting.'

"Then Abraham said, 'I am faint and hungry; bring me a little bread and a drop of water.'

"But the woman answered, 'I have none for such as thou.'

"So Abraham said to her, 'Say to thy husband, even to Ishmael, these words: "An old man hath come to see thee out of the land of the Philistines, and he says: The nail that fastens thy tent is bad; cast it away, or thy tent will fall, and get thee a better nail."' Then he departed and went home.

"Now, when Ishmael returned, his wife told him all these words, and he knew that his father had been there, and he understood the tenor of his words; so he sent away his wife, and he took another, with his mother's advice, out of Egypt, and her name was Fatima.

"And after three years, Abraham yearned once more after his son, and he said to Sarah, 'I must see how Ishmael fares.' And she answered, 'Thou shalt go, if thou wilt swear to me not to alight from off thy camel.' So he swore.

"Then he went to Paran, over the desert, seeking Ishmael's tent, and he reached it at noon; but neither Hagar nor her son was at home. Only

Ishmael's wife, Fatima, was within, and she was singing to the children.

"So Abraham halted. And when Fatima saw a stranger at the door, she rose from her seat and veiled her face, and came out and greeted him.

"Then said Abraham, 'Is thy husband within?'"

"She answered, 'My lord, he is pasturing the camels in the desert.' And she added, 'Enter, my lord, into the cool of the tent and rest, and suffer me to bring thee a little meat.'

"But Abraham said, 'I may not alight from off my camel, for my journey is hasty; but bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread and a drop of water, for I am hungry and faint.'

"Then she ran and brought him of the best that she had in the tent, and he ate and drank, and was glad.

"So he said to her, 'Say to thy husband, even to Ishmael, that an old man out of the land of the Philistines has been here, and he says: The nail that fastens thy tent is very good; let it not be stirred out of its place, and thy tent shall stand.'

"And when Ishmael came home, Fatima related to him all the words that the old man had spoken; and he understood the tenor of the words.

"And Ishmael was glad that his father had visited him, for he knew thereby that his love for him was not extinguished."

THE GREEN HOUSE WITH GOLD NAILS.

BY MRS. J. P. BALLARD.

AMONG the butterflies which flit gayly about our summer flowers, there is one in which I was much interested last season, and which I would like to describe to the readers of ST. NICHOLAS, that this summer they may study it for themselves. It has been my "progressive object-card" for the summer, and I do not believe even the Little Schoolma'am would object to my studies when I tell her that no pin or other instrument of torture has been used, either in its capture or mounting.

How did I catch my butterfly? As I would advise all to do who wish for success and a perfect

specimen. Take with you a box; watch for a nice plump caterpillar; break off the leaf you will easily find him feeding upon; and when you have carried him home in the box, put him on a white paper and invert a clear plain-glass tumbler quickly over him; feed him daily with whatever sort of leaf you found him eating, and—you have caught your butterfly. You can see him through the glass, and will find it a source of enjoyment to watch from time to time his great changes.

But it is of one particular kind I wish now to tell you. The caterpillar lives upon the common milk-weed, or *Asclepias*, which grows by the road-side,

* For an account of progressive object-cards, see "Jack-in-the-Pulpit," ST. NICHOLAS for October, 1876.

with pinkish clusters of flowers in summer, and curious bird-shaped pods in the fall. This caterpillar (whose true name is *Danaïs* archippus*—we



FIG. 1.—THE CATERPILLAR.

might call him Archie, for short) is very pretty, and the butterfly is handsome; but the crowning beauty of all is the chrysalis. It looks like a little green house, put together with gold nails. It is somewhat of the size and shape of a long, delicate pea-green acorn, and has a row of dots half way around what would be the saucer of the acorn, with others about the size of a pin's head on different parts of the chrysalis, and you will say they are not like gold, but are real gold itself.

The caterpillar, when full-grown, is about two inches long. It is cylindrical, and handsomely

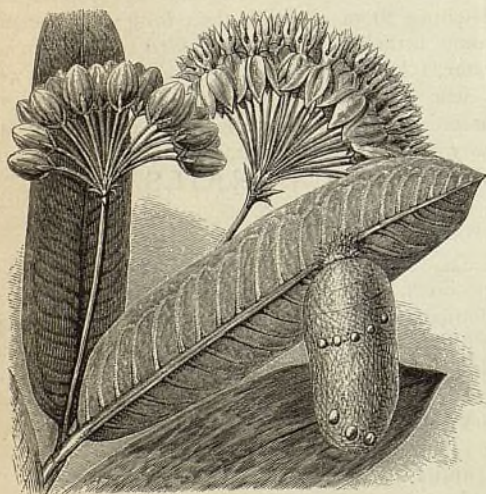


FIG. 2.—THE MILK-WEED AND THE CHRYSALIS.

marked with narrow alternating bands of black, white, and lemon-yellow. The bands are not en-

tirely even, and occasionally run into each other. On the top of the second ring or segment are two slender black thread-like horns, and on a hind ring two more not quite as long as those near the head. You can find it almost any day in July or August, if you look closely on the under side of the broad ovate-elliptical leaves of the milk-weed.

It was the accidental finding of his chrysalis, attached to a spray of wild carrot, that led me to study this particular species. It was a secret to me—this beautiful green and gold house. It held something. What, I must know! Cutting the stem of the carrot, I brought the treasure carefully into the house, covered it with a tumbler, and for a week it remained just the same. Then the green began to turn to a light purple, and lines began to show through the clear case. The front showed lines like a curtain, parted and folded back each way, like drapery, to the bottom, as shown in Fig. 3. The back was curiously marked off, and

FIG. 3.—FRONT.



FIG. 4.—BACK.



THE CHRYSALIS BEGINNING TO CHANGE.

looked like Fig. 4. The whole gradually took on a very dark purple hue, and I hoped to see it open and give up its treasure. But though I watched very carefully, it stole a march on me, and one morning I found its secret disclosed and fluttering below the empty chrysalis, now but a clear, rent tissue, with here and there a pale gold dot.

The butterfly is handsome and quite large (more than three inches across when the wings are spread), but not quite so beautiful as you would infer from his elegant house. He is of a rich tawny orange, bordered with velvety black, on the upper side, and a lighter, nankeen yellow below; and has a large velvety black head, spotted with white.

As I did not know how large he would be, nor when he would come out,—for he did not invite me, as I said, to his “opening,”—I had not given him a glass roomy enough for his wings to expand entirely at the first, as they must, or remain imperfect. So afterward, although he had the liberty of the whole room, he walked about with one wing folded back over his shoulder, like a

* From the name of *Danaë*, the only daughter of Acrisius, who shut her up in a brazen tower, for fear some one would rob him of her; and Jupiter visited her there by transforming himself into a shower of gold.



FIG. 5.—THE BUTTERFLY.

lady's opera-cloak. But I kept him, and, learning that he came from the milk-weed caterpillar, I went in quest of some. I was fortunate enough to find five in one search—three on one large milk-weed, and two on another. I put them in a glass fernery, about one foot long and ten inches high, and fed them with fresh milk-weed leaves daily. Soon they mounted, one after another, to the top, and began to work on the under side of the glass cover. My curiosity was on the alert to see how each would build his green house. I had seen cocoons of various kinds spun, but the glass-smooth chrysalis could not be spun. Oh, no! It was altogether too nice work to be done in sight. There was no sound of hammer or sight of tools. It was all polished and painted and ready—and lo! the inner layers of the caterpillar's skin had been the workshop, and the outer skin was taken down and discarded, like worthless scaffolding, when the green and gold house was ready. Pretty soon there were

five of these houses hanging from the glass roof, side by side; and now there are five empty homes, still clinging by the little shiny black twist that fastens them firmly to the glass, and five handsome great butterflies, like the one shown in the picture. Only one of all these did I see break the shell and come out, and that only by the most diligent watching. The butterfly was packed, head downward, at the bottom of the chrysalis—wonderfully packed, as all will admit who see him emerge, to shake himself out into something five or six times as wide, a beautiful uncramped butterfly.

After seeing them brighten a bouquet, and watching them eat with their long spiral tongues from a little bed of moss sprinkled with sweetened water, I let them take a nap under a tumbler with a little pillow of chloroformed cotton, and, unmarred even by a pin, they were ready to be laid away in a glass-covered box in their long, dreamless sleep.

THE CATERPILLAR.

By M. F. B.

I CREEP on the ground, and the children say:
"You ugly old thing!" and push me away.

I lie in my bed, and the children say:
"The fellow is dead; we'll throw him away!"

At last I awake, and the children try
To make me stay, as I rise and fly.

TOMMY'S COUSINS.



BY E. MULLER.

TOMMY had been cross all day. He had pulled Robbie's hair, and taken his pea-nuts from him. He had sat down on Susie's lovely doll and flattened her nose, and he had put the kitten on top of the book-case. He had even been saucy and hateful to his dear mamma, when she asked if her little boy felt quite well, or if his long visit to the Aquarium yesterday had tired him. Instead of answering pleasantly, Tommy had hunched up his shoulders, shoved out his elbows, and snapped out, fiercely:

"No; I aint tired, and I aint cross either."

Every one was glad when bed-time came, and Master Tommy was taken upstairs.

"I do declare, Master Tommy, you'll turn into a nasty, snappy turtle, or a crab, some of these nights, when you're so cross," said nurse.

"Pooh!" said Tommy, "I wont."

"Well, something will happen; you'll see if it does n't. I've read of just such things coming to boys in books," said nurse, as she tucked him into his bed.

Nurse thought he had become very quiet all at once, and as she bade him "Good-night," she wondered if he was up to more mischief. But he was already snoring as she reached the door.

As soon as she had gone down-stairs, Tommy got out of bed, and felt under the bureau for the piece of mince-pie he had hidden there. He had taken it from the pantry shelf, that evening,—a good big quarter of a pie. It was rather dusty, but tasted good, and Tommy sat up in bed, and ate it

all in ten bites. Then he curled down among the blankets, and wished he was a crab.

"I'd crawl right down and bite nurse, now," he thought. "I wonder how it would feel to be a turtle, or a crab, or a—a —"

"A very fine specimen indeed," said a gruff, strange voice.

Tommy looked around. Where was he? Where



TOMMY ON EXHIBITION.

was his bed, and his room with blue paper on the walls?

"Oh, my! what is the matter?" cried Tommy. He was sitting upon a bit of sea-weed, in a great

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glass case full of water, and a red-nosed man in spectacles was looking at him.

"A fine specimen of fresh-water urchin," said the red-nosed man.

"I aint a urchin," cried Tommy, indignantly.

"See him open his mouth! How ugly he is!" exclaimed a small boy beside the red-nosed man.

Tommy looked around for something to throw at him, but right at his elbow sat a huge hermit crab, who stretched out four claws, and said:

"Shake hands, cousin! Glad to see you!"

cousin! Nonsense! Of course you are. Come along."

He was just stretching out his claws to drag Tommy off the bit of sea-weed, when two little sea-urchins came rolling along, and said:

"Why, here's cousin Tommy!"

"Go 'way!" exclaimed Tommy. "I never was such an ugly, prickly thing like a chestnut bur."

"Ugly, prickly thing, indeed!" cried the sea-urchins. "Did n't you pain your poor mamma with your naughty, prickly temper,—you ugly little



TOMMY'S TORMENTORS.

"I'm not your cousin," said Tommy, drawing himself up.

"Oho! He says he is not my cousin!" squeaked the hermit crab, so loudly that all the skates came to see what was the matter.

"You're a horrid ugly thing!" screamed Tommy. "I saw you yesterday pinching a poor little crab, and poking your old claws into his shell. I'm not *your* cousin."

"Now, just hear that!" said the hermit crab, with a wicked smile. "Here is an urchin who pinches his little brother, pulls his hair, and takes his pea-nuts away, and yet he declares he is not my

fresh-water urchin!" And both the sea-urchins gave him great pokes with their sharp spiny sides, and then rolled away, laughing at his pain.

They had no sooner gone, than up came a whole family of thin little alligators, and with them a whole family of fat little seals, giggling, bouncing up and down, and eating mince-pie.

"Tommy, how d'ye do? How d'ye do. Tommy?" said they all.

They looked so mischievous, and so big, that Tommy began to cry.

"Cry, baby,—cry! Have n't any pie!" sang all the fat little seals and thin little alligators,

jumping at him and trying to bite his toes, till Tommy was frightened half to death.

Just as he made sure they were going to eat him, something wonderful happened. A beautiful sea-horse, with a silver bridle, came floating down, led by the loveliest little mermaid that ever was seen. And as she came close to Tommy, she said:

"Poor Tommy! Come with me. Mount my little friend here, and we will take you away from these tormentors."

So Tommy got upon the sea-horse's back,—and he just fitted there nicely, which surprised him, till he remembered that since he had become a fresh-water urchin, he had grown very small.

They pranced away from the seals and alligators, and all the skates smiled pleasantly as they passed. Soon they came to the mermaid's house,—a large pink conch-shell, with sea-weed climbing over it, and a long avenue, marked by rows of pink sea-anemones, leading up to it. The sea-anemones bowed, and waved their fringes to the mermaid, and welcomed her home.

"I have here a poor little urchin who has been naughty, and has been punished; but now he will be good, and happy," said the mermaid.

Then they went into the conch-shell, and around and around, and up the spiral stairs, that were pinked at every step, till at last the mermaid put Tommy into a little bed like a rosy pink sunset, and kissed him good-night.

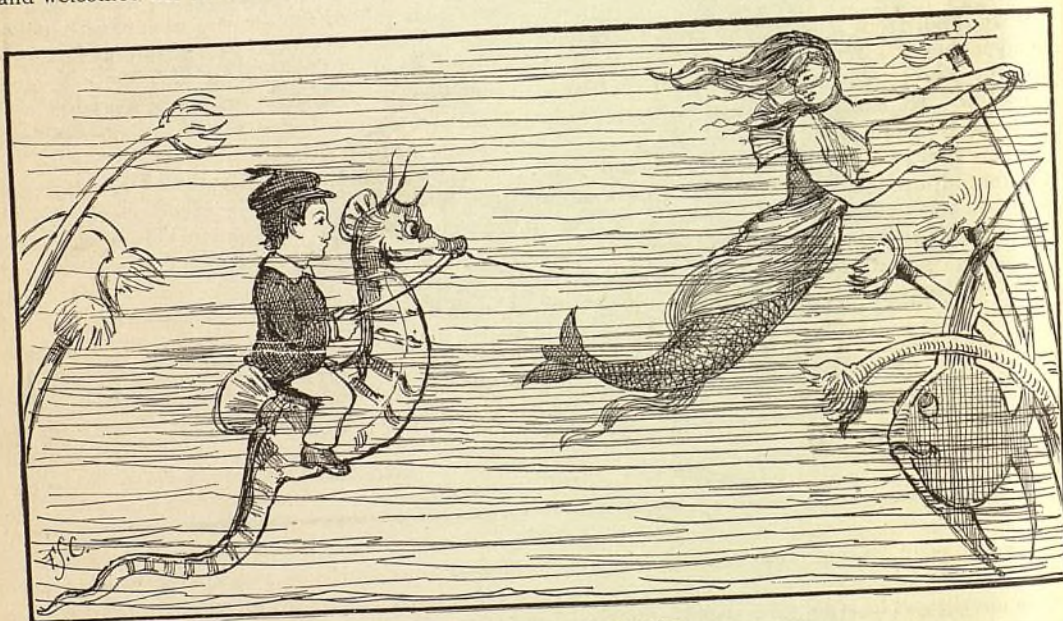
"You wont want to get up and look for pie again, will you?" said she.

"I just guess *not*!" answered Tommy; and then he fell asleep, while she sang to him songs about the sea.

When he woke up, the sunshine was streaming over him.

"I did think of giving him some paregoric, ma'am," nurse was saying. "But after a little while he stopped crying, so I did not get up."

"Why! I must have dreamed it!" said Tommy to himself. Just then he looked down and saw some pie-crust crumbs in his bed. "I don't know, though," he thought. "May be it was true. May be I really was—a—urchin."



THE RIDE WITH THE MERMAID.

CECILE AND LULU.

(Translation of French Story in April Number.)

BY A. A. CHAPMAN.

"WHAT are those funny black marks, Cecile, that we see everywhere on the walls?"

"Letters, Lulu; don't you know them?"

"No, Cecile; nobody has ever taught me them."

"Alas! how you have been neglected, my poor little one; but when one must work all day long to earn a living, one does not easily find the opportunity either to teach or to study. I myself have forgotten a great deal of what I used to know when we were happy. But what I still remember, I will teach to you, little by little, as I find time."

"Why are we so poor, Cecile?"

"It is our misfortune, my child; we must bear it with patience until Heaven sends us better days. Only, if we could find our uncle, all our troubles would end."

"Why do we not go and look for him at once, Cecile?"

"My child, I did look for him everywhere until all my money was gone. But don't let us think of that any more. You are going to take a lesson, you know. Here is a poster which will serve very nicely for a reading-book."

"This letter here," said she, pointing to it with her knitting-needle, "is called 'H.' Look at it well; will you remember it?"

"'H,'" repeated Lulu, "I will remember it. 'H'—I know it already."

And so Cecile taught her little sister the letters H-O-U-S-E.

"What does all that mean?" asked little Lulu at length.

"These letters spell the word *house*,—do you see it? H-o-u-s-e—*house*. But there strikes the hour. I have no more time to teach you. I must go to the factory. Here is a little basket of fruit that I bought for your luncheon. Let us go!"

"Oh, Cecile! don't shut me up in that dark, narrow room! I hate it. Let me follow you, or even leave me here, where I feel the fresh air, and where there is something to look at, I beg of you!"

"Will you promise me not to leave this place to wander in the streets?"

"I will stay here until you return, Cecile."

"Remember, Lulu, that if I lose you, I shall be all alone in the world."

"Have no fear, Cecile; be sure I will take good care."

"I ask only that you will stay where you can see the word *house* all the time. Be good, my child, and don't forget what I have taught you. Good-bye!"

She kissed her little sister, with tears in her eyes, and went away.

Lulu sat down well satisfied, and proceeded to examine the contents of her basket, happily not dreaming that it had cost her sister a dinner. But her attention was soon diverted from her agreeable occupation by the various things that were passing in the street. She thought them so new and so delightful!

At length Lulu ate her luncheon, then she read over two or three times the word *house* that she had just learned, and then she began to grow weary of the place where she was, which became now very quiet, for everybody had turned the same street-corner, which seemed to her the entrance to a mysterious place, where all sorts of pretty things were to be found. In order to see again these lost wonders, Lulu ran to the corner, whence she looked down a broad street lined with magnificent shops, and thronged with handsome carriages, children richly dressed who were amusing themselves with all sorts of pretty playthings, and a number of those little rogues that we call *street-Arabs*.

For a few minutes she took good care not to lose sight of the word *house*, of which she could still get a glimpse. But she was not yet six years old, and besides, she was very inexperienced, having come recently from the country, where she was born. This is why it is not very surprising that she soon forgot the word, and thought of nothing but the interesting objects that she had before her eyes.

Little by little she drew nearer to these marvels, that attracted her irresistibly by their splendor, until she had entirely turned the corner, and found herself in the midst of her new paradise.

Time passed. More and more drawn away by these charming novelties, Lulu turned a great many corners, without remembering how many, when all at once the hour sounded when her sister was accustomed to return home! Thus awakened from her dream of pleasure, she realized that she was lost in the great city, not knowing whither to direct her steps!

Sad and terrified, she turned corner after corner, crossed street after street, looking for the place that she had left, without knowing how to recognize it if she should succeed in finding it again, there were so many that looked like it. After many turnings, she remembered the word *house* which she would be certain to recognize, and which she resolved to look for.

At length she espied it again on a wall at the other side of the street.

"My house!" cried she, "I have found it again; soon my sister will find me again."

A gentleman who was passing at that moment stopped and said: "Of which house do you speak, my child? This one is mine."

"I am speaking of the word 'house,' which is here on the wall."

"And can you read that word?"

"Yes, sir; my sister taught it to me."

"And what is this good sister's name?"

"Cecile."

"And your name, little one?"

"My name is Lulu."

"Cecile and Lulu!" repeated the gentleman; then he said quickly: "What is your father's name?"

"My father is no more. His name was Mr. Henry Jolivet, but —"

"My child," said the gentleman, in a deeply moved voice, "truly you have found your house, for henceforth it is yours, like all that I have in the world. My poor little lost lamb that I have vainly

sought so long, come to my arms!"—and he embraced her tenderly.

Just then a young girl with a wild look turned the corner at a rapid pace.

"Oh, Lulu!" cried the new-comer, in an impatient voice, "how could you have been so naughty? Here have I been looking for you more than an hour!"

"But why did you not come here to look for me at once?"

"What are you talking about, Lulu? This is not the place where I left you."

"Why yes, Cecile; don't you see the word *house* that you taught to me?"

"You are mistaken, Lulu; it is the same word, but it is another place."

"She is not mistaken," said the gentleman; "it is the place she ought to have found. Don't you know me, Cecile?"

She looked at him fixedly for a moment, then she uttered a cry: "My uncle!"

Lulu now knows how to read, write, and do many other things; but she will never forget the lesson her sister gave her, and which had so happy a result.

[The great number of translations which the story of "Cécile et Lulu" has called forth from all parts of the country, proves how gladly our young readers welcome these stories in foreign languages. Many of the versions received are truly admirable, and one and all show commendable painstaking. We are very glad to see this eager interest displayed by our young correspondents, and we see signs of a like enthusiasm over the shorter and simpler French tale published in our last number. For further notice of translations received, see "Letter-Box" of this issue.]

ST. NICHOLAS' DAY AND THE CHILD-BISHOPS OF SALISBURY.

BY MELVILLE EGGLESTON.

THERE are few more interesting regions in England than that of which the old cathedral town of Salisbury is the center. A few miles away, upon the gently undulating downs of Salisbury Plain, is Stonehenge, one of the most celebrated monuments of the ancient Britons. Nearer to the city are the ruins of Sarum, a stronghold of the same people, and, afterward, of their Roman conquerors. Later still, it was fortified and held by English kings, and was for a long time a bishop's seat. In the reign of Henry III. its honors were transferred to Salisbury, and there, in time, rose the great cathedral, with its beautiful spire, the loftiest in the land. It is one of the finest examples of the English Gothic architecture anywhere to be found.

During the middle ages, the cathedral church of Sarum, and its successor at Salisbury, were very celebrated, and a certain precedence was given to their bishops. The forms of service were widely followed in other places, and the peculiar customs of Sarum were held in high respect. Among these customs were some that were very curious, and one of them will certainly be of interest to the readers of ST. NICHOLAS.

But, first, I must say a little about St. Nicholas; for the queer custom which I shall describe was connected with the celebration of his festival. This magazine has already told you that he was a saint of the early days of Christianity, and especially honored in what is called the Eastern Church—the

church of Russia and other eastern countries. He was the Bishop of Myra, a city of Asia Minor, and is often called "the child-bishop," because of the piety and goodness for which he was noted even in his infancy. It was said of him, as of Timothy, that "he knew the Scriptures from a child." Very strange stories are told about him, and one of them

high honor in many countries, and that he is especially distinguished as the patron of young scholars and children.

Now you see that, in the old times, when great attention was paid to the observance of saints' days, it was very natural that St. Nicholas' Day, the 6th of December, should be celebrated by the children,



THE PROCESSION.

I will give you in the very words of the old book in which I found it,—written in the queer English of our forefathers.

"And whan he was born, they made hym chrysten, and called hym Nycolas. That is a mannes name; but he kepeth the name of a chyld; for he chose kepe vertues, meknes and symplenes, and without malyce. Also we rede, whyle he lay in hys cradel, he fasted Wednesday and Fryday. These days he would souke but ones of the day, and therewith held hym plesed. Thus he lived all hys lyf in vertues with this childes name; and therefore chyldren don hym worship before all other saynts."

But in another old book we find another anecdote, which does not speak so well for the "meknes" of his disposition; for it is said that at the great Council of Nice he had a very lively dispute with another divine named Arius, in the course of which our saint gave his heretical opponent a sound box on the ear. Whatever may be the truth of these stories, we all know that St. Nicholas was and is a very famous saint, that he has long been held in

especially in the schools, and wherever many were gathered together for any purpose; and so we find traces of many odd and interesting customs connected with the observance of the festival. But nowhere was it celebrated with greater solemnity, or in a more singular way, than at Old Sarum, and afterward at Salisbury. It was there the custom to choose from among the choristers—the boy-singers of the cathedral—an *episcopus puerorum*, which means, as those who have studied Latin will know, a "bishop of the boys." In old English he was called the "barne byshop," or "chyld byshop,"—that is, child bishop. From the feast of St. Nicholas until Innocents' Day, the 28th of December, this child-bishop was invested with great authority, and maintained all the state of a real prelate of the church. He wore a bishop's robes and miter, and carried in his hand the pastoral staff or crozier, while the rest of the choristers attended him as

prebendaries, and yielded to him the same obedience which was shown by the real officials to their superior, the bishop. Upon the eve of Innocents' Day,—a day observed in memory of the innocent children murdered by Herod,—the boy-bishop, attended by his fellow-choristers in rich copes, with lighted tapers in their hands, went in solemn procession to the altar of the Holy Trinity. As they marched along, three of the children chanted hymns. The dean and canons walked at the head of the procession, the chaplain next, and the bishop, with his little prebendaries, in the place of honor, last of all. The bishop then took his seat upon a throne, while the rest of the children were arranged on each side of the choir upon the uppermost ascent. They then performed at the altar the same service, with the exception of the mass, that the real bishop and his clergy would have performed had they officiated. After service, all left the church in the same solemn order. Such a singular ceremony must have excited great curiosity among the people who filled the cathedral on the holiday, and we can well imagine that there would have been much confusion and disturbance but for a severe law which forbade any person to press upon the children, or to hinder or interrupt them in any way, upon pain of excommunication. One can fancy that he sees the little fellows with their long faces, filled with a sense of their momentary dignity, marching solemnly up the aisle, while the rude crowd on either hand pushes and jostles, each

man trying to elbow himself into a place where he can see the odd and attractive spectacle! What did they think of it, these child-priests of a day? Did they feel that they were taking part in a sacred ceremony, or was it simply a novel kind of play to them? We cannot tell. But as for the boy-bishop, although he may have enjoyed the importance of his position for a day or two, I am quite sure that he must have grown heartily tired of his dignity before the three weeks of his episcopate were over. During all that time he was forbidden "to feast or to make visits," but was required to stay in the common room of the choristers, keeping up the dignity of his office. Think of the little fellow, compelled to act his part with all the gravity of a grown person, sitting in solemn state while his light-hearted playfellows were perhaps romping in the cathedral close, or even making sly attempts to disturb his composure.

In the case of the little bishop's dying during his term of office, his funeral ceremonies were celebrated with the greatest pomp and magnificence, and he was interred, like other bishops, with all his ornaments. At least one such case seems to have happened at Salisbury, for there is in the cathedral a very ancient sepulchral monument, with the effigy, or rather the figure in demi-relief, of a child lying on its back, with a miter on its head, and a pastoral staff in the left hand. The feet are upon a dragon, while over the head is a trefoil canopy with two small angels.

WILD MICE AND THEIR WAYS.

BY ERNEST INGERSOLL.

"When every stream in its pent-house
Goes gurgling on its way,
And in his gallery the mouse
Nibbleth the meadow hay;

"Methinks the summer still is nigh,
And lurketh underneath,
As that same meadow-mouse doth lie
Snug in that last year's heath."

—THOREAU.

WALKING about the fields, I come upon little pathways as plain as Indian trails, which lead in and out among the grass and weed-stalks, under Gothic arches which the bending tops of the flowering grasses make, like roads for the tiny chariots of Queen Mab. These curious little paths branching here and there, and crossing one another in

all directions, are the runways of the field-mice, along which they go, mostly after sunset, to visit one another or bring home their plunder; for the thieving little gray-coats of our cupboards, whose bright eyes glance at us from behind the cheese-box, and who whisk away down some unthought-of hole, learned their naughty tricks from their many out-door cousins, whom we may forgive on the plea of their not knowing any better. Suppose I tell you about some of these same cousins who live in the woods and fields of the Northern States?

Well, to begin, if you take the *o* and the *e* out of "mouse," you have left, *mus*, which is the Latin word for mouse; but instead of saying "mousey," a Roman girl would have said *musculus*. Put the

two together, and you have *Mus musculus*, the name we write when we want every person, whether he understands our language or not, to know that we mean the common house-mouse, for all the world is supposed to know something of Latin. This little plague was originally a native of some Eastern country, but has now spread all over the world, forgetting where he really does belong. Sometimes, in this country, he forsakes the houses and takes up a wild life in the woods.

Coming now to the true field-mice, there is first a kind which, to distinguish it from Old World kinds, is called in the books by Greek words which mean the "white-footed Western mouse" (*Hesperomys leucopus*)—a very good name. A third sort is generally found in meadows through which brooks wander, and its Latin name, *Arvicola riparius*, just tells the whole story in two words; it is the "meadow mouse." The fourth and last sort of wild mouse was first noticed near the Hudson Bay, and, being a great jumper, received the Latin name of the "little Hudsonian jumping-mouse"—*Jaculus hudsonius*.

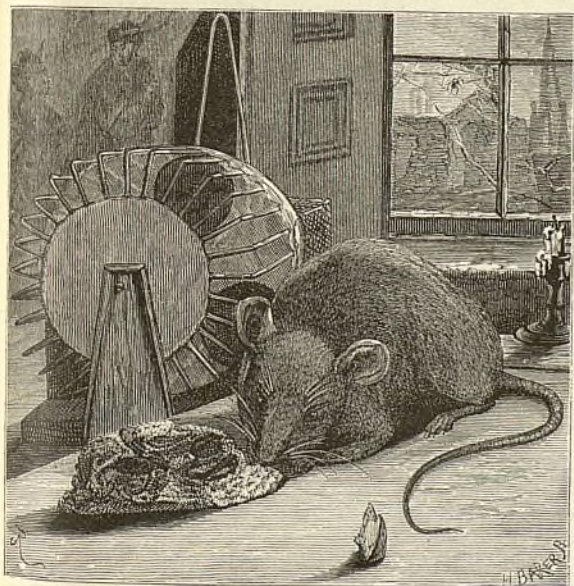
These four mice differ in shape, color, size and habits, and of the second and third there are sev-

Prettiest of all is the long-legged jumping-mouse. If you should look at a kangaroo through the wrong end of a telescope you would have a very fair idea of our little friend's form, with hind-legs and feet very long and slender, and fore-legs very short; so that when he sits up they seem like little paws held before him in a coquettish way. His tail is often twice the length of his body, and is tipped with a brush of long hairs. He has a knowing look in his face, with its upright, furry ears and bright eyes. Being dark-brown above, yellowish-brown on the sides, and white underneath, with white stockings on, he makes a gay figure among his more soberly dressed companions. Various names are given him,—such as the deer-mouse, wood-mouse, jumping wood-mouse, and others.

The white-foot is somewhat larger than the house-mouse; being about three inches long. It has a lithe, slender form and quick movement; its eyes are large and prominent, its nose sharp, and its ears high, round and thin. The fore-feet are hardly half as long as the hinder ones, and the tail is as long as, or longer, than the body, and covered with close hairs. The fur is soft, dense, and glossy, reddish-brown above and white below, while the feet are all white. The most ill-looking of the lot is the meadow-mouse, which reminds me of a miniature bear. His coat is dirty brownish-black, not even turning white in winter; his head is short and his nose blunt; all his four feet are short, and his tail is a mere stump, scarcely long enough to reach the ground. Nevertheless, he is a very interesting mouse, and able to make an immense deal of trouble.

In general habits the three wild ones are pretty much alike, though some prefer dry, while others choose wet, ground; some keep mostly in the woods, others on the prairies, and so on. All the species burrow more or less, and some build elaborate nests. Their voices are fine, low and squeaking, but the meadow-mouse is a great chatterbox, and the white-foot has been known more than once really to sing tunes of his own very nicely. Each one manifests immense courage in defending its young against harm; but I believe only the meadow-mice are accused of being really ferocious, and of

waging battles constantly among themselves. Their food is the tender stems of young grasses and herbs, seeds, nuts, roots and bark, and they lay up stores of food for the winter, since none become torpid at that season, as is the habit of the wood-chuck and chipmunk, except the jumping-mouse. This fellow, during cold weather, curls up in his soft grass blankets underground, wraps his long



THE HOUSE-MOUSE.

eral varieties in different parts of the country. The soft, brownish-gray coat of the house-mouse you know very well; or, if you do not, take the next one you catch and look at it closely. It is as clean as your pet squirrel, and just as pretty. See how dainty are the little feet, how keen the black beads of eyes, how sharp and white the fine small teeth, how delicate the pencilings of the fur!



THE LONG-LEGGED JUMPING-MOUSE.

tail tightly about him, and becomes dead to all outward things until the warmth of spring revives him, which is certainly an easy and economical way to get through the winter! They also eat insects, old and young, particularly such kinds as are hatched underground or in the loose wood of rotten stumps; but their main subsistence is seeds and bark, in getting which they do a vast deal of damage to plants and young fruit-trees with those sharp front teeth of theirs.

The field-mice make snug beds in old stumps, under logs, inside stacks of corn and bundles of straw; dig out galleries below the grass roots; occupy the abandoned nests of birds and the holes made by other animals; and even weave nests of their own in weeds and bushes. They live well in captivity, and you can easily see them at work if you supply materials.

In tearing down old buildings the carpenters often find between the walls a lot of pieces of paper, bits of cloth, sticks, fur, and such stuff, forming a great bale, and know that it was once the home of a house-mouse. You have heard anecdotes of how a shop-keeper missed small pieces of money from his till, and suspected his clerk of taking it; how the clerk was a poor boy who was supporting a

widowed mother, or a sister at school, and the kind-hearted shop-keeper shut his eyes to his suspicions, and waited for more and more proof before being convinced that his young clerk was the thief; but, as the money kept disappearing, how at last he accused the clerk of taking it. Then the story tells how, in spite of the boy's vehement and tearful denial, a policeman was called in to arrest him, and when everything had been searched to no purpose, and he was about being taken to the police-station, how, away back in a corner was discovered a mouse's nest made of stolen pieces of ragged currency—ten, twenty-five, and fifty-cent pieces. Then everybody was happy, and the story ended with a capital moral!

More than one such stolen house the mice have really built, and sometimes their work has destroyed half a hundred dollars, and caused no end of heart-aches. Their little teeth are not to be despised, I assure you. I believe one of the most disastrous of those great floods which in past years have swept over the fertile plains of Holland was caused by mice digging through the thick banks of earth, called dykes, which had been piled up to keep the sea back. In this case, of course, the mice lost their lives by their misdeeds, as well as the people,

sharing in the general catastrophe. They hardly intended this; but

"The best-laid plans o' mice and men
Gang aft agley."

It was by the gnawing of a ridiculous little mouse, you remember, that the lion in the fable got free from the net in which the king of beasts found himself caught.

Sometimes the house-mouse goes out-of-doors to live, and forgets his civilization; while, on the other hand, the woodland species occasionally come indoors and grow tame. At the fur-trading posts about Hudson Bay, wild mice live in the traders' houses; and Thoreau—the poet, naturalist and philosopher, whom all the animals seemed at once to recognize as their friend—wrote this beautiful story of how a white-footed mouse made friends

introduced into the country, but a wild native kind not found in the village. I sent one to a distinguished naturalist, and it interested him much. When I was building, one of these had its nest underneath the house, and before I had laid the second floor and swept out the shavings, would come out regularly at lunch-time and pick up the crumbs at my feet. It probably had never seen a man before; and it soon became quite familiar, and would run over my shoes and up my clothes. It could readily ascend the sides of the room by short impulses, like a squirrel, which it resembled in its motions. At length, as I leaned my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes and along my sleeve, and around and around the table which held my dinner, while I kept the latter close, and dodged and played at bo-peep with it; and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between



THE WHITE-FOOTED WESTERN MOUSE.

with him when he lived all alone in the woods by Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts:

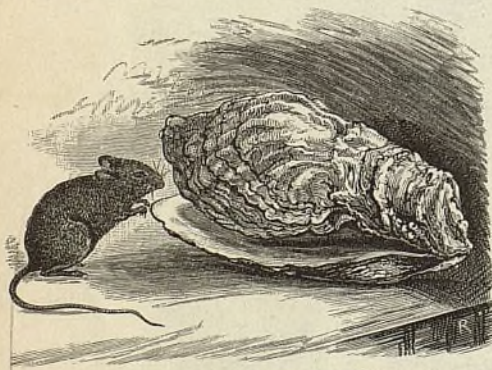
"The mice which haunted my house were not the common ones, which are said to have been

my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and afterward cleaned its face and paws like a fly, and walked away."

Mice are full of such curiosity. They poke their

noses into all sorts of places where there is a prospect of something to eat, and sometimes failing to find so good a friend as Mr. Thoreau, meet the fate which ought to be the end of all poking of noses into other people's affairs—they get caught. I remember one such case which Mr. Frank Buckland has related. When oysters are left out of water for any length of time, especially in hot weather, they always open their shells a little way, probably seeking a drink of water. A mouse hunting about for food found such an oyster in the larder, and put his head in to nibble at the oyster's beard; instantly the bivalve shut his shells, and held them together so tightly by his strong muscles, that the poor mouse could not pull his head out, and so died of suffocation. Other similar cases have been known.

The most common of all our field-mice is the short-tailed meadow-mouse, the *Arvicola*. I find it in the woods, out on the prairies, and in the hay-fields. In summer these little creatures inhabit the low, wet meadows in great numbers. When the heavy rains of autumn drive them out, they move to higher and dryer ground, and look for some hill-ock, or old ant-hill, under which to dig their home. In digging they scratch rapidly with the fore-feet a few times, and then throw back the earth to a great distance with the hind-feet, frequently loosening the dirt with their teeth, and pushing it aside with their noses. As the hole grows deeper (horizontally) they will lie on their backs and dig overhead, every little while backing slowly out, and shoving the loose earth to the entrance. These winter bur-



THE MOUSE AND THE OYSTER.

rows are only five or six inches below the surface, and sometimes are simply hollowed out under a great stone, but are remarkable for the numerous and complicated chambers and side passages of which they are composed. In one of the largest

rooms of this subterranean house is placed their winter bed, formed of fine dry grasses. Its shape and size are about that of a foot-ball, with only a small cavity in the center, entered through a hole in the side, and they creep in as do Arctic travelers into their fur-bags.

"Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozy here, beneath the blast
Thou thought to dwell."

Here five or six young mice are born, and stay until the coming of warm weather, by which time they are grown, and go out to take care of themselves. Sometimes one of them, instead of hunting up a wife and getting a home of his own, will wander off by himself and live alone like a hermit, growing crosser as he grows older.

In the deepest part of the burrow is placed their store of provisions. Uncover one of these little granaries in November, before the owners have used much of it, and you might find five or six quarts of seeds, roots, and small nuts. Out on the prairie this store would consist chiefly of the round tubers—like very small potatoes—of the spike-flower, a few juicy roots of some other weeds and grasses, bulbs of the wild onion, and so forth. If a wheat or rye patch was near, there would be quantities of grain; and if you should open a nest under a log or stump in the woods, you might discover a hundred or so chestnuts, beech-nuts, and acorns, nicely shelled. All these stores are carried to the burrows, often from long distances, in their baggy cheeks, which are a mouse's pockets, and they work with immense industry, knowing just when to gather this and that kind of food for the winter. A friend of mine, who had a farm near the Hudson River, had a nice field of rye, which he was only waiting a day or two longer to harvest until it should be quite ready. But the very night before he went to cut it, the mice stole a large portion of the grain and carried it off to their nests in the neighboring woods. Hunting up these nests he got back from two of them about half a bushel of rye, which was perfectly good. Sometimes they build nests in the russet corn-shocks left standing in the sere October fields, and store up there heaps of food, although there may be no necessity, so firmly fixed in their minds is the idea of preparing for the future. But they eat a great deal, and their stores are none too large to outlast the long, dreary months, when the ground is frozen hard, and the meadows are swept by the wintry winds, or packed under a blanket of snow.

(Concluded next month.)



ROSES.

BY EDGAR FAWCETT.

H, the queen of all the roses, it can never be denied,
Is the heavy crimson rose of velvet leaf!
There is such a gracious royalty about her vivid bloom,
That among all charming kindred she is chief!

Then the fainter-shaded roses, in their balmy damask pride,
Group like satellites about one central star,—
Royal princesses, of whom we can discover at a glance
What aristocrats the dainty creatures are!

Then those tender gauzy roses, clustered closely on their vines,
They are gentle maids of honor, I am told;
But the pompous yellow roses, these are sneered at, it is said,
For so showing off the color of their gold!

And the roses that are powerless to boast of any tint,
Unsullied as the snow itself in hue,
These are pious nuns, I fancy, who perhaps may murmur prayers
Very softly upon rosaries of dew!

But the delicate pink roses that one meets in quiet lanes,
Gleaming pale upon a background of clear green,
Why, these are only peasant girls, who never go to court,
But are loyal little subjects of their queen!

MRS. PETERKIN'S TEA-PARTY.

BY LUCRETIA P. HALE.

It was important to have a tea-party, as they had all been invited by everybody,—the Bromwiches, the Tremletts, and the Gibbonses. It would be such a good chance to pay off some of their old debts, now that the lady from Philadelphia was back again, and her two daughters, who would be sure to make it all go off well.

But as soon as they began to make out the list, they saw there were too many to have at once, for there were but twelve cups and saucers in the best set.

"There are seven of us to begin with," said Mr. Peterkin.

"We need not all drink tea," said Mrs. Peterkin.

"I never do," said Solomon John. The little boys never did.

"And we could have coffee, too," suggested Elizabeth Eliza.

"That would take as many cups," objected Agamemnon.

"We could use the every-day set for the coffee," answered Elizabeth Eliza; "they are the right shape. Besides," she went on, "they would not all come. Mr. and Mrs. Bromwich, for instance; they never go out."

"There are but six cups in the every-day set," said Mrs. Peterkin.

The little boys said there were plenty of saucers; and Mr. Peterkin agreed with Elizabeth Eliza that

all would not come. Old Mr. Jeffers never went out.

"There are three of the Tremletts," said Elizabeth Eliza; "they never go out together. One of them, if not two, will be sure to have the headache. Ann Maria Bromwich would come, and the three Gibbons boys, and their sister Juliana; but the other sisters are out West, and there is but one Osborne."

It really did seem safe to ask "everybody." They would be sorry, after it was over, that they had not asked more.

"We have the cow," said Mrs. Peterkin, "so there will be as much cream and milk as we shall need."

"And our own pig," said Agamemnon. "I am glad we had it salted; so we can have plenty of sandwiches."

"I will buy a chest of tea," exclaimed Mr. Peterkin. "I have been thinking of a chest for some time."

Mrs. Peterkin thought a whole chest would not be needed; it was as well to buy the tea and coffee by the pound. But Mr. Peterkin determined on a chest of tea and a bag of coffee.

So they decided to give the invitations to all. It might be a stormy evening, and some would be prevented.

The lady from Philadelphia and her daughters accepted.

And it turned out a fair day, and more came than were expected. Ann Maria Bromwich had a friend staying with her, and brought her over, for the Bromwiches were opposite neighbors. And the Tremletts had a niece, and Mary Osborne an aunt, that they took the liberty to bring.

The little boys were at the door, to show in the guests; and as each set came to the front gate, they ran back to tell their mother that more were coming. Mrs. Peterkin had grown dizzy with counting those who had come, and trying to calculate how many were to come, and wondering why there were always more and never less, and whether the cups would go round.

The three Tremletts all came with their niece. They all had had their headaches the day before, and were having that banged feeling you always have after a headache; so they all sat at the same side of the room on the long sofa.

All the Jefferses came, though they had sent uncertain answer. Old Mr. Jeffers had to be helped in with his cane, by Mr. Peterkin.

The Gibbons boys came, and would stand just outside the parlor door. And Juliana appeared afterward, with the two other sisters, unexpectedly home from the West.

"Got home this morning!" they said. "And

so glad to be in time to see everybody,—a little tired, to be sure, after forty-eight hours in a sleeping-car!"

"Forty-eight!" repeated Mrs. Peterkin; and wondered if there were forty-eight people, and why they were all so glad to come, and whether all could sit down.

Old Mr. and Mrs. Bromwich came. They thought it would not be neighborly to stay away. They insisted on getting into the most uncomfortable seats.

Yet there seemed to be seats enough while the Gibbons boys preferred to stand. But they never could sit around a tea-table. Elizabeth Eliza had thought they all might have room at the table, and Solomon John and the little boys could help in the waiting.

It was a great moment when the lady from Philadelphia arrived with her daughters. Mr. Peterkin was talking to Mr. Bromwich, who was a little deaf. The Gibbons boys retreated a little farther behind the parlor door. Mrs. Peterkin hastened forward to shake hands with the lady from Philadelphia, saying:

"Four Gibbons girls and Mary Osborne's aunt,—that makes nineteen; and now —"

It made no difference what she said; for there was such a murmuring of talk, that any words suited. And the lady from Philadelphia wanted to be introduced to the Bromwiches.

It was delightful for the little boys. They came to Elizabeth Eliza, and asked:

"Can't we go and ask more? Can't we fetch the Larkins?"

"Oh dear, no!" answered Elizabeth Eliza. "I can't even count them!"

Mrs. Peterkin found time to meet Elizabeth Eliza in the side entry to ask if there were going to be cups enough.

"I have set Agamemnon in the front entry to count," said Elizabeth Eliza, putting her hand to her head.

The little boys came to say that the Maberlys were coming.

"The Maberlys!" exclaimed Elizabeth Eliza. "I never asked them."

"It is your father's doing," cried Mrs. Peterkin. "I do believe he asked everybody he saw!" And she hurried back to her guests.

"What if father really has asked everybody?" Elizabeth Eliza said to herself, pressing her head again with her hand.

There was the cow and the pig. But if they all took tea or coffee, or both, the cups could *not* go round.

Agamemnon returned in the midst of her agony.

He had not been able to count the guests, they moved about so, they talked so; and it would not look well to appear to count.

"What shall we do?" exclaimed Elizabeth Eliza.

"We are not a family for an emergency," sighed Agamemnon.

"What do you suppose they do in Philadelphia at the Exhibition, when there are more people than cups and saucers?" asked Elizabeth Eliza. "Could not you go and inquire? I know the lady from Philadelphia is talking about the Exhibition, and telling why she must go back to receive friends. And they must have trouble there! Could not you go in and ask, just as if you wanted to know?"

Agamemnon looked into the room, but there were too many talking with the lady from Philadelphia.

"If we could only look into some book," he said, "the encyclopædia or the dictionary,—they are such a help sometimes!"

At this moment he thought of his "Great Triumphs of Great Men," that he was reading just now. He had not reached the lives of the Stephensons, or any of the men of modern times. He might skip over to them,—he knew they were men for emergencies.

He ran up to his room, and met Solomon John coming down with chairs.

"That is a good thought," said Agamemnon. "I will bring down more upstairs chairs."

"No," said Solomon John, "here are all that can come down; the rest of the bedroom chairs match bureaus, and they never will do!"

Agamemnon kept on to his own room, to consult his books. If only he could invent something on the spur of the moment,—a set of bedroom furniture, that in an emergency could be turned into parlor chairs! It seemed an idea; and he sat himself down to his table and pencils, when he was interrupted by the little boys, who came to tell him that Elizabeth Eliza wanted him.

The little boys had been busy thinking. They proposed that the tea-table, with all the things on, should be pushed into the front room, where the company were; and those could take cups who could find cups.

But Elizabeth Eliza feared it would not be safe to push so large a table; it might upset and break what china they had.

Agamemnon came down to find her pouring out tea, in the back room. She called to him:

"Agamemnon, you must bring Mary Osborne to help, and perhaps one of the Gibbons boys would carry round some of the cups."

And so she began to pour out and to send round

the sandwiches, and the tea, and the coffee. Let things go as far as they would!

The little boys took the sugar and cream.

"As soon as they have done drinking, bring back the cups and saucers to be washed," she said to the Gibbons boys and the little boys.

This was an idea of Mary Osborne's.

But what was their surprise, that the more they poured out, the more cups they seemed to have! Elizabeth Eliza took the coffee, and Mary Osborne the tea. Amanda brought fresh cups from the kitchen.

"I can't understand it," Elizabeth Eliza said to Amanda. "Do they come back to you, round through the piazza? Surely there are more cups than there were!"

Her surprise was greater when some of them proved to be coffee-cups that matched the set! And they never had had coffee-cups.

Solomon John came in at this moment, breathless with triumph.

"Solomon John!" Elizabeth Eliza exclaimed, "I cannot understand the cups!"

"It is my doing," said Solomon John, with an elevated air. "I went to the lady from Philadelphia, in the midst of her talk. 'What do you do in Philadelphia, when you have n't enough cups?' 'Borrow of my neighbors,' she answered, as quick as she could."

"She must have guessed," interrupted Elizabeth Eliza.

"That may be," said Solomon John. "But I whispered to Ann Maria Bromwich,—she was standing by,—and she took me straight over into their closet, and old Mr. Bromwich bought this set, just where we bought ours. And they had a coffee-set, too —"

"You mean where our father and mother bought them. We were not born," said Elizabeth Eliza.

"It is all the same," said Solomon John. "They match exactly."

So they did, and more and more came in.

Elizabeth Eliza exclaimed:

"And Agamemnon says we are not a family for emergencies!"

"Ann Maria was very good about it," said Solomon John; "and quick, too. And old Mrs. Bromwich has kept all her set of two dozen coffee and tea cups!"

Elizabeth Eliza was ready to faint with delight and relief. She told the Gibbons boys, by mistake, instead of Agamemnon, and the little boys. She almost let fall the cups and saucers she took in her hand.

"No trouble now!"

She thought of the cow, and she thought of the pig, and she poured on.

No trouble, except about the chairs. She looked into the room—all seemed to be sitting down, even her mother. No, her father was standing, talking to Mr. Jeffers. But he was drinking coffee, and the Gibbons boys were handing things around.

The daughters of the lady from Philadelphia were sitting on shawls on the edge of the window that opened upon the piazza. It was a soft, warm evening, and some of the young people were on the piazza. Everybody was talking and laughing, except those who were listening.

Mr. Peterkin broke away, to bring back his cup and another for more coffee.

"It's a great success, Elizabeth Eliza," he whispered. "The coffee is admirable, and plenty of cups. We asked none too many. I should not mind having a tea-party every week."

Elizabeth Eliza sighed with relief as she filled his cup. It was going off well. There were cups enough, but she was not sure she could live over another such hour of anxiety; and what was to be done after tea?

HIS OWN MASTER.

By J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

THE way now appeared dreary enough to the young traveler, carrying his little bag in his hand along the uneven track.

He had not minded the stump fences at first; somehow they had looked rather picturesque, with their immense and many-pronged roots turned up and interlocked in an endless row on either side, suggesting the bleached and broken antlers of a whole species of some extinct gigantic stag. But they soon made Jacob feel that he was walking through a narrow and interminable prison, shutting him out from all the world beside; and ever afterward the sight of a root fence anywhere, carried his mind back to that hour of his parting from Ruth and setting out on his dubious journey alone.

He came to a more cultivated country before long, a region of orchards, groves, and fields, in which there were men and boys at work. When he got tired and hungry, he sat down on a log in the edge of some woods, where there was a road-side spring, and opened his bag, in which he knew that Mary's careful hands had placed his luncheon. He had many things to think of as he unfolded the neat brown paper covering, and found hard-boiled eggs, and salt, and butter, and biscuit, and cold chicken,—enough for luncheon and dinner too.

After eating, he got down on his hands and knees and drank at the cool spring. A spout led the water to a road-side trough, where travelers stopped to water their teams.

While Jacob was sitting there in the shade, a farmer in a wagon drove up to the trough, and was

about getting down from his seat, when Jacob sprang up and offered to uncheck the horses for him.

"Thank ye, boy," said the man. Then, after Jacob had put up the check-reins again, "Tumble in and ride, if you are going my way."

Jacob was going his way, and he "tumbled in."

So Jacob walked, and rested, and rode occasionally, without meeting with any remarkable adventures that day or the next. He slept the first night at a farm-house, and on the afternoon of the second day came to the village of Jackson.

Seeing the smoke of an iron-furnace, he made his way toward it; and, taking out Matthew's letter, and looking at the back of it, asked some men in the casting-room if they could tell him where to find Benjamin Radkin.

"You mean *Mr.* Benjamin Radkin, don't you?" said a big fellow with grimy arms and face, and a very blunt, overbearing manner.

"Y-y-yes, sir," stammered Jacob, quite abashed by the suddenness and strangeness of the question.

"Why did n't you say so, then?"

"I—I suppose—because it is simply *Benjamin Radkin* on the back of this letter. A letter from his uncle, Matthew Lane," added Jacob.

"The Quaker," said the big grimy fellow. "Mr. Radkin is something of a Quaker, too, but not so much of a one but what it'll be safe enough for youngsters like you to *Mister* him."

And the man turned away, swinging a long iron bar which he carried with both hands.

Jacob followed him along the sandy floor, on one side of which preparations had evidently been made for casting.

"Where can I find—Mr. Radkin?" said he.

"Don't know," said the man, gruffly.

"Is this his iron-furnace?"

"He's one of the owners."

"Is he about here now?"

"No, he aint about here now."

And the gruff and grimy one set his bar up against the great chimney with a clang.

Jacob immediately set him down as a sort of grim and surly foreman, puffed up by the importance of his office. He could not help feeling stung by the rebuff, which he regarded as a bad omen for the result of his search.

He turned to another workman, who answered his questions rather more civilly, although he, too, had something of the foreman's ill manners, perhaps more imitated than natural.

"Mr. Radkin is here generally every day, but I have n't seen him to-day. Anybody in the village can tell you where his house is."

So Jacob went out, and found the house after a little trouble. A young girl came to the door.

"Is Mr. Radkin at home?" he asked, being careful to put in the *Mister* distinctly this time.

The girl smiled on him pleasantly enough to have been a daughter of the cousin of Ruth. But her reply was by no means pleasant to poor Jacob.

"He has gone away."

"When will he be home?"

"I think not for three or four days. He went to Chillicothe, on business, this morning."

Jacob's heart sank more and more. Still he had hopes of what Friend Matthew's letter might do for him even in the nephew's absence.

"Is Mrs. Radkin at home?"

"Yes. But here is her father; perhaps he can tell you all you wish to know."

Jacob heard a heavy footstep behind her in the entry, as she spoke. She slipped out of sight, and there appeared a huge form in a drab coat and a broad red face under a broad-brimmed hat; at sight of which Jacob's heart, which had sunk low enough before, seemed for a dizzy moment utterly annihilated.

"What, Jacob! is it thee?" said he, with an odd smile. "Where does thee come from?—and what brings thee at this time to the house of my daughter, Jacob?"

"Is this—is Mrs. Radkin ——" faltered Jacob, in utter discomfiture.

"Salome Radkin is my daughter. Benjamin Radkin is away. What can I do for thee, Jacob?"

Jacob had turned slightly pale at first, but now his face became redder even than that of the well-satisfied and grimly-smiling speaker,—who, as the reader has no doubt divined, was no other than our hero's old acquaintance, Friend David Doane, of that unlucky cow-trade.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE INCONVENIENCE OF HAVING AN ENEMY.

AS soon as he had recovered a little from his confusion, Jacob said: "I have brought a letter to Mr. Radkin from his uncle, Matthew Lane."

"Very well," replied Friend David; "thee can hand me the letter, and I will see it delivered to my son-in-law on his return."

Jacob reached out the letter, but immediately drew it back.

"I hoped—his uncle expected me—to hand him the letter myself."

"That thee cannot very well do unless thee comes again next week, or goes to Chillicothe to find him."

This was a new idea, and it afforded a gleam of light to Jacob's bewildered mind.

"How far is it to Chillicothe?"

"I think it is about forty miles by railroad; but perhaps not more than twenty-five in a direct line."

"Thank you," said Jacob, hesitatingly, putting the letter back into his pocket.

Friend David's immense waistcoat still blocked up the door-way, and there was no invitation in that grimly smiling face. Of course Jacob believed that he had made an implacable enemy forever of Mrs. Radkin's father; how, then, could he expect hospitality from her during her husband's absence, or even after his return? For would not Friend David prejudice the minds of both against him, perhaps to such a degree that the uncle's letter would be of no use to him?

"If I could see Mr. Radkin before he sees Friend David, deliver the letter, and, may be, tell him my side of that cow-story first, there might be some chance for me."

The thought passed quickly through the lad's mind, and he asked:

"How can I find him, if I go to Chillicothe?"

"He has business with the firm of Phelps & Walton; everybody, I should say, knows them," replied Friend David.

"Thank you, Mr. Doane,"—and Jacob slowly and reluctantly turned away.

"Anything else I can do for thee?" Friend David called after him.

"Nothing more," replied Jacob, too proud to ask anything of the man he had offended.

He walked off, still in a state of great anxiety and doubt as to the course he ought to pursue. The money Matthew had put into his hand was all spent, together with a part of the half-dollar which Longshore had given him. He had only thirty cents in his pocket, and it was Saturday afternoon. Experience had taught him that he could make thirty cents go farther in the country

than in a village, and he could see no good reason for remaining in Jackson. "Better be traveling, even if I come back here," thought he.

Then why not go to Chillicothe? He had found out about how far he could walk in a day, and believed that he could reach Chillicothe on foot by

of necessity?"—for he now recalled that convenient term by which the worthy woman used to excuse to her conscience and to him much of her own labor on the Lord's Day.

While making up his mind what he should do, he wandered back to the casting-room of the iron-



"THEE CAN HAND ME THE LETTER."

the evening of the next day. But the next day was Sunday. He did not wish to travel on Sunday again, as he had on the last Sunday, acting under Mr. Pinkey's advice and influence. That gentleman's free and easy principles were fast losing their power over him, while his pious aunt's instructions were remembered. But would not travel on Sunday, in his present circumstances, be a "deed

furnace, and sat down on a box near the door, for it now occurred to him that he was very tired.

"Where is that light of conscience Friend Matthew told about?" he said to himself. "Oh, I wish it would show me what to do!"

Meanwhile, there was a great glare of a different light before his eyes. In the back part of the room was the huge furnace, or "cupola," rising to the

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roof. Before it were ranged a gang of men, with the gruff foreman at their head, who with his bar drilled out the baked mass of clay that closed the vent. Red spatters of melted iron flew at first, and then out gushed the fiery flood. This was conducted down channels in the sand to the casting-floor, and led off into side channels, which it filled, until the whole of that side of the floor was occupied by one immense gridiron-shaped mass of glowing and smoking metal.

Jacob watched this process with interest, although the heat from the casting made his position on the box very uncomfortable. But when water was showered upon the floor from a hose-pipe, filling the great hollow building with a terrible hissing and a vast cloud of stifling steam, he could stand it no longer, but, taking up his little black bag, he walked out and cooled his face and lungs on the bank of a stream that fed the works.

Meanwhile, there was talk about Jacob in Benjamin Radkin's house. The girl, who was indeed a daughter of Ruth's cousin, reported to her mother that a nice-looking lad was at the door inquiring for her father; and Friend David was duly questioned with regard to him, on his return into the house after the interview.

And now, if Jacob could have been behind the door, he would have discovered that Friend David was not so much his enemy as he supposed.

The broad face of the burly Quaker was crinkled with smiles as he re-entered the room.

"It happened to be a boy I know, who left our town a week since in company with a scapegrace dancing-master. He had a letter for Benjamin, which I offered to see delivered to him, but he said me nay, and departed."

"Why did n't thee ask him in?" said Salomé.

"I had my reasons for that," replied the smiling David. "I had some little trouble with him just before he left. I desired to buy a cow of him, and he charged me a round price for her,—which was but natural. I respected him none the less for that. But as I was bargaining with him, he mocked me in my own language. I thought it right to punish him a little for his impertinence. Nevertheless, I think he is an honest-hearted lad, and when he comes back we will see what can be done for him."

"But what if he should not come back?" said the young girl, who had watched Jacob with interest as he wandered wretchedly away.

"He will come back, fast enough, Caroline?" said Friend David. "He inquired about Chillicothe, but there is no train to take him there to-night. His pride will be humbled. He will not mock me with his *thee* and *thy* again very soon."

Caroline and her mother looked anxiously to see

Jacob re-appear; and at last Friend David himself began to feel uneasy at his prolonged absence.

"I should like to know what his fortunes have been, and what has become of his flighty dancing-master," he said. "By his looks, I judge he has seen trouble; or I may have been deceived by the confusion he was thrown into by seeing me."

And the broad face crinkled again at the pleasant recollection of that triumph.

"If he were here, he might sit down to supper with us," said Mrs. Radkin. "I am sure Benjamin would wish us to do so much for one who brings him a letter from his Uncle Matthew."

After supper, Friend David, feeling more and more troubled in his mind at what he had done, walked out, thinking he would hunt Jacob up, speak more kindly to him, and bring him to the house. He traced him to the iron-furnace, and there learned that Jacob had last been seen sitting on the box near the door. But he had now disappeared, and none knew where he had gone.

"I did not think the lad would have been so foolish!" said David, on his return to the house. "He will be back here by dark, I am confident."

But at dark, Jacob was miles away, on the road to Chillicothe.

CHAPTER XXV.

JACOB HEARS PREACHING, AND GETS A RIDE.

FOOLISH or not, the boy had reasons of his own for going off in that way.

In the first place, he had made a great mistake in imagining Friend David to be a worse man than he really was; there being, after all, a kindly heart somewhere within that prodigious expanse of waistcoat,—its chief fault lying in that too earnest inclination we have noticed, "to hold the world rightly by the handle."

Then Jacob remembered how, in the matter of the cow-trade, he too had wished in a humble way to keep a hold on the said handle, and there had been a jostling which did not result to David's advantage. That a lad of fifteen should have beaten that wary old head at a bargain, would seem of itself no slight offense, however blameless. But he had added insult to that injury,—a conscious fault to an innocent victory; thereby putting himself in the wrong. He had gloated over that boyish triumph, fancying the Quaker's burning resentment, and laughing to think that it was powerless to harm him. And now, behold, it was not so powerless!—here was the terrible David, a lion in his path. No wonder he retired in dismay.

He got a supper of bread-and-milk at a farmhouse, for which he offered to pay. The woman who served it looked at him with a sort of moth-

erly interest, and for a moment there seemed to be a struggle in her breast between the instinct of hospitality and the desire of gain. She was evidently poor. She was having a hard struggle, there in a rough country, to bring up her own children and keep them from want.

"We don't often feed strangers," she said, "and I would n't take a cent if I could afford to keep you for nothing."

"I have thirty cents," said Jacob, as he produced three little ten-cent pieces of scrip.

"That all ye have?" said the woman. "Then I won't take any pay. Call it a treat."

But Jacob, fearing she might think he meant to plead poverty, and shirk paying for what he had had, insisted on her making change. This she refused to do, but she finally accepted one of the ten-cent bits of paper, on condition that he would put two of her fried cakes in his pocket. To this he agreed, and with mutual satisfaction they parted.

He now felt that he could not afford the expense of lodgings that night, and as it grew dark, he looked wistfully for a place to sleep in the open air.

Between him and the sunset sky appeared the giant arms and battered trunks of a ruined forest. Approaching it, he found it to be what the Kentucky people, who had settled in that part of the country, called a "deadening." To save the labor of clearing a piece of woods, which they wished to convert into a field, they had killed the trees by girdling with the ax, leaving them to enrich the soil with droppings of bark and limbs, until the trunks themselves should decay and fall. Meanwhile, in this dismantled and almost shadeless grove crops were planted, and flourished well; and Jacob, drawing near, found a freshly harvested field of late grain among the spectral giants that drew their black profiles on the sunset sky.

He sat down behind one of the stooks of grain, and waited some time to see if he was followed or observed. Then, by parting and re-arranging the bundles, he formed a sort of bed, into which he crept, and lay down in a tent of sheaves. Then the solitude deepened, the last gleam of day vanished, and through the open door of his tent, and between the ghostly trunks, he saw the stars in the deep, quiet sky. They had never seemed so far away before. He had never felt so utterly alone,—not even when left by the steam-tug at night on the wooded banks of the great river.

But Jacob was not afraid. And somehow he was not sad. There came to him a sense of wild freedom in this novel situation; and a stream of solemn joy flowed with his strangely awakened thoughts.

The crickets sang him to sleep. Then, in the middle of the night, the wind arose, and shook the rustling hair of the tall sheaves above his head,

and moaned among the dead trees. Jacob, aroused, heard also an occasional dull, heavy patter, which excited his wonder at first, and then his fear. The wind was shaking down rotted fragments of the dismal old forest, and he thought, "Suppose one of the trunks or great limbs should fall on me here!"

He looked out, and saw wild clouds flying between those ruined columns and the moon; then crept back, with a sense of trust in the Great Power that rules the mighty spheres, and slept again.

The next morning, he decided not to go back to Jackson, but to go on to Chillicothe.

Holding with one hand the stick which suspended the bag over his shoulder, and, with the other, one of the good woman's greasy cakes, which he nibbled for his breakfast, our hero might have been seen trudging among the woods and fields, and scattered farm-houses, that quiet Sunday morning.

He dined on the other cake, sauced with roadside berries; and kept on, meeting with no adventures until afternoon. Then, feeling weary and hungry, and remembering that he had still twenty cents in his pocket, he stopped at a farm-house, but found it shut and deserted. It was near a mile to the next one; and that he found defended by a big dog.

"Folks have all gone to meeting," thought the young traveler, and tramped wearily on.

Country people on horseback or in open wagons had passed him a little while before, raising a dust for him to walk in. Now the last had gone by. The road was solitary; the silence was broken only by the sound of his own footsteps, the shrill noise of a locust, the far-off low of a heifer or the bark of a dog, and, at last, by the voice of a preacher.

The meeting-house was not in sight when Jacob first heard the voice rising in a wild wail, and then dying away in a sort of sing-song till it was heard no more. Soon he caught sight of the plain white building in a pleasant grove, and saw horses and wagons standing in the shade of the trees. The windows were wide open, and the voice was rolling out again in full volume; then it sank as before, running on in a low, monotonous chant.

He entered the grove, and, being faint from want of rest and food, sat down on a log, amidst a group of boys, some on the log, and others lying on the ground or leaning against the trees. He did not hear much of the sermon, even when the voice was at its loudest shout. Yet somehow those tones, and the atmosphere of the place carried his mind back to the many Sundays when he had sat with his aunt in her pew, and hearkened to the minister's earnest words, like a good boy; when he had a respectable home, and a place in the Sunday-school; and the influence of those days was so

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strong upon him that he could not help regarding himself as one of the wicked now, resting there on the log, dusty, with his stick and bag.

Once, when the voice was low and the grove quiet, one of the boys sitting with him on the log, asked him if he would like to take a little ride.

"Of course I should," replied Jacob, "if it's in the direction I want to go."

"Which way is that?" said the boy.

"To Chillicothe," said Jacob.

"All right," said the boy. "We are just going to drive out on the Chillicothe road, and get back by the time preaching is over. One of the fellers here has a mule team that'll carry a crowd."

Jacob felt his spirits revive at this unexpected good fortune. He thought it a little singular, however, that he, a strange boy, should be favored with such an invitation, and helped on his way by fellows who, from their looks, would never have been suspected of being so generous and accommodating.



"HE LAY DOWN IN A TENT OF SHEAVES."

What was likewise remarkable, he was given a place on the front seat, and trusted to hold the reins while the boy was backing his team around. It also struck him as a trifle queer that the wagon should be turned so carefully, stopped when the

grove was still, and moved on again at a time when the preacher's voice was drowning all other sounds.

It was a three-seated wagon, drawn by a pair of large mules, and it held eight boys,—a rather rough-appearing set, Jacob thought. He did not like the way they winked at each other, and snickered now and then, over some secret fun. But they were very good-natured and obliging; and, to a boy, a ride is a ride,—more particularly to one so sore-footed, worn, and hungry as Jacob was then.

The fellow who had been at the mules' heads backing them around, having got in last, took a seat by Jacob's side. A whip which he had dragged behind him he now thrust under the seat. He was round-shouldered, and not very well dressed, and seemed young to be the owner of a wagon and pair of mules. The others called him Josh.

"Just hold the lines a minute till I find my driving-gloves," he said to Jacob, and fumbled in his pockets, while the mules, moving at a walk, took them around out of the grove.

No driving-gloves were discovered. Indeed, even while searching for them, Josh appeared to be more intent on glancing up through the woods at the meeting-house, as if looking with anxious cunning for something in that direction.

As soon as the building was hidden from view, his attitude and expression changed. He straightened his stooping shoulders. He pulled up the whip from under the seat, snatched the reins, shook out the lash, and shouted with glee. All the others began at the same time to laugh and yell like young lunatics; and away went the mules at a round trot.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE BOYS AND THE MULE-TEAM.

JACOB was now sure that something was wrong.

"This is n't your team, is it?" he said to Josh.

"Mine while I have it!" said Josh, and laid on the whip.

"Wont old Dorgan be mad when he comes out and finds his mules and wagon gone!" screamed a fellow on the back seat. The rattling of the vehicle and the jargon of voices were so great that he had to scream to be heard.

"We'll have 'em back there, fast tied to the tree, by the time preaching is over," yelled another. "Wont we, Josh?"

"If we don't miss of it!" shouted Josh, with a wild laugh. "Wake up there, you stingy man's mules!" And *crack! crack!* went the whip again.

The mules had struck into a canter, and the wagon, which was without springs, was bounding at a furious rate over the uneven road. Had the boys been subjected to that ride for a punishment, they would have considered it cruel. But as it was of their own choosing, they no doubt deemed it, if a trifle rough, yet jolly.

"Look here!" cried Jacob, "you are getting into a scrape! I'd rather walk than ride in this style!"

"Walk, then, why don't ye?" laughed the driver, and yelled to the team,—but suddenly stopped yelling to recover his whip. He had somehow, in brandishing it, got the lash caught in a wheel, and it was wound up so suddenly around the hub,—hickory stock and all,—and wrenched out of his hand, that he hardly had time to think about it.

He now tried to stop the team, and begged Jacob to help him tug at the reins. But the large, clumsy mules, having been forced into a gallop, were not to be easily forced out of it. One of them appeared rather inclined to lag, but the speed of the other increased. He was probably frightened at the whip-stock, which at every turn of the wheel struck the whippetree, and sometimes his heels.

Suddenly he too slackened speed a little. But it was only to waste his energies in another direction. That mule began to kick. The heels flew up to the whippetree, and at last clearing the whippetree, struck the fore-board of the wagon, and sent the splinters flying. One of them flew into the face of Josh, and made him put up a hand with a cry.

This was a change of business which seemed to amuse the mule. Having begun, he kicked a great deal longer than was necessary, if he could only have been made to think so. The whip had ceased to trouble him; but still he kicked. Kicking—like many other things—is catching, and at length the other mule began to kick. And now Jacob had to dodge the splinters. Such a rattling of whippetrees and play of mules' hoofs in the air those boys had never heard or seen before. Variety of this sort did not please them so well.

"Hold on to the reins!" cried Jacob, while he dodged. "They've kicked the whippetrees clear off! They'll get away and get killed!"

"Let 'em!" said Josh. "I'd like to kill that off mule!"

Indeed, he seemed to lay all the blame of the disaster and of the pain over his eye to the malice and depravity of that kicking beast.

"We must run 'em into the fence—there's no other way!" said Jacob; and pulling hard on *his* rein did the business.

The fence was what is called a "brush-wattling"—a thick platting of twigs and boughs, twisted in and out between slender upright supports. Had the team taken it at right angles, they would have gone through it as neatly as a circus-rider goes through a paper-covered hoop. But they struck it aslant, and it proved too much for them. After tearing out four or five yards of it they stuck fast, with the fence between them, the wagon-pole and the broken harness tangled in the reins.

And still that perverse quadruped kicked!

"Run to their heads, or they'll get away!" cried Jacob; and he himself, jumping out, set the example, which nobody followed.

The young rogues seemed hardly to know whether to laugh or not. They flopped out of the wagon all at once and in every direction except that of the mules' heels, and stood around giggling excitedly and casting scared looks at the mischief done and back toward the meeting-house.

"I did n't get the wagon!" said one.

"Nor I neither!" said another.

"I don't care,—I've had the fun of seeing a mule-team make tracks once in my life!" said a third. "What ailed your whip, Josh?"

"There comes old Dorgan!" exclaimed a fourth; and half a dozen of the boys disappeared through the brush-wattling like squirrels.

Jacob looked up the road, and saw a horseman coming at a sharp gallop, his arms in the air like wings, flapping at every leap of the horse.

His own impulse was to run like the rest, but the mules were still struggling, and he could not make up his mind to let them go. It required no small courage, however, to stick to the reins, while "Old Dorgan" charged upon him with a terrible countenance and uplifted whip.

"What are ye doing with my team?" he shouted.

"Trying to hold 'em!" said Jacob, looking up straight into the pale, enraged face.

"Where are the other rascals? I see 'em!"

The horseman dashed through the ruined wattling, and soon had Josh and two of his companions marching back under the menace of his whip.

"Which of you stole my team?" he roared over their heads.

"He did! he did!"—and they pointed at Jacob.

"But you helped him!"

"No, we did n't!" said Josh. "Anybody that see us start will tell ye he was driving! Ask the other boys."

"They've got away. And what was *you* scooting for?"

"When he run the team into the fence, we got scared," said Josh.

"He'd got us into the scrape, and we wanted to get out of it," said another, rather sheepishly.

The angry man drove the culprits back to the road, and brandished his whip over Jacob, who stood, white and trembling, for he had overheard what was said.

"Thought you could take my team and ask a crew of boys to ride, did ye? If you did n't have hold of my mules, I'd slash ye!"

"You'd better not slash me till you know the truth about it," said Jacob, as calmly as he could.

"Whose whip is that snarled up in the wheel?" Dorgan demanded.

"It's no whip that I ever saw, till I saw it in

afoot from Jackson to Chillicothe. My bag is there in the wagon. I had come into the grove, and sat down to rest, when they asked me to ride. They *did* get me to sit on the front seat and hold the reins, while they were backing the team around and that fellow with a sore eye pretended to be searching his pockets for driving-gloves. But I believe now it was all a trick, to have the blame laid on me if they got caught."

The rogues tried to interrupt Jacob's story, and vehemently charged him with falsehood; but the old man silenced them with a flourish of his whip.



OLD DORGAN'S PURSUIT.

that fellow's hands," replied Jacob. "They pretended that it was his team, and asked me to ride. I tried to stop the mules for him, after he got his whip caught in the wheel and they had kicked the whippetrees clear of the wagon; and I *did* turn them into the fence. Then, when all the rest ran, I stayed to hold the team. Where do you think they would be now if I had run, too?"

There was something in Jacob's honest, energetic face more convincing than the united voices of the lying rogues.

"What is your name?" Dorgan inquired.

"My name is Jacob Fortune. I am traveling

Without expressing any opinion on the matter, he told them if they valued their skins not to attempt running away again, but to help him get his mules and wagon out of the fence.

They took hold and helped accordingly. But Jacob was the only one who rendered any very efficient service. He found the lost whippetree bolt, and assisted in tying up the broken harness with the rope-halters.

"Now get in, every one of ye!" said the old man, when he thought it safe to start.

"I've had a pretty poor ride, and I think I've done enough to pay for it," said Jacob. "I've

had no dinner, I'm tired, and I should like to continue my journey."

"Get in, I tell ye!" growled the old man.

And, seeing that remonstrance was in vain, Jacob got in with the rest.

Driving the mules with his own whip while the broken one lay coiled up by Jacob's bag at his feet, and leading the borrowed horse by the bridle made fast to the tail-end of the wagon, the old man rode back to the meeting-house in grim triumph.

The meeting was over when he got there, and his return with the captured boys awakened a good deal of interest, and occasioned also some merriment, among the spectators. He restored the horse he had taken for the pursuit, and tossed the ruined whip to the owner.

The names of the runaways were given up by those who had been taken, and the fathers and friends of three or four of the crew came out to conciliate the old man. As soon as he found anybody who promised to take the responsibility of giving one of his prisoners a "sound thrashing" at home, he delivered him into his hands. In this way he soon got rid of them all except Jacob.

"There's nobody to promise any such favor for me," said he, with a ruefully humorous smile. "I'd like to go where I can get something to eat."

"Set right where you be!" said the old man, sternly; and, driving up to the meeting-house steps, he called out: "Mother! gals! come on!"

The "mother," who turned out to be the old man's wife, and three "gals," one of whom was herself a young mother with a baby in her arms and two other young children at her side,—a coarse-featured and oddly dressed family in old-fashioned bonnets and faded gowns,—came and climbed into the wagon.

Jacob was going to get out and make room for them, but again the old man growled to him:

"I tell ye, stay right where you be!"

"You don't seem to believe my story," the boy remonstrated.

"What makes you think so?"

"If you believed me, you would trust me."

"I do trust you. I believe you are the only honest boy of the hull caboodle."

Jacob looked up at the old man in astonishment.

"Then what are you going to do with me?" he inquired.

And the old man answered, still in a sharp voice, but with a kindly twinkle in his black eye:

"I'm going to take you home with me, give you some supper, keep ye overnight, and carry ye up to Chillicothe when I go there to get my harness mended. Does that suit ye?"

"Oh!" said the hungry and weary Jacob, overcome with surprise and gratitude.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A CURIOUS CHANCE OR TWO.

It was about four miles to the old man's house, and the mule-team was so slow that it seemed to Jacob, impatient for his supper, as if they never would get there. The old man whipped enough, but he did not whip as Josh whipped. Riding with him, however, was pleasanter, on the whole; and, during those last hungry and weary miles, it was vastly better than walking.

"Then they'll have to build a fire and put on the potatoes and wait for them to boil, and by that time I shall be starved!" thought Jacob.

But it was not quite so bad as that. When they came in sight of a house which the old man informed him was his "roost," Jacob was pleased to observe a smoke curling up from the chimney, and to hear the comments of the young ladies on that signal of domestic cheer.

"Jim's there!" said one.

"I hope he's got the potatoes on," said another.

"Trust Jim for that!" said her sister.

Jim, as it proved, was her husband; and her confidence in his attention to the family comforts turned out to be well placed. Not only did the kitchen door, as they rode up to it, exhale the steam of boiling potatoes, but it also breathed the fragrance of roasting corn. Jacob was glad.

That exemplary husband and son-in-law had, moreover, set the table for supper; and he now came out—a bushy-headed fellow in shirt and trousers—to take the children down over the wheel and kiss them, help the women, and then assist the old man in taking care of the team.

The old man had talked all the way home about the adventure of the boys with his mules and wagon, and he now had to go over it all again for the edification of Jim. The story was vividly illustrated by the broken harness and splintered fore-board; and at about every sentence the bushy-headed son-in-law broke forth with the exclamation, "Lucky for the scoundrels I was n't there!" This he repeated some fifty or sixty times during the talk, frequently enlarging on the lively treatment the rogues might have expected if he had been in the old man's place.

Supper was soon ready; and, though it was served in very homely style, it seemed to Jacob that food had never tasted so good to him.

"My corn at home would have been fine for roasting by this time," he thought; and, his mind starting off on a train of rather homesick reflections, he wondered where he would be eating supper when another Sunday came.

What he next needed most was sleep, and he was glad when the early rural bed-time arrived.

"We shall want to be starting for town by sun-up," said the old man, with his good-night.

Jim showed Jacob upstairs into a low-raftered garret, and left him to crawl into a bunk with the two boys. Jacob slept well in spite of too short a bed; and he was up betimes the next morning, ready for the early start the old man had promised. He was now impatient to be in Chillicothe, inquiring out Mr. Radkin.

But it was not until long after sunrise that the family sat down to breakfast. Then the old man had his wagon to grease. Then the mules, which were in the pasture, had to be caught and harnessed. More than once, in his increasing anxiety of mind, Jacob had proposed to set off on foot. But the old man had always prevented him, saying: "Don't rush; don't be desperate; plenty of time; we shall be off now in two minutes."

After the two minutes had become about two hours, the mules were at the door at last, and Jacob and his bag were in the wagon. Even then it seemed as if the old man would never be ready. Jacob, watching him with impatience, wishing many times that he had started on foot immediately after breakfast, said to himself:

"I believe that old man never hurried but once in his life, and that was when he came after us on horseback, with his arms flapping like wings!"

Could it be possible that this was that once energetic, furiously angry old man? Jacob wished he would get angry at something now.

At last they were off. The women, with red arms just from their wash-tubs, watched them from the door; while Jim called after Jacob, "If ever ye see any of them young scoundrels again, tell 'em 't was lucky for them I did n't ketch 'em!"

It was five miles to town, and the mules were slower even than when the old man drove them the day before. He said it would n't do to drive fast, on account of a tub of eggs he had in the wagon. So Jacob, finding it useless to fret, gave up at last, and enjoyed the journey.

The old man's talk was racy and interesting; and all the while the country was growing more and more beautiful. When at length the valley of the Scioto opened before them, Jacob thought he had never seen anything so enchanting.

From the eastern hills they looked down upon it, and across to the background of almost mountainous uplands beyond, refulgent with sunshine and soft blue haze. Through this broad, fertile, verdant plain, checkered with farms, and rising on either side in magnificent cultivated slopes, wound the many-looped river, with the accompanying canal near its western bank. Chillicothe was in

the distance, with its spires and smoke. A train of cars was flying along their iron track. Over all, superb cloud-shadows were chasing each other.

Jacob could not conceal his pleasure at the view. And even the old man, often as he had seen the same, was not insensible to its charms.

"Looks very much like a scenery," said he.

"Why, it *is* scenery," replied Jacob, not quite understanding the old man's meaning.

"I mean a painted picture," said Dorgan.

"Oh yes!" said Jacob; "only I am sure nobody ever saw a painting so beautiful!"

The old man said that he knew Phelps & Walton's place of business; and on reaching the city at last, he directed Jacob how to find it. Then he went to sell his butter and eggs, and get his harness and wagon mended.

Jacob found Phelps & Walton's easily. But the members of the firm had gone home to dinner. A boy left in charge of the counting-room could give no information regarding Mr. Radkin, except that he had seen him on Saturday. He advised Jacob to wait for Mr. Walton.

Jacob sat down and waited, and walked to the door and watched, then sat down again,—in his restlessness repeating this operation a dozen or twenty times. At last, a brisk, florid little man came bustling in; and the office-boy whispered to Jacob, "That's Mr. Walton."

Jacob stepped up to him with an anxiously beating heart.

"Mr. Walton," he said.

Mr. Walton was already opening papers at his desk, and appeared too busy to give him even a glance. Nevertheless, Jacob went on.

"I want to find Mr. Benjamin Radkin, of Jackson."

"Go to Jackson, then," said Mr. Walton, in a quick, bluff tone, and went on with his papers.

Jacob was struck dumb for a moment. Then he spoke up resolutely: "I have been to Jackson. He was not at home. I was told he was here, and that you would know about him."

Mr. Walton turned partly about, still with papers in his hands, and said: "He has been here, but he left this forenoon."

"To return to Jackson?" faltered Jacob.

"I don't know. My partner does. Here he is now. Phelps, which way did Radkin go, when he left this morning? Back to Jackson?"

"No," said Phelps, stopping to knock the ashes from a cigar. "He took the train for Cincinnati."

Jacob stood for a moment looking dazed; then, as if there were nothing more to be said, he quietly walked out of the store.

(To be continued.)

SPRAY.

(A Sketch from Real Life.)

BY J. REED SEVER.

"HERE, Spray! Come here, old fellow!"
The words, spoken in an affectionate tone, were
answered by a joyful bark. and a large black-and-

as some of the young guests had never seen them;
and Spray's master readily consented.

"Here, sir!" said the gentleman, in a tone of



SPRAY.

tan dog sprang into the room, and leaped up
against his master, licked his hand and snapped
playfully at his feet.

His entrance now, when many little folks were
having an evening party, was greeted with a lively
clapping of hands; for Spray was a great pet, and
had been taught by the gentleman who owned him
to do some wonderful tricks. Many of the com-
pany begged that he be allowed to show these tricks,

command, after Spray had been introduced all
around; "show me how big people waltz."

Spray pricked up his ears intelligently, and, as
his master whistled some bars of a favorite air,
rose on his hind legs, and began to dance around
and around, keeping time with the tune.

While the little folks were laughing heartily at
this clever imitation of a popular amusement, the
gentleman suddenly cried, "Cigars!"

The word was scarcely spoken, when Spray dropped on all-fours, and, raising himself on his fore-paws, walked slowly about the room in that difficult position.

"Now, sir," said his master, when he had done, "we'll do something harder. Show me how the school-master reads."

All Spray's little audience waited with delight to see how he would do this.

Lifting himself on his haunches, he stretched out his paws, as if he were holding a school-book, and turning his head around slowly, with a comical air of severity, as if trying to get the attention of imaginary scholars, he began to open and shut his jaws, so as to imitate reading the lesson.

"Big word, Spray?" said his owner, as his pet was thus acting the school-master, reminding him that a long, hard word was near at hand.

Spray took the hint, and with a funny look that made all the party laugh, opened his jaws very wide indeed, to show his scholars how to pronounce the hard word properly.

The lesson done, and school dismissed, the dog dropped to the floor at a sign, and allowed himself to be petted and praised by the company.

"Tell me," said his master, after a time, "whether you would rather be a wicked traitor or die for your country?"

Spray, on hearing the question, ran around the room, and at last, finding a soft spot on the carpet, rolled over on his back, curled up his legs, and closed his eyes, to show the company that, if he had his choice, he would die a hero. As he lay this way, the little folks tried to make him move by coaxing and threats; but he did not stir until his master cried "Police!" And then he sprang up and ran to him, as if for protection from the dreaded policeman. When told that the policeman had gone away, however, he came out from his hiding-place, and turned a somersault on the floor, as much as to say:

"I'm not a bit afraid! I'll play as much as I like, spite of all the policemen in the world."

"Now show me how the minister prays," said Spray's master, when the dog had turned a number of somersaults.

The pet went over to a chair in one corner of the room, and sitting on his haunches, placed his paws on the rung, bowing his head between them in a very solemn way.

Again did Spray's little friends try to coax him away, and frighten him with cries of "Police!" but Spray knew his duty, and did not pay the slightest attention to them, but kept perfectly still, until, at a signal from his master, he sprang up, ready to obey further orders.

"Go and open that door, sir!" said his master,

pointing to the parlor door, that stood slightly ajar.

Spray, hearing the command, sprang away from the girls who were petting him, and creeping through the opening into the hall, raised himself on his hind legs, and pushed the door wide open against the wall.

"Now, shut it again, sir!" said his master; and Spray obeyed, forcing his way behind the door, raising himself on his hind legs as before, and slamming it to with a loud bang.

"That's a good dog," said his master, patting him on the head. "Now go over there, and bring me your tail."

With that, Spray went into the corner and began to run around in a circle. After doing this a good many times, he dropped down on his haunches and made several laughable attempts to catch hold of his wagging tail. At last, seizing it firmly in his teeth, he stood up, and went on turning around and around, just as puss does when she chases after her tail. After turning in this way for quite a while, Spray at last reached the sofa, on which his master and several of his young companions were seated, laughing at him, and, at the former's command, let go his hold, and allowed his tail to wag as before.

Presently Spray broke away from the hugs and petting bestowed upon him by his little friends, and ran up to his master, who ordered him to show how he wrestled.

Running to the middle of the room, Spray planted his paws firmly on the carpet, and lifted one after the other several times, to show how boys change their feet about when wrestling. At length, after showing more such feints, he rolled over and over to show how boys tumble about when wrestling in a hay-loft, or on the long grass.

Again escaping from the caresses of the delighted spectators, after this amusing exhibition, he lay down at his master's feet. The gentleman then seized Spray's wagging tail, and making believe to bite it, said: "Shall I bite it? Say 'Oh, no!'"

Spray now became rather refractory, and would not at first do as he was told; but when the order was repeated in a tone of authority, he turned his eyes up to his master's face, and uttered a low whine, which sounded really very much like the words "Oh, no!"

Having thus made him plead to be let off, as well as a dog could, his master told him to jump up and make a figure eight; first, however, patting him affectionately, as a reward for his previous obedience. As his master stood up, Spray walked around, and in and out of both his feet from right to left; thus following the outline of a figure eight, as skaters do when cutting it on the ice.

This ended his tricks for the evening, and after being praised and called a "good dog" by his master, he joined in the sports of his young friends, until his owner called him to go home.

As the readers of ST. NICHOLAS may be interested in Spray, after reading of his doings, we will say that he is a New York dog, whose tricks they

may have a chance of seeing some day in public. At present, however, he is staying with his master, a down-town merchant, romping every day with his young friends, and learning new tricks for their amusement. He would no doubt be very vain if he could know that the readers of ST. NICHOLAS are interested in his performances.

THE THREE FISHERS.

BY LAURA E. RICHARDS.



JOHN, Frederick, and Henry
Had once a holiday;
And they would go a-fishing,
So merry and so gay.

It was not in the ocean,
Nor from the river-shore,
But in the monstrous water-butt
Outside the kitchen-door.

And John he had a fish-hook,
And Freddy had a pin,
And Henry took his sister's net,
And thought it was no sin.

They climbed up on the ladder
Till they the top did win;
And then they perched upon the edge,
And then they did begin.

But how their fishing prospered,
Or if they did it well,
Or if they caught the salmon,
I really cannot tell.

Because I was not there, you know.
But I can only say
That I too went a-fishing
That pleasant summer day.

It was not for a salmon,
Or shark with monstrous fin,
But it was for three little boys
All dripping to the skin.

I took them, and I shook them,
And I hung them up to dry.
D'ye think they ever fished again?
You don't? No more do I!

BIRDS IN THE SPRING.

BY PROF. W. K. BROOKS.

THE nests of birds afford the naturalist a most interesting subject for study, and every one has admired the wonderful skill with which each bird



THE WOODPECKER.

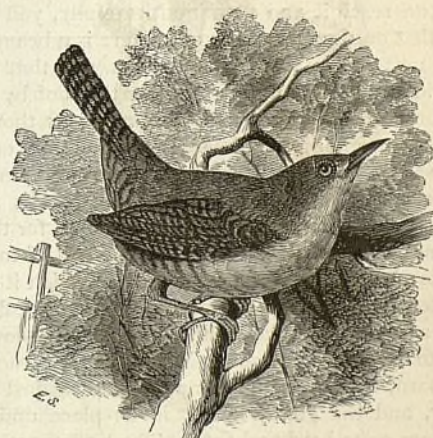
selects a proper place for its nest, gathers the necessary materials, and constructs the cradle in which its young are to find shelter and protection. But the nests of the various species of birds are almost as different from one another as the birds themselves.

WOODEN NESTS.

The red-headed woodpecker and the yellow-hammer bore holes in the decaying branches and trunks of trees, and in these they lay their eggs and bring up their young. The red-headed woodpecker is not often molested by man during the spring, for the farmers understand that, although this bird does destroy a great deal of fruit at certain seasons, he more than pays for this damage by the service he renders in freeing the orchard-trees from the insects and worms which otherwise would ruin them. The woodpecker knows very well that he is safe, and it is very easy to watch him at his labors. When a pair of these birds are ready to make their nest, they usually choose a large dead limb at some distance from the ground, and on the lower or sheltered side drill a round hole by means of their awl-like bills. This hole is as perfectly round and smooth as if made with an auger, and is just large enough to allow the bird to pass

through it. After the branch has been penetrated to the depth of three or four inches, the birds change the direction of the hole, and bore a tunnel down the inside of the branch for five or six inches, enlarging this portion somewhat at the bottom. Upon a soft bed of chips on the floor of this solid wooden house the eggs are laid, and here the young are raised, perfectly protected from rain and storm, and from nearly all enemies. The nest is so far from the ground that the eggs are in no danger of destruction by a prowling cat, and the entrance to the nest is so small that no hawk or owl can gain admission. Almost the only peril to which they are exposed is, that a snake may crawl into the nest, and eat up the eggs, or the young birds, if these are hatched. This done, the reptile quietly coils himself up in their place, and sleeps for several days.

A woodpecker's hole is such a very convenient place for a nest, that many other birds are glad to find one unoccupied. Sometimes a pair of wrens will watch the motions of the woodpeckers while they are at work, until an unfinished hole is left unguarded, when they will take possession of it. As soon as the lawful owners return, the thieves are driven off, but they are so persistent and



THE WREN.

troublesome that, although a woodpecker is larger and stronger than twenty wrens, the owners sometimes abandon the place, and make a new nest. Still, the wrens are not always allowed to keep the house they have stolen, for the blue-birds are

equally covetous of it, and sometimes fight fiercely with the wrens in their attempts to gain possession of it. Occasionally, both wrens and blue-birds are driven away by the martins, for these birds also prize woodpeckers' holes very highly. The fierce battles between these various birds over an abandoned hole are very amusing, and often last several days; for they all are very obstinate birds, and as each one is determined not to give up, the matter is not very easily settled.

NEST BUILDING.

Another interesting nest is that of the barn-swallow; and as these birds are very abundant, and have little fear of man, there is no difficulty in watching them while at work. Every boy who has passed the summer in the country, and has played in the hay-loft of a large open barn, has seen the nests and watched the birds build them, lay their eggs, raise their young ones, and give them their first lessons in flying; so that I can tell him nothing about it which he does not already know. But some of my readers may not have seen these birds at home. If you will go into any large open barn in the country, and hunt along the rafters close to the roof, you probably will find several large bunches of dried mud, which look like anything but nests. At first sight, each looks as if some one had taken a shovelful of stiff, wet clay, and thrown it up against the rafter with so much force that it was flattened out against the timber, and thus held fast until it had grown dry and hard. If you can find one of these lumps of clay in such a position that you can reach it and examine it carefully, you will find that on the upper side of it there is a beautiful little nest of hay lined with feathers, and that this is held up in its snug place under the roof by the platform of mud upon which it rests, as though upon a scaffolding. In the early summer, you often may see the barn-swallows very busy around pumps and cisterns, and upon the banks of brooks and ponds. They are then gathering material for their new nests. Each bird collects a little ball of mud, and carries this on its bill to the place which it has selected for its nest, moistening the mud, as it flies, with a thick, glue-like fluid, which the swallow is able to form at this season. When the bird reaches the barn, it presses the lump of mud against the rafter, and the glue holds it in its place until it becomes quite hard and firm. The birds continue to fasten new lumps of mud upon the first, until they have made a structure like half of a large bowl, fastened against the rafter, so near the roof of the barn that there is barely room enough for the birds to pass in and out. As the mud dries, it grows brittle; and as the finished nest weighs more

than a pound, it would be in great danger of falling by its own weight, unless the birds had some way of strengthening the mud. You know that masons mix hair with their mortar in order to make it stronger, and you remember that when the Jews were slaves in Egypt they mixed straw with the clay from which they made bricks. The barn-swallow has learned how to give strength to its work in the same way, and mixes small pieces of hay with its mud, so that this is made sufficiently tenacious to be in no danger of falling from

its place. After the outside of the nest is finished, the birds carry pieces of hay into the bowl, and so arrange them that they form a soft, warm bed, which is also well lined with feathers.

After all the work is done, and the nest is ready, the mother-bird lays four or five eggs; and if you will look into some of the nests early in the summer, you may be able to find some which contain these little white eggs, spotted with brown, resting upon the soft bed of feathers. The birds are so tame that looking into their nests does not trouble them as much as it does most birds; but in looking into the nest, you must be very careful



BARN-SWALLOWS AND THEIR NESTS.

not to touch any part of it, or the eggs; for although the mud is strong enough to hold up the birds, it is very dry and brittle indeed, so that a very slight touch is sometimes enough to bring it down and break it. The birds then lose not only their home, but, what is a much greater misfortune to them, the eggs for which they have labored so long and so faithfully to make a soft bed, out of the reach of cats, and rats, and birds of prey. Whenever you look into the nest to see the eggs or young birds, you must be very careful, too, not to stay too long, but to be satisfied with one short peep; for the old birds will not go into the nest while you are near it, and if they are kept away from the

eggs to
young

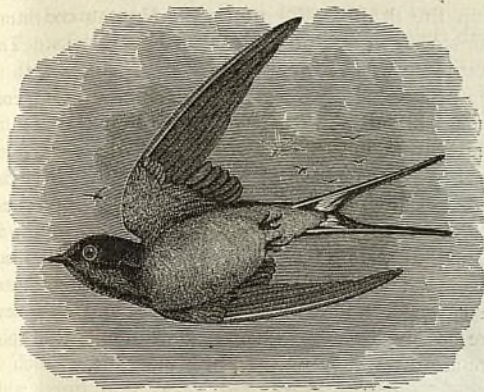
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eggs too long, these will become cold, and the young birds inside them will die.

If you are very careful to avoid touching the nest, and to make your visits while the old birds



A BARN-SWALLOW ON THE WING.

are away, and to stay near the nest only a very short time, you will have no trouble in following the growth of the young birds until they leave the nest, and I think that you would feel well paid for your trouble if you should try the experiment. After the young are hatched, the old birds are very busy for some days finding food for them, and are flying in and out of the barn continually. As barn-swallows are very sociable, a great many often build their nests under the same roof,—as many as thirty or forty being sometimes found in one barn. Of course there are two old birds for each nest, and as they are constantly flying in and out, there appears to be a much greater number. At first, the young birds are fed inside of the nest; but as they grow older, they come to the opening and stretch out their heads to take the food which their parents bring them, and soon they become strong enough to crawl to the outside of the nest.

THE FLYING-LESSON.

As soon as the young are large and strong enough to fly, the old birds try to induce them to use their wings, but they are rather slow to learn. This first lesson in flying is a very amusing performance, and it may be seen almost every day in summer.

The old birds fly back and forth before the little one in order to show it what an easy thing flying is, and keep up a constant twittering as if explaining the art, and urging the beginner to make the attempt. All the other old birds in the barn take a great interest in the lesson, and neglect their own work to attend to this. They fly back and forth with the parents, and join them in telling the little bird what to do. To judge from the noise

which they make, one would think that all the swallows in the country had gathered in the barn; and as they all talk together, it must be rather confusing to the young bird; so that it is not strange that it appears rather puzzled and stupid. At last, the young bird gathers sufficient courage to slide off its perch, and to give two or three wild flaps with its wings. In this way it manages to fly a few feet to another beam, the whole flock flying with it, and redoubling their twittering. When, by several trials of this kind, the young bird has learned how to use its wings, it flies out of the barn with its parents, and perches upon some tree or fence near the place where the old birds are in the habit of pursuing their insect food.

Their work is now much lightened, for they are not compelled to make the journey to the barn with every fly which they capture, but feed the young near the hunting-ground. Soon the little swallow becomes strong enough to accompany its parents, and although it does not yet do much hunting for itself, by watching the old birds, it gradually learns how to provide for its own wants. Whenever it perceives that one of its parents has captured an insect, it opens its mouth and flies near the old bird, which comes to meet it; and as the two pass each other in the air, the fly or grasshopper is very dexterously transferred from the beak of the old to that of the young bird.

Occasionally, a young swallow is so timid or lazy that it will not try to fly, but stays in its nest and compels its parents to feed it there until it has grown quite large and strong. At last, after the



THE CHIMNEY-SWALLOW.

old birds have done and said everything possible to encourage it, without success, they push it out of the nest, and drive it from one perch to another, until it is fairly out of the barn, when it usually finds no difficulty in flying.

The chimney-swallow is another well-known bird, which builds its nest inside unused chimneys. The nest of this bird is somewhat like that of the barn-swallow in shape, but is made of small sticks instead of mud. These sticks, like the little balls of mud, are fastened together by means of a glue-like substance which is formed in the mouth of the bird; for almost all the birds which belong to the swallow family are able to secrete this glue, and make use of it in building their nests.

The chimney-swallows are usually not abundant in the large cities, and so are met with there only now and then; but in small towns, and in the country, they are very common, and nearly every unused chimney has at least one nest. The birds feed almost entirely upon insects, and when the young brood is hatched, the parents hunt for food by night as well as during the day; therefore you often may hear, in the middle of the night, the twittering of the young

birds in the chimney when the old ones return to the nest with the insects which they have captured. Like the barn-swallows, the chimney-swallows are very sociable, and so many often build in the same chimney that the nests block up the flue and entirely stop the draft. When heavy and long-continued rains occur, the glue by which the nests are stuck on becomes softened, and the old birds striking against the nests while flying in and out, break them from their attachment to the bricks, so that they fall to the bottom of the flue. It is said that, in 1857, during a long season of wet, cold weather in June, four hundred and eighty of these birds, young and old, were precipitated down a single chimney in Woodbury, Connecticut. Sometimes the chimney-swallow and the barn-swallow build their nests in caves or hollow trees, but barns and chimneys are so much more safe and convenient, that they are almost always selected in preference.



ANNETTA PLUMMER'S DIARY.

BY ABBY MORTON DIAZ.

My mother told me that it would be a good way for me to make believe that I am telling Miss Annetta Fourteen what happens every day. I asked my mother, "Will she be I? Will Miss Annetta Fourteen be the same I then that I am now when I am seven?"

She said, "She will be the same I, and she will not be the same I."

Then I asked my mother to tell me how I could be the same I, and not be the same I. She said, "You are the same you that you were when you were a baby, and you are not the same you." She

said that if I were the very same you—no, the very same I—that I was when I was a baby, I should want a rattle to shake, and to be trotted, and to pat cakes!

That made me laugh out loud.

Then my mother asked me if I should not like to read a little cunning diary, where Annetta Baby put down when she learned how to pat-a-cake, and when she jumped first time in a baby-jumper, and when she fell out of bed. And I said I should.

I shall tell something now in my diary about poor little Banty White. She died this morning. She

had the pip. She was a little beauty. Oh, she was just as white as snow all over, and every one in the family loved her very much. She would come when we called her, and she knew her name. She had four chickens once, and once she had seven. They are sold.

I cried when my Banty died. She was very cunning and very nice. My mother does not think it is foolish to cry for something like that. She thinks it is foolish to cry when you can't have things that you want, and when you cannot go to the places that you want to. My mother talks to me a great deal about Banty White. The Plaguer talks some. The Plaguer is my cousin Hiram. He is fifteen. He is very tall. He likes to plague us when we do not wish him to do so. He says "Boo!" in our ears when we do not know he is there.

They counted four good things about Banty. Kind—that was one of the good things. My cat had three kittens, and two died. My cat had fits. They were running fits. And once she ran away. That was the last one she had, for she did not live much longer, and her little kitty was left without any mother. Banty White let the kitty come under her wings, and did not push it out. She was kind to it a great many days. When she called her chickies to eat something, she wanted that kitty to come too, and she wanted the kitty to run under her wings when the chickies came under; and when the kitty did not come quick, she kept saying "Cluck! cluck! cluck!" till somebody put it under there. Then she kept still.

Not quarrelsome. This makes two good things. When any other Banty ran to get the same crumble that she was going after, she did not fly at that other one.

Not pick out the best. This makes three good things. When anybody threw down corn, or crumbs, or bugs,—my father picked off squash-bugs to give to the hens,—she did not try to pick for the biggest one, and she did not either try to keep the best place for herself. The best hen-place is close to the back door. Banty White was tied to a stake there, but she was willing the other ones should have that good place, too.

Not proud. Four good things. The Plaguer told me of this one. He said some hens are so proud when they lay eggs that they go around cackling very loud, just as much as to say, "See

what I've done! I've done!" He said Banty White never made a very loud cackling. My mother said that she heard the boys "cackle," one day, when they had brought in some large sticks of wood. That made us laugh. Then she said she heard a little girl "cackle," one day, when she had picked more huckleberries than the others did. I know what little girl she meant. Me.

One day, my father and my mother and myself went to see my aunt, and we stayed there all night, and Hiram put my Banty under a barrel to make her not want to sit, and he forgot she was under there, and she starved almost to death, because she had no food to eat.

One day, when our great Shanghai hen wanted to sit, the Jimmyjohns went 'way into a corner of the hen-house and tried to get hold of her legs to pull her off, and she pecked them. 'Most everybody knows about the Jimmies now, I think, for they are only our two little twin boys who look just alike. One of the Jimmies held out a stick for her to bite, and so she did a little while; but she stopped biting that stick when he began to put out his other hand to take hold of her legs with, and pecked that hand. Then he threw sand in her face, so she could not see his hand; but she could. Then he threw some pine-needles that were on the ground in the hen-house; but they did not stop her from pecking that hand he was taking hold of her legs with. Then he put his straw hat on her head, so that she had to knock her head on the inside of it, and then they both took hold of her legs and pulled her off. This is a very funny story. They could not get out. They let her go back again. The button on the door of the hen-house turns itself around, and they had to stay shut up in there almost two hours. They hollered just as loud as they could, and then they cried, and then they pounded, and then they kicked the door, and then they did all these same things over again. When Hiram put the cow in the barn, he heard them pounding, and heard Snip barking. Snip was lying down outside, and sometimes he got up and barked. One day, the Jimmyjohns went off in a boat, and it was bad weather, and they almost got drowned. This almost makes me cry—for then we could never, never see our little Jimmies any more! Oh! what should we do without our dear little Jimmies?

THE NAUGHTY LITTLE EGYPTIAN.

BY JOEL STACY.



"EVER ON HIS BRONZÈD FACE HE WORE A LOOK OF GLEE."

LONG, long ago, in Egypt land,
Where the lazy lotus grew,
And the pyramids, though vast and grand,
Were rather fresh and new,
There dwelt an honored family,
Called Scarabéus Phlat,
Whose duty 't was all faithfully
To tend The Sacred Cat.

They brought the water of the Nile
To bathe its precious feet;
They gave it oil and camomile
Whene'er it deigned to eat.

With gold and precious emeralds
Its temple sparkled o'er,
And golden mats lay thick upon
The consecrated floor.

And Scarabéus Phlat himself—
A man of cheerful mood—
Held not his trust from love of pelf,
For he was very good.
He thought The Cat a catamount
In strength and majesty;
And ever on his bronzed face
He wore a look of glee.

And Mrs. Scarabéus Phlat
Was smiling, bright, and good;
For she, too, loved The Sacred Cat,
As it was meet she should.
Never a grumpy syllable
Came from this joyous pair;
And all the neighbors envied them
Their very jolly air.

When Scarabéus went to find
The Sacred Cat its store,
The pretty wife he left behind
Stood smiling at the door.
He knew that sweetly, smilingly
She'd welcome his return,
And brightly on the altar stone
The tended flame would burn.

The Sacred Cat was different quite;
No jollity he knew;
But, spoiled and petted day and night,
Only the crosser grew.
Yet still they served him faithfully,
And thought his snarling sweet;
And still they fed him lusciously,
And bathed his sacred feet.

So far, so good. But hear the rest:
This couple had a child,
A little boy, not of the best,—
Ramesis, he was styled.
This little boy was beautiful,
But soon he grew to be
So like The Cat in manners,—oh!
'T was wonderful to see!

He might have copied Papa Phlat,
Or Mamma Phlat, as well;
And why he did n't this or that
No mortal soul could tell.
It was n't want of discipline,
Nor lack of good advice,
But just because he did n't care
To be the least bit nice.

Besides, he noticed day by day
How ill The Cat behaved,

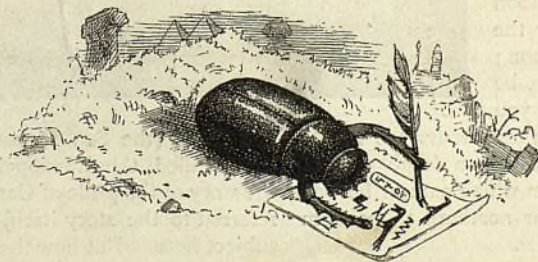
And how (whatever they might say)
His parents were enslaved;
And how they worshiped silently
The naughty Sacred Cat.
Said he, "They'll do the same by me,
If I but act like that."

At first the parents said: "How blest
Are we, to find The Cat
Glow, humanized, within the breast
Of a Scarabéus Phlat!"
But soon the neighbors, pitying,
Whispered: "'T is very sad!
There's no mistake,—that little one
Of Phlat's is very bad!"

He snarled, he squalled from night till morn,
And scratched his mother's eyes.
The Sacred Cat, himself, looked on
In undisguised surprise.
And here the record suddenly
Breaks off. No more we know,
Excepting this: That happy pair
Soon wore a look of woe.

Yes, then, and ever afterward,
A look of pain they wore.
No more the wife stood smilingly
A-waiting at the door.
No more did Scarabéus Phlat
Display a jolly face;
But on his brow such sadness sat
It gloomied all the place.

So, children, take the lesson in,
And due attention give:
No matter when, or where, or how,
Mothers and fathers live;
No matter be they Brown or Jones,
Or Scarabéus Phlat,
It grieves their hearts to see their child
Act like a naughty cat.
And Sacred Cats are well enough
To those who hold them so;
But—oh, take warning of the boy
In Egypt long ago!



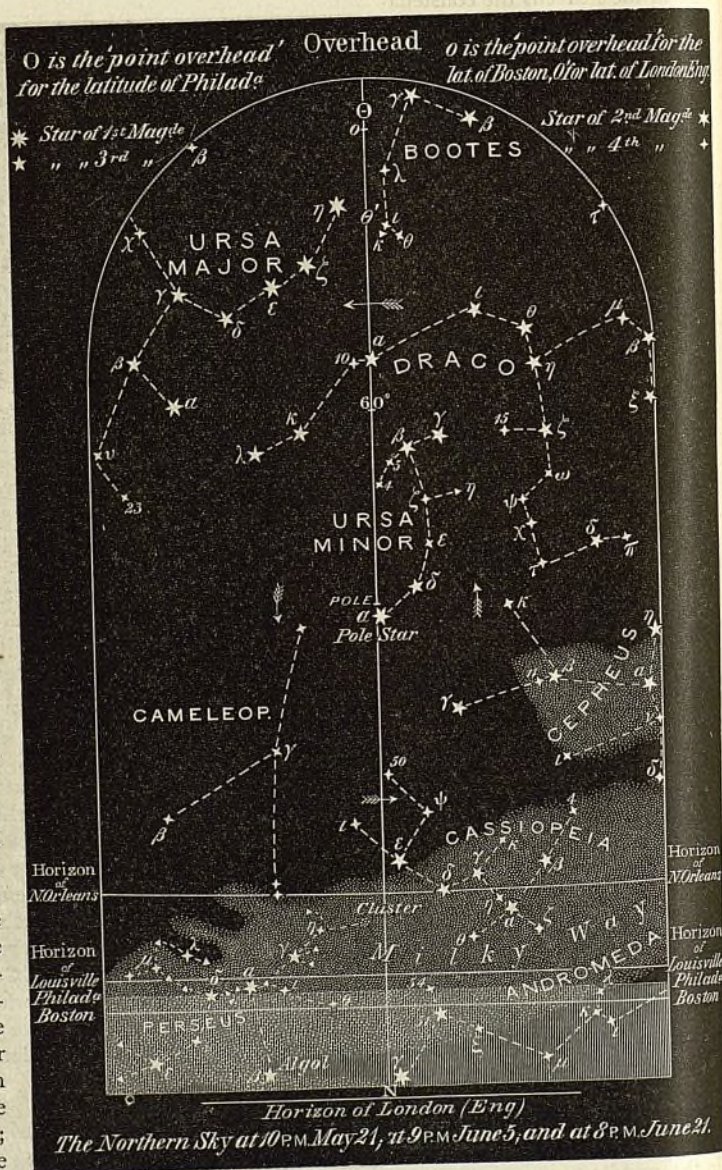
THE STARS IN JUNE.

BY RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

THIS month, two pairs of maps are given,— The constellation Perseus is one of the oldest. two northern and two southern,—partly because It belongs, with Cepheus, Cassiopeia, Andromeda,

we wish to complete the set of twelve maps—one for each month—in the present volume; but chiefly because the evenings are now getting long, and the stars must be looked for later. Thus, the first northern or southern map shows the stars as they are seen on June 21st at eight; but at that hour it is not dark enough then to see the stars. Now, the second northern or southern map shows the stars as they are seen on June 21st at ten o'clock. In July and August, also, it will be well to have maps of the stars at later hours than eight or nine. In the first part of June, as you will see, the first pair of maps are still to be used; from June 5, at nine in the evening, the stars can be well seen.

Taking the first northern map, we find the Guardians nearly above the pole. The Dipper has passed to the left, or west, of due north. The last star of the Great Bear's tail is nearly overhead. Cassiopeia has passed below the pole toward the east, and the five bright stars of the constellation now make a straggling W close to the horizon, and very nearly upright. The festoon of stars belonging to the constellation Perseus is just visible above the latitude of Philadelphia, but better seen above the latitude of Boston. As far south as Louisville, the festoon at the hours named under the map is broken by the horizon; but half an hour earlier, can be well seen. In London, as you see by the map, we can at these hours see nearly the whole of Perseus; and also a large part of Andromeda,—a constellation which cannot be well seen within the range of our northern maps from any part of the United States.



and Cetus (the Sea Monster), to a set which has been called the Cassiopeian group,—illustrating the story of the pride of Cassiopeia. I have already referred to the story itself, as not belonging to our subject here. But how the story found its way into

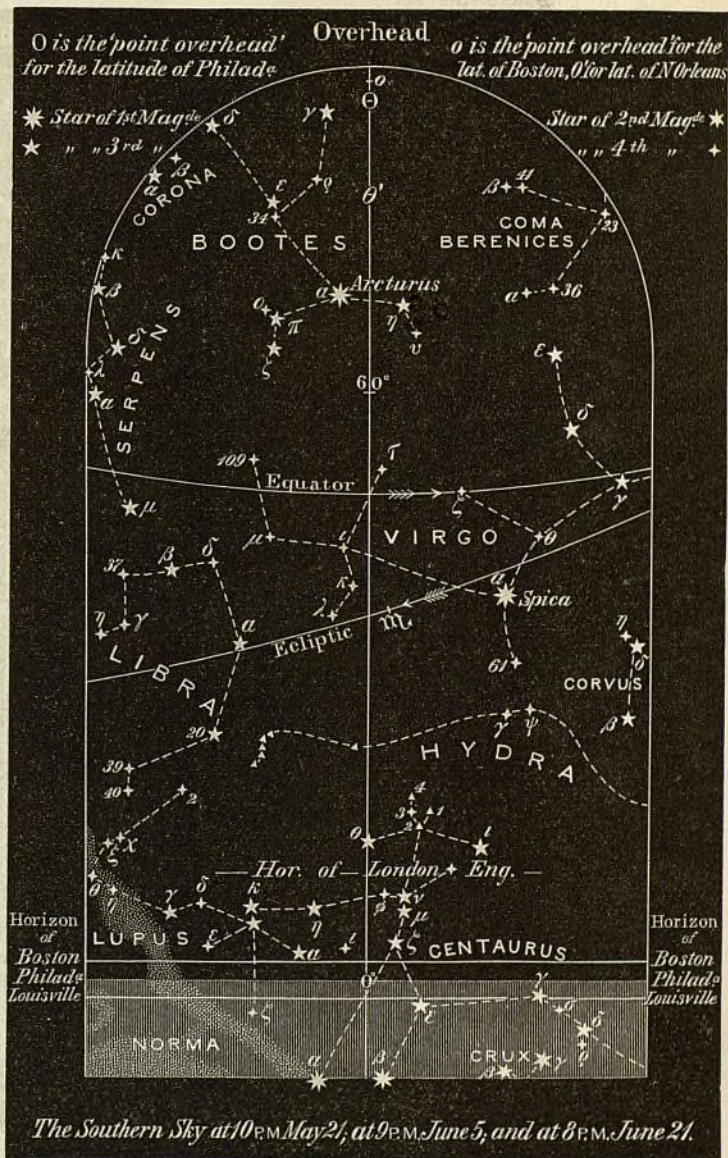
the heavens is one of the most mysterious questions in the history of astronomy; and if the answer could be found, we should have made an important step toward determining what nation first studied the stars. A curious story is told by Wilford, in his Asiatic researches, about these constellations. Asking an Indian astronomer, he says, "to show me in the heavens the constellation Antarmada," he immediately pointed to Andromeda, though I had not given him any information about it beforehand. He afterward brought me a very rare and curious work in Sanscrit, which contained a chapter devoted to "*Upanachatras*," or constellations not in the zodiac, "with drawings of *Capuja* (Cepheus) and of *Casyapi* (Cassiopeia) seated and holding a lotus-flower in her hand, of *Antarmada* charmed with the fish beside her, and last, of *Parasiea* (Perseus), who, according to the explanation of the book, held the head of a monster which he had slain in combat; blood was dropping from it, and for hair it had snakes." But whether the Indians borrowed from the Greeks, or the Greeks from the Indians, or both from some other source, we do not know.

Perseus is represented as in Fig. 1 on page 566. Why, instead of a sword, the Rescuer should carry a weapon which looks like a reaping-hook, deponent sayeth not,—not knowing. Admiral Smyth remarks, that in an ancient MS. of the astronomical poet Aratus in the British Museum, with drawings made, it is supposed, in the reign of Constantine, Perseus is represented with no other drapery than a light scarf, holding the head of Medusa in his left hand and a singular hooked and pointed weapon in the right. In the middle ages, an earnest effort was made to dismiss Perseus and Medusa's head in favor of David with the head of Goliath, but the attempt failed.

The Cluster on the sword hand of Perseus (see the northern map, also) can be seen easily with the

naked eye. This cluster should be examined with a small telescope, by all who possess, or can beg or borrow one. Nothing more wonderful exists in the heavens than this splendid cluster. In the middle there is a beautiful coronet of small stars.

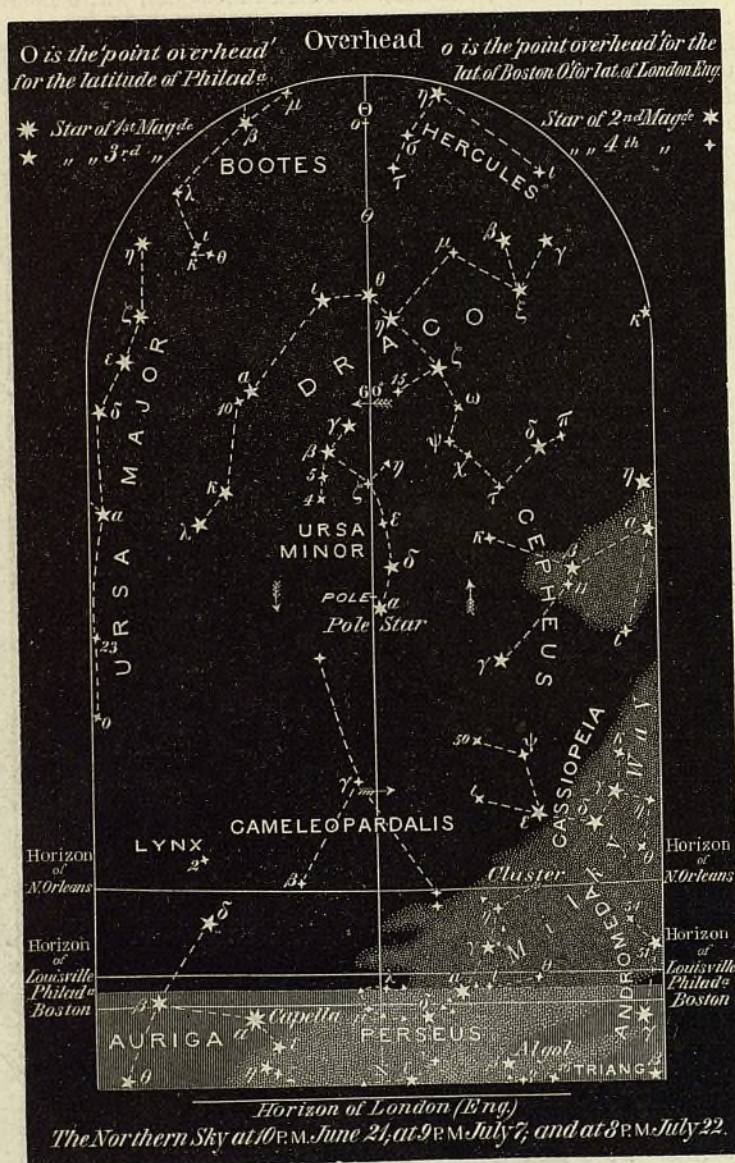
Although Algol, in the head of Medusa, cannot be seen in America, where shown, the horizon of



Boston passing high above it, yet as its place will soon be learned when once the festoon of stars in Perseus (μ , δ , α , γ , and η) is known, we may take this opportunity of describing this remarkable star. It shines most of the time as a star of the third

magnitude. During two days, fourteen hours, it retains this brightness, then, in the course of three hours and a quarter, it is reduced to the fourth magnitude. It remains thus faint for about a quarter of an hour, and then in the course of three hours and a quarter it gradually recovers its usual

The star loses half its brightness for about a quarter of an hour out of nearly sixty-nine hours, and remains in all only six hours and three-quarters below its full brightness. Now, if one side or part of a sun were less bright than the rest, to such a degree that, when that side was looked at, the sun

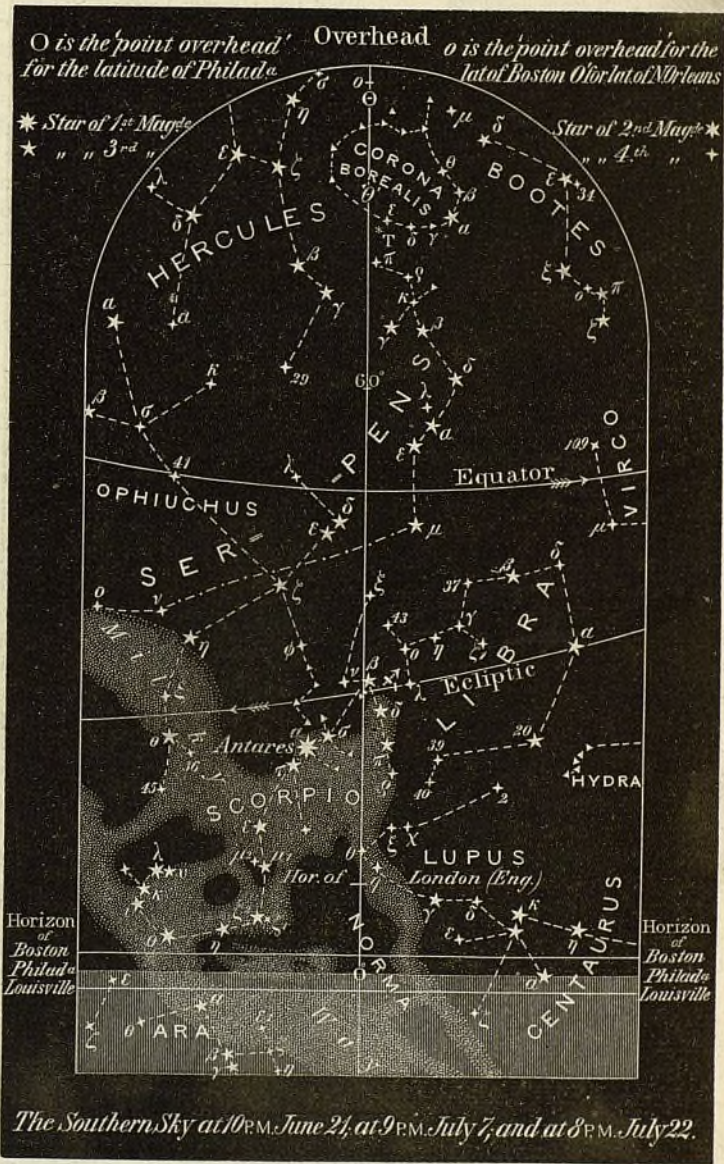


luster. This regular change is accounted for by some astronomers "by supposing the body of the star to rotate on an axis, having parts of its surface not luminous." It is singular that Sir W. Herschel and others who have given this explanation should not have noticed how it fails when put to the test.

shone with only half the luster of its other side, then the sun would be certainly quite half the time below its full brightness, and probably longer. Try the experiment with an orange. Peel off so much of one side that when you look at that side about half is peeled and the other half unpeeled, and

suppose the unpeeled part of the orange made intensely bright and the peeled part dark. Now, let the orange spin steadily on an axis, either thrusting a stick through it, or hanging it by a thread. You will find the peeled part remains wholly in view for (roughly) about a third part of

tenth part. This could never happen. The only possible explanation seems to be this,—that there is a great dark orb, like our earth, only very much larger, traveling around that distant sun, once in about sixty-nine hours, and coming between that sun and us once in each circuit. It must be large



an entire turning, and partly in view nearly twice as long. This is very unlike what is observed in the case of Algol, whose dark part, on the theory we are considering, would remain wholly in view only about a three-hundredth part of an entire turning, and more or less in view only about a

enough to cut off about half that sun's light, and must travel at such a rate that the partial eclipses which it causes last nearly seven hours at a time from beginning to end. The discovery that Algol changes in brightness in this strange way is commonly supposed to be-

long to late times; but I think the name of the star shows that the astronomers of old knew all about this star's changes of luster. You see from Fig. 1 how the star adorns the head of the Gorgon



FIG. 1.

Medusa, borne by Perseus, which was supposed to possess the power of turning to stone every living creature that looked upon it. The Arabian name Algol is the same as *Al-ghúl*, the monster or demon. And to this star most evil influences were attributed by astrologers. All this seems to show that the old astronomers had found out how ominously the star looks upon our system, slowly winking upon us from out the depths of space.

Turning to the southern skies, we find Virgo (the Virgin) now the ruling zodiacal constellation. Last month, she shared the honor with Leo (the Lion). Both these constellations are larger than others of the twelve which form the zodiac,—the two together, instead of covering about sixty degrees of the sun's path (one-sixth of his circuit), covering fully eighty degrees, or between a fourth part and a fifth part. The next two—the Scales and the Scorpion—together, scarcely cover forty degrees, instead of covering about thirty degrees, or a twelfth part of the zodiac, apiece. Nothing need be added to what I said last month about Virgo, and her bright star Spica. Libra (the Scales) I shall speak about presently.

The fine constellation Boötes (the Herdsman) is seen above Virgo. He is too high, however, for you readily to recognize his figure. At New Orleans, indeed, and other places far south, about as much of his frame is on the northern as on the southern side of the point overhead. The bright star Arcturus is a very noted one. According to the measurement of its light by Sir J. Herschel, it is the brightest star north of the celestial equator, though to the unaided eye, Vega, in the Lyre, and Capella, in the Charioteer, seem equally conspicuous. The heat which reaches us from this star

has been measured, and is found to be equal to about as much heat as would be received from a three-inch cube, full of boiling water, at a distance of 383 yards!

Low down toward the south you see the stars of the Centaur and Lupus (the Wolf). But it is only from the latitude of New Orleans that the bright stars marking the fore-feet of this constellation can be seen. The stars of the Cross marked in former times the hind-feet. You can easily see how the figure was imagined,—the stars θ and ι marking the shoulders, and 1, 2, 3 and 4 the head, of the human part of the Centaur; while the back of the horse extended from ζ to γ , σ , and δ . He was represented as bearing the body of the wolf upon a spear, apparently by way of offering it as a suitable sacrifice upon the altar, Ara,—a constellation which a little later comes into view in the south from places as far south as New Orleans.

But now let us take the second northern and southern maps for this month,—that is, let two hours be supposed to have passed, the summer sky darkening, and the stars in these later maps coming into view in the places shown.

In the northern map, you see that the Guardians have passed over to the left, or west, of due north. The Dipper now has its top—from δ to α —nearly perpendicular to the horizon. The Cameleopard is below the pole. The solitary star marked 2, near the fore-foot of the Giraffe, belongs to the Lynx, a constellation of small stars, set by Hevelius in this barren region of the heavens. The constellation Perseus has nearly passed from below the pole close by the horizon, and a part of Auriga is taking its place. But the bright star, Capella, which is the glory of this constellation, is beneath the horizon at the hours named below the second northern map, for all places south of the horizon of Boston, and even for two degrees or so north of that horizon.

It is toward the south that at present the heavens present the most glorious display. The contrast, in fact, between the northern and southern skies is very strange. Toward the north, the region below the pole shows (in America) not a single star above the fourth magnitude. Toward the south, the corresponding region (that is, the region extending some 40 degrees from the horizon) is singularly rich in large stars, chief among them being Antares (the Heart of the Scorpion), and perhaps the most beautiful of all the red stars. The word Antares means, in fact, "the rival of Mars." You will have an opportunity this year, in August and September, of observing whether Antares can really be said to rival in ruddiness or in splendor the planet of war when at his brightest.

Libra, which by rights should hold sway as the

southern zodiacal constellation one month out of the twelve, has passed the south at the time shown in the southern map. The *sign* Libra has thirty degrees, like the rest, and probably the original constellation had its due extension. A foolish story is told by Servius to the effect that the original Chaldean zodiac had only eleven signs, and that Libra was made out of the claws of Scorpio. But there is ample evidence to show that both the sign and constellation Libra belonged to the earliest Chaldean and Egyptian zodiacs.

The figures of the Scorpion, Ophiuchus (the Serpent-Bearer), with his serpent, besides parts of

represent Æsculapius, and by others to be another celestial Hercules. Novidius insists that it prefigured the miracle of St. Paul and the viper, in which case the Maltese viper was considerably magnified in anticipation. The figure is a very absurd one, the legs being singularly feeble. But it must be admitted he is awkwardly placed. The serpent is quite enough to occupy his attention, yet a scorpion is ready to sting one leg and to pinch the other. The club of Hercules may be meant for the serpent, and the arrow of the Archer for the scorpion, but they seem to threaten the Serpent-Bearer at least as much.

In the constellation Corona Borealis, a star marked T will be noticed. Here no star can now be seen; but in May, 1866, one blazed out here very brightly, and, though it soon faded in luster, it is still visible with a telescope. Like the star which blazed out lately in the constellation Cygnus, this one was found to be shining with the light of glowing hydrogen gas. At its brightest it appeared as a star of the second magnitude. Its present luster is but about one-eight-hundredth part of that.

You will notice toward the left, or east, of due south, just outside the limits of the second southern map for this month, a star much brighter than any—even Antares or Arcturus—which has yet been shown in these maps. It is not, however, a fixed star, but a planet,—the prince of all the planets,—Jupiter. It will be an interesting exercise for the young observer to track this wandering star among the fixed stars until next month, when I hope, with the editor's permission, to make a few remarks about the planet.

The ecliptic (the sun's path among the stars) still tends downward in both the southern maps. The place marked π in the first southern map is that reached by the sun moving in the direction shown by the arrow on or about October 10, when, passing from the sign Libra, he enters the sign Scorpio, of which π is the symbol. The place marked \dagger in the second southern map is that reached by the sun on or about November 22d, when he enters the sign Sagittarius, of which \dagger is the symbol.



FIG. 2.

Hercules (head, arm and club), Libra (the Scales), Sagittarius (the Archer), and Lupus (the Wolf), are shown in Fig. 2.

The large constellation Ophiuchus is not specially interesting. It has been supposed by some to

TONY'S LETTER.

PETER was a funny little boy, who had a dog named Tony. This dog was all covered with long shaggy hair, which hung down over his eyes and his mouth, and made him look very wise. But Tony was not as wise as he looked, and he did not know as much as little Peter thought he knew.

Peter was only three years old. He did not know all the alphabet, but he knew what letters spelled his own name.

Peter was very fond of what he called "writing letters." He would scribble all over a piece of paper, and then fold it up and get his sister Emily to write on it the name of one of the family, or else of one of the neighbors. Then Peter would carry it to that person; and he very often got a written answer, which Emily would read to him. Sometimes these answers had candy in them, which pleased Peter very much.

One day, Peter wrote a long letter to his dog Tony. When he gave it to him, Tony took it in his mouth and carried it to the rug in front of the fire in the sitting-room. There he laid it down, and put his nose to it. Then he laid himself down, with his head on the letter, and shut his eyes. He was sleepy, and he found that the letter was not good to eat.

Peter was very glad to see Tony do this, for he thought he had read the letter and was thinking what he should say when he answered it.

So little Peter said, "Tony shall write me an answer to my letter," and he ran into his grandma's room, to ask for a pencil. She was not there, but on the table there was some paper, and an inkstand with a quill pen in it. His grandma always used a quill pen.

So Peter took a big sheet of paper and the inkstand with the pen in it. Then he saw his grandma's spectacles on the table, and he thought he would take these too, as Tony might write better if he had spectacles on.

Peter waked Tony, who was fast asleep by this time, and made him hold his head up. Peter put the spectacles on Tony, and laid the paper before him. Then he set the inkstand down, close to his right paw.

"Now, Tony," said Peter, "you must write me a letter."

Tony looked at the little boy, but he did not take the pen.

"There, Tony!" said Peter. "There's the ink and the pen. Don't you see them?" And he pushed the inkstand against Tony's paw.

The dog gave the inkstand a tap with his paw, and over it went!

"Oh!" cried Peter. "You naughty dog! Upsetting grandma's inkstand!" And he picked up the inkstand as quickly as he could. Some of the ink had run out on the paper, but none of it had gone on the carpet.

Peter took off Tony's spectacles, and drove him away; and then, with

what he called the "tail" of the quill pen (by which he meant the feather end), he spread the ink about on the paper.

Then he took the paper up by a corner, and carried it to his mother.



TONY.

"Mamma!" said he, "See the letter Tony wrote to me. He upset the inkstand, but none of the letter runned off on the carpet!"

Tony never wrote another letter, and that was the last time that little Peter meddled with his grandma's pen and ink.



JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

WHAT is so rare as a day in June? Then, if ever, come perfect days. I believe some great poet has said the same thing. But, bless you! the birds have sung it every summer since the world began; so it is doubly true and doubly new—for the very truest and newest thing in the universe is the glad note of a bird when summer comes.

There is something that your Jack loves nearly as well, though, and that is the laugh of a happy young heart.

So laugh out, my children—laugh and be happy, in these sweet, warm days; and when the flowers nod brightly to you, as they will, and the grass whispers softly, and the whole earth seems to smile and sing, remember Jack's words: Be glad, glad, glad—and keep your hearts in tune!

THE DEACON'S CONUNDRUM.

"BOYS!" said Deacon Green to a group of red-cheeked fellows the other day, "I never see a healthy, go-ahead crowd of young folks like you, that I don't say to myself, 'here's a chance for practical religion.' Do you know the reason?"

"Is it a conundrum?" asked three of the boys in a breath.

"Yes," said the Deacon, with the air of a man who had intended to make a speech, but had suddenly decided to keep it to himself. "It is a conundrum."

Then the Deacon gave a pleasant nod, and walked off.

"Now, what *did* he mean by that?" said one of the fellows.

"I know," cried Bob King. "He meant that some folks think religion is intended only for Sundays and for sick people, and the Deacon

would like to see more well people trying it on week-days—that's all."

"Humph!" said John Salters. "You know a heap—you do!"

"The Deacon does, anyhow," answered Bob, meekly. "You can't get around that."

ASTRAGALOI.

Montreal, April 3d, 1877.

DEAR JACK: In the April number of ST. NICHOLAS there was a paragraph about children in Pompeii playing with Jack-stones, and calling them "Astragaloï." It also mentioned their being made of the small joint bones of sheep. So I thought that *Astragalus*, which means an ankle-bone, might have some connection with Astragaloï. Would Jack kindly tell me?—Your constant reader, NELLIE F.

Certainly. Exactly so. Jack has n't the least doubt of it, Nellie. In fact, I am sure the dear Little Schoolma'am would say that the sheep bones used by the little ancients in the game undoubtedly were those which correspond with the ankle-bones of man. But to find these sheep ankle-bones you'll have to be sharp, or you'll look in the wrong place, may be. There's a study known as "Comparative Anatomy" which will throw light on this matter, if you wish to pursue it further.

BAD NEWS FOR THE CHILDREN.

Peekskill, N. Y.

DEAR JACK: I heard two men talking the other evening in a drug store, while I was waiting for some medicine to be done up. And I heard one of them say that in Randolph County, Illinois, they were raising castor-oil beans at the rate of twelve bushels to the acre. It made me shudder. Don't you think it is dreadful?

Yours truly,

ROBBIE N.

A STOCKING REVIVAL.

ALL through the last winter and spring there seems to have been a great stir among the stockings. They have come out in all sorts of colors and almost all sorts of patterns. Here, many a time this past spring, the dead meadows have looked as if they were full of flowers by reason of the children skipping around with their red and blue striped legs. Even the little boys made me think of scarlet-runners, and the Johnny-jump-ups were out in great variety.

Whether it was on this account or not, I do not know, but the other day the Little Schoolma'am began to talk to the children about stockings, telling them that in the old, old time the people wore them made of cloth. Up to the days of Henry VIII., she said, they were made out of ordinary cloth. The king's own were formed of yard-wide taffeta, and it was only by chance that he might obtain a pair of silk hose from Spain. Then she read something from an old book, which, perhaps, you may like to hear. In fact, the children were so delighted with it that they begged the dear Little Schoolma'am to send it to ST. NICHOLAS; and, if she has done so, I will thank the editors to put it in right here.

* * * Henry VIII.'s son, Edward VI., received as a great present from Sir Thomas Gresham 'a pair of long Spanish silk stockings.' For some years longer, silk stockings continued to be a great rarity. 'In the second year of Queen

Elizabeth,' says Stow in his Chronicle, 'her silk-woman, Mistress Montague, presented her majesty with a pair of black knit-silk stockings for a New-Year's gift; the which, after a few days' wearing, pleased her highness so well that she sent for Mistress Montague and asked her where she had them, and if she could help her to any more, who answered, saying: "I made them very carefully of purpose only for your majesty, and seeing these please you so well, I will presently set more in hand." "Do so," quoth the queen, "for indeed I like silk stockings so well, because they are pleasant, fine and delicate, that henceforth I will wear no more cloth stockings."

"And from that time to her death the queen wore no more cloth hose, but only silk stockings."

SCHOOL-LUNCHEONS.

(A Letter from the Little Schoolma'am.)

DEAR JACK: You were so good in March as to let me "have a say" on the subject of school-luncheons. Now I want to have another,—a short one. May I? (Of course she may. Bless her!) Dozens and dozens of answers have come to my letter, girls and boys, and it was like a geography lesson just to read them; for they were sent from all parts of the country,—California, and Maine, and Oregon,—New York, Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, the Rocky Mountains, Kansas, Ohio,—and a good many other places which I have n't breath to mention. I don't think I ever realized before how far our dear ST. NICHOLAS travels, or what numbers of small friends he has in far-away places across the prairies and among the hill-tops, as well as nearer home. Well, dear boys and girls, thank you all. Your letters were very interesting, and just what I wanted. One of these days I shall write you a long answer, and say what I think about your luncheons and luncheons in general, and how they may be improved, and made more attractive and nourishing without too much trouble to the kind mammas who put them up. But I won't do this now, because vacation-time is near, and the lunch-baskets are about to be stored away for the summer, and your heads



A GRAND SAIL IN A CIRCULAR BOAT.

A CIRCULAR BOAT.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: I want to tell you of something that I saw in San Francisco, which ought to be introduced in other cities where there are boys and girls,—I suppose most cities have boys and girls,—and that is the "circular boat." It can be introduced in any grounds where a circular lake can be made, and supplied with water either naturally or artificially.

The boat of which I send you a picture is in Woodward's Garden, San Francisco, and you can't imagine what fun it is to sail in it. The picture explains it better than I can. I need only say, that the inside rim of the boat looks over the water, and the outside rim looks over the land; there being only just enough space, between the outside rim of the boat and the land, to enable the boat to move easily. It is provided with sails to catch all the wind there may be to send it around; and, besides this, every fellow may take an oar if he chooses. Sometimes hired men row.

They might put fish in this lake, and let the boys try their luck at catching them, but it would n't be quite fair to the fish, I suppose. I am sure that if such things as this were to be introduced in other towns, they would be very popular,—among us boys, at least,—and the girls would like them, because there is no danger of shipwreck.

I must tell you that, as nearly as I can remember, it is a flat-bottomed boat about three feet and a half wide, and that the diameter of the entire lake is about forty feet. Sometimes the boat goes very fast, sometimes very slowly, but that only adds to the variety.

Hoping that you will copy my picture and print this note, I am yours truly,

EDWARD C. D.

are full of other things,—as they ought to be,—with a pleasant summer before you; and if we had our talk now, it would just go into one of your ears and out at the other. So I will wait till a little before school begins again.

Meantime, let me specially thank all of you whose initials are given below, for your frank and straightforward letters,—though every word, from every one of the dear ST. NICHOLAS crowd, is heartily welcomed by your affectionate

LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM.

K. U., M. B., J. B., M. U., M. C. H., A. M. K., M. K., A. H. W., F. W., G. H., M. E., G. B., A. S., A. E. S., K. M. F., H. D. F., E. K. B., M. M. C., R. C. W., "Mattie," L. A. J., H. B. S., C. W. R., J. B. H., H. K. C., O. G., J. C. W., Daisy and Aphra M., L. L. P., S. F. P., H. M. H., M. C. C., E. T., J. B. F., G. H. C., A. E. P., R. D. H., M. C., A. McC., M. G. McC., S. D. M., S. G., S. C., M. R., G. W. S., W. W. B., A. M., C. M. S., C. M. A., M. E., I. F. G., J. B. H., "Bob White," F. M., L. P. R., T. M. S., J. B., F. G. E., H. M. A., G. N. M., M. C. L., S. W. B., L. L., C. R., C. W., E. Y. M., M. S. C., M. C., L. P., M. C. W., A. C. T., L. B., L. G. C., G. J., E. B. F., A. H. B., S. S. R., F. F., E. H. H., A. F. H., M. H. E., J. L. S., T. G., N. G. W., S. W., B. F., "B. B.", "G. L. H.", "A. H. A.", G. H. D., F. G. M., P. M. (no address), "Gulick," "Perry," L. F. G., B. L., N. W., M. W., L. F., E. S., H. C., B. L. G., S. B. F., A. H. F., M. F. B., K. W., Lulu G., L. O' C., T. O' C., N. E. S., H. G. N., A. T. P., K. McG., L. F., H. C., M. J. A., A. F. A., G. T. W., Katie and Annie M., Rudolph A., W. T. S., R. M. L., Fredericka W., P. T. S., N. T. U., H. J. B., W. J. G.

YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS' DEPARTMENT.

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

A SONNET.

THERE by the roadside stands the queer old house.
Deserted it has been for many years;
And when one enters first one has strange fears
Of what may be inside. But not a mouse
Raises its tiny head, or hides, afraid;
And the sole sound through the deep stillness heard,
Is the shrill chirping of a mother-bird,
Who right above the door her nest has made.
While through bare, lonely rooms my way I wend,
I feel a kind of pity for the thing,
Left thus alone, like to some fallen king,
Deserted both by enemy and friend.
But life is short; so gently close the gate,
And leave the house to mercy and to fate.

W. H. (aged 13).

A FAIRY STORY.

THERE was once a little girl, named Charlotte, who was very disorderly, never putting anything in its right place. One day a fairy came into her room and asked her why she kept her room in such disorder.

Lottie answered: "Paul says, that it makes no difference where you put things so long as you know where to find them."

"Ah, well," said the fairy, "you believe what Paul says, do you? We will soon find if he is right."

Then the fairy waved her wand over Charlotte's head, touched her eyes and ears, hands and feet, making them all change places, and left poor Charlotte alone.

Charlotte was very much surprised to find she could not see in front of her, but could see very distinctly on both sides of the room; she then began crying; and trying to put her hand up she was much more surprised to find it was her foot; she then discovered that her eyes and ears, hands and feet had changed places.

She found it was very inconvenient for her foot to be there instead of her hand; but she managed to get hold of her handkerchief with her toes, and on putting it up to her head, wiped her eyes where her ears ought to be.

She attempted to walk, but could not stand, for her hands were on the floor instead of her feet.

She then cried very hard, and said, "What shall I do? I cannot walk, I cannot even crawl straight ahead, for I cannot see straight before me; I cannot eat, for how can I hold my knife and fork. Now I see the use of having things in their right places."

Just then Paul came in, asking for the garden seeds she helped him gather yesterday, but he was perfectly bewildered when he saw her in this condition. He asked her who did all this? Then Lottie, still crying, told him that it was the fairy.

Said Lottie: "I know where my eyes and ears, hands and feet are, but as they are now they are of no use to me. If they were only in their right places how glad I would be!"

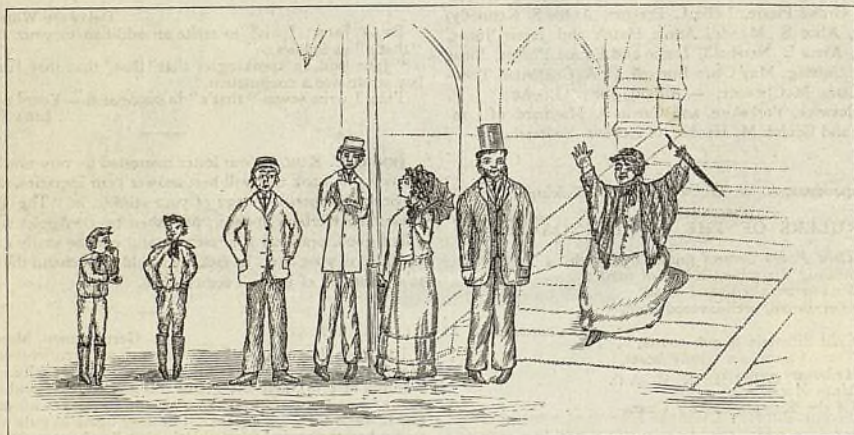
"If I only had my hands where they ought to be I would always put things in their right places."

Then the fairy, who had been invisible all this time, suddenly appeared, and waved her wand over poor Charlotte's head, touched her eyes, ears, hands and feet, and they all went instantly to their right places.

After that, Charlotte always remembered to have a place for everything and everything in its right place.

Paul also improved his ways, and always put hoe, rake and seeds where they ought to be, for he was afraid if he did not the fairy might make him a visit.

ALICE R. (aged 11).



THE PETERKINS AT THE CENTENNIAL.

(Drawn by a Young Contributor, to illustrate the story in ST. NICHOLAS for February, 1877.)

THE LETTER-BOX.

ALICE BROOME sends us a translation of the French story "Cécile et Lulu," that was printed in the April number, and adds: "I think that in the article on 'Curious Customs of Easter' the writer should have mentioned the custom of rolling eggs down the terrace of the Capitol at Washington on Easter Monday."

Our correspondent will find a full account of this interesting custom in ST. NICHOLAS for April 1875, under the title "Fred's Easter Mon-

day." From it she will learn how Fred, enticed by the beautiful spring weather and by George Washington Dayspring, a "darkie" boy, went to the Capitol, gazed at the building, its pictures and statues, helped, with hundreds and hundreds of other children, to roll the pretty, colored, boiled eggs down the terraces and eat them when broken, and then roll themselves down hill and have all manner of splendid fun, in which even some of the grown-ups joined.

TRANSLATIONS of the French story of "Cécile et Lulu" were received, previous to April 18th, from Lulu A. Wilkinson, Alice Robinson, J. C. Habersham, Julia Lathers, Jessie Pringle, Benj. Merrill, Maggie P. Colton, Hattie Jessie Peabody, Hattie K. Chase, Amy Reynolds, Lottie Upham, Lily Groome, Eveline Browne, M. L. Cox, Carrie T. Granger, Alice Bates, Lizzie K. Tapley, Alice Broome, Martha Hussey Lambertson, Martha B. Beck, Jessie O. Lorsch, M. C., Edith Strong Perry, F. J. Parsons, Wilson Rockhill, Rose Seitz, Mabel Cutler, John B. Sedgwick, Louisa Anderson, Maggie P. Biddle, Junius E. Beal, Edith Monroe Pollard, Trudie Whitney, Jeannie Moore, Mary Brown, Annie M. Horton, Frances M. Woodward, Elsie L. Shaw, Julia H. George, Lidie V. B. Parker, Virginia H. Townsend, Fannie Freeman, Laura C. Jernegan, Mae Fiske, Constance Smith, Alice M. Cobb, Hattie C. Fernald, Lillie P. Haydel, Louise Cross, Harry A. Hall, Ella F. Truitt, Nellie Emerson, M. Bella Robinson, Frankie English, Mary P. Barton, Daisy Ramsdell, Nellie Mack, Clara Chessborough, Elsie S. Adams, Emily Kent, William Weightman Walker, Persifer F. Gibson, A. B. W., Katherine Hamilton, A. S. Dillon, Mabel S. Fay, Nellie Chase, Minnie B. Chapin, Mary Chase, Kathleen Croasdale, "One of the Little Gallaudets," —Hull, May Parker, Ida Travis, Louis L. Tribus, Aline M. Godfrey, Harriette Woodruff, Alice S. Millard, Jennie Spence, Mamie A. Gould, Philip Stanley Abbot, Annie M. Sloan, Helen Green, Alice C. Moses, "Winnie Woodbine and Ruth Rivulet," Carrie L. Dinzey, "Ahack," ("No Name"), Alice B. Bullions, Mamie S. Littster, Jessie H. Dodd, Virginia L. Hopkins, Minnie T. Byington, Sallie E. Macallister, Will Parker, Geo. W. Pepper, Agnes and Margie Lawrence, W. J. T., Romaine M. Stone, "Mignonne," Fannie E. Blake, Lulu Fetter, Emily Buckley Newbold, Amy L. Massey, Marie W. Robinson, Eliza H. Tyson, Mamie Baldwin, Norman L. Archer, Lillie Kent, James E. Whitney, Jr., A. L. Cameron, Minnie E. Waldo, Addie Guerber, Florence Satterlee, Mazie Wright, Nellie Chandler, Nellie Spencer, Madge Wilson, Jennie D. V. Brown, Beulah Park, Minnie W. Stanwood, Bessie Van Rensselaer, Ellie L. Kenney, Russell Duane, Ethel R. Wrightington, Merritt L. Stewart, Minnie M. Walling, Constance Grand Pierre, Lillie L. Preston, Annie S. Kennedy, Gertie Silliman, Alice S. Moody, Annie Hatch and Jessie Jones, Annie S. Knox, Anna B. Newbold, Lizzie and Emma Phelps, Susie Minturn, A. W. Cutting, May Clare Burtzell, C. A. Cushman, Theodore Brooks, Clara McChesney, —Abbott, Jr., "Louise," J. P. Brewin of Giggleswick, Yorkshire, and Carrie A. Maynard of London, England; and Beulah M. Hacher, of Geneva, Switzerland.

A NEW correspondent, A. W. G., sends us the following:

THE RULERS OF THE WORLD TO-DAY.

Dom Pedro Second ranks, by worth,
Among the wisest kings of earth;
Ruling with a liberal hand
O'er Brazil, well-favored land.

Cold Siberia's frozen coasts,
Trans-Caucasia's manly hosts,
Tributary from afar
Unto *Alexander* are—
Of the Russias mighty Czar.

Prussia's king extends his sway
O'er a mighty realm to-day.
Frederick William First is he,
Emperor of Germany.
This the scheme Count Bismarck planned:
One united Fatherland.

Austria's emperor still remains
King of wide Hungarian plains.
O'er Vienna's gardens gay
Francis Joseph's banners sway.

Battling for their native mountains,
Proudly have the Switzers stood.
Meet the crimson of their banner
For their patriot brotherhood.
O'er the land of William Tell,
Now *Herr Herzog* ruleth well.

Abdul Hamid, Othman's sword
Wields, as Turkey's present lord.

Athens, oft in song rehearsed,
Owns as ruler *George the First*.

Fair Italia's sunny realm
Nevermore shall tyrants whelm.
On her seven hills enthroned,
Shall again her power be owned.
Gone the sway of priest and pope—
Victor Emanuel is her hope.

Stilled the Carlists' rebel battle,—
Dumb the cannon, sheathed the steel;
Over Spain, late rent and sundered,
Reigns *Afonso of Castile*.

Louis First maintains his rank
In Lisbon, on the Tagus bank.
France has *Marshal McMahon*—
Gone the proud Napoleon.
Belgium has *Leopold*;
Holland, *William*, as of old.

On the ancient Vikings' throne,
Christian Ninth now reigns alone;
And the Norsemen monarch call
Osar, crowned in Odin's hall.

On Britannia's kingdom yet,
Lo! the sun doth never set.
There *Victoria* reigns serene,—
Noble mother, honored queen.

Here at home the people reign;
Ours no crown, or courtly train.
Now the patriot *Hayes* doth stand
Highest servant of our land.

Providence, R. I.
DEAR JACK: I send a "that" sentence that I think beats
"M. S.'s."
"That boy said that 'that' that that girl that sat on that seat
parsed yesterday was not that 'that' that that gentleman meant."
Yours, etc. STANLEY.

Delaware Water Gap, Pa.
DEAR JACK: I wish to make an addition to your article on five
"that's" as follows:
"Jane said, in speaking of that 'that,' that that 'that' that that
boy wrote was a conjunction."
Thus I write seven "that's" in succession.—Yours truly,
LIDA B. GRAVES.

JENNIE C. KING: Your letter interested us very much, and, in our
opinion, the book that will best answer your inquiries, and be of most
service at the present stage of your studies, is "The Philosophy of
Style," by Herbert Spencer, published by D. Appleton & Co. It is
full of good, practical suggestions, and can be easily comprehended
by a girl of your age. In fact, we would recommend the book heartily
to all students of English composition.

Germantown, March 3, 1877.
DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I was very sick with scarlet fever one winter.
My grandma brought into my room a beautiful calla. She thought
it would help to make me better. It was watered and cared for just
the same as ever. But it withered, and the leaves all turned yellow,
and it was hard work to make it healthy again in pure air. Grandma
said it had the scarlet fever. Do plants take diseases?
HELEN P. (nine years old).

WE already have received a number of letters showing the interest
which our young readers everywhere are taking in Professor Proctor's
admirable Star-papers; and now that the evenings are growing warmer,
the opportunity of fully enjoying them is increased. A good practical
knowledge of astronomy can be gained readily from these articles;
and we think that all our readers who during these open-air
months occasionally engage in the study of the heavens with these
star-maps in hand, will find it among the foremost of the many pleasures
which our summer evenings afford.

WHEN too late to correct the error, it was discovered that the artist
who made the illustrations for "The Green House with Gold Nails"
had made a mistake. The text of the article shows that the caterpillar
was found upon the milkweed, and the chrysalis upon the wild
carrot. But in the pictures these positions are reversed, and thus the
caterpillar and chrysalis are placed each upon the wrong plant.

Fairyland, March 24, 1877.

MY VERY DEAR JACK: I believe I can help you out of that difficulty concerning the birds' motto—*Lux mea dux*. It means, Light is my leader. Don't you think that fits? I think it is just the thing for the dear little birds, who, as you say, love the sunlight so much. It is time now to go to our ball, so good-bye.—Very affectionately,
"QUEEN MAB."

Hakodate, Japan, July 4, 1876.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Inclosed please find a little child-song rendered from the Japanese. Of course, it has no intrinsic merit; but I fancied that my American cousins might like to know what songs their almond-eyed sisters sing. I inclose photograph of a little Japanese girl and her doll.—Very respectfully yours, F. B. H.

A JAPANESE CHILD-SONG.



Dear! oh dear!
What do I hear
There at the pantry door?
Gon! Gon!
The mouse is gnawing,
Scrambling and pawing.
There's never a doubt about that rat,
But always a doubt about my cat.

At set of sun
She's on the run,
'Till—hie! ho!
'T is cock-crow;
Or she creeps away
(The little sinner)
At midnight gray,
And never comes back
Till break of day;
But she never forgets
To want her dinner.

"Chop-pi! Chop-pi!"
Come here! come here!
If you'll only catch those naughty rats,
I'll give you a feast for the best of cats.
There now! You think,
If the sea is bad,
Your favorite fish
Cannot be had;
But I'll bustle about,
And find some trout.
Chop-pi! Chop-pi!
Don't you hear?
Gon! Gon!
Run, my dear."

* "Chop-pi" is the Japanese "cat-call," like "Kitty, Kitty."

New Haven, Ct., Nov. 24, 1876.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Here is a curious problem in algebra that I should like to have somebody explain.

It can be proved that any number equals any other number. For example, let it be required to prove that $7 = 2$:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Now } 49 - 63 &= -14 \\ \text{and } 4 - 18 &= -14 \end{aligned}$$

hence $49 - 63$ and $4 - 18$, being both equal to -14 , must be equal to each other; therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} 49 - 63 &= 4 - 18, \\ \text{or } 49 - 9(7) &= 4 - 9(2). \end{aligned}$$

Adding $\frac{81}{4}$ to both members of the equation, we have:

$$49 - 9(7) + \frac{81}{4} = 4 - 9(2) + \frac{81}{4}.$$

Now, since both members are perfect squares, extracting the square root,

$$7 - \frac{9}{2} = 2 - \frac{9}{2}$$

omitting $-\frac{9}{2}$ from both members, then $7 = 2$, which was to be proved.

OTHER EXAMPLES.

$$2 = 1.$$

$$\begin{aligned} 4 - 6 &= -2 \\ 1 - 3 &= -2 \\ 4 - 6 &= 1 - 3 \\ 4 - 3(2) &= 1 - 3(1) \\ 4 - 3(2) + \frac{9}{4} &= 1 - 3(1) + \frac{9}{4} \\ 2 - \frac{3}{2} &= 1 - \frac{3}{2} \end{aligned}$$

therefore $2 = 1$.

$$4 = 3.$$

$$\begin{aligned} 16 - 28 &= -12 \\ 9 - 21 &= -12 \\ 16 - 28 &= 9 - 21 \\ 16 - 7(4) &= 9 - 7(3) \\ 16 - 7(4) + \frac{81}{4} &= 9 - 7(3) + \frac{81}{4} \\ 4 - \frac{7}{4} &= 3 - \frac{7}{4} \end{aligned}$$

therefore $4 = 3$.

One of the scholars in our class gave it to the rest of us, and I have shown it to others, but nobody seems to be able to explain it.

Now if the Little Schoolma'am, or some one else, will show where the catch is, it will much oblige
H. STARKWEATHER.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little girl seven years old. I want to send a letter to the "Letter-Box," and surprise my mamma.—Your loving friend,
ANNE JENKINS.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Wont you please put this in the "Letter-Box." I cut it out of the paper yesterday. I am sure the other boys and girls will be as much interested in it as I am.—Yours truly,
JOHNNY C. PLATT.

"Prof. Richard A. Proctor is inclined to believe the tale that modern mariners are telling about the monster sea-serpent, which coils about sperm whales in mid-ocean. He reminds the public that monstrous cuttle-fish were thought to be monstrous lies, till the 'Alecton,' in 1861, came upon one and captured its tail, whose weight of 40 pounds led naturalists to estimate the entire weight of the creature at 4,000 pounds, or nearly a couple of tons. In 1873, again, two fishermen encountered a gigantic cuttle in Conception Bay, Newfoundland, whose arms were about 35 feet in length (the fishermen cut off from one arm a piece 25 feet long), while its body was estimated at 60 feet in length and 5 feet in diameter—so that the devil-fish of Victor Hugo's famous story was a mere baby cuttle by comparison with the Newfoundland monster. The mermaid, again, has been satisfactorily identified with the manatee, or 'woman-fish,' as the Portuguese call it, which assumes, says Captain Scoresby, 'such positions that the human appearance is very closely imitated.'"

We comply with Johnny's request. While we admit the interest of this paragraph, we would suggest, by way of general caution, that a newspaper paragraph is not always the best scientific testimony. See "The Manatee," in ST. NICHOLAS for February, 1874.—ED. ST. NICHOLAS.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

AFTER eating a 9, 7, 4, the traveler took his 2, 3, 6, which was painted 8, 5, 1, and mounting the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, resumed his journey.

INCOMPLETE SENTENCES.

FILL the first blank with a certain word, and the second with the same word beheaded.

1. It is better to — than to — too positively without sufficient proof. 2. She was the — of the — child. 3. The children took a — to the village to visit their —. 4. The boys made a great — in the — room. 5. The — went to — her, in her preparations. 6. She took off the — and turned it — to the other side.

VIOLET.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

THE initials name for high and peculiar mental gifts, and the finals for a general strength of intellect.

1. A precious stone. 2. A kind of puzzle. 3. A metal. 4. Anger. 5. A fabulous animal. 6. A color.

ISOLA.

CHARADE.

FIRST.

LITTLE girls are fond of me,
Sometimes boys as well;
Boys do pet me "on the sly,"
But you must not tell.

SECOND.

In a far-off land I live,
Under northern sky;
You may learn about my home
In geography.

WHOLE.

A "fish story" let me tell;
Cupid-saucy rover—
Rode upon my back one day;
Wish I'd tipped him over!

L. W. H.

A NAME PUZZLE.

PLACE four girls' names in such order that the initials form a fifth name.

LITTLE ONE.

DIAMOND REMAINDERS.

Behead and curtail the words defined, and leave a word diamond. My first never denies himself his worst enemy; although it does not seem as if it could be true, he is always complaining of being my fifth; and is often heard to declare that my second are against him.

After a liberal potation, he goes home in a manner my fourth describe, and wives and my third weep and pray that the rum may be swept from the land.

GEOGRAPHICAL DOUBLE DIAMOND.

FROM left to right and from right to left.

1. A town in Massachusetts. 2. A city in Italy. 3. A range of mountains in the United States. 4. A range of mountains in the United States. 5. One of the United States.

ABBREVIATIONS.

1. BEHEAD and syncopate a fish. 2. Behead and syncopate a fish. 3. Behead and syncopate a fish. 4. Behead and syncopate a fish. 5. Behead and syncopate a fish. 6. Behead and syncopate a fish. 7. Behead and syncopate a fish. 8. Behead and syncopate a fish. 9. Behead and syncopate a fish. 10. Behead and syncopate a fish.

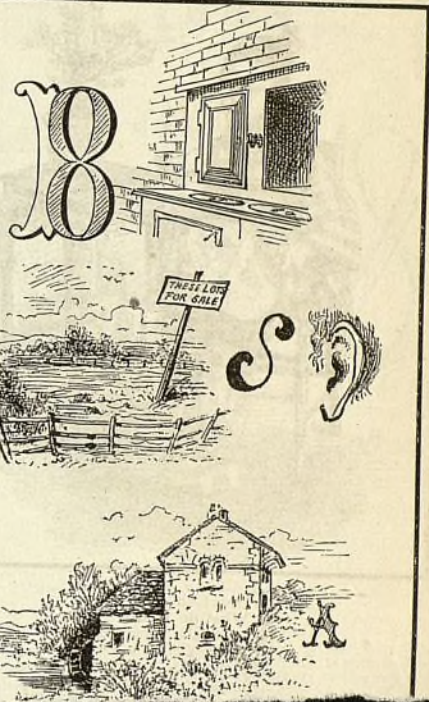
HALF-SQUARE.

1. MACHINES for cutting grain. 2. Paid back. 3. A fruit. 4. A field. 5. Prevarication. 6. A boy's nickname. 7. In churches and schools.

CYRIL DEANE.

EASY REBUSES.

EACH of the small pictures represents a name of a distinguished man—two of the three persons named being celebrated English painters, and the other a famous German musical composer. X.



REBUS.



A quotation am I. To find me who'll try?
The reward, I'll engage, shall suggest fine old age.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN MAY NUMBER.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.—"Hate the evil and love the good."

LETTER PUZZLES.—1. R-dent (ardent). 2. M-press (empress).

3. L-fin (elfin). 4. N-sign (ensign). 5. C-cured (secured). 6. Q-rate

CONCEALED DIAMOND.—

D
F E N
P A G E D
D E G R E E S
N E E D Y
D E Y
S

SYMBOLICAL PUZZLE.—CODICIL.

WORD ENIGMA.—St. Nicholas.

1. Dove, doe. 2. Hart, hat. 3. Clam, cam. 4. Cub. 5. Pike, pie. 6. Pike, pie. 7. Pine, pic. 8. Reed, red.

ACROSTIC.—"A rolling stone gathers no moss."

—wnin— G
—egali— A
—wle— T
—atc— H
—er— E
—bbbe— R
S
N
O
M
O
S
S

McKeever, George H.
iske, Carrie A. Stoddard.
Howard Steele Rodgers.
Alice Bartow Moore.