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AN ADVENTURE ON AN EGG-VÄR.

BY MRS. C. A. STEPHENS.

JAN lived with his father, Christoph Jansen, his good mother, Ilse; and his wee sister Ilse, her mother's namesake, in a little hut on the southern coast of Iceland.

This hut would have looked very odd to the boys and girls of New England. It was built of layers of stones, up three or four feet from the ground, with turf between the layers to keep out the cold. Then above this was a sloping roof of wood covered with turf, which, in these long sunny days of June, had sprouted up thick with grass, making it resemble a green hillock more than a human dwelling. And, indeed, their only ewe—a present to little Ilse from her Uncle Gotthard, who lived inland and owned flocks of sheep and cows—would often climb the family mansion, and, clinging with her sharp hoofs to the turf, nibble a breakfast with much contentment.

Christoph Jansen was a fisherman, and spent the greater part of his time in his boat, setting fishing nets, or gathering in quantities of haddock and cod-fish, and preparing them to dry on the beach. And he constantly had to keep a sharp eye over his game, for if left unwatched, the pilfering ravens, not unfrequently, would come in large flocks and devour whole "catches" at once.

But the business from which the fisherman derived most profit was from his egg-vär. And first I must explain to some of you just what an egg-vär is.

All along the west coast of Norway and the southern coast of Iceland there are numerous islands, some of them situated at a considerable distance from the main-land, but others within a bow-shot of it. These islands are of two kinds,

many of them being nothing more than high masses of rock, while others are flat, or nearly so. The former are called *holme*, the latter *vär*.

Upon these vär the eider-ducks congregate in large numbers for laying eggs and rearing their young; for when nesting on the main-land they are much disturbed by the cunning Arctic fox, who is as great an epicure in his cold, northern haunts as is the red fox in New England. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that his appetite, from the colder climate in which he lives, would be considerably the keener,—and the young eiders, or the rich eggs which he deftly cracks with a stroke of his paw, make one of the daintiest meals Reynard can procure.

Yet Nature teaches the defenseless bird that she can, at least, protect herself against this one of her many enemies by nesting in places impossible for him to reach.

The high price set upon the feathers of the eider-duck renders these islands very valuable, and they have been in the possession of Icelandic and Danish families for many generations.

More than twenty-five years ago, Iceland exported between four and five thousand pounds of eider-down in a single year, and as great care has been taken to promote an increase of the supply, the amount sold has probably more than doubled since then. The true "down" is worth from three to four dollars per pound, and it is said that enough down for a bed coverlet would not weigh more than a pound and a half.

The laws of the country are very strict in relation to the ownership of the islands, and the poacher, if caught, is punished with a fine of thirty

dollars, for the seizure of a single duck. Even an egg cannot be stolen with impunity.

But the vär-owners have other poachers to deal with, for whom the law has no terrors,—the raven and the great sea-eagle. These birds of prey make sad havoc among the young eiders, in spite of the vigilance used in protecting them,—the eagle sometimes even carrying off the old ducks themselves.

Christoph Jansen's vär was but a short distance from the main-land, and was looked after entirely by the fisherman's wife and Jan, now eleven years old.

"Now be off, good Jan, for it is getting late," said Mother Jansen, as the boy was about to set off to the vär one evening early in June, "and be quite sure, my son, not to disturb the old eiders, and do not forget to cut the notches," she added.

"Let little Ilse go too, mother," pleaded Jan, who did not like always going alone.

"*Nai, nai,*" returned Mrs. Jansen, "Ilse is but a wee thing; she would stumble over the rocks. And have ye forgot the raven that perched on the gable only yesterday? I fear, Jan, he hoded us ill!"* and she gazed solemnly at the tiny, blue-eyed fairy playing with a string of blown egg-shells, then away across the dancing waves, whither Christoph had been gone since early dawn to fish. "However," she added, seeing Jan's disappointment, "thou art a careful boy, my Jan, and, since I must go to the beach to help your father when he comes in, she may go with you. But mind and let nothing befall her; lead her carefully over the cliffs."

"*Ja! ja! jeg vil!*" (Yes! yes! I will!) cried the delighted boy; and, attired in an eider-skin jacket and scarlet cloth hood, baby Ilse went laughing and skipping toward where the boat was drawn up on the rocky beach, Jan following, with the basket and big bag on his arm.

Lifting little Ilse into the boat, Jan rowed across the narrow strip of water separating the island from the main-land.

The sun was yet high, although it was nearly eight o'clock in the evening, and as they approached the island they floated amid whole flocks of the eider drakes, shining white in the sunlight, plunging and flapping, and sending the spray sparkling high in the air.

"Now, Ilse," said Jan, after tying his boat to a stone, "cling to my back and I'll be your pony," and climbing the path that wound over and about the ridge of low lava cliffs which ran through the

length of the island, he went galloping across the flat on the farther side.

Ah! here was a sight fit to set any Yankee boy's heart fluttering! The very ground was covered with ducks, each on its own nest; and it would have been difficult to walk about without treading upon their great brown backs; for the birds were very tame and would not stir at Jan's approach, and would even allow him to take the eggs and down from the nests without seeming in the least disturbed.

Hitherto, they had given the boy much trouble in laying about in any spot they chose and in places where the eggs frequently were broken, and where the down was matted and spoiled with the yolks of the broken eggs.

To remedy the evil, he had set himself to work before the laying season began, and with good-sized stones had built little inclosures, about a foot and a half square and one foot high, on the southern, or most sheltered, part of the island. He then had gathered moss from a bog a little back from the shore, on the main-land, and boating it across to the island, had filled these squares half full with the moss, and formed it into shapely nests.

The ducks had taken to them wonderfully, though some of the younger and more timid ones would still crawl far into the crevices between the rocks, where it was impossible to get the down and eggs without the assistance of a "hook," which Jan always carried with him—a pole three or four feet long with a curved iron at the end.

The method of obtaining the eggs and down, though profitable, would seem to you very cruel. It is this: After lining her nest with the soft down from her body, the eider-duck lays from five to seven greenish-brown eggs. No sooner are they laid than she is taken from her nest and its contents confiscated. Again the duck plucks her down to line the nest anew, and continues laying—this time not more than two or three eggs. But her peace is soon disturbed, and she is once more left with an empty nest.

By this time the down on her own body has become nearly or quite exhausted, and she calls upon her mate to assist, which he does, plucking his breast amidst loud quackings at the cruelty and injustice of the whole thing.

Now, indeed, the eider must be left to lay the remaining eggs, and pursue her maternal instincts in quiet, for if the nest should again be disturbed, it would be abandoned by the discouraged pair for a spot on some other island.

*In the Northern, or Scandinavian, mythology, the raven was consecrated to the god Odin, who, as Icelandic tradition relates, had two ravens, which he loosed every morning, bidding them go abroad and gather tidings of what was going on, even at the farthest corner of the earth. On returning at night, they would perch upon his shoulders and chatter the news into his ears. Hugin was the name given to one, Mumin to the other, the former signifying Spirit, the latter Memory. And now, many of the Icelanders believe that ravens in general understand what is passing at a distance, and events which are to occur in the future; and if a raven happens to perch upon the house-top, the people think that the death or ill-fortune of some member of the family is sure to follow.

Jan went from nest to nest removing the ducks, and filling his basket and bag, carefully notching the stake of dwarf birch (*Betula nana*) which was driven down beside each nest to indicate the number of times it had been rifled; for the older ducks begin to lay earlier in the season than the

Scarcely had he dragged the eggs out with his hook and laid them in the basket, and stuffed the down into the bag,—which, though almost as light as air, assumed enormous proportions, elastic as a rubber ball,—when he heard a great outcry from the ducks, and saw them all rise from their nests and go flapping, hissing, and quacking toward the water, beneath which they all plunged in a great tumult, crying and splashing.

The next moment a huge sea-eagle, circling low over the island, swooped down toward the red-hooded baby on the rock.

Dropping basket and bag, Jan ran toward them, swinging his hook and shouting wildly.

Clutching the little girl's clothes with his talons, the eagle succeeded in dragging her off the rock, and was now flapping laboriously as if to carry her toward the beach.

Her piteous cries of "Jan! Oh, Jan!" were muffled by the broad wings of the eagle.

As Jan came close up to them, he dashed his hook at the fierce-looking bird, which loosed its hold, and lightly lifting itself a few feet, soared so closely above his head, that Jan could hear its great beak snap close beside his ear.

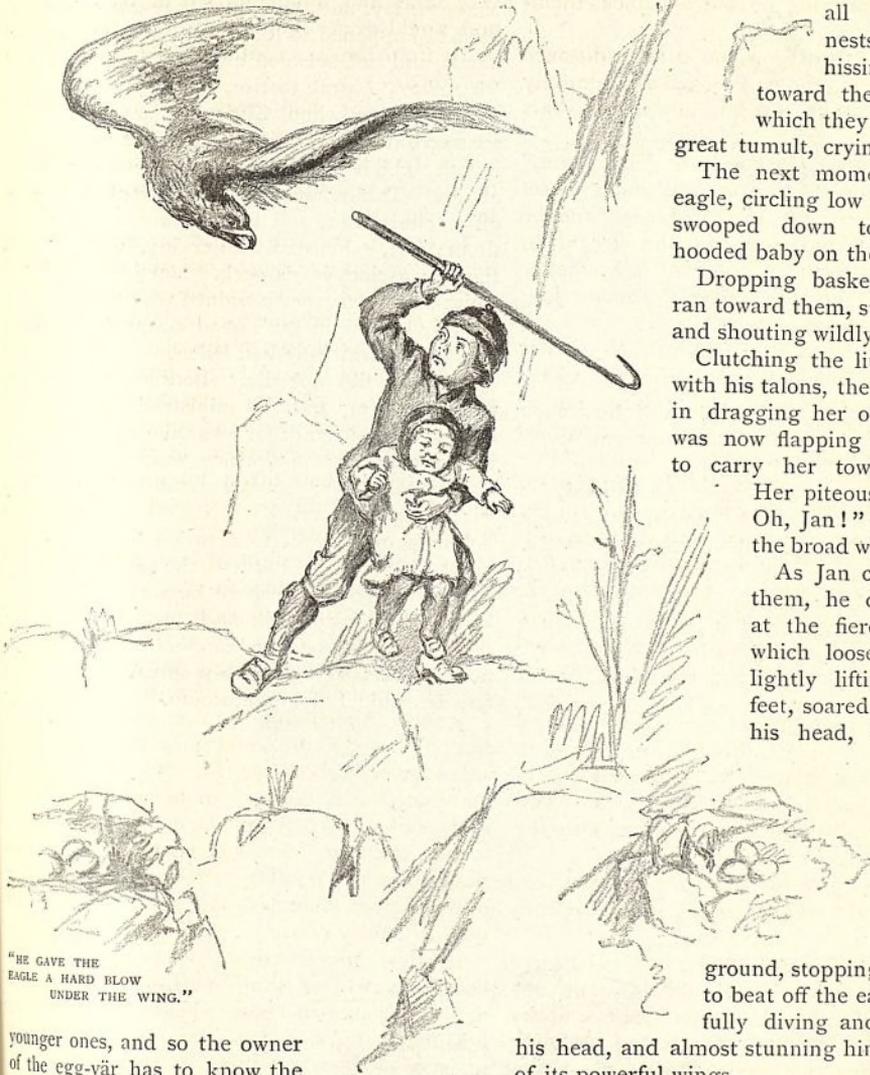
Seizing little Ilse's arm, the boy made off with her over the difficult ground, stopping every few steps to beat off the eagle, now wrathfully diving and flapping upon

his head, and almost stunning him with the blows of its powerful wings.

Jan's only thought was for Ilse. The eagle's sharp talons pierced through his jacket at every swoop, but he staggered bravely on, hoping to get over the cliffs to the boat and in sight of home.

"*Gaae skyndepa, Ilse! gaae skyndepa!*" (run faster, Ilse! run faster!) cried Jan, striving in vain to keep the angry bird at bay with his hook.

"*Jeg kan ikke, god Jan!*" (I can't, good Jan)



"HE GAVE THE EAGLE A HARD BLOW UNDER THE WING."

younger ones, and so the owner of the egg-vär has to know the history of each nest.

As his load grew heavier and more difficult to carry, he sat little Ilse upon a large, flat, lava rock, bidding her not to get down while he went his rounds to the farther end of the island, where the shyer ducks, disdainful of all his attempts to tame them, and lure them to comfortable homes, had crept into some large crevices, depositing their eggs and down far beyond the reach of Jan's arm.

panted the little girl, and Jan hastily lifted her in his arms.

Contesting every step, he had nearly gained the



PURSUED.

crest of the ridge when the buffetings of the savage bird upon his head became so furious and bewildering that Jan was forced to stop.

Exhausted, but still brave and determined, he stood Ilse beside him, and grasping the hook with both hands, set upon the eagle desperately.

Back and forth he stumbled over the rocks, beating at the bird, which, lightly rising and falling, adroitly eluded the attack, till at last, as it swooped down toward him, he gave it a hard blow directly under the left wing.

It was effectual. The sharp hook clung fast,

and in the sudden short struggle which followed, both boy and bird tumbled to the foot of the cliff on which they had been battling.

Poor, brave Jan! He was now, indeed, vanquished as well as his enemy, and could not reply to Ilse's entreaties to come up to her.

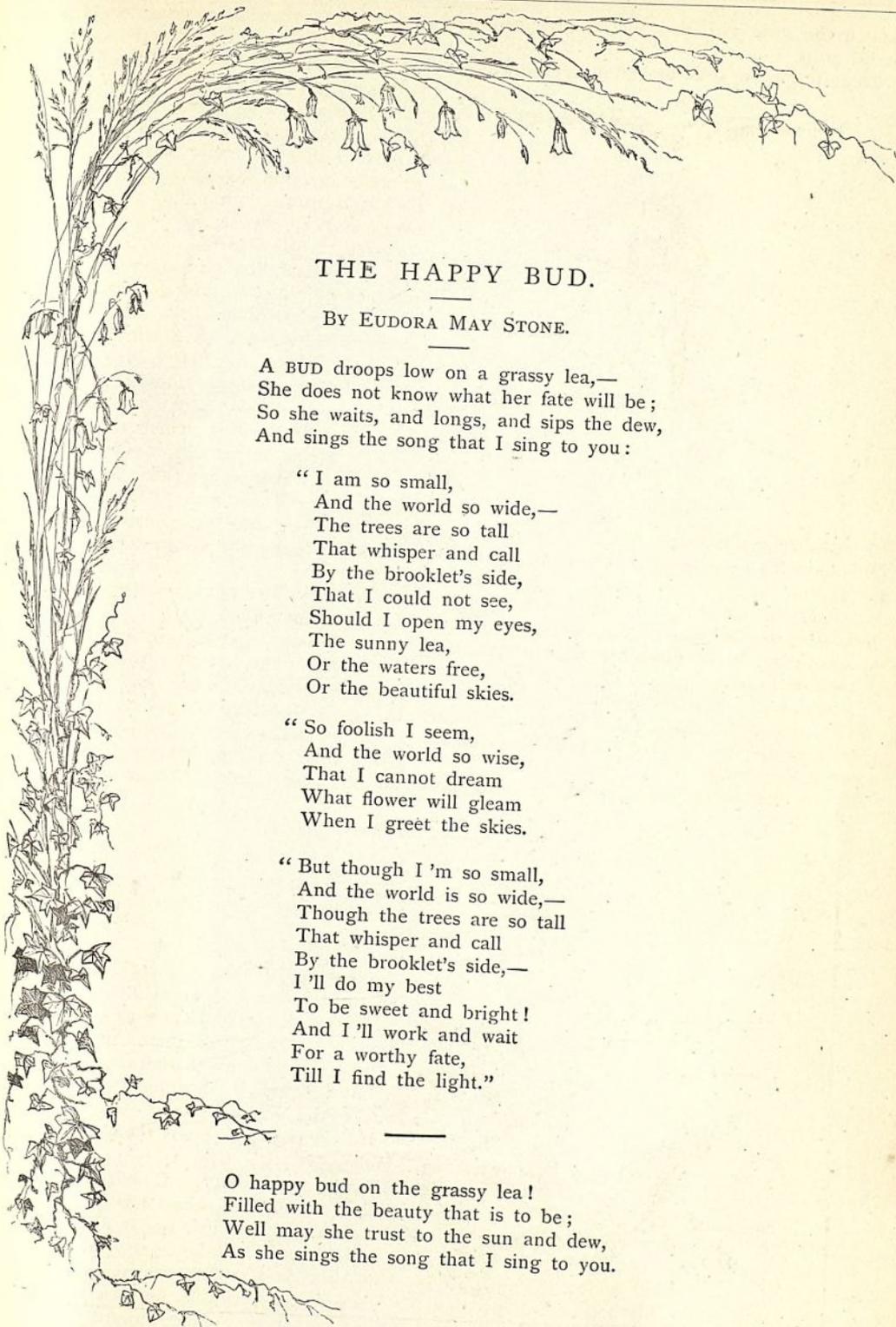
After a time the child slid down the path to where he lay, and, conscious that something terrible had happened to him, began to pat his face and hands, and call between her sobs, "*Tale Ilse, Jan! Tale Ilse!*" (speak to Ilse, Jan! Speak to Ilse!).

It was late when Christoph and mother Ilse returned from the "drying ground," and, not finding the children at the hut, they were filled with alarm. Taking his boat, Christoph hastily set off to the island, and before long he came upon them; Ilse, exhausted with crying, lying asleep on the unconscious boy's neck. Her yellow locks and white down jacket were stained with the blood from an ugly wound on Jan's head, cut by the sharp lava rocks upon which he had fallen.

But Jan did not die. Between mother Ilse's careful nursing and the ministrations of the kind old priest, living not far away, he was, after many weeks, able to sit in the now waning sunlight and amuse baby Ilse; but it was too late for the egg-vär again that year.

I must not forget to mention that, at Jan's request, his father carried the skin of the sea-eagle to Reykjavik, where he went to dispose of his year's stock of fish and down, and sold it for seven rix dollars to an English naturalist at that port. The eagle probably spreads its wings to-day in some London museum.





THE HAPPY BUD.

BY EUDORA MAY STONE.

A BUD droops low on a grassy lea,—
 She does not know what her fate will be ;
 So she waits, and longs, and sips the dew,
 And sings the song that I sing to you :

“ I am so small,
 And the world so wide,—
 The trees are so tall
 That whisper and call
 By the brooklet's side,
 That I could not see,
 Should I open my eyes,
 The sunny lea,
 Or the waters free,
 Or the beautiful skies.

“ So foolish I seem,
 And the world so wise,
 That I cannot dream
 What flower will gleam
 When I greet the skies.

“ But though I'm so small,
 And the world is so wide,—
 Though the trees are so tall
 That whisper and call
 By the brooklet's side,—
 I'll do my best
 To be sweet and bright !
 And I'll work and wait
 For a worthy fate,
 Till I find the light.”

O happy bud on the grassy lea !
 Filled with the beauty that is to be ;
 Well may she trust to the sun and dew,
 As she sings the song that I sing to you.



GETTING ACQUAINTED.

JACK AND JILL.*

BY LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEBATING CLUB.

"LOOK here, old man, we ought to have a meeting. Holidays are over, and we must brace up and attend to business," said Frank to Gus, as they strolled out of the school-yard one afternoon in January, apparently absorbed in conversation, but in reality waiting for a blue cloud and a scarlet feather to appear on the steps.

"All right. When, where, and what?" asked Gus, who was a man of few words.

"To-night, our house, subject, 'Shall girls go to college with us?' Mother said we had better be making up our minds, because every one is

talking about it, and we shall have to be on one side or the other, so we may as well settle it now," answered Frank, for there was an impression among the members that all vexed questions would be much helped by the united eloquence and wisdom of the club.

"Very good; I'll pass the word and be there. Hullo, Neddy! The D. C. meets to-night, at Minot's, seven sharp. Co-ed, etc.," added Gus, losing no time, as a third boy came briskly round the corner, with a little bag in his hand.

"I'll come. Got home an hour earlier to-night, and thought I'd look you up as I went by," responded Ed Devlin, as he took possession of the third post, with a glance toward the school-house

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to see if a seal-skin cap, with a long, yellow braid depending therefrom, was anywhere in sight.

"Very good of you, I'm sure," said Gus, ironically, not a bit deceived by this polite attention.

"The longest way round is sometimes the shortest way home, hey, Ed?" and Frank gave him a playful poke that nearly sent him off his perch.

Then they all laughed at some joke of their own, and Gus added: "No girls coming to hear us tonight. Don't think it, my son."

"More 's the pity," and Ed shook his head regretfully over the downfall of his hopes.

"Can't help it; the other fellows say they spoil the fun, so we have to give in, sometimes, for the sake of peace and quietness. Don't mind having them a bit myself," said Frank, in such a tone of cheerful resignation that they laughed again, for the "Triangle," as the three chums were called, always made merry music.

"We must have a game party next week. The girls like that, and so do I," candidly observed Gus, whose pleasant parlors were the scene of many such frolics.

"And so do your sisters and your cousins and your aunts," hummed Ed, for Gus was often called Admiral because he really did possess three sisters, two cousins, and four aunts, besides mother and grandmother, all living in the big house together.

The boys promptly joined in the popular chorus, and other voices all about the yard took it up, for the "Pinafore" epidemic raged fearfully in Harmony Village that winter.

"How 's business?" asked Gus, when the song ended, for Ed had not returned to school in the autumn, but had gone into a store in the city.

"Dull; things will look up toward Spring, they say. I get on well enough, but I miss you fellows dreadfully," and Ed put a hand on the broad shoulder of each friend, as if he longed to be a school-boy again.

"Better give it up and go to college with me next year," said Frank, who was preparing for Boston University, while Gus fitted for Harvard.

"No; I've chosen business, and I mean to stick to it, so don't you unsettle my mind. Have you practiced that March?" asked Ed, turning to a gayer subject, for he had his little troubles, but always looked on the bright side of things.

"Skating is so good, I don't get much time. Come early and we'll have a turn at it."

"I will. Must run home now."

"Pretty cold loafing here."

"Mail is in by this time."

And with these artless excuses the three boys leaped off the posts, as if one spring moved them, as a group of girls came chattering down the path. The blue cloud floated away beside Frank, the

scarlet feather marched off with the Admiral, while the fur cap nodded to the gray hat as two happy faces smiled at each other.

The same thing often happened, for twice a-day the streets were full of young couples walking to and from school together, smiled at by the elders, and laughed at by the less susceptible boys and girls, who went alone or trooped along in noisy groups. The prudent mothers had tried to stop this guileless custom, but found it very difficult, as the fathers usually sympathized with their sons, and dismissed the matter with the comfortable phrase: "Never mind; boys will be boys." "Not forever," returned the anxious mammas, seeing the tall lads daily grow more manly, and the pretty daughters fast learning to look demure when certain names were mentioned.

It could not be stopped without great parental sternness and the danger of deceit, for co-education will go on outside of school if not inside, and the safest way is to let sentiment and study go hand in hand, with teachers and parents to direct and explain the great lesson all are the better for learning soon or late. So the elders had to give in, acknowledging that this sudden readiness to go to school was a comfort, that the new sort of gentle emulation worked wonders in lazy girls and boys, and that watching these "primrose friendships" bud, blossom and die painless deaths, gave a little touch of romance to their own work-a-day lives.

"On the whole I'd rather have my sons walking, playing and studying with bright, well-mannered girls, than always knocking about with rough boys," said Mrs. Minot at one of the Mothers' Meetings, where the good ladies met to talk over their children, and help one another to do their duty by them.

"I find that Gus is more gentle with his sisters since Juliet took him in hand, for he wants to stand well with her, and they report him if he troubles them. I really see no harm in the little friendship, though I never had any such when I was a girl," said Mrs. Burton, who adored her one boy and was his confidante.

"My Merry seems to be contented with her brothers so far, but I should n't wonder if I had my hands full by and by," added Mrs. Grant, who already foresaw that her sweet little daughter would be sought after as soon as she should lengthen her skirts and turn up her bonny brown hair.

Molly Loo had no mother to say a word for her, but she settled matters for herself by holding fast to Merry, and declaring that she would have no escort but faithful Boo.

It is necessary to dwell a moment upon this new amusement, because it was not peculiar to Harmony Village, but appears everywhere as naturally

as the game parties and croquet which have taken the place of the husking frolics and apple bees of olden times, and it is impossible to dodge the subject if one attempts to write of boys and girls as they really are nowadays.

"Here, my hero, see how you like this. If it suits, you will be ready to march as soon as the doctor gives the word," said Ralph, coming into the Bird-Room that evening with a neat little crutch under his arm.

"Ha, ha, that looks fine! I'd like to try it right off, but I won't till I get leave. Did you make it yourself, Ral?" asked Jack, handling it with delight, as he sat bolt upright, with his leg on a rest, for he was getting on capitally now.

"Mostly. Rather a neat job, I flatter myself."

"I should say so. What a clever fellow you are! Any new inventions lately?" asked Frank, coming up to examine and admire.

"Only an anti-snoring machine and an elbow-pad," answered Ralph, with a twinkle in his eye, as if reminded of something funny.

"Go on, and tell about them. I never heard of an anti-snorer. Jack better have one," said Frank, interested at once.

"Well, a rich old lady kept her family awake with that lively music, so she sent to Shirtman and Codleff for something to stop it. They thought it was a good joke, and told me to see what I could do. I thought it over, and got up the nicest little affair you ever saw. It went over the mouth, and had a tube to fit the ear, so when the lady snored she woke herself up and stopped it. It suited exactly. I think of taking out a patent," concluded Ralph, joining in the boys' laugh at the droll idea.

"What was the pad?" asked Frank, returning to the small model of an engine he was making.

"Oh, that was a mere trifle for a man who had a tender elbow-joint and wanted something to protect it. I made a little pad to fit on, and his crazy-bone was safe."

"I planned to have you make me a new leg if this one was spoilt," said Jack, sure that his friend could invent anything under the sun.

"I'd do my best for you. I made a hand for a fellow once, and that got me my place, you know," answered Ralph, who thought little of such mechanical trifles, and longed to be painting portraits or modeling busts, being an artist as well as an inventor.

Here Gus, Ed, and several other boys came in, and the conversation became general. Grif, Chick and Brickbat were three young gentlemen whose own respectable names were usually ignored, and they cheerfully answered to these nicknames.

As the clock struck seven, Frank, who ruled the club with a rod of iron, when Chairman, took his

place behind the study table. Seats stood about it, and a large, shabby book lay before Gus, who was Secretary, and kept the records with a lavish expenditure of ink, to judge by the blots. The members took their seats, and nearly all tilted back their chairs and put their hands in their pockets, to keep them out of mischief, for, as every one knows, it is impossible for two lads to be near each other and refrain from tickling or pinching. Frank gave three raps with an old croquet-mallet set on a short handle, and with much dignity opened the meeting.

"Gentlemen, the business of the club will be attended to, and then we will discuss the question, 'Shall girls go to our colleges?' The secretary will now read the report of the last meeting."

Clearing his throat, Gus read the following brief and elegant report:

"Club met, December 18th, at the house of G. Burton, Esq. Subject: 'Is summer or winter best fun.' A lively pow-wow. About evenly divided. J. Flint fined five cents for disrespect to the Chair. A collection of forty cents taken up to pay for breaking a pane of glass during a free fight of the members on the door-step. E. Devlin was chosen secretary for the coming year, and a new book contributed by the chairman."

"That's all."

"Is there any other business before the meeting?" asked Frank, as the reader closed the old book with a slam and shoved the new one across the table.

Ed rose, and glancing about him with an appealing look, said, as if sure his proposition would not be well received: "I wish to propose the name of a new member. Bob Walker wants to join, and I think we ought to let him. He is trying to behave well, and I am sure we could help him. Can't we?"

All the boys looked sober, and Joe, otherwise Brickbat, said, bluntly: "I won't. He's a bad lot, and we don't want any such here. Let him go with chaps of his own sort."

"That is just what I want to keep him from! He's a good-hearted boy enough, only, no one looks after him, so he gets into scrapes, as we should if we were in his place, I dare say. He wants to come here, and would be so proud if he was let in, I know he'd behave. Come now, let's give him a chance," and Ed looked at Gus and Frank, sure that if they stood by him he should carry his point.

But Gus shook his head, as if doubtful of the wisdom of the plan, and Frank said gravely: "You know we made the rule that the number should never be over eight, and we cannot break it."

"You need n't. I can't be here half the time, so I will resign and let Bob have my place," began Ed, but he was silenced by shouts of, "No, no, you shan't!" "We won't let you off!" "Club would go to smash, if you back out!"

"Let him have my place; I'm the youngest, and you won't miss me," cried Jack, bound to stand by Ed at all costs.

"We might do that," said Frank, who did object to small boys, though willing to admit this particular one.

"Better make a new rule to have ten members, and admit both Bob and Tom Grant," said Ralph,

all turn our backs on him, so he loafs 'round the tavern, and goes with fellows we don't care to know. But he is n't bad yet, and we can keep him up, I'm sure, if we just try. I hope to get him into the Lodge, and that will be half the battle, won't it, Frank?" added Ed, sure that this suggestion would have weight with the honorable Chairman.

"Bring him along; I'm with you!" answered



EXCITEMENT IN THE DEBATING CLUB. [SEE NEXT PAGE.]

whereat Grif grinned and Joe scowled, for one lad liked Merry's big brother and the other did not.

"That's a good idea! Put it to vote," said Gus, too kind-hearted to shut the door on any one.

"First, I want to ask if all you fellows are ready to stand by Bob, out of the club as well as in, for it won't do much good to be kind to him here and cut him at school and in the street," said Ed, heartily in earnest about the matter.

"I will!" cried Jack, ready to follow where his beloved friend led, and the others nodded, unwilling to be outdone by the youngest member.

"Good! With all of us to lend a hand, we can do a great deal; and I tell you, boys, it is time, if we want to keep poor Bob straight. We

Frank, making up his mind at once, for he had joined the Temperance Lodge four years ago, and already six boys had followed his example.

"He is learning to smoke, but we'll make him drop it before it leads to worse. You can help him there, Admiral, if you only will," added Ed, giving a grateful look at one friend, and turning to the other.

"I'm your man!" and Gus looked as if he knew what he promised, for he had given up smoking to oblige his father, and kept his word like a hero.

"You other fellows can do a good deal by just being kind and not twitting him with old scrapes, and I'll do anything I can for you all to pay for

this," and Ed sat down with a beaming smile, feeling that his cause was won.

The vote was taken, and all hands went up, for even surly Joe gave in; so Bob and Tom were duly elected, and proved their gratitude for the honor done them by becoming worthy members of the club. It was only boys' play now, but the kind heart and pure instincts of one lad showed the others how to lend a helping hand to a comrade in danger, and win him away from temptation to the safer pastimes of their more guarded lives.

Well pleased with themselves,—for every genuine act or word, no matter how trifling it seems, leaves a sweet and strengthening influence behind,—the members settled down to the debate, which was never very long, and often only an excuse for fun of all sorts.

"Ralph, Gus and Ed are for, and Brickbat, Grif and Chick against, I suppose?" said Frank, surveying his company like a general preparing for battle.

"No, sir! I believe in co-everything!" cried Chick, a mild youth, who loyally escorted a chosen damsel home from school every day.

A laugh greeted this bold declaration, and Chick sat down, red but firm.

"I'll speak for two, since the Chairman can't, and Jack wont go against those who pet him most to death," said Joe, who, not being a favorite with the girls, considered them a nuisance, and lost no opportunity of telling them so.

"Fire away, then, since you are up!" commanded Frank.

"Well," began Joe, feeling too late how much he had undertaken, "I don't know a great deal about it, and I don't care, but I do *not* believe in having girls at college. They don't belong there, nobody wants 'em, and they 'd better be at home darning their stockings."

"Yours, too," put in Ralph, who had heard that argument so often he was tired of it.

"Of course; that 's what girls are for. I don't mind 'em at school, but I 'd just as soon they had a room to themselves. We should get on better."

"*You* would if Mabel was n't in your class and always ahead of you," observed Ed, whose friend was a fine scholar, and he very proud of the fact.

"Look here; if you fellows keep interrupting, I wont sit down for half an hour," said Joe, well knowing that eloquence was not his gift, but bound to have his say out.

Deep silence reigned, for that threat quelled the most impatient member, and Joe prosed on, using all the arguments he had ever heard, and paying off several old scores by sly hits of a personal nature, as older orators often do.

"It is clear to my mind that boys would get on

better without any girls fooling 'round. As for their being as smart as we are, it is all nonsense, for some of 'em cry over their lessons every day, or go home with headaches, or get mad and scold all recess, because something 'is n't fair.' No, *sir*; girls aint meant to know much, and they can't. Wise folks say so, and I believe them. Have n't got any sisters myself, and I don't want any, for they don't seem to amount to much, according to those who do have 'em."

Groans from Gus and Ed greeted the closing remarks of the ungallant Joe, who sat down, feeling that he had made somebody squirm. Up jumped Grif, the delight of whose life was practical jokes, which amiable weakness made him the terror of the girls, though they had no other fault to find with the merry lad.

"Mr. Chairman, the ground I take is this: girls have not the strength to go to college with us. They could n't row a race, go on a lark, or take care of themselves, as we do. They are all well enough at home, and I like them at parties, but for real fun and go I would n't give a cent for them," began Grif, whose views of a collegiate life were confined to the enjoyments rather than the studies of that festive period. "I have tried them, and they can't stand anything. They scream if you tell them there is a mouse in the room, and run if they see a big dog. I just put a cockroach in Molly's desk one day, and when she opened it she jumped as if she was shot."

So did the gentlemen of the club, for at that moment half-a-dozen fire-crackers exploded under the chair Grif had left, and flew wildly about the room. Order was with difficulty restored, the mischievous party summarily chastised and commanded to hold his tongue, under penalty of ejection from the room if he spoke again. Firmly grasping that red and unruly member, Grif composed himself to listen, with his nose in the air and his eyes shining like black beads.

Ed was always the peace-maker, and now, when he rose with his engaging smile, his voice fell like oil upon the troubled waters, and his bright face was full of the becoming bashfulness which afflicts youths of seventeen when touching upon such subjects of newly acquired interest as girls and their pleasant but perplexing ways.

"It seems to me we have hardly considered the matter enough to be able to say much. But I think that school would be awfully dry and dismal without—ahem!—any young ladies to make it nice. I would n't give a pin to go if there was only a crowd of fellows, though I like a good game as well as any man. I pity any boy who has no sisters," continued Ed, warming up as he thought of his own, who loved him dearly, as well they might, for

a better brother never lived. "Home would n't be worth having without them to look after a fellow, to keep him out of scrapes, help him with his lessons, and make things jolly for his friends. I tell you we can't do without girls, and I'm not ashamed to say that I think the more we see of them, and try to be like them in many ways, the better men we shall be by and by."

"Hear! hear!" cried Frank, in his deepest tone, for he heartily agreed to that, having talked the matter over with his mother, and received much light upon things which should always be set right in young heads and hearts. And who can do this so wisely and well as mothers, if they only will?

Feeling that his sentiments had been approved, and he need not be ashamed of the honest color in his cheeks, Ed sat down amid the applause of his side, especially of Jack, who pounded so vigorously with his crutch that Mrs. Peccq popped in her head to see if anything was wanted.

"No, thank you, ma'am, we were only cheering Ed," said Gus, now upon his legs, and rather at a loss what to say till Mrs. Peccq's appearance suggested an idea, and he seized upon it.

"My honored friend has spoken so well that I have little to add. I agree with him, and if you want an example of what girls *can* do, why, look at Jill. She's young, I know, but a first rate scholar for her age. As for pluck, she is as brave as a boy, and almost as smart at running, rowing, and so on. Of course, she can't play ball,—no girl can; their arms are not made right to throw,—but she can catch remarkably well. I'll say that for her. Now, if she and Mabel—and—and—some others I could name, are so clever and strong at the beginning, I don't see why they should n't keep up and go along with us all through. I'm willing, and will do what I can to help other fellows' sisters as I'd like to have them help mine. And I'll punch their heads if they don't," and Gus subsided, assured, by a burst of applause, that his manly way of stating the case met with general approval.

"We shall be happy to hear from our senior member if he will honor us with a few remarks," said Frank, with a bow to Ralph.

No one ever knew whom he would choose to personate, for he never spake in his own character. Now he rose slowly, put one hand in his bosom, and fixing his eye sternly on Grif, who was doing something suspicious with a pin, gave them a touch of Sergeant Buzfuz, from the Pickwick trial, thinking that the debate was not likely to throw much light on the subject under discussion. In the midst of this appeal to "Me lud and gentlemen of the jury," he suddenly paused, smoothed his hair down upon his forehead, rolled up his eyes, and folding his hands, droned out Mr.

Chadband's sermon on peace, delivered over poor Jo, and ending with the famous lines:

"Oh, running stream of sparkling joy,
To be a glorious human boy."

Then setting his hair erect with one comprehensive sweep, he caught up his coat-skirts over his arm, and, assuming a parliamentary attitude, burst into a comical medley, composed of extracts from Jefferson Brick's and Lafayette Kettle's speeches, and Elijah Pogram's Defiance, from "Martin Chuzzlewit." Gazing at Gus, who was convulsed with suppressed merriment, he thundered forth:

"In the name of our common country, sir, in the name of that righteous cause in which we are joined, and in the name of the star-spangled banner, I thank you for your eloquent and categorical remarks. You, sir, are a model of a man fresh from Natur's mould. A true-born child of this free hemisphere. Verdant as the Mountains of our land; bright and flowin' as our mineral Licks; unspiled by fashion, as air our boundless perearers. Rough you may be; so air our Barrs. Wild you may be; so air our Buffalers. But, sir, you air a Child of Freedom, and your proud answer to the Tyrant is, that your bright home is in the Settin' Sun. And, sir, if any man denies this fact, though it be the British Lion himself, I defy him. Let me have him here!"—smiting the table, and causing the ink-stand to skip,—"here, upon this sacred altar. Here, upon the ancestral ashes cemented with the glorious blood poured out like water on the plains of Oshkosh. Alone I dare that Lion, and tell him that Freedom's hand once twisted in his mane, he rolls a corse before me, and the Barra-boe Eagles of the Great Republic scream, Ha, ha!"

By this time the boys were rolling about in fits of laughter; even sober Frank was red and breathless, and Jack lay back, feebly squealing, as he could laugh no more. In a moment, Ralph was as meek as a Quaker, and sat looking about him with a mildly astonished air, as if inquiring the cause of such unseemly mirth. A knock at the door produced a lull, and in came a maid with apples.

"Time's up; fall to and make yourselves comfortable," was the summary way in which the club was released from its sterner duties, and permitted to unbend its mighty mind for a social half hour, chiefly devoted to whist, with an Indian war-dance as a closing ceremony.

CHAPTER X.

THE DRAMATIC CLUB.

WHILE Jack was hopping gayly about on his crutches, poor Jill was feeling the effects of her second fall, and instead of sitting up, as she hoped to do after six weeks of rest, she was ordered to lie

on a board for two hours each day. Not an easy penance, by any means, for the board was very hard, and she could do nothing while she lay there, as it did not slope enough to permit her to read without great fatigue of both eyes and hands. So the little martyr spent her first hour of trial in sobbing, the second in singing, for just as her mother and Mrs. Minot were deciding in despair that neither she nor they could bear it, Jill suddenly broke out into a merry chorus she used to hear her father sing :

" Faut jouer le mirliton,
Faut jouer le mirlitir,
Faut jouer le mirliter,
Mir—li—ton."

The sound of the brave little voice was very comforting to the two mothers hovering about her, and Jack said, with a look of mingled pity and admiration, as he brandished his crutch over the imaginary foes :

" That's right! Sing away, and we 'll play you are an Indian captive being tormented by your enemies, and too proud to complain. I 'll watch the clock, and the minute time is up I 'll rush in and rescue you."

Jill laughed, but the fancy pleased her, and she straightened herself out under the gay afghan, while she sang, in a plaintive voice, another little French song her father taught her :

" J'avais une colombe blanche,
J'avais un blanc petit pigeon,
Tous deux volaient, de branche en branche,
Jusqu' au faite de mon dongeon :
Mais comme un coup de vent d'automne,
S'est abattu là, l'épervier,
Et ma colombe si mignonne
Ne revient plus au colombier."

" My poor Jean had a fine voice, and always hoped the child would take after him. It would break his heart to see her lying there trying to cheer her pain with the songs he used to sing her to sleep with," said Mrs. Pecq, sadly.

" She really has a great deal of talent, and when she is able she shall have some lessons, for music is a comfort and a pleasure, sick or well," answered Mrs. Minot, who had often admired the fresh voice, with its pretty accent.

Here Jill began the Canadian boat-song, with great vigor, as if bound to play her part of Indian victim with spirit, and not disgrace herself by any more crying. All knew the air, and joined in, especially Jack, who came out strong on the " Row, brothers, row," but ended in a squeak on a high note, so drolly, that the rest broke down. So the hour that began with tears ended with music and laughter, and a new pleasure to think of for the future.

After that day Jill exerted all her fortitude, for

she liked to have the boys call her brave, and admire the cheerful way in which she endured two hours of discomfort. She found she could use her zither as it lay upon her breast, and every day the pretty music began at a certain hour, and all in the house soon learned to love and listen for it. Even the old cook set open her kitchen door, saying pitifully: " Poor darlint, hear how purty she's singin', wid the pain, on that crewel board. It's a little saint she is. May her bed above be aisy!"

Frank would lift her gently on and off, with a kind word that comforted her immensely, and gentle Ed would come and teach her new bits of music, while the other fellows were frolicking below. Ralph added his share to her amusement, for he asked leave to model her head in clay, and set up his work in a corner, coming to pat, scrape, and mold whenever he had a spare minute, amusing her by his lively chat, and showing her how to shape birds, rabbits, and queer faces in the soft clay, when the songs were all sung and her fingers tired of the zither.

The girls sympathized very heartily with her new trial, and brought all manner of gifts to cheer her captivity. Merry and Molly made a gay screen by pasting pictures on the black cambric which covered the folding frame that stood before her to keep the draughts from her as she lay on her board. Bright birds and flowers, figures and animals covered one side, and on the other they put mottoes, bits of poetry, anecdotes, and short stories, so that Jill could lie and look or read without the trouble of holding a book. It was not all done at once, but grew slowly, and was a source of instruction as well as amusement to them all, as they read carefully, that they might make good selections.

But the thing that pleased Jill most was something Jack did, for he gave up going to school, and stayed at home nearly a fortnight after he might have gone, all for her sake. The day the doctor said he might try it if he would be very careful, he was in great spirits, and limped about looking up his books, and planning how he would astonish his mates by the rapidity of his recovery. When he sat down to rest, he remembered Jill, who had been lying quietly behind the screen, while he talked gayly with his mother, busy putting fresh covers on the books.

" She is so still I guess she is asleep," thought Jack, peeping round the corner.

No, not asleep, but lying with her eyes fixed on the sunny window, beyond which the bright winter world sparkled after a fresh snow-fall. The jingle of sleigh-bells could be heard, the laughter of boys and girls on their way to school, all the pleasant stir of a new day of happy work and play

for the rest of the world, more lonely, quiet, and wearisome than ever to her since her friend and fellow-prisoner was set free and going to leave her.

Jack understood that patient, wistful look, and, without a word, went back to his seat, staring at the fire so soberly, that his mother presently asked: "What are you thinking of so busily, with that pucker in your forehead?"

"I've about made up my mind that I wont go

to school till the first of February?" called Jack, laughing to himself at the absurdity of the question.

"Not much!" answered a glad voice from behind the screen, and he knew the sorrowful eyes were shining with delight, though he could not see them.

"Well, I guess I may as well, and get quite firm on my legs before I start. Another week or



JILL MAKING THE BEST OF IT.

to school just yet," answered Jack, slowly lifting his head, for it cost him something to give up the long-expected pleasure.

"Why not?" and Mrs. Minot looked much surprised, till Jack pointed to the screen, and making a sad face to express Jill's anguish, answered in a cheerful tone: "Well, I'm not sure that it is best. Doctor did not want me to go, but said I might because I teased. I shall be sure to come to grief, and then every one will say, 'I told you so,' and that is so provoking: I'd rather keep still a week longer. Had n't I better?"

His mother smiled, and nodded as she said, sewing away at much-abused old Cæsar, as if she loved him: "Do as you think best, dear. I always want you at home, but I don't wonder you are rather tired of it after this long confinement."

"I say, Jill, should I be in your way if I did n't

so will bring me up if I study hard, so I shall not lose my time. I'll tackle my Latin as soon as it's ready, mother."

Jack got a hearty kiss with the neatly covered book, and mamma loved him for the little sacrifice more than if he had won a prize at school. He did get a reward, for, in five minutes from the time he decided, Jill was singing like a bobolink, and such a medley of merry music came from behind the screen, that it was a regular morning concert. She did not know then that he stayed for her sake, but she found it out soon after, and when the time came did as much for him, as we shall see.

It proved a wise decision, for the last part of January was so stormy Jack could not have gone half the time. So, while the snow drifted, and bitter winds raged, he sat snugly at home amusing Jill, and getting on bravely with his lessons, for

Frank took great pains with him to show his approbation of the little kindness, and, somehow, the memory of it seemed to make even the detested Latin easier.

February First, fair weather set in, and Jack marched happily away to school, with Jill's new mittens on his hands, mamma nodding from the door-step, and Frank ready to give him a lift on the new sled, if the way proved too long or too rough.

"I shall not have time to miss him now, for we are to be very busy getting ready for the Twenty-second. The Dramatic Club meets to-night, and would like to come here, if they may, so I can help?" said Jill, as Mrs. Minot came up, expecting to find her rather low in her mind.

"Certainly; and I have a basket of old finery I looked up for the club when I was rummaging out bits of silk for your blue quilt," answered the good lady, who had set up a new employment to beguile the hours of Jack's absence.

When the girls arrived, that evening, they found Mrs. Chairwoman surrounded by a "strew" of theatrical properties, enjoying herself very much. All brought such contributions as they could muster, and all were eager about a certain tableau which was to be the gem of the whole, they thought. Jill, of course, was not expected to take any part, but her taste was good, so all consulted her as they showed their old silks, laces, and flowers, asking who should be this, and who that. All wanted to be the "Sleeping Beauty," for that was the chosen scene, with the slumbering court about the princess, and the prince in the act of awakening her. Jack was to be the hero, brave in his mother's velvet cape, red boots, and a real sword, while the other boys were to have parts of more or less splendor.

"Mabel should be the 'Beauty,' because her hair is so lovely," said Juliet, who was quite satisfied with her own part of the "Queen."

"No, Merry ought to have it, as she is the prettiest, and has that splendid veil to wear," answered Molly, who was to be the maid of honor cuffing the little page, Boo.

"I don't care a bit, but my feather would be fine for the 'Princess,' and I don't know as Emma would like to have me lend it to any one else," said Annette, waving a long white plume over her head, with girlish delight in its grace.

"I should think the white silk dress, the veil, and the feather ought to go together, with the scarlet crape shawl and these pearls. That would be sweet, and just what princesses really wear," advised Jill, who was stringing a quantity of old Roman pearls.

"We all want to wear the nice things, so let us draw lots. Would n't that be the fairest way?"

asked Merry, looking like a rosy little bride, under a great piece of illusion, which had done duty in many plays.

"The 'Prince' is light, so the 'Princess' must be darkish. We ought to choose the girl who will look best, as it is a picture. I heard Miss Delano say so, when the ladies got up the tableaux, last winter, and every one wanted to be 'Cleopatra,'" said Jill, decidedly.

"You choose, and then if we can't agree we will draw lots," proposed Susy, who, being plain, knew there was little hope of her getting a chance in any other way.

So all stood in a row, and Jill, from her sofa, surveyed them critically, feeling that the one Jack would really prefer was not among the number.

"I choose that one, for Juliet wants to be 'Queen,' Molly would make faces, and the others are too big or too light," pronounced Jill, pointing to Merry, who looked pleased, while Mabel's face darkened, and Susy gave a disdainful sniff.

"You'd better draw lots, and then there will be no fuss. Ju and I are out of the fight, but you three can try, and let this settle the matter," said Molly, handing Jill a long strip of paper.

All agreed to let it be so, and when the bits were ready drew in turn. This time fate was evidently on Merry's side, and no one grumbled when she showed the longest paper.

"Go and dress, then come back, and we'll plan how we are to be placed before we call up the boys," commanded Jill, who was manager, since she could be nothing else.

The girls retired to the bedroom and began to "rig up," as they called it; but discontent still lurked among them, and showed itself in sharp words, envious looks, and disobliging acts.

"Am I to have the white silk and the feather?" asked Merry, delighted with the silvery shimmer of the one and the graceful droop of the other, though both were rather shabby.

"You can use your own dress. I don't see why you should have everything," answered Susy, who was at the mirror, putting a wreath of scarlet flowers on her red head, bound to be gay since she could not be pretty.

"I think I'd better keep the plume, as I have n't anything else that is nice, and I'm afraid Emma would n't like me to lend it," added Annette, who was disappointed that Mabel was not to be the "Beauty."

"I don't intend to act at all!" declared Mabel, beginning to braid up her hair with a jerk, out of humor with the whole affair.

"I think you are a set of cross, selfish girls to back out and keep your nice things just because you can't all have the best part. I'm ashamed

of you!" scolded Molly, standing by Merry, who was sadly surveying her mother's old purple silk, which looked like brown in the evening.

"I'm going to have Miss Delano's red brocade for the 'Queen,' and I shall ask her for the yellow-satin dress for Merry when I go to get mine, and tell her how mean you are," said Juliet, frowning under her gilt-paper crown as she swept about in a red table-cloth for train till the brocade arrived.

"Perhaps you'd like to have Mabel cut her hair off so Merry can have that, too?" cried Susy, with whom hair was a tender point.

"Light hair is n't wanted, so Ju will have to give hers, or you'd better borrow Miss Bat's frizette," added Mabel, with a scornful laugh.

"I just wish Miss Bat was here to give you girls a good shaking. Do let some one else have a chance at the glass, you peacock!" exclaimed Molly Loo, pushing Susy aside to arrange her own blue turban, out of which she plucked the pink pompon to give Merry.

"Don't quarrel about me. I shall do well enough, and the scarlet shawl will hide my ugly dress," said Merry, from the corner, where she sat waiting for her turn at the mirror.

As she spoke of the shawl her eye went in search of it, and something that she saw in the other room put her own disappointment out of her head. Jill lay there all alone, rather tired from the lively chatter, and the effort it cost her not to repine at being shut out from the great delight of dressing up and acting. Her eyes were closed, her net was off, and all the pretty black curls lay about her shoulders as one hand idly pulled them out, while the other rested on the red shawl, as if she loved its glowing color and soft texture. She was humming to herself the little song of the dove and the donjon, and something in the plaintive voice, the solitary figure, went straight to Merry's gentle heart.

"Poor Jilly can't have any of the fun," was the first thought, then came a second that made Merry start and smile, and in a minute whisper, so that all but Jill could hear her: "Girls, I'm not going to be the 'Princess.' But I've thought of a splendid one!"

"Who?" asked the rest, staring at one another, much surprised by this sudden announcement.

"Hush! Speak low, or you will spoil it all. Look in the Bird-Room, and tell me if that is n't a prettier 'Princess' than I could make?"

They all looked, but no one spoke, and Merry added, with sweet eagerness: "It is the only thing poor Jill *can* be, and it would make her so happy, Jack would like it, and it would please every one, I know. Perhaps she will never walk again, so we ought to be very good to her, poor dear."

The last words, whispered with a little quiver in

the voice, settled the matter better than hours of talking, for girls are tender-hearted creatures, and not one of these but would have gladly given all the pretty things she owned to see Jill dancing about well and strong again. Like a ray of sunshine the kind thought touched and brightened every face; envy, impatience, vanity and discontent flew away like imps at the coming of the good fairy, and with one accord they all cried:

"It will be lovely; let us go and tell her!"

Forgetting their own adornment, out they trooped after Merry, who ran to the sofa, saying, with a smile, which was reflected in all the other faces: "Jill, dear, we have chosen another 'Princess,' and I know you'll like her."

"Who is it?" asked Jill, languidly, opening her eyes without the least suspicion of the truth.

"I'll show you;" and taking the cherished veil from her own head, Merry dropped it like a soft cloud over Jill; Annette added the long plume, Susy laid the white silk dress about her, while Juliet and Mabel lifted the scarlet shawl to spread it over the foot of the sofa, and Molly tore the last ornament from her turban, a silver star, to shine on Jill's breast. Then they all took hands and danced round the couch, singing, as they laughed at her astonishment: "There she is! There she is! Princess Jill as fine as you please!"

"Do you really mean it? But can I? Is it fair? How sweet of you! Come here and let me hug you all!" cried Jill, in a rapture at the surprise, and the pretty way in which it was done.

The grand scene on the Twenty-second was very fine, indeed; but the little tableau of that minute was infinitely better, though no one saw it, as Jill tried to gather them all in her arms, for that nosegay of girlish faces was the sweeter because each one had sacrificed her own little vanity to please a friend, and her joy was reflected in the eyes that sparkled round the happy "Princess."

"Oh, you dear, kind things, to think of me and give me all your best clothes! I never shall forget it, and I'll do anything for you. Yes! I'll write and ask Mrs. Piper to lend us her ermine cloak for the king. See if I don't!"

Shrieks of delight hailed this noble offer, for no one had dared to borrow the much-coveted mantle, but all agreed that the old lady would not refuse Jill. It was astonishing how smoothly everything went after this, for each was eager to help, admire and suggest, in the friendliest way; and when all were dressed, the boys found a party of very gay ladies waiting for them round the couch, where lay the brightest little "Princess" ever seen.

"Oh, Jack, I'm to act! Was n't it dear of the girls to choose me? Don't they look lovely? Are n't you glad?" cried Jill, as the lads stared and

the lasses blushed and smiled, well pleased at the frank admiration the boyish faces showed.

"I guess I am! You are a set of trumps, and we'll give you a first-class spread after the play to pay for it. Wont we, fellows?" answered Jack, much gratified, and feeling that now he could act his own part capitally.

"We will. It was a handsome thing to do, and we think well of you for it. Hey, Gus?" and Frank nodded approvingly at all, though he looked only at Annette.

"As king of this crowd, I call it to order," said Gus, retiring to the throne, where Juliet sat laughing in her red table-cloth.

"We'll have 'The Fair One with Golden Locks' next time; I promise you that," whispered Ed to Mabel, whose shining hair streamed over her blue dress like a mantle of gold-colored silk.

"Girls are pretty nice things, are n't they?"

(To be continued.)

THE FARMER WHO BECAME DRUM-MAJOR.

Peggy and Meggy tell the story in their own way.

BY JOEL STACY.



Peggy: OUR father worked upon a farm,
He wore a linen smock;

Meggy: 'T was gathered to a yoke on top,
And hung down like a frock.

Peggy: Oh, he was very meek,
And mother used to scold him,

Meggy: And he would always do,
Exactly what we told him,—

Peggy: *Ex-actly* what we told him.

Kind of 'em to take Jill in. Don't Molly look fine though?" and Grif's black eyes twinkled as he planned to pin her skirts to Merry's at the first opportunity.

"Susy looks as gay as a feather-duster. I like her. She never snubs a fellow," said Joe, much impressed with the splendor of the court ladies.

The boys' costumes were not yet ready, but they posed well, and all had a merry time, ending with a game of blind-man's-buff, in which every one caught the right person in the most singular way, and all agreed as they went home in the moonlight that it had been an unusually jolly meeting.

So the fairy play woke the sleeping beauty that lies in all of us, and makes us lovely, when we rouse it with a kiss of unselfish good-will, for, though the girls did not know it then, they had adorned themselves with pearls more precious than the waxen ones they decked their "Princess" in.

Meggy: His shoulders had a little stoop
Which mother tried to cure:

Peggy: She used to say his shambling walk
She scarcely could endure.

Meggy: But he played the fiddle well,
And sang on Sunday sweetly;

Peggy: He beat the time for all,
And knew the tune completely,—

Meggy: Yes, knew the tune com-pletely.

Peggy: When mother called, "Come, John!"
he came,

Meggy: And smiling, chopped the wood;
He drew the water, swept the path,
And helped her all he could.

Peggy: He used to romp with Meg and me,

Meggy: Yes, and with Polly Wentels,

Peggy: But oh, my sakes! That was before
He put on regimentals!

Meggy: Yes, put on regimentals!

Peggy: For, oh, a big militia-man,
One evening, after tea,

Meggy: Came in and coaxed our father dear
To join his company.

Peggy: For men were very scarce
That summer in our village,
Meggy: And so they all prepared
They said for war and pillage.
Peggy: Just think! for war and pillage!

Meggy: Well, after that he dropt the smock,
He stood up stiff and straight;
Peggy: And when we called for wood and things,
We always had to wait.

Meggy: Still, he was rather meek,
And mother still could scold him;

Peggy: He nearly always did
Exactly what we told him,—

Meggy: *Ex-actly* what we told him.

Peggy: But soon he had a big mustache,
He stalked about the farm;

Meggy: He went to drill three times a week,
And could n't see the harm.

Peggy: At last he told our mother
A thing that did enrage her.

Meggy: "*Rid-dic-u-lus!*" she said,
"For you to be *drum-major!*"

Peggy: For *him* to be drum-major!

Meggy: He wore a splendid soldier coat,
He bore a mighty staff;

Peggy: But oh, he lost his gentle ways,
And would n't let us laugh.

Meggy: He grew so very fierce
He soon began to scold us,

Peggy: And then *we* had to do
Exactly what *he* told us!

Meggy: *Ex-actly* what he told us!

Peggy: We used to run and hide away—

Meggy: *You* did—not *I*, dear Peg!

Peggy: Why, yes, you often did it, too,
Now don't deny it, Meg!



Meggy: He scared us 'most to death,
He walked just like a lion;

Peggy: And when he coughed out loud
He set us both a-cryin'!

Meggy: Yes, set us *both* a-cryin'!

Peggy: He would n't play, he would n't work,
The weeds grew rank and tall;

Meggy: The pumpkins died: we did n't have
Thanksgiving Day at all.

Peggy: The farm is spoiled. It is n't worth,
Ma says, a tinker's wager.

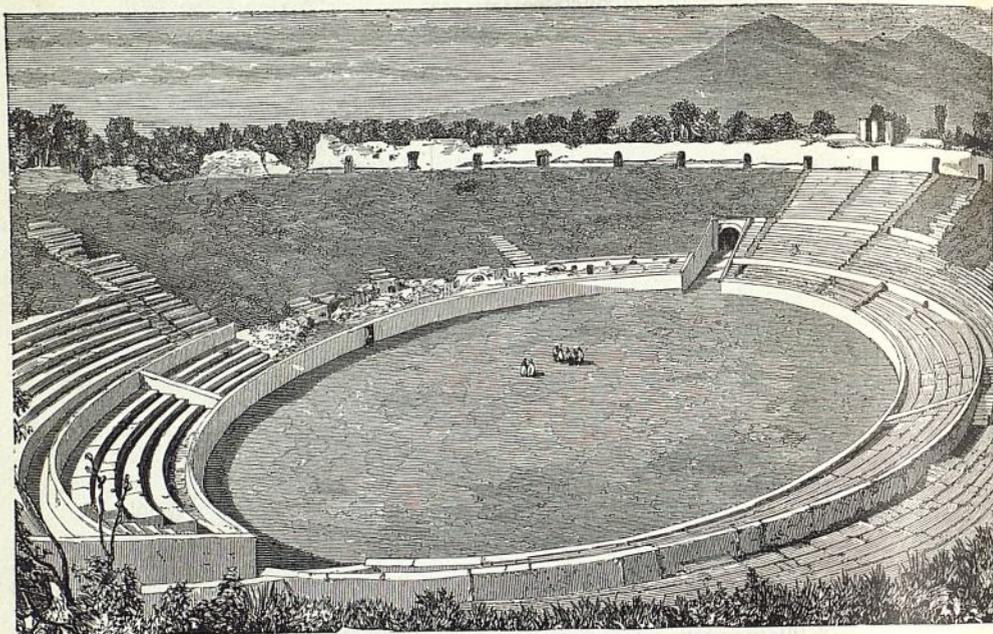
Meggy: Now was n't it a dreadful thing
For him to turn drum-major?

Both: A savage, awful, stark and stiff, ridic-
ulous drum-major!



A DEAD CITY.

BY MARGARET BERTHA WRIGHT.



THE AMPHITHEATER AT POMPEII.

LAST October a little American boy, named Charley, with his mother and sister, lived for three weeks at the foot of a mighty volcano, and just beside a dead city, renowned all over the world for the appalling manner in which it died.

They lived in a queer, rough little country inn, such as young American readers who never have been in Southern Europe can scarcely picture to themselves.

Just across the road from this little "hotel," as it was called, and between it and the dread volcano, whose smoke ever rises against the blue sky, while at night its red glare illumines the darkness, was the dead city. It is shut in from the road by high embankments of earth, and is guarded day and night by quite an army of men, lest some injury of robbery or fire happen to the buildings. At one place in this embankment is the gate of entrance, where people pay two francs admission fee, and are then escorted all over the city by one of the regular guides in a white uniform. Nobody is allowed to visit this city without a guide, except by permission of the Director, at Naples. But Charley's mother had this permission, and the three spent nearly all their time wandering about and making pictures

among the shattered walls and overthrown columns of buried and excavated Pompeii. It became in time as familiar to them as their native city.

Eighteen hundred years ago, Pompeii was prosperous and beautiful, having been newly rebuilt after an earthquake that had thrown down all the old, time-stained buildings, and left room for the showy, many-columned houses, with magnificent mosaic pavements and brilliantly frescoed walls, that arose speedily there. This city had been rebuilt not more than sixteen years, and everything in it was still bright and new, when the great calamity fell upon it which makes it almost as much spoken of to-day as it was spoken of nearly two thousand years ago.

One summer afternoon, little children were merrily at play around the beautiful fountains that tinkled in every garden; mothers were busy with needle-work in the cool shadow of the pillared courts; slaves were preparing dinners in hundreds of kitchens; men were in their offices or thronging the public places; and the streets were filled with gay and brilliant crowds running in and out of the tempting shops, chatting with one another, coming from the baths, hastening to give or take lessons

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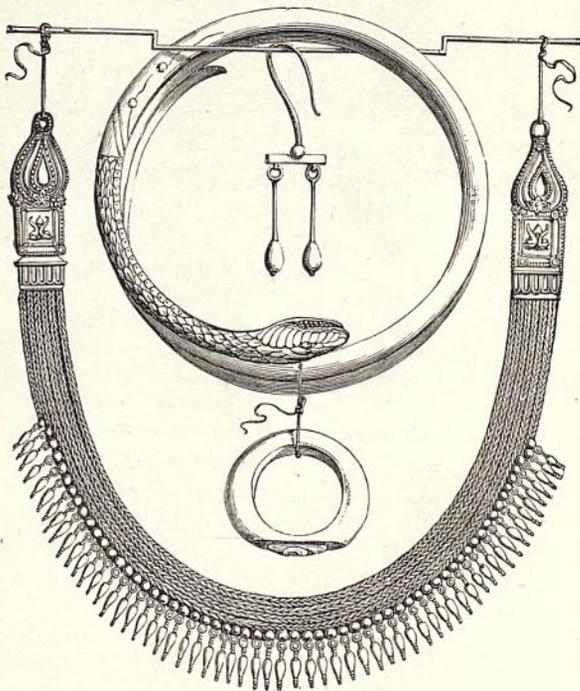
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on the lute or lyre, to make visits or purchases, just as people are doing in Broadway to-day. Suddenly, in the height of this gay scene, a storm arose. It was a more appalling storm than you can imagine, for the darkness was that of the blackest night, while not rain fell, but showers of red-hot stones, and a deluge of blistering ashes. Horrible sulphur-fumes burst forth from the earth and strangled many people before they could escape, while an awful thunderous roar, as if the heavens were being rent asunder, beat and boomed over the doomed city. This awful storm endured for three days and three nights. When it ceased, there was no longer any bright, beautiful city, there were no longer any laughing children, any happy mothers, and busy crowds. Nothing was there, but a great piled-up waste of black ashes and stones, with two thousand dead people buried below.

For seventeen hundred years this city lay buried. Ordinary earth gradually gathered over the ashes, grass grew there, shrubs, vines and lofty trees.

But it chanced, after seventeen hundred years, that a peasant, in digging a well upon his farm, dug straight down into a house where were many beautiful statues and valuable utensils of bronze, which were thus brought up again to the day. This discovery created much excitement, and the government officers at once caused excavations to be made. The work has been going on ever since, so that now about two-thirds of the city has been brought to view, while one-third is still covered with green fields and vegetable gardens.

When Charley first walked in Pompeii through silent and deserted streets, in the shadow of gaping and roofless walls, he was as hushed and quiet as if in a church. Scarcely was he willing even to slip over the mosaic thresholds, upon which is sometimes an inlaid bear, a dog, or a word of welcome. "I don't like to go in. I should think the people who lived here would object to our prying about," he said, when his mother sought the cause of his unusual reserve. And then his mother knew



OLD GOLD JEWELRY FOUND IN THE RUINS OF POMPEII.

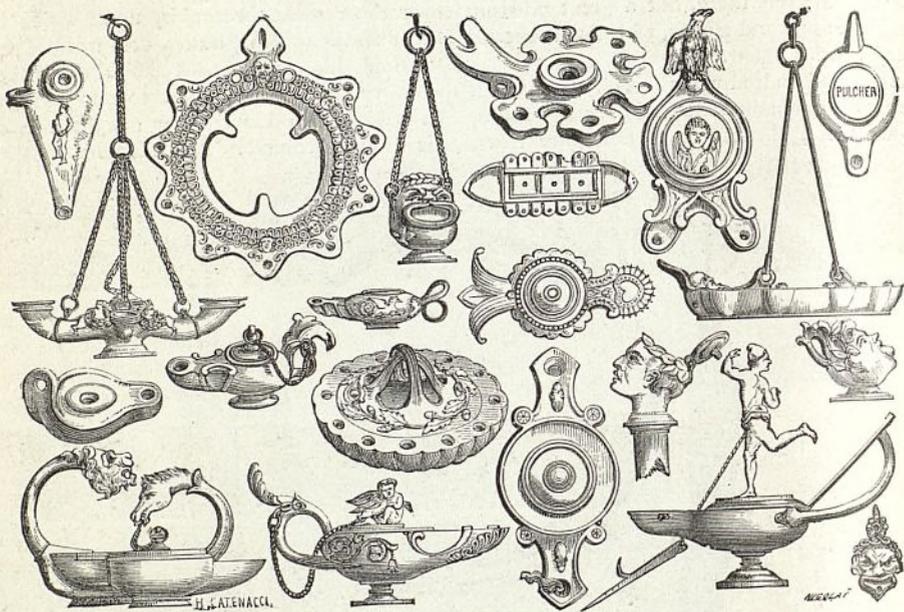
Houses were built upon it, farms were bought and sold, cattle grazed and men plowed, sowed and harvested for centuries, ignorant that many feet below was a dead, beautiful city. It had been dead so long that the world had quite forgotten that it ever had lived.

that he felt what she did,—an impression of nearness in time and sympathy of feeling with the long, long dead inhabitants, a feeling which she never had for the dead dwellers in the imperial ruins of Rome,—even for those who lived much nearer to our day than any who once walked the

streets of Pompeii, for in Rome one sees relics only of great personages and rulers. In Pompeii we are brought close to the life of people like ourselves.

They wandered about for hours, thinking and speaking of the Pompeians as if they had died only a year or two ago, and as if these beautiful lower rooms, with perfectly preserved Mosaic floors and still brilliant frescoes upon the walls, these bedrooms, these dining-rooms, these marble courts with their unbroken pillars and dry fountains, had but recently been in the use and service of their owners. Charley entered the wine and oil shops, and even dipped his hand into the immense jars, sunk into the marble counters, which once held

peii,—and it was only necessary for him to know that the old Pompeians were Pagans, to know that they worshiped beautiful Venuses, Apollos, and a whole imaginary world of imaginary deities. He was a little puzzled when he saw the ruins in Pompeii of a temple to a goddess called Isis, with little chambers still existing, where the cunning priests pulled strings and spoke in disguised voices to make the easily deceived people believe that the goddess worked miracles. Isis was not a Greek or Roman divinity, but one worshiped in far-off Egypt, where were the pyramids and the sphinx, and Charley could not understand why her temple should be in Italy among the believers in other



HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS AND ORNAMENTS DUG UP AT POMPEII.

the oil and wine, but now were half full of rain-water. He tried to read the painted advertisements upon the street-wall, calling upon the people to vote for some citizen who was running for office, and he stood in the midst of a roofless but magnificent temple, where heathen deities had fallen in the universal ruin.

"Do you see this table, dear?" said his mother, calling his attention to a marble table in one of the dwellings, its curved legs sculptured with snarling dogs. "Can you realize that this table has stood here since the story of Christ was new, and people talked of the new religion perhaps over this very table?"

Charley had lived long enough in Italy to have learned much about the gods of old Greece and Rome,—that is, of old Italy and, of course, Pom-

peii; but when he had read Bulwer's story, "The Last Days of Pompeii," he understood that there were many Egyptians,—merchants and sailors,—who came sailing over the Mediterranean to Pompeii with the wealth of their land to sell, and that they wished to worship their own goddess in this foreign land, just as the Chinese in California build their Joss-houses and worship their Joss within the sound of church-bells.

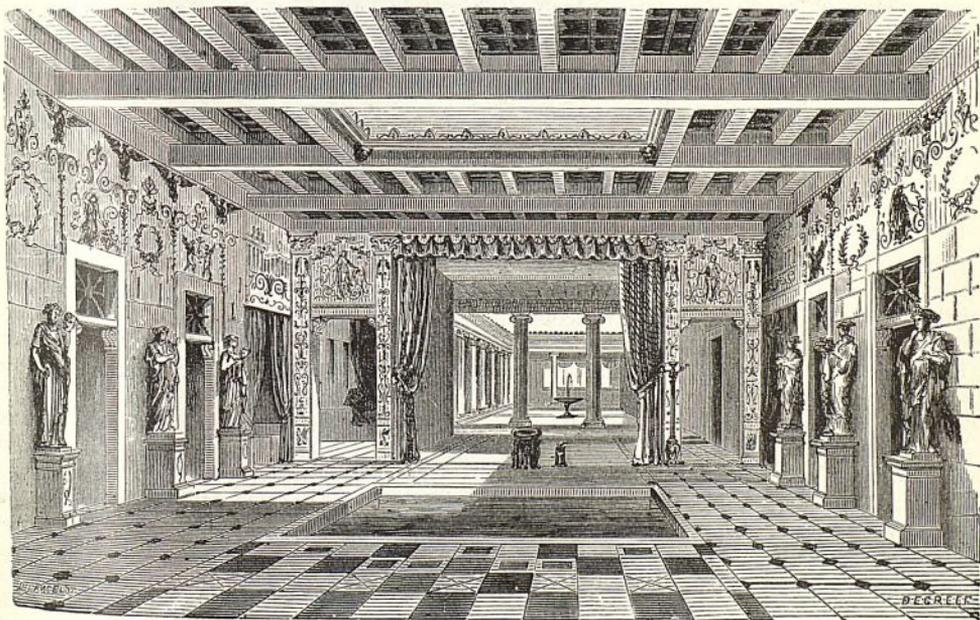
In other rooms, he saw the prints in the wall where human skeletons were found pressed into the very stone. In the bakers' shops, he saw standing yet large hand-mills, with which slaves ground the wheat into flour. He saw, also, the kitchens,—their walls almost always painted with serpents, boars' heads, joints of meat, and vegetable-tables,—where dinners were cooking when the

great darkness fell, and where were found, seven- had been dug out of the ashes, and also skele-
teen centuries afterward, charred roasts of meats, tons of horses, donkeys, cats, dogs, and fowls.



A STREET IN POMPEII.

burnt fowls, loaves of bread, black and hard but Just outside the ancient walls of the city was a
perfect in shape, and blackened fruit and vege- long street leading away to Herculaneum—another
tables, which Charley saw afterward in the museum. and smaller town buried by the same volcanic erup-

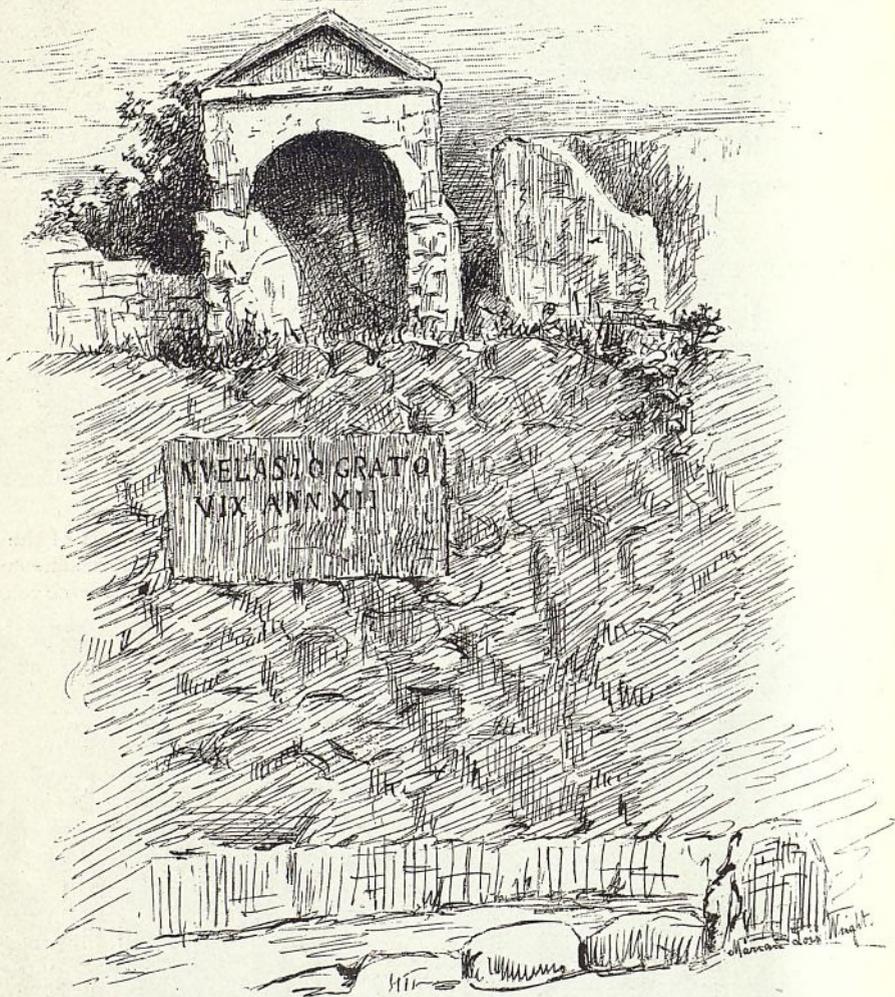


THE INTERIOR OF A POMPEIAN HOUSE.

In this museum, besides household utensils and tion. In those days, it was the custom to bury the
jewelry, he saw skeletons of men and women that dead, not in single graves in consecrated cemeteries

as we do now, but to burn the bodies and gather the ashes into vases, which were then entombed, whole families together, in splendid marble sepul-

the houses of the dead escaped. They stand yet, broken and defaced, upon each side of the Street of Tombs; and there, high up from the lava-paved



A TOMB IN POMPEII OF A BOY TWELVE YEARS OLD.

chers by the public road-side. These tombs were sometimes as large as houses, and Charley has seen one near Rome large enough to have been used as a fortress, and thus to have seen many battles, although, originally, it was "only a woman's grave." This Herculaneum road was called the Street of Tombs, and the ashes of Pompeii's dead had rested there for many years before Pompeii was destroyed.

When the storm came, it fell here also. But

road, is a little sepulcher, empty and broken, with a slab set into the rubble-work wall below it, which tells that here was buried

N. VELASIO GRATO,
VIX ANN XII.

"Lived twelve years!" said Charley, when his mother translated the inscription for him. "Just three years longer than I have lived! Perhaps

he died two thousand years ago; but for all that he seems to himself only twelve yet!"

Then he asked, thoughtfully: "What was America like when this little Italian boy died?"

"A wide, lonely world toward the setting sun,

where only wild red-men and strange animals roamed," answered his mother, "a beautiful, teeming world of which no white man had ever dreamed, and of which no white man would hear for centuries upon centuries."

CHILDHOOD'S GOLD.

BY LUCY LARCOM.

THEY need not go so far away,
Through heat and cold, to hunt for gold;
They might beside us sit or stray,—
Our hands are full as they can hold.

Gold? Gold is poured out of the sky
From rise of sun till day is done;
With falling leaves it flashes by;
In liquid gold the rivers run.

'T was scattered all the way from school,
In stars and bells adown the dells:
We children gathered aprons full,
Where little Dandelion dwells.

And yellow Cowslip to our feet
Came, like a king, his hoard to bring;
And Columbine, with nod so sweet,
Shook gold upon our path,—gay thing!

What goblet glistens with such wine
As the bee sups from buttercups?
What gold beads on the wet grass shine,
Sparkling to breezy downs and ups!

Our homes are sweet upon the hills,
Where love is sure, and life is pure,
And sunshine every season fills:
How can a country child be poor?

No robber scares our midnight hours;
No coffers cold our treasures hold:
Dewdrops and sunbeams, stars and flowers,—
Gold! Gold! Who shares our childhood's gold?

WHAT HAPPENED TO JANÁN.

BY M. A. ADGATE.

HER name was really Jane Ann. But you never would have known it; for every one who called her by any name at all, called her Janán, with a decided emphasis on the last syllable. So much of an emphasis, indeed, that it might have reminded a casual hearer of the "ca-nán, ca-nán" of the farmers, with which they called home the flocks of sheep scattered over the hills of the wild region in which Janán lived.

For her home was upon the western shore of Lake Champlain,—not the southern portion of it, where the little towns and villages stand not many miles apart, and the green shores of Vermont seem hardly more than a stone's throw away,—but farther north, where the lake widens into a broad expanse of blue, and where the Vermont shores are so far distant, that nothing can be distinctly seen from the New York side, except the great shining dome of Vermont University, at Burlington, which serves as a land-mark for many miles around.

The face of the country, at this point, is very wild and broken. Great rocks, which in almost any other place would be called mountains, but which here are dwarfed by the neighboring Adirondacks, rise abruptly from the water's edge. The railroad, completed not long since, creeps along a narrow road-bed, blasted from the side of the cliffs, with the wall of rock, rising a hundred feet above, on one side, and the water, dashing against its foot, a hundred feet below, on the other. This coast is covered with a stubby growth of timber, mostly pine. Farther inland, a mile or two, are well-cultivated, prosperous farms. But the sparsely settled shore is inhabited by wood-choppers or fishermen, who live a precarious, hand-to-mouth sort of existence, in the midst of the wildness and beauty of scenery for which this region is famous.

Janan's father, Peter Brown, belonged to this class. He was an American by birth, and what the country people round about called "shif'less." The mother bore very much the same character, and consequently, the large family of tow-headed children had learned to take care of themselves, and to expect cold, hunger, and hard knocks. There were seven of them, and Janan was the fourth. Their home was a small, unpainted house, which had grown gray with age. Originally it had been surrounded by a fence, inclosing a small garden patch, which had been cleared, but

had been only partly cultivated, as shown by its few sickly corn-stalks and potato-tops; and the fence had departed long ago,—probably because it was easy to split into kindling wood,—and a solitary fence post, here and there, was the only sign to show that such a fence ever existed.

The house stood not far from the railroad tracks, in a little valley, between high rocks. There were two or three other houses of the same description in the valley. Each one poured forth its group of whooping, shouting children, who played, quarreled, and fought together, almost as ignorant and wild as young savages. Sometimes the noise of their brawlings would bring the mothers of the respective families to the scene of the disturbance, to punish or sympathize, as the case might be. Sometimes they fought it out among themselves, until the weaker yielded, after which there was quiet, until some fresh cause of trouble arose.

Janan took an active part in the public affairs of the valley. And on the very morning upon which our story opens, had been engaged in a battle with the children of the neighbor who lived just below, and the struggle had resulted disastrously to herself. Enraged and furious, she finally sprang from the others, dashed past her own door, not heeding the call that came to her from within, and began to climb the steep ledge, that rose high above her. Janan was a good climber, and before many minutes, reached the summit of the rock, and threw herself down upon its flat surface, pausing to take breath.

Before we go any further, I would like to describe her to you, as she looked that day. She was thirteen years old, but small for her age. Her features were irregular, but not unpleasant to look upon. Her skin was tanned, until she was nearly as dark as an Indian. Janan deemed a bonnet superfluous, and never wore one, except when she went where such a covering was absolutely required. The sun, while it had darkened her face, had produced a contrary effect upon her hair, and had burnt and bleached it, until she really deserved the name of "tow-head." Her clothing consisted of a little excepting a dress of faded calico. Her feet were bare, and just now she was digging her naked toes viciously into the dry moss at the edge of the rock, where she had thrown herself down, and was angrily soliloquizing:

"Them Pickenses aggrivate me more 'n any thing I ever did see! The chicken 's dead! The

one Lyddy giv' me to grow up and be an old hen. That last stone Jim Pickens threw killed her deader 'n—deader 'n anything. I hate 'em; I hate 'em all! I would n't lift my finger to help one of 'em. And I *never* will!"

Here Janan paused, and looked down into the valley, but all was quiet, so she went on again:

had some effect upon Janan; for she presently raised her head, and looked about her. It was a lovely day, in early June,—the most delightful season in these latitudes, when Nature robes herself in new and tender green. The lake spread a broad, glittering expanse before her. Away to the north, a white sail danced upon its blue.



the children were cared
their homes, he thankfull



"THE TRAIN WAS

"To think they should be so mean! That chicken! Never hurt one of 'em! And 't was only thing I 've got that I reely cared for."

Janan's tears gushed forth, and she laid her face down, talking angrily to herself and sobbing listlessly between the words.

But neither sorrow nor anger can last forever, everything I'd like and the sweet influence of the morning may have

if I allus live here? So many of us, we can't have nothin'. If I only looked diff'rent I could do somethin'. Strawberries are 'most ripe. I could pick 'em, and take 'em to the village to sell, I s'pose. But who 'd buy berries of such a lookin' cretur' as me?"—and Janan looked down at her faded dress and brown hands, regretfully.

"How 'm I ever goin' to keep my dress lookin' any way, I wonder. Pete broke the handle off the flat-iron last week, and how I 'm goin' to iron anythin', I don't know. I 'd like to learn somethin', too. I know how to read some, a'ready. I know what I 'd like to do, and I could do it, too, if I only had some clothes. I 'd like to go to the village, and hire out to some lady to take care of her baby. I could do that kind of work; I know I could. But there! what 's the use o' talkin'? I can't get clothes, and I can't go to the village, and I can't go to school! I wish I could! I wish somethin' would happen! Nothin' ever happens to me."

Janan was fast giving way to her bad feelings again, when she saw a carriage driving slowly up the roadway, which wound around the foot of the hill, and yet some distance

in' along this bad, to

"We are quite near the railroad track," she said; "the track is down in that hollow, and a train which will pass us in a moment

was very near them. An instant would dash round the short curve from their view. Just then, Miss

companion grasp her arm, and her horror-struck gaze, until she

she looked that day. She but small for her age. Her

ones, all unconscious of the horrible seemed certain to overtake him.

"What can we do?" gasped Miss Parker, in a whisper. "There is no time—"

At that moment the ladies saw, running the track, with all the speed of which her

frame was capable, a little girl, whose faded and white hair streamed behind her as she

exerting every muscle in a terrible race for life or death.

It was Janan. She had come down the bank, and taken her position where she could see the cars pass.

Looking casually along the track, in the direction of the approaching train, she saw the youngest of the Pickens family, who had not gone home

toward the track. She always liked to be near the trains when they passed. It gave her such an idea of power, to see the long line of cars dragged by the mighty giant, to-whom time and space seemed nothing. And then, it was almost the only link connecting her with the outside world. The brief glimpse of a face, which she sometimes obtained as the cars were thundering past, was enough to give her a sense of companionship, which lasted for a long time.

Meantime, the carriage Janan had seen reached the summit of the hill, and brought into view the scene which had so comforted the child.

"Stop the horses, coachman," said Miss Parker (for it was really the lady of numerous and eccentric charities of whom Janan had spoken), "and let us get out and enjoy this."

The two ladies left the carriage, and walked slowly along the edge of the bank, on the carpet of thick, green moss.

"How beautiful all this is!" said Miss Parker's companion. "I do not believe there is a finer scene, even on Lake George."

"Yes," answered Miss Parker; "I often tell New York people that if Lake George were not so near, Lake Champlain would be better appreciated. I, for one, am loyal to my home, and it always pleases me to bring my friends to the lake on such a morning as this, when everything appears at its best."

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with the rest, after all, still at play with his house-building. He was close by the curve, and could not see the engine until it was upon him.

Janan forgot her quarrels, forgot everything, except that she must save the unconscious child, who kept on with his play.

"I'm 'fraid I can't!" she thought to herself, as she sprang forward, with all the energy within her concentrated upon that one purpose. It seemed so far—and the roar of the train was so terribly near! What if she should trip and fall. The thought made her sick with fear. Why did n't the child hear? Would she never reach him? Still, the train had not come in sight around the curve. There might be time. Two minutes ago, she had said: "I would n't lift a finger to help one of 'em!" But now,—oh, she must save him,—if she could! What if she should be too late? She strained onward more swiftly, yet so slowly, as it seemed, and called shrilly:

"Tom! Tom!"

The child turned to her his chubby brown face, all smiles and dimples,—as the engine came thundering toward him. A hoarse whistle sounded in quick gasps; and there was the sudden clanging of a bell.

At last, little Tom saw his danger. With a piercing cry, he threw up his arms. He would have fallen, but Janan reached forward as she ran, and grasped him tightly by the shoulder. Then she turned to drag him out of the engine's path.

Too late!

The rushing monster lifted them from their feet, and whirled them up and off the track.

The engineer stopped his train as soon as possible, and the conductor and one or two others came up to see what damage had been done, and what reparation could be made.

When Miss Parker told him she would see that the children were cared for, and were restored to their homes, he thankfully accepted her offer, and rejoined his train with an exclamation of impatience, in regard to people who let their "young uns" run on the track.

At Miss Parker's directions, Johnson, the coachman, set out for the houses, not far off, to find at which of them the children belonged, and to inform their parents of the accident.

Miss Wait ran quickly down to the little brook, in the hollow, and filled a drinking cup with water, which she brought to Miss Parker, who sprinkled it lightly on Janan's forehead. Its cool touch soon produced an appearance of returning consciousness, and before long, Janan opened her eyes, and looked with wonder at the strange faces above her. A moment more, and her features contracted with pain, and she closed her eyes.

"Are you very much hurt, my dear," said Miss Parker, kindly, as she bent over her.

"I don't know" said Janan, faintly, "it's in my shoulder,—and my arm."

Just then, Johnson appeared in sight, accompanied by the mothers of the children, with as many others as happened to be within hearing, when he carried the news of the accident.

At the sight of Janan, lying white and helpless on the grass, they broke out into noisy exclamations of sorrow; but seemed to have no idea of what should be done for her. Miss Parker quietly assumed the direction of everything, and Janan was soon carried, in Johnson's strong arms, up the steep bank, and home, where she was laid upon her mother's bed, and then the crowd of lookers-on was banished.

"Now," said Miss Parker, "I want you, Johnson, to drive to the village as soon as possible, and bring back Doctor Miles. Miss Wait can go with you, and I will remain here until the doctor comes."

"Will it not be better for me to stay here, instead of you? I am stronger, and more accustomed to the care of the sick," said Miss Wait.

"No," replied Miss Parker, "I shall not leave her until I know the extent of her injuries."

So Miss Wait and Johnson drove back to the village as rapidly as possible, and Miss Parker sat by Janan's bedside and fanned her, or occasionally moistened her lips with water.

She lay very still, with her eyes closed; and a faint moan, now and then, was the only complaint she made.

Once, as she opened her eyes wide, and looked at Miss Parker, the lady came closer to her and said: "It was a noble, a brave thing to do! Not many of us would be willing to risk our lives as you did."

And she stooped, and pressed a kiss softly upon Janan's forehead.

The little girl smiled a pleased and happy smile, and said:

"I'm so glad! But I had to do it, you know. For I'd been quarrelin' with 'em all the mornin', and when I saw little Tom on the track, I thought if I did n't save him, 't would be most as bad as if I'd murdered him."

"There, don't try to talk any more," said Miss Parker; and Janan closed her eyes, and tried to be as patient as possible, under the severe twinges of pain, which would force the moans from her in spite of herself.

After what seemed a long time, Johnson came back, bringing the doctor. An examination showed that Janan's arm was broken, and her shoulder badly bruised.

She bore the painful operation of setting the arm with heroic endurance, comforted by Miss Parker's expressions of sympathy.

After the arm was set, and she was comfortable in bed again, the doctor told her not to feel discouraged, for she would be well before very long. That cheered her considerably, for, in her ignorance, she had thought, perhaps, she never could use her arm again. So she bade Miss Parker good-bye, with a smile on her face.

"I shall come and see you to-morrow," said the lady as she left her, "for I shall feel very anxious to know how you are."

When Miss Parker reached home, she said to Miss Wait :

"It is wonderful what courage that child has. She bore that painful operation with more calmness than most grown people would have shown ; and think of her risking her life for that little fellow ! She is quite an uncommon child, I am sure."

And she told Miss Wait what Janan had said of her motive in saving the little boy.

She sat lost in thought for some minutes, and then began :

"I am resolved to do something for her ! She shall have a year's schooling at any rate ! If her arm is well enough, when the schools open in the fall, she shall come here, and board with old Mrs. Miller, and go to school for a year. After that, we shall be able to find something else for her."

Miss Parker kept her promise to Janan, and went back to see her the next day, and the next, also. And, in fact, there were not many days during the summer that she did not visit her. And many were the delightful little remembrances which she left behind,—one day, a bouquet of beautiful hot-house flowers, of such brilliance as Janan had never dreamed of ; the next, a basket of delicious fruit, of which the name even was strange to Janan ; or a picture of angels, with great white wings, to hang at the foot of her bed, and be with her, even in her dreams. And as she grew stronger, Johnson brought, one day, a bright, chintz-covered lounge, which Miss Parker thought would be a pleasant change from the bed, and which seemed to Janan the most delightful and desirable resting-place in the world.

She lay upon her lounge, one hot afternoon in August, looking abstractedly at its bunches of crimson rosebuds, and thinking that all these pleasant events in her life must come to an end, as she was fast getting well. Just then, Miss Parker came in. She held in her hand a cluster of white lilies, which filled the room with their perfume, as she gave them to Janan.

"You are almost well now, and I shall not feel anxious about you any more," she said, "so you must not expect to see me here quite so often."

The large tears gathered in Janan's eyes and rolled slowly down her cheeks ; but she did not say one word.

Then Miss Parker, sitting down by the lounge, took her hand in her own, and told her what plans she had made. How Janan was to begin school in a few weeks, and how she was to board with a worthy widow lady, whom Miss Parker knew, and who would teach her many things she could not learn in school. How she was to have a whole year of school, and after that, was to be assisted to help herself.

Lost in wonder and delight, Janan could find no words in which to thank her kind friend, but Miss Parker read her joy and gratitude in her beaming eyes.

So something really "happened" to Janan, after all. And the June day, which opened with so many hopeless longings, proved to be the turning-point in her life.

We must have one more glimpse of her. It is nearly two years since the eventful June day. Janan has had her year of school, and has obtained a position as child's nurse. And in the neat and tidy young girl, with brown hair and fair complexion, who is known in the village as Jenny Brown, it would be hard to recognize the Janan of former days.

In her own home, the change in Jenny's affairs was regarded with much wonder. And her father was wont to dispose of the matter by saying :

"Janan allus was the lucky one of the family ; none of the rest of 'em would 'a' gone and got run over by the engine, with Miss Parker stan'in' right by to pick 'em up."



AN EASTER CARD.—DRAWN BY ADDIE LEDYARD.

THE BELL-BUOY.

BY MRS. B. L. MERRILL.

OUT in the open sea stood an old spirit of evil called General Ledge, who held his head high above the level of the water. He was hard featured and cross-grained, and his brow was furrowed into a constant frown; which was truly the most appropriate expression he could wear, as his only object in life was the destruction of sailors and their craft. To these he was a powerful enemy, backed as he was by the strongest of allies,—the sullen fog, the dark, cloudy nights, the fierce winds and the raging waves. It was the fog's business, and also the cloudy nights', to veil the sailors' eyes and cause them to lose their way; it was the winds' to drive their vessel toward the rock, who would no sooner feel her approach than he would thrust his long, sharp ribs through her, making way for the waves to possess themselves of her, and drag her, together with her cargo and crew, down into the bottom of the ocean. Old General Ledge and his wicked army corps had destroyed in this manner so many human lives, that at last the good light-house keeper at Fairy Point resolved to put an end to their mischief; so he moored a bell-buoy near

the old rock to ring, whenever the storm should rage, a warning to the seamen to keep off.

A fine sturdy fellow was the bell-buoy, with an iron body, a loud iron tongue, and long chain arms with iron hands, that stretched so far they could grapple the ocean-bed and hold him in one place upon the water. So soon as the light-house keeper had found the buoy's anchors were fast to the spot where he had cast them off, he addressed to him these parting words:

"Bell-buoy, I have made you good and strong, and able to hold out long and stanchly against the enemies by whom you are surrounded. Here is your post of duty; never flinch from it; whatever betide, stand fast by the seamen and their craft."

And the bell-buoy, proud of his daring mission, promised himself that he would.

But, so soon as the man had left him, he began to feel lonely and sad. To be sure, the waters were smiling then in the daylight, but the man at the light-house had told him they were treacherous; the winds were absent, but he knew they visited often and he must expect them soon; moreover,

only a little way off, scowling at the bell-buoy, stood the wicked old General Ledge, ever grim and threatening, even while at rest from his naughty sport in the very face of the cheery old Sun.

crouches a wicked old reef ready to stave you in pieces."

This was the call of the fog-horn at Mastenhead. "Ah!" thought the bell-buoy, "that is the voice



THE BELL-BUOY AND GENERAL LEDGE.

"Never mind," thought the bell-buoy, "I shall save many a costly ship, and many a goodly crew, and the memory of my useful deeds will cheer me in my loneliness."

Soon after, the fog-veil spread, and the flying winds drove the high waves before them; then the buoy bestirred himself and tolled at the top of his voice, so that every coming ship might hear:

of a kindred spirit, whose life-work is the same as mine; if I could only be near it, I would never be lonely and sad."

He leapt frantically on the wave, and loosened one of his anchors, making ready to drift in the direction whence came the voice, when, suddenly, he heard the whistle of a steamer in distress growing louder and plainer each moment, as if bearing



THE FOG-HORN GIVES THE ALARM.

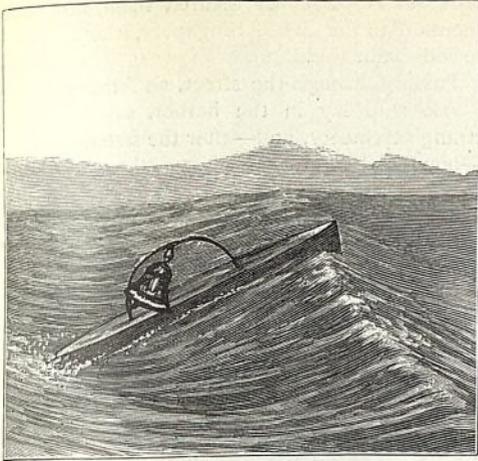
"Bear away! Bear away! Here stands old General Ledge ready to shatter you in pieces."

Strange to say, between his ding and dong, the strain of a soft voice reached him out of the distance:

"Toot! Toot!" chimed in the distant voice; "Keep off! Keep off! Hard by in the water

quickly toward the ledge. This woke the bell-buoy from his selfish dream, he bounded back, and grappled bottom again with the anchor he had dragged, and, rocking wildly, he tolled as loud as he could till after the steamer's whistle had long been muffled by the distance.

Then he thought of all the cruel mischief



that might have followed, if he had listened to his heart and drifted away to the fog-horn, and ever

after he held quite fast to his post, though he often felt lonely and sad. "At least," thought he, "we live the same life, though apart, our voices chime often together, and our efforts unite in the same good, noble cause."

But it was so hard for him to keep away from the fog-horn whenever he heard her voice, that a little weak spot in his left side cracked, and though at first the wound was almost imperceptible, the wary winds espied it and twitted him with it, and the passing waves chafed it, till they wore it wide enough for them to creep through and take possession of the sinking buoy.

But even while the waters were closing around him, the bell-buoy was happily unconscious of his fate, for a beautiful vision filled his mind, in which all the craft he had rescued passed before him with their grateful crews looking out at him over the railings, waving their caps and cheering at the top of their voices: "God bless the faithful bell-buoy!"

THE "DEAR LITTLE DEER."

BY OLIVE THORNE MILLER.

SO THE parrot called her, and I think he was right; for, although shaped like a common-sized deer, she was not more than eight inches high. You can see her picture here, and it is a true one; it was drawn from the little creature herself.

Perhaps it is the most rare and curious animal that was ever brought to our country, and I must tell you her story; but first I will say that this deer family is not a new discovery. It has long been known to the book-makers, though it is so shy and swift to fly from men, and so cunning in hiding among thick grass and shrubs that very little is known of the habits of the family in its native woods.

They live in India and the islands near, and they have almost as many names as they have inches of height. They are called musk-deer, though they have no musk; mouse-deer, though they are not in the least like a mouse; and moose-deer, though still less like a moose. All these names are supposed to arise from the different ways in which people pronounce the Dutch name for mouse. But that is not all. Some call them the *Napu*, many call them the pigmy musk, and the books complete the list with *Moschus-meminna*.

An old writer says of it: "There is a creature in this land (Ceylon) no bigger than a hare, though

every part rightly resembleth a deer; of a gray color, with white spots and good meat."

Good meat! Ah, that's their misfortune! The good meat which they carry on their bones is the cause of their being hunted with dogs, caught in traps, and killed by a stick thrown against their legs, when they come into a garden at night to feed on the young sweet-potatoes.

They have no horns, and the skull is shaped something like that of a rat, with very long and strong tusks. It is said by some writers that, when chased by animals, they will leap into the air, catch on to the branch of a tree by their tusks, and hang there till all is safe. Whether this is true or not, it is certain that they do make wonderful jumps; though when hunted by men and dogs, they run for a hollow log, or for the water, where they quickly swim out of the reach of hunters.

No animal—not even a cat—can be more graceful than these little creatures; and, like Pussy, too, they can, if they like, give a sharp bite. They are of a glossy red-brown color, though now and then one is found of a snowy white. That happy deer who is white is at once adopted as a pet, and never, never thought of as "meat."

They have large black eyes, full of expression,

and liquid as a gazelle's are said to be, and their legs are no bigger than a common lead-pencil, with the daintiest little black hoofs you can imagine.

The babies of this pretty family are about the size of very young kittens; and, if taken before they learn to be afraid of people, they are easily tamed, and are interesting pets about a house.

Now, I'll tell you about the one in the picture, whose name was Joan. She was born in the

hunter. He carefully secured them, and carried them off to the city of Singapore, where he hoped to sell them.

Passing through the street, an American sailor, whose ship lay in the harbor, saw the pretty, strange creatures, and—after the fashion of sailors—bought them to carry home, though he had to pay for them with his watch.

The strange new home of the timid little family



THE LITTLE DEER.

island of Sumatra, and, when quietly feeding one day with three companions, had the misfortune to be seen by a dog. Now, a dog is the worst enemy of the whole deer family, and of course the four took to their fleet little heels, and in a few minutes were all safely hidden in a nice hollow log, where they crouched in the dark, trembling at the fearful bark of their big noisy enemy outside.

But, as it happened, the dog had a master behind him, and the master came up and dragged the whole party, more dead than alive, out of their retreat. They are very cunning, and they pretended to be dead; but that did not deceive the

was the ship "Janet," bound for New York, and the bed of the small passengers was made in a cozy corner of the captain's cabin, under his bunk—which is the sailor word for bed, you know. There were four of them, as I said, and their owner gave them the not very descriptive names, Jack and Jill, Darby and Joan. The vessel sailed, and their long voyage of more than four months began.

There was another resident of the captain's cabin, a pet parrot, who at once struck up an intimacy with the new-comers, evidently welcoming them as society in his lonely life. Finding that they were not to be hurt, the deer, after a while,

grew quite affectionate, perch on their heads, calling his "dear little deer."

During the affair. Or added to the. They were though the ing long le event, to Poll was v gers. He box where head first them curious tionately, l

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grew quite at home, and Poll was on the most affectionate terms with them. He delighted to perch on their backs or their heads, and to talk to them, calling each by its own name, or, all together, his "dear little deer."

During the long voyage, there was one tragic affair. One day, Poll was much pleased to find added to the family of four, two little deer babies. They were about as big as very young kittens, though they did not look like Pussy's babies, having long legs, like all their family. This was an event, to be sure, in a dull, tedious voyage, and Poll was very much interested in the little strangers. He stood nearly all the time perched on a box where he could see them, turning his wise head first one side and then the other, examining them curiously, and calling them also, most affectionately, his "dear little deer."

This happy state of affairs came to a sad end, by means of the babies' father. Why he did that dreadful thing, nobody knows, of course. Whether he thought life in a ship was worse than an early death, or whether he was jealous of the attention they had, that strange parent—you'll be horrified to hear—put an end to their short lives by biting off their legs with his sharp front teeth!

This was a grief to Poll, but it was only the beginning of sorrows. When the "Janet" reached Sandy Hook, it was winter, and cold is fatal to delicate natives of the south. The little family were provided with the warmest of bedding, to keep them comfortable; but, while the captain was on deck, two of them wandered away from their quarters and died of cold.

Poor Poll took this to heart; he sat disconsolately on his perch and mourned in silence. But when they reached New York, and another of the family died of cold, the bird evidently made up his mind that all was over. He retired to his own corner of the cabin, became very low-spirited, and utterly refused to speak. It did not even arouse him to see the last one go away, which she did, in a market-basket. To this green-coated philosopher the world seemed, no doubt, a hollow mockery,—a fleeting show.

The only survivor of the pretty family—the widowed Joan—had become accustomed to life in a ship; but a basket was new and strange, and when she reached the home of the gentleman who had bought her, she was more timid than ever. She hardly dared to stand up, but crouched, always ready to run in an instant.

Then she had new acquaintances to make. These were, first, the dog, of whose intentions she was always suspicious—with good reason. Perhaps even worse was the cat,—a fearful monster in

her eyes,—who, it must be admitted, showed the greatest eagerness to catch her, no doubt with the desire to make a meal of her, as Pussy's big cousin, the tiger, does of the little deer's cousins, in countries where they both are wild.

Besides the two animals who made life a terror to her, there was a new variety, of human kind, to get used to. On the ship were only men, and she had learned that they would not hurt her; but this new species, with long, rustling skirts, she did not understand, and what she did not understand always frightened her. She was in a constant state of nervous watchfulness.

When called by her master,—who named her Nan—she would come to him and allow him to caress her, even showing her affection by licking his hand like a dog; but the slightest noise would send her like a flash across the room behind a table or chair, to hide, and the slamming of a door would make her spring two or three feet into the air. Her tiny feet made no noise on the carpet, and her motions were so rapid, she seemed to fairly glide over it like a spirit.

It was not meant that this beautiful pet should die, like her unfortunate relations, with cold. So her home was made in a basket in the warm room of the house-mistress, where she could never feel a chill, nor be in danger from dog or cat, however savage, though she was not confined to this room, but ran all over the house. She lived upon vegetables, which her sharp teeth cut like a knife; parsnips, carrots, sweet-potatoes, and cabbage were on her bill of fare.

She was the most quiet of pets, though when fed she had a sort of low whistle; and sometimes she would utter a whinnying cry, which in Borneo is considered by the natives an evil omen, so portentous that a newly married pair, on hearing the sound, will at once separate, being sure that the marriage would prove unfortunate.

This attractive little deer lived some days in the new home, and the whole family had become much attached to her, hoping by summer to make her so much at home that she would run about everywhere, and also to teach the dog and cat that she was a pet, and not to be touched. But their hopes were dashed one morning to find her dead in her basket.

It may have been the food, for, in her native woods she ate berries and fruits; or possibly a chill, or some sudden terror which had startled her sensitive nerves. Whatever the cause, poor little Joan was at rest.

There is—or there was, a few months ago—in a window on Maiden Lane, in New York, a group of Mouse Deer, stuffed and standing up like life.

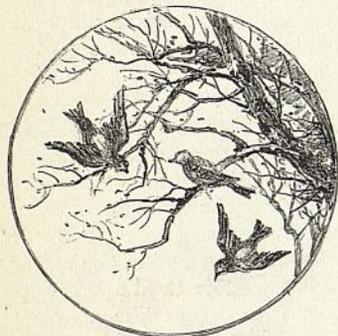


Spring Time

BY MARY GORDON.

"OH, the Spring has come," chirped the dear little birds

- I. As they opened their drowsy eyes,
And shook out the fans in their pretty tails,
And turned up their heads to the skies.



"'T is time now to look for a place to build"—
So Robin engaged an elm tree.

- II. The black Crow she spoke for a tall pine's top,
Where high in the world she might be.



- III. "I like a low cottage," she said to herself,—
"With a daisy to nod by the door."



- IV. The Swallow she fancied the corner lot
Of the barn, 'neath the sloping eaves;
The Oriole sought for a graceful twig,
Where her cradle could rock with the breeze.

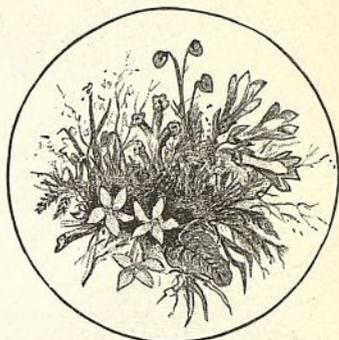
- V. "The Spring has come," said each little flower
As she stirred in her damp, brown bed;
First Snowdrop peeped in her neat white cap,
Then modestly hung down her head.





“Do I hear Sir Robin?” said Crocus white,
 “I am certainly late,” cried she;
 VI. Then popped out her head from under the clothes,
 And looked straight into the tree.

The May-Flower woke, and she drew from the moss
 On which she had pillowed her head,
 VII. Her small waxen phials of odorous sweets
 To perfume her soft, lowly bed.



“’T is darksome down here,” moaned Violet blue;
 But when she crept out to the sky,
 VIII. She had to slip back just behind a green leaf,
 ’T was so bright for her tender young eye.



“These rich, golden beams,” said Buttercup gay,
 “I will take to my dairy brown,
 IX. And churn them and pat them in bright little balls,
 The green of my young buds to crown.”



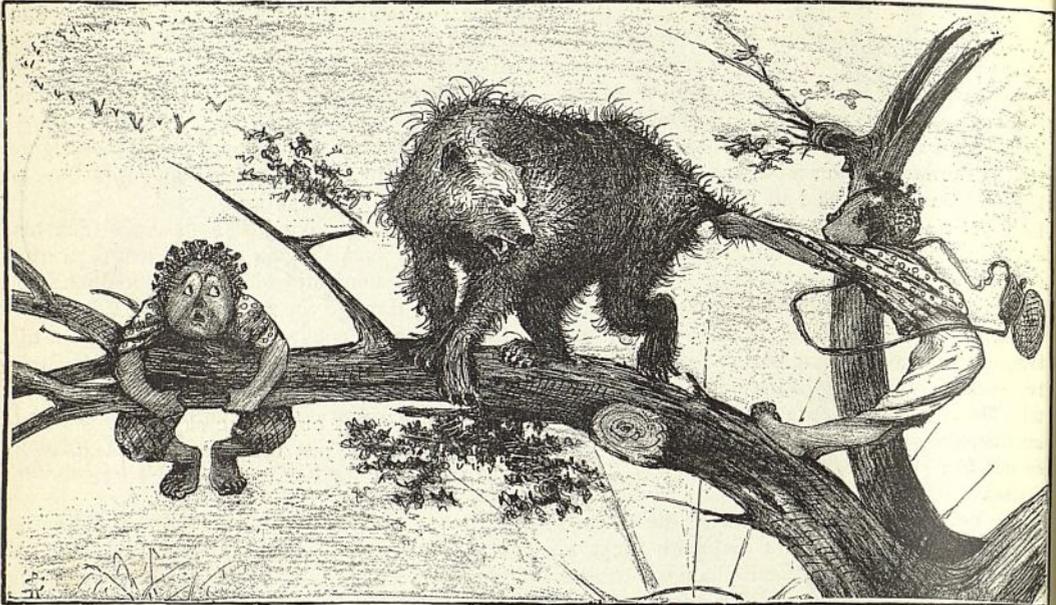
“O, there is a bee!” cried Miss Clover, so red,
 “He’s buzzing because I’m not up;”
 X. So she sprang into sight with her sweet honey jars,
 And asked Mr. Bee in to sup.

A busy time is this fresh, bright Spring
 For Birdie and Bee and for Flowers;
 XI. There’s work for each in its own little world,
 And joy just the same as in ours.



THE MAJOR'S BIG-TALK STORIES. No. I.

BY F. BLAKE CROFTON.



"MANGO SEIZED THE BEAR FIRMLY BY THE TAIL."

In this story, the Major recounts an incident of his African travels, which is just nothing at all compared with certain other matters and events which have come to the knowledge of that remarkable man.

My negro gardener came to me one evening in great alarm, and stated that his twin sons, Mango and Chango, had taken out his gun that morning, and had been missing ever since. I at once loaded my rifle, loosed my Cuban blood-hound, and followed the man to his hut. There I put the dog upon the boys' scent, following on horseback myself.

It turned out that the young scamps had gone on the trail of a large bear, though they were only thirteen years old, and their father had often warned them not to meddle with wild beasts. They began their adventure by hunting the bear, but ended, as often happens, in being hunted by the bear: for Bruin had turned upon them, and chased them so hard that they were fain to drop the gun and take to a tree.

It was a sycamore of peculiar shape, sending forth from its stem many small, but only two large,

branches. These two were some thirty feet from the ground, and stretched almost horizontally in opposite directions. They were as like each other as the twin brothers themselves. Chango took refuge on one of these, Mango on the other.

The bear hugged the tree till he had climbed as far as the fork. There he hesitated an instant, and then began to creep along the branch which supported Chango. The beast advanced slowly and gingerly, sinking his claws into the bark at every step, and not depending too much upon his balancing powers.

Chango's position was now far from pleasant. It was useless to play the trick—well known to bear-hunters—of enticing the animal out to a point where the branch would yield beneath its great weight, for there was no higher branch within Chango's reach, by catching which he could save himself from a deadly fall,—thirty feet sheer.

Three more steps, and the bear would be upon him, or he would be upon the ground. Brave as the boy was, his teeth chattered.

At this moment, Mango, nerved to heroism by his brother's peril, moved rapidly from the opposite limb of the tree. Stepping behind the bear,

he grasped with one hand a small higher bough, which extended to where he stood, but not to where his brother lay; with the other hand, he seized the animal firmly by its stumpy tail. The bear turned to punish his rash assailant; but, angry as he was, he turned cautiously. It was no easy task to right-about-face on a branch which already had begun to tremble and sway beneath his weight.

Chango was saved, for the bear evidently had transferred his animosity to Mango, whom he pursued, step by step, toward the extremity of the other limb. But Chango was not the boy to leave his brother and rescuer in the lurch. Waiting until the enraged brute was well embarked upon Mango's branch, he pulled its tail, as he had seen his brother do before. Again Bruin turned awkwardly, and resumed the interrupted chase of Chango.

The twins continued their tactics with success. Whenever the bear was well advanced on one limb, and dangerously close to one twin, the other twin would sally from the other limb and pull his tail. The silly animal always would yield to his latest impulse of wrath, and suffer himself to be diverted from the enemy who was almost in his clutches.

After two hours of disappointment, he learned his mistake. He was now, for the tenth time, on Chango's branch, and very near Chango. In vain Mango dragged at his hinder extremity: he kept

grimly on till Mango, forced to choose between letting go the brute's tail or the higher branch which enabled him to keep his feet, let go the former.

Chango could now retreat no farther, and he was hardly a yard beyond the bear's reach. The branch was swaying more than ever, and the beast seemed quite aware that he might tax its strength too far. After a pause, he advanced one of his fore feet a quarter of a yard. To increase the bear's difficulty in seizing him, the terrified boy let himself down and swung with his hands from the bough.

He was hanging in suspense between two frightful deaths. His heart was sinking, his fingers were relaxing.

Then the deep baying of a hound struck his ear, and his hands again closed firmly on the branch. In a moment, a blood-hound and a horseman sprang through the underwood.

Chango held on like grim death,—held on till he heard the sharp report of a rifle ringing through the air; held on till the falling carcass of the bear passed before his eyes; held on till I had climbed the tree, crawled along the branch, and, grasping his wearied wrists, assisted him to get back to the fork of the tree, and rest a bit.

If that bear only had understood in time that a boy in the hand is worth two in the bush, he might have lengthened his days and gone down with honor to the grave!

HOW BO-PEEP'S SHEEP WERE FOUND.

BY GEO. J. VARNEY.

"Tr's drifted even full between the top of the house and the bank, and the sheep have n't come!" shouted Johnny, as he looked into the house, after breaking a path to the barn.

"Sheep 's in big snow-d'ift, I dess," wisely asserted little Jamie.

"I'm afraid they have run off and got lost, so we'll never see 'em again," mourned Bo-peep.

"May be they have found a sheltered place in the bushes somewhere," replied Johnny.

"Not much shelter out-of-doors from such a storm as this has been," said the mother, softly, as she cast an anxious glance out upon the snow-covered world.

The loss of their sheep, or even of three or four lambs, would be a serious matter to this fatherless

family; for the sale of the lambs and wool, and of the butter and eggs from one cow and a score of hens, was all they had to live upon, excepting what Johnny and Bo-peep earned picking blue-berries on the plains, in summer, and cranberries on the meadow, for a neighbor, in the autumn. They had a few acres of land, from which Johnny usually raised vegetables enough for the family, and cut hay sufficient for the cow and sheep. But the flock had increased, and this season the hay was falling short.

Only late in the day, before the storm, the sheep had been let out to nibble the coarse, green herbage that appeared in numerous patches, where the snow had melted away between the pines on the neighboring plains. It was usually Bo-peep's busi-

ness to watch them, and so it was on this occasion. But a little before dark she came running into the house, very much out of breath, exclaiming:

"Mother, the sheep are just as ugly as they can be! They would n't follow me, and when I tried to drive them home, they ran back, every way, and I could n't get them home, at all,—not one of 'em."

"Don't worry yourself, dear," said her mother; "sit down in the rocking-chair and rest. Johnny will go after them as soon as he comes."

Johnny did go after them, but—as we have already learned—without success; and so the sheep were out in the greatest snow-storm of the season.

"All this comes because Bo-peep got vexed with the sheep, and left 'em," said Johnny.

"We hope that she will learn to be more patient," replied their mother, stroking Bo-peep's head.

"Had n't you better run over to Mr. Brown's, Johnny, and see if the sheep did n't go in there?"

After shoveling a path to the well, and preparing more wood for the fire, Johnny went.

"No," said Mr. Brown, in reply to Johnny's question; "the sheep have n't been here, and I have n't seen or heard anything of 'em. When'd they go away?"

Johnny told him how they happened to be lost.

"Don't you worry about 'em. They 're in the bushes, somewhere. They 'll trample the snow down around 'em, so as to get at the bushes. If 'twas only among birch and beech bushes, now, those sheep would get along well enough,—but among these saplin' pines—I don' know. I hope that the wolves, they tell of down river, wont be prowlin' around this way. They 're dreful cre'tur's to kill sheep."

Johnny started for home, feeling more hopeless and sad than when he had come. It was now certain that the sheep and young lambs were stuck in the snow somewhere on the woody plains. Johnny had intended to search the thickets on his way home; but when he left the ridge along which the road ran, the deep snow so clogged and bound him, that he made but little progress, and was at length forced to go home without the least token of the missing flock. Bo-peep cried when she heard Johnny's report, and her mother could scarcely keep back the tears when she thought that if they should lose their flock, they could not make the payments due on their little homestead.

The larger part of the next day was spent by Johnny in going from hill to hill, and in climbing trees, where he peered into every vista, and listened to every sound,—if, by good fortune, he might catch a glimpse of a fleece, or the faintest

bleating of sheep or lamb. Several times he did hear bleats, but so smothered that he could not tell whence they proceeded, or so distant that he supposed they came from a neighbor's flock.

The day after the storm had been warm, and this was warmer still, melting the snow away in some spots; but toward night the wind changed, and the air grew very cool; and Johnny hastened home to do up the evening chores.

By day-break the next morning he was out-of-doors. He found, as he had expected, a crust upon the snow firm enough to bear him. Having milked the cow and fed the hens, he sat down with his mother to their breakfast; then, after brief devotions, he sallied out upon the piny plains.

The poor birds, which had come in numbers during the warm days when the snow was off, were now chilled and nearly famished. Johnny could see them, now and then, searching about in the great trees and in the thickets for the least morsel of food. Several times he caught sight of rabbits, hopping about the copses, or sitting, with long ears erect, and large, wondering eyes, as if to inquire and hear "why in the world the boy was staring about in these woods."

Now a fish-hawk sailed slowly over, high in air; and, yonder, a straggling flock of crows hurried toward some unseen point, for some unknown purpose.

Everything looked so cheerful when he started, that Johnny had confidently expected success; but, as noon drew nigh, the softening crust yielded more and more under his feet, and he grew weary and despondent. He had searched in an ever-widening circle about the spot where the sheep were last seen,—but not a track nor token of them had yet been discovered.

Hungry and weary, he turned toward home, with a choking feeling in his throat, and sometimes with misty eyes.

Though he now broke through the crust at every step, the snow was rarely more than knee-deep; but there was a snowy gully to cross, in the bottom of which ran, usually, a small rivulet, now a deep stream. A fallen tree enabled him to cross this without a wetting. The top led him into a spur of the main gully,—deep, narrow, and shaded by great pines. This had been drifted full of snow, which, owing to its shaded position, had thawed but little. Johnny threw himself flat upon the mass, and began to crawl along, thinking that thus he would not sink, as he must if he stood upon his feet.

Between him and the fringe of bushes some twenty feet distant, marking the edge of the bank, the snow had sunken away in a saucer-like cavity; and in the very center of this appeared a small

opening. Johnny feared there was a spring, or quagmire, underneath, into which he might fall; he therefore turned to make a wide circuit of the spot.

Too late! He suddenly found the snow breaking

creatures under the loose snow his fall had thrown over him. Lambs bleated in affright; and Johnny perceived that he had tumbled into the midst of a flock of sheep.

They had come into this shady hollow for shelter



JOHNNY BRINGS THE SHEEP OUT OF THE GULLY.

away beneath him, and before he could throw himself upon a firmer part, or grasp a bough, he found that he was falling rapidly down, together with a great mass of snow. Confused and blinded, amid the snowy avalanche, for some moments he could not discern where he was. He was not in the water; but there was rapid movement of living

from the storm, and been buried under the drifting snow. The warmth of their bodies had soon thawed away a cavity, the snow had settled, and a large breathing-hole had formed above them.

So here were the lost sheep and lambs, all huddled together in the gully, snug and warm. The snow had melted from the mossy and porous

soil, and the shrubs and herbage were all gnawed close. The sheep might still be hungry, but they were not starving.

Pretty soon all had shaken themselves out from the fallen snow, so that each one could be plainly seen. Johnny counted them; none were missing, except one weakly lamb. How to get them out, now, was the question. He trod steps for himself, up the bank of snow, but the sheep would not follow; so he went home, rather late for dinner, but with a heart so merry, that it was as good as a feast.

After dinner, he repaired again to the gully,

carrying a dish of salt, agreeable to flocks after green forage. He gave each of the sheep a taste, then put a little on each step, and the ewes all followed him up, and the lambs after them,—only he had to bring two or three. One, the weakest, he carried all the way home. So they went home in regular procession; first Johnny with the salt-dish in his hand and a lamb in his arms; then two ewes and a lamb; then a ewe and two lambs.

It was a pleasant sight to this humble family,—who certainly ate their bread and milk that night with gladness of heart.

EASTER IN ROME.

BY LILLIAN GILBERT BROWNE.

IN the old days of Rome, when the Pope was absolute ruler, and before the present King of Italy lived there with his sweet, young wife, Holy Week, the last week in Lent, which ends with Easter Sunday, used to be celebrated so prettily that strangers went from far and near to see the spectacle. There were all sorts of processions in the streets, fine music in the churches, ceremonies in the great basilica of St. Peter, and everybody looked happy; for the Italians seem a great deal more like grown-up children than like men and women. They are fond of all bright, pleasant things, and though it is their religion to observe the rites of Holy Week, the doing so gladdens them, for other reasons.

But all these ceremonies cease at the close of Easter Sunday, which is made a sort of beautiful climax to the week of celebrations. Everybody who can get there hurries to St. Peter's, the largest church in the world, you know, and the one you see illuminated in the picture. There all the most important ceremonies take place, and everybody wants to see them. St. Peter's is on the right bank of the muddy Tiber, which flows swiftly through Rome, dividing the city somewhat as the river Seine divides the city of Paris. The largest portion of the town, where most of the people live, is on the left side of the river; so when they go to St. Peter's—and that is very often—they have to cross the bridge of St. Angelo, as the picture shows. The Castle of St. Angelo is the big round fortress you see at the right; and from there a street leads directly to the great place, or piazza, as the Italians call it, before St. Peter's.

At each corner of the front of the church begins a grand covered walk, called a colonnade. For some

distance this covered walk, which has four rows of handsome pillars to support the roof, comes straight from the front of the church. Then it curves out into an oval form, and nearly surrounds the open place, which would otherwise be a square. Looking down from the roof of the church, the colonnades seem like great stone sickles, the handles joining the building, and the blades—the points toward each other—inclosing the piazza. The colonnades, favorite places for the Romans to walk in when the piazza is sunny and hot, are always crowded when the people are waiting to see or attend any of the famous ceremonials of the church.

St. Peter's itself is so big, so much bigger than any church you and I have ever seen in this country, that I am afraid you would get very little idea of it if I should say it was 696 feet at its longest part, and 450 feet at its widest. It is built, like most Roman churches, in the form of a cross, and just over the part where the arms of the cross, or transept, separate from the body of the cross, or nave, rises the great dome, which is 403 feet from the floor to the top. Beside this great dome, are two lesser but not little ones, and six, I think, really small ones; and it was the lighting of all of them which made St. Peter's so magnificent on Easter Sunday evening.

On Easter Sunday morning, there used to be a service in St. Peter's, in which the Pope took part. The great interior was crowded with ladies and gentlemen, the ladies all wearing black dresses and veils, and the gentlemen, evening dress or handsome uniforms. There was beautiful music, and chanting by the priests; and after it was over, the Pope was lifted in his great chair of state, and



EASTER IN ROME—ILLUMINATION OF ST. PETER'S AND FLIGHT OF ROCKETS.

borne on the shoulders of men in a long procession from the church. About noon he appeared on the gallery in front of the big dome and over the great door of the church, and looking down on the crowds in the piazza below, gave them his blessing.

This was a very pretty sight. The place was full of people; fathers, mothers, girls and boys, babies held up in their mothers' arms, and little bits of toddling children, all dressed in their best, with bright-colored garments and shining chains and rings—the Italians love jewelry, and wear all they can get—all looking bright and happy, waiting patiently for the Pope to come. Even the strangers who did not think as he did were glad to see him, for he was a gentle, kindly old man, and looked very handsome, standing above the people in his white robe and rich, red cloak.

But the most splendid part of the festival was when, just at dusk, the whole church of St. Peter's was illuminated, as you see in the picture, by forty-four hundred lamps. These were hung on all the pillars of the portico, the corners of the walls, the angles of the domes—wherever, in fact, the line of light could bring out the shape of the building. Even the great cross on the big bronze ball at the top of the large dome looked like a cross of fire. If the evening were dark, the stone walls of the building seemed to disappear, and a monster cage of flame to stand in its place.

About an hour and a quarter after sunset, when the people had begun to grow tired of this spectacle, 250 workmen would, in almost as little time as it takes to tell it, change the lamps for blazing torches. This was the most imposing sight of the day, and the people waited for it patiently for hours. It was well worth seeing, too. Travelers stood in the streets, side by side with the Romans, that they might witness what they could never witness in their own countries. Perhaps the sight will never be observed in Rome again, because for some years before the gentle old Pope, Pio Nono, died, and ever since the new Pope, Leo X., was chosen, the custom of illuminating St. Peter's has been discontinued.

Those who have seen it know how beautiful it was, and how delighted the Roman people were after spending the day in idly wandering about the city; whole families together visiting, chattering, and enjoying the sunshine, with the illuminations, and the fire-works that sometimes rose high over the gloomy castle of St. Angelo, and fell into the dark, hurrying river.

The castle of St. Angelo was built by the Emperor Hadrian, for a tomb for himself and his descendants, and for a long time their remains were placed there. But when the Goths came down from Germany, they turned it into a fortress, without asking anybody's leave, and a fortress it has remained ever since.

"DAFFY-DOWN-DILLY."

BY SUSAN HARTLEY.

POOR little Daffy-down-Dilly!

She slept with her head on a rose,
When a sly moth miller kissed her,
And left some dust on her nose.

Poor little Daffy-down-Dilly!

She woke when the clock struck ten,
And hurried away to the Fairy Queen's ball,
Down in the shadowy glen.

Poor little Daffy-down-Dilly!

Right dainty was she and fair,
In her bodice of yellow satin,
And petticoat green and rare.

But to look in her dew-drop mirror,

She quite forgot when she rose,
And into the Queen's high presence
Tripped with a spot on her nose.

Then the little knight who loved her—

O, he wished that he were dead,
And the Queen's maid began to titter,
And tossed her saucy head.

And up from her throne so stately,
The wee Queen rose in her power,
Just waved her light wand o'er her,
And she changed into a flower.

Poor little Daffy-down-Dilly!

Now in silver spring-time hours
She wakes in the sunny meadows,
And lives with the other flowers.

Her beautiful yellow bodice

With green skirts wears she still,
And the children seek and love her,
But they call her Daffodil.

KITTY'S MOTHER.

BY A. G. PLYMPTON.

I WONDER if any one thinks how tiresome it is to be a little girl, and how perfectly horrid a girl's mother can be, if she chooses? No; that's the worst about grown people, they never seem to suspect that there is anything out of the way about them. They are saints in white, of course. Ah, but Kitty's mother! She is perfectly splendid.

I don't know Kitty's mother very well, but they live in a "splendiferous" big house next to ours, and I often hear what goes on at the other side of the fence.

My mother makes me wait on her all day long. It's "Mary Jane, just put on your hat and run down to Bennet's, and see why they don't send the coal"; or, "Mary Jane, step 'round to Hazleton's, and tell them to send me a peck of potatoes." Very nice, to be sure. Why don't she "just run round to Bennet's," or "step into Hazleton's" herself, if it's such a trifle.

Kitty's mother says: "Don't wear yourself out carrying that heavy parasol. Let Eliza hold it over your head, love." I heard her as they were walking in the garden.

Imagine my mother thinking that I could wear myself out. No, not though I ran errands and tended baby, and ran up and down stairs all day long.

And oh, once I was in the toy-shop, and Kitty and her mother came in, and her mother did actually say, "Don't you see anything here that you would like, Kitty, dear?" And "Kitty, dear," like a simpleton, said, "No, mamma."

I wish my mother would let me call her "mamma," it sounds so stylish, and makes you feel just like a girl in a book; but she says "mother" is the most beautiful name in the world. I'm sure, I don't think so.

People say that I'm not a good little girl, and I think it's because I'm not brought up judiciously. It spoils a child's disposition to be constantly thwarted, and that's why I do a great many things that are bad. That's why I tear my clothes so often, and make up faces behind people's backs. I'm aggravated. If my mother was not so strict about my going to school, I think I should be a much better girl. I'll tell you how I have to manage when I don't want to go. I get the twins, and begin the most interesting play that ever was. Just as we get all ready to have the party, or get into the cars for a journey, or something exciting, I stop short and say: "I can't play any more now;

it's school time." Then Lucy sets up the most awful howl, and as she has been sick, it is n't good for her to cry, so if mother's pretty busy, and can't 'tend to her, she says: "Perhaps you had better stay at home to-day, Mary Jane. Lucy is so fretful, and will have to be amused." And then I get them into the yard, and run away and have a good time by myself. I know it is n't right, but I'm aggravated to it.

But what I particularly like about Kitty's mother is that she is so interested in everything you do, and is so encouraging. Now, there is that composition I wrote, and mother snubbed so. At least, she said I had better try something more simple, and would n't let me give it in. It begins: "It was a beautiful spring morning, and all nature seemed to blend with one accord into each other." Well, I always thought it was real good, and when I read it to Kitty's mother, she said she thought it was beautiful, and that I would turn out a famous authoress.

All this I wrote one day in my journal. It is dated May 21st, 1879, a year ago, so now I can tell you what happened afterward when I had a chance to compare Kitty's mother with my own.

One day, Kitty's mother came to see mine. I supposed that she had come to make a call, and I thought that was splendid, 'cause I believed that she might influence her to bring me up as she did Kitty. But, oh, she had an object in coming that I never should have dreamt of. She wanted to adopt me for a companion for Kitty. I was in the room when she told my mother so, and my heart bounced, I can tell you.

I thought mother looked amused at first, and she put her hand under my chin to hold my face up to hers, and said: "Do you want to leave your mother, dear?" I really believe she thought I would n't want to go.

When I said, "Oh, mother, do let me," a great blush came over her face. "I will think it over," she said, quietly, to Kitty's mother, "and I'll let you know my decision."

She had a long talk with father when he came home. I don't think he approved of my going, but after the twins were in bed and baby asleep, she came into my room, and told me that she had concluded to let me try it for a month, while she and the children paid a visit to grandpa.

I could hardly believe my senses, for I never

supposed she would let me go, and I was wild with delight. "Kitty's mother is a perfect love," I declared, and mother kissed me gently and left me.

In just a week, I began to be Kitty's mother's little girl. My trunk was carried over to the big



MARY JANE AND THE TWINS.

house, and I kissed my mother,—my first mother you know, and the twins, and carried the baby by to the carriage that was to take them to the station, and after seeing it drive away, I followed Kitty to my splendid new home.

I had never been in the house before. When I had seen Kitty and her mother, it had always been in the garden or the little summer-house near our own home. That is where I read my composition to them, and learned to think Kitty's mother perfection. But now I entered the tiled hall, and walked through the elegant rooms on either side of it. It just turned my head to think of living there.

"Now we'll go upstairs, and you shall see the room that has been prepared for you," said my mamma.

"Yes, mamma, said Mary Jane, tossing her golden curls as she glided down the marble hall." This I said out loud, but I intended to say only "yes, mamma," the rest came out before I knew it. You see, I was pretending I was in a book.

Kitty's mother laughed outright. "You are the most amusing child," said she; "but I should think being called Mary Jane would take the poetry out of anything."

"It does," said I, eagerly. "I want to be called May Jennie instead. Then I would be happy."

So May Jennie I became. In two or three days, I almost forgot that I ever had been called Mary Jane at all. My new mother was just elegant, I thought, and there were no errands and no baby. I did not know just what to make of Kitty. She was not a bit like me or any girl I knew.

When I played with her it always reminded me of the day I was shut up in the spare chamber, and made believe that my image in the glass was another little girl and tried to play with it. She would do just what I did, but she would never do anything first. She did not care to play much, anyway. Her mother said that she was too delicate, and I felt that I ought to be too delicate, too. At first, it was great fun to pretend to be too feeble to move, and call a servant every time I wanted anything; but I got very tired of that sort of

thing, by and by. One day I said to Kitty's mother:

"I should like to just go and splash around in a mud-puddle as I used to do when I was Mary Jane Hunt."

I thought she never would let me, on account of my fine clothes, but she said "I am afraid you can't find a mud-puddle, there has been so little rain lately; but you can tell Thomas to take the horse and make one for you."

I could not help laughing at this plan. "I should feel pretty cheap to do that. I think I'll get a book and read instead."

"There," said she, "that just proves my theory. You never would have cared to do such things, if your mother had not been so strict. The fact is, she does not know how to bring up children. Why, my dear, how warm you look!"

I suppose I did look warm. I felt mad. Why should she go and talk in that way about my mother? To be sure, I had complained about her to myself when I was Mary Jane Hunt, and grumbled because she made me run errands, and amuse the baby, and pick up threads off the carpet, but —

About this time I began to think it was very queer I had received no letters from mother. It's

true I had not asked her to write to me, because I had n't thought anything about it then. I longed to hear what they were doing at grandpa's. So one day I sat down and wrote:

DEAR MOTHER: Why don't you write to me? I want to know if the twins cry as much as usual, and if the baby is as cross now that his tooth is through. I'm having a splendid time.

Then this I scratched out and wrote instead:

This is a very handsome house indeed. Does grandpa let the children ride old Whitey, and does Aunt Prue make many doughnuts? I can eat just as much cake as I want to, here; but they don't have any doughnuts. I don't see why. Do write soon to your
MAY JANE.

When the answer came, it was a real short one. Mother said the children had all gone huckleberrying,—(Oh don't I like to go huckleberrying!)—and she never wrote a word about seeing me again. I thought she would say when she was coming home, and how glad she would be to see me when the month was over. Could it be that she expected me to live with Kitty's mother always? I sat right down and cried at the thought of it.

I made my eyes so red, that Kitty's mother declared that I should receive no more letters.

"It just upsets you," said she, "and besides, when a person adopts a child, she does n't expect the relatives to meddle with it."

Meddle! I began to think I hated Kitty's mother.

I told the truth when I wrote that I could have all the cake I wanted, for Kitty and I used to have lots of it. I don't believe it agreed with me, for before that month was over I became real ill. Now I knew why Kitty did n't care to play, and preferred to loll all day on the lounge. I could n't hold my head up, and I felt as cross as a bear. Oh, how I did snap at people if they spoke to me!

Of course, I would not take any of the medicines prescribed for me, for I never do until my mother makes me. And Kitty's mother only laughed when I flung them away. She did n't seem to try to do anything to make me more comfortable; but left me entirely in Eliza's hands. I began to feel the value of the mother I had left. All day long I cried for her, till that hateful Eliza said: "Lor', miss, I would n't be crying for her, she is n't half so illigant as your new ma."

Oh dear, I did feel so mad and so sick, I could n't think of anything half horrid enough to say to her. I could only lie there and cry.

I suppose I must have been pretty sick. I know I felt horrid. How I wished I was healthy Mary

Jane Hunt again, with the baby and the errands, and the strict mother thrown in.

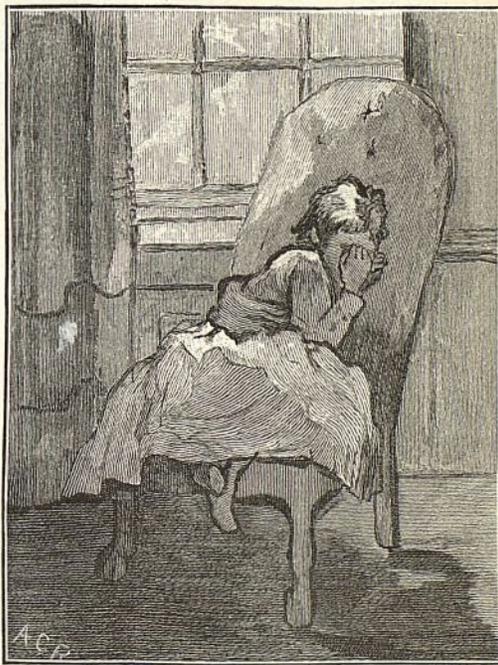
"She is a hundred million times better than Kitty's mother, after all," I sobbed to the pillow.

When the doctor came, and inquired for Miss May Jennie, I screamed out that my name was Mary Jane Hunt, and I suppose he must have thought I was raving.

But Eliza explained that that was my real name, and May Jennie only my new name I had taken, and all about my coming there to live.

He was n't the regular family doctor, for he had gone out of town, but I thought this one must be just as good, and better, too, when he took my hand and said: "Oh, ho! so that 's the trouble, is it? Well, Miss Mary Jane, we must get you back to your own mother. That 's the kind of medicine you need." And so a telegram was dispatched that very night to Mrs. Deborah Hunt, and the next morning I was lying in her dear, kind arms.

I had to take my medicines regularly after that, and I got well, but I think the reason was because



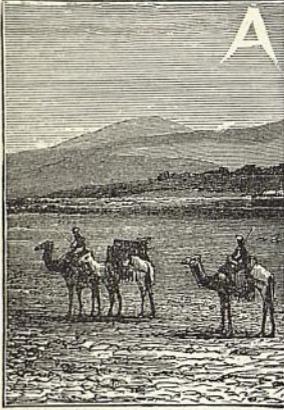
"I SAT RIGHT DOWN AND CRIED."

I had got back to my own mother again, and the doctor thinks so, too.

And now, if any one wants to make me real mad, they have only to call me May Jennie, or ask me if I don't wish my mother was like Kitty's mother.

NAPOLEON AND THE YOUNG EGYPTIAN.

BY COLONEL T. A. DODGE.



ALI BANU, Sheik of Alexandria, was universally beloved and respected for his great riches and generous charities. But the Sheik was not a happy man. Ten years before the beginning of our story, he had lost his only son, a lad twelve years old. It was at the time when the French were waging war in Egypt, under the leadership of Napoleon. Ali Banu was a wise and prudent man, but his sympathies were with his brethren in the faith, and one day his son, Kairam, was taken prisoner and held as a hostage of the Sheik's good behavior.

Soon after, the French, or Franks, as they were called, unexpectedly left the country, and, it was supposed, carried Kairam with them.

Ali Banu was nearly broken-hearted, but he was a pious Mussulman, and instead of wrapping himself in his gloom, he went about, though with sad heart and downcast mien, doing good. Every year, on the anniversary of his son's abduction, he gave away much money to the poor, and freed twelve of his slaves.

One day, a Dervish foretold that on the same day of the year as that on which Kairam had been lost, the lad would once again be found.

Henceforth, Ali Banu would always garnish his house on this sad day, invite his friends, and await his long-yearned-for son. And upon the tenth anniversary the following events occurred.

The guests were all assembled, and the group of slaves who were to be freed sat upon a carpet in the center of the great hall. After refreshments had been handed about, the slaves, according to custom, drew lots as to who should entertain the guests with story-telling. The lot fell upon a youth, who had attracted much attention by his noble bearing and manly beauty. He had been purchased at a great price a few days before, but as he was at about the age at which Ali Banu's son should have arrived, the Sheik gave him his freedom at this early day. He arose, and having bowed low to the company, began as follows:

"Oh, master! On the vessel of that Algerian slave-trader from whose hands your generous purse freed me some days since, was a young man, of about my own age, who seemed out of place in the slave's dress which he wore. He was called Almansor, and as we passed a great deal of our time together, I became familiar with his history.

"Almansor, whose father was a man of note in a large town in Egypt, had passed his youth in happiness, surrounded by all the comfort which wealth procures. His father had taken special care with his education, and he had enjoyed the instruction of a sage, of great reputation, who taught him everything which it becomes a young man of his position to know. Almansor was about eleven years old, when the Franks came across the sea and made war upon his people.

"The boy's father must have been considered a great enemy to the Franks, for one day they burst into his house, seized upon his son, and carried him away to their camp as a hostage.

"No harm happened to young Almansor among the Franks; he was treated well, as far as food, drink, and clothing went, but his homesick prayers and tears to be sent back to his father were in vain; he was told that he must remain as a hostage of his father's good-will.

"All at once, orders came for the troops to march toward the coast, to re-embark and leave the country. Almansor now expected to be liberated, but he was obliged to embark with the army. He was told that it had not been possible to send him home from the place where they had embarked, and that if he had been left behind he would have perished miserably; and they promised that if he was a good boy, he soon should see his home again.

"But the Franks did not keep their word, for after many days' sailing, when they finally landed, they were not in Egypt, but in France, and the poor lad's heart sank within him. For two weeks he marched with the army into the interior. Finally, the army arrived at a great city, which was the end of their march, and Almansor was handed over to a doctor, who took him to his house.

"The doctor obliged him first to put on Frankish clothes, which were a poor exchange for the flowing robes worn in Egypt. Then he was no longer allowed to cross his arms over his breast, and make the usual salutation of the believers; but when he wanted to address any one, he was taught

to lift the detestable, stiff, black hat that all Franks wear, and bow his head. Nor was he allowed to sit with his legs crossed beneath him, as was the custom at home; but he had to use high-legged chairs, and let his feet hang down to the ground, a position which cost him much discomfort. And eating was a matter of no less difficulty; for everything he ate he was obliged to convey to his mouth on an implement of iron, as awkward as it was dangerous.

"It is probable that he would have entirely forgotten his native tongue, but for the kindness of a certain old Professor.

"This old man was very learned, knew many of the languages of the East, and was paid much money by the Franks for teaching them in the public schools. He was an intimate friend of the doctor, and obtained permission for young Almansor to visit his house twice a week and spend the day. When, on these occasions, he arrived at the Professor's residence, the old man would give him a suit of Egyptian clothes to put on, and being himself similarly attired, he would take him by the hand and lead him to a great room, where all kinds of Oriental trees and plants were growing in large boxes, and where there were carpets spread for them to sit upon, with soft and luxurious cushions, such as Almansor had been used to have at home. A servant in eastern dress would wait upon them with sherbet and other eastern delicacies, while another would stand beside his master with a dictionary, to aid the Professor when a word failed him; and thus they would spend the afternoon, chatting in the beautiful eastern tongues that he and young Almansor were in common acquainted with.

"My poor comrade had lived in this way five years or more in the great city, when a circumstance happened which greatly influenced his future. These Franks had chosen for their Emperor that leader with whom Almansor had so often spoken in Egypt, when he was first taken to the camp. Almansor was not aware of this fact, for he had only seen the coronation processions and ceremonies from a distance, and had no idea that so young a man as he remembered this leader to have been could rise in so short a time to so eminent a position. But one day, as he was going across one of the bridges of the city, he saw a man dressed in a plain uniform such as soldiers wear in that country, leaning on the parapet, and looking thoughtfully over into the water. No sooner did Almansor's eye fall upon this man, than he recognized him as an officer of the Franks who had been very kind to him in Egypt, and who, he had always felt sure, would have sent him home if he had known of his detention after the embarkation of the army. So the youth at once approached the man,

crossed his arms upon his breast, and addressed him by the name he had gone by in the army. 'Salaam alaicum, Petit-Caporal!' said he.

"The soldier turned about with an air of much surprise, looked at the lad, bethought himself a moment, and then exclaimed:

"'Heavens! is this possible? *You* here, Almansor! How is your father? How go matters in Egypt? What has brought you here?'

"Poor Almansor could not restrain his emotion. He began to weep bitterly, and said to the man: 'So you do not know what your wicked countrymen have done to me? Don't you know that I have not seen the land of my fathers for many weary years?'

"'I hope,' replied the man, and his brow clouded up, 'I hope they did not carry you away from Egypt with my army, Almansor?'

"'Why, to be sure they did,' answered Almansor, amid his tears. 'On the day your soldiers embarked, I saw Egypt for the last time; since when I have been servant to a hard-hearted doctor. But, look you here, Petit-Caporal,' he continued, and a smile of hope broke through the gloom upon his face; 'it is very lucky that I have found you here. You will help me, will you not?'

"The man smiled, and asked in what manner he could help the boy.

"'Why, don't you see,' said little Almansor, 'I cannot ask any money of you, for I know you are poor, you wear such plain clothes; but you are a soldier, and, I dare say, you know some of the officers of this Emperor the Franks have chosen. Now, could n't you say a good word for me to some of them, so that I may get sent back to Egypt? My father will pay you handsomely for it, I know.'

"'Come with me, then,' said the soldier, 'and perhaps I can aid you at once.'

"'What, now?' cried poor Almansor, frightened. 'Oh, no! I can't come now, else I should be late, and the doctor would beat me; I must hurry and get back home.'

"The soldier seemed touched by the boy's sad story. 'Never mind the doctor,' said he; 'come with me, and be of good heart; the doctor shall not hurt you again.' With which words he took Almansor by the hand, and led him through many streets; and although his heart beat fast when he thought of his cruel master, there was an air of assurance in the soldier's face which comforted him not a little. But he could not explain why every one bowed so low to the soldier, and so many would stand still and gaze after them. He spoke of this to his companion, but he only laughed.

"At last, they arrived at a beautiful palace, into which the man led Almansor.

“‘Do you live here, Petit-Caporal?’ asked the boy.

“‘Yes, I live here,’ answered he, ‘and I will take you to my wife.’

“‘Oh, what a beautiful place! I suppose the Emperor gives you some rooms here, does n’t he, Petit-Caporal?’

“‘Yes, it is the Emperor who lets me live here,’ said the man, and led him into the palace. They mounted a broad flight of steps, entered a large anteroom, and thence proceeded along a beautifully decorated hall, to a small but richly furnished apartment, where, seated on a divan, was a lady. The soldier said a few words, in a foreign tongue, to her, whereupon they both indulged in a hearty laugh, and then the lady moved to Almansor, and asked him, in the Frankish language, many questions about Egypt, which the boy answered with alacrity and intelligence. Finally, the soldier interrupted them: ‘Perhaps, after all, Almansor,’ said he, ‘we may as well go and see the Emperor, now, and I will speak for you, myself.’

“Almansor was quite startled at the idea of seeing the Emperor in his present shabby guise, but he bethought himself of his wretchedness, and the chance of once again seeing his home. ‘I will go with you,’ he said. ‘But say, Petit-Caporal, what must I do when I see him? Must I kneel and touch the ground with my forehead, as they do in the East?’

“Both the soldier and his wife laughed immoderately at the question, and assured little Almansor that no such prostration was at all necessary.

“‘But what does he look like? Has he a long beard, and stern, flashing eyes? And does he look awfully grand and majestic?’ asked Almansor, trembling at the idea of seeing the Emperor face to face.

“‘I’ll leave you to guess who he is, from his looks,’ replied the soldier, taking him by the hand. ‘But I will tell you how you may recognize him. Everybody will take off his hat in the Emperor’s presence, while he alone remains covered.’

“With these words, he led the boy toward a saloon, where a morning business reception was being held. The nearer they got to the place, the faster poor Almansor’s heart beat, and his knees smote together with excitement and dread. A servant threw open the door of the hall, and they entered. There stood some fifty officers, all splendidly dressed, with stars and broad ribbons on their breasts, and Almansor thought it strange that his companion, who was dressed so plainly, should be allowed to be among these great personages. All had their heads uncovered, and Almansor began to look about for one with his hat on, for this must be the Emperor. But in vain; every one carried his

hat in his hand,—the Emperor could not be among them. He turned to ask the soldier when the Emperor would arrive, when, lo! the Petit-Caporal had not removed his hat from his head!

“Almansor was stupefied. He regarded his companion for a moment with a vacant stare, while a kindly smile stole over the latter’s face; when suddenly remembering that in his excitement he himself had retained his own cap, he hastily pulled it off, made a low bow, and said: ‘Salaam, alai-cum, Petit-Caporal! You are the only one who is covered—tell me, are *you* the Emperor?’

“‘You have guessed right,’ answered his companion; ‘and, moreover, I am your friend. Do not think you were brought over here with my knowledge or consent. The first ship that sails from here to Egypt shall take you home to your father.’

“Thus spoke the Emperor, and Almansor fell down before him, kissed his hand, and begged his forgiveness for not recognizing him at once, saying that he could scarcely have thought from his looks that he was the Emperor.

“‘That’s true,’ replied the Emperor, with a laugh. ‘In our country the head of the nation has not his rank emblazoned in his face and manners.’ Almansor retired with a servant, and from that day lived in the palace, in joyful anticipation of his return to the home of his ancestors. He revisited the old Professor once or twice, but never again saw the hard-hearted Doctor. After the lapse of several weeks, the Emperor sent for him and told him that a ship was lying at anchor, on board of which he would be sent home. Almansor was beside himself for joy. A few hours sufficed to make his preparations, and with a heart full of thankfulness, and boxes laden with presents, he took leave of the Petit-Caporal, and journeyed toward the sea.

“But it so happened that in those days another Frankish tribe, who lived on an island in the great sea, were at war with the Emperor, and captured all of his ships they could find at sea. And on the sixth day of the voyage the vessel upon which Almansor was sailing was shot at by a cruiser of the Britons (so is this other tribe called), and compelled to surrender. The crew were placed upon a smaller vessel, which followed in the wake of the cruiser, and the captured ship was set on fire. But the sea is no more secure than the desert, where caravans are so often attacked by robbers: a pirate from Tunis captured the smaller vessel, which had been separated from the large one by a storm, and putting all on board in the hold of his own ship, carried them to Algeria, and sold them into slavery.

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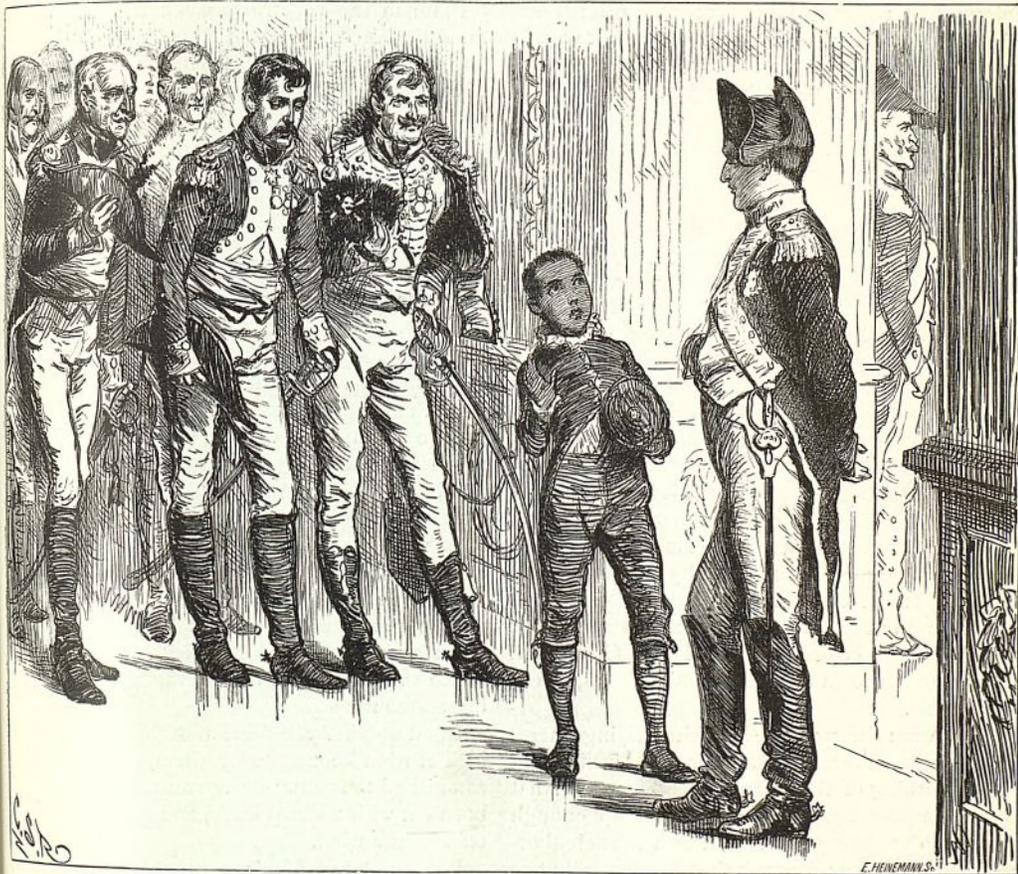
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slavery as the Christians, for he was a good Mussulman; but yet all hopes of again seeing his home and his father were dashed by this new calamity. He lived in Algiers, as gardener to a rich man, for five long years. At the end of this time his owner died without heirs, his property and slaves were sold, and Almansor was again cast into the hands of a slave-trader. About this time the trader hired a vessel, and placing his slaves, Almansor among the number, on board, sailed from Algeria. It was in Almansor's own country that the slave-

"It is your son, Kairam Almansor; for you are he who bought him!"

"Allah! Allah! A miracle! A wonder!" cried the guests, and crowded about the prostrate youth, while the Sheik, bereft of speech, stood intently gazing into the face which was lifted up toward him.

"My old friend, Mustapha," said he, at last, to a venerable dervish, who stood near him, "before my eyes there hangs a mist of tears, and I cannot trace his features. Tell me, is this my son?"



"ARE YOU THE EMPEROR?" EXCLAIMED ALMANSOR.

trader determined to sell his cargo; it was the slave-market of his native town in which Almansor was offered for sale, and it was his own, his beloved father, who purchased him!"

Sheik Ali Banu had listened with rapt attention and rising excitement to this strange tale; his breast heaved, his eye glistened, and he was often on the point of interrupting the narrative; but at its termination the youth could no longer restrain his emotion, and weeping for very joy, he fell at the Sheik's feet, exclaiming:

The old man stepped up, looked long and earnestly at the youth, who was now standing, laid one hand upon his forehead and the other on his shoulder, saying:

"Kairam, what was the proverb that in that luckless day when you were carried into the camp of the Franks, I gave you to remember?"

"My beloved teacher!" answered the youth, pressing the hand of the aged dervish to his heart; "it ran thus: 'If a man but love Allah, and have a good conscience, he will never be alone, even in

the desert of misery; for there go with him two companions, who steadfastly walk at his side."

The old man lifted up his eyes, and led the youth to the Sheik:

"Take him, Sheik Ali Banu," said he; "as surely as you have mourned him ten long years, so surely is he your son!"

The Sheik's heart overflowed with joy and content; he scarcely could remove his eyes from the face of his newly found son, whose features grew to him every moment more like those of the young wife he had loved, and he well remembered how Kairam had resembled his mother. All present joined him in his rejoicings; for the Sheik was so universally beloved, that each guest felt as if he had a large share in the father's joy.

Kairam explained that he had not made himself known immediately on his arrival at his old home, because he had heard of the prophecy of the old dervish, and of his father's custom of remembering the anniversary of his son's loss, and so had thought it well to wait until that day to tell his story. Mirth and feasting once more rang through the halls of Ali Banu's house. Again and again the youth was entreated to tell his story in all its details, and each one praised the old Professor and the Emperor, and all who had taken an interest in Kairam's welfare. The company remained together till late in the night, and when at last they separated the Sheik presented each friend with a costly gift by which he might remember the happy day of the return of his only son.

THE GAME OF KITE-CUTTING.

BY F. D. CLARKE.



I WISH to tell the boys about a game I learned to play when I was a boy. I hope it will not be thought a very rough game, for if it is played fairly there is a great deal of fun in it. It is a game played with kites, by Mexicans and Cubans. It was a bright afternoon in March when I first found out about it. I took my kite and went out to fly it. I crossed the San Pedro Creek to a hill west of the town of San Antonio, Texas, where I then lived.

There were dozens of other kites flying there. In fact, it was a favorite place for kite-cutting, but I knew nothing of that then. I had been in that part of Texas some time, and picked up enough Spanish to get along pretty well with the neighboring Mexicans, who all speak that language, but as it had not been "kite-time" since I came I knew nothing of "cutters."

I soon had my kite high above all the others. The other fellows were running about a good deal, but I thought that was because they did not put up their kites high enough to catch a steady wind. Presently a Mexican boy whom I knew came toward me with his kite about twenty yards up in the air.

"*Tiene usted navajas*" (have you any knives?) he sang out as soon as he came within hearing. I thought he wanted to borrow my knife, as I did

not notice he had said "knives," so I said "yes." Just then I caught sight of a kite which had broken its string, as I then thought, and I was so much interested in watching it fall that I forgot all about my Mexican.

When I looked at him again he had got, as the sailors say, "dead to windward" of me, with his kite a short distance over my string. Suddenly letting out a few feet of cord and running sideways, he brought the tail of his kite down across my string, and gave a quick pull on his own, which caused his kite to rise rapidly, dragging its tail across my string.

I had watched all these movements without an idea of what he meant by them, and was greatly astonished to see my string come in two as if it had been cut with a sharp knife, and my kite go sailing off with the wind.

I thought my Mexican friend must have had something to do with it, but I could not see just how. I had no time, however, to wait for explanations, but started off after my kite, which was carried so far that I had a run of nearly a mile before I recovered it.

As I was winding up my string, Alfred, one of my school-mates, a boy who had been born in the town and knew all the customs, came up and said, with a laugh:

"So you got cut, did you? You were foolish to let your kite go up so high."

"What do you mean?" I asked, in surprise.

"Did that Mexican cut my string? How did he do it, then?"

"Of course he cut it. Have n't you cutters on your kite?"

"Cutters on my kite!" I exclaimed. "What are cutters?"

"Why! Don't you know? Cutters are things made of glass, you know. You fasten them on your kite's tail and cut other fellows' strings with them."

I suppose I showed by my looks that I was considerably puzzled, for Alfred added:

"Wind up your string and come back where the other fellows are and I will show you. It was not fair in Santiago to cut you if you had on no cutters. A kite without cutters is considered out of the game."

When we reached the Mexican boy, Alfred translated my demand to know why he had cut my kite.

"Why," he answered, "I asked him if he had on cutters, and he said 'yes.'"

"No, he didn't," I said. "He asked me if I had a knife and I said 'yes,' and was waiting for him to come and get it when he cut my kite-string."

When I had got this far I noticed that Alfred was laughing. He said a few words in Spanish to the Mexican, and he began to laugh too. I anxiously waited for Alfred to tell me the joke.

"You did not understand," he said. "When Santiago said '*tiene usted navajas*' (have you any knives), he meant 'have you any cutters on your kite?' When you told him 'yes,' you declared yourself ready to fight, and he had a right to cut you if he could."

I soon had my kite up again, and, while we were sitting watching it, Alfred explained all about cutters to me. His explanation must have been good, for I soon became one of the most expert cutter-makers in the town.

As we sat and talked, several boys came up with their kites and cried out to us, "*Tiene usted navajas*," or "Got on any cutters," according to their nationality. When they found that we had none, they always went off, though I know their hearts must have ached at the sight of my tempting kite so high up that I would have had no chance to defend myself.

But now I must tell you how cutting is done, and the best way for me to tell you will be to describe one of my cutting-kites.

This veteran war-kite was a six-sided one, about two feet and a half long. The frame was made of thin pieces of southern cane, and while very light was very strong. This was covered with paper cambric. Paper would have been lighter,

but this was a cutting-kite, and one fall into a bush would ruin a paper kite, but would not hurt one of cloth. The tail was made of pieces of soft cloth, about one inch wide and eight inches long, securely knotted in the middle to a strong twine string. The end of the tail was finished by a neat tassel.

I took great pride in this kite, so I had each foot or two of her tail made of a different color. Just above the tassel was the place where I put the best set of cutters I could get. Half-way up the tail was another set. Some boys would have many more sets of cutters, but I always thought two sets were enough; in fact, I often only used the set at the end of the tail.

These cutters were made of glass. I would get a thick glass bottle and a case-knife. The bottle was broken off below the neck, and then I would begin to chip off the glass by tapping the bottle with the back of the knife. Pretty soon off would come a long, keen splinter of glass, thick and strong on the back, which had been the outside of the bottle, but as sharp as a razor on the inside. This was a cutter. They were usually shaped like a scythe-blade. Some of the boys made them by tapping the bottle against a smooth stone, but I had better luck with a knife.

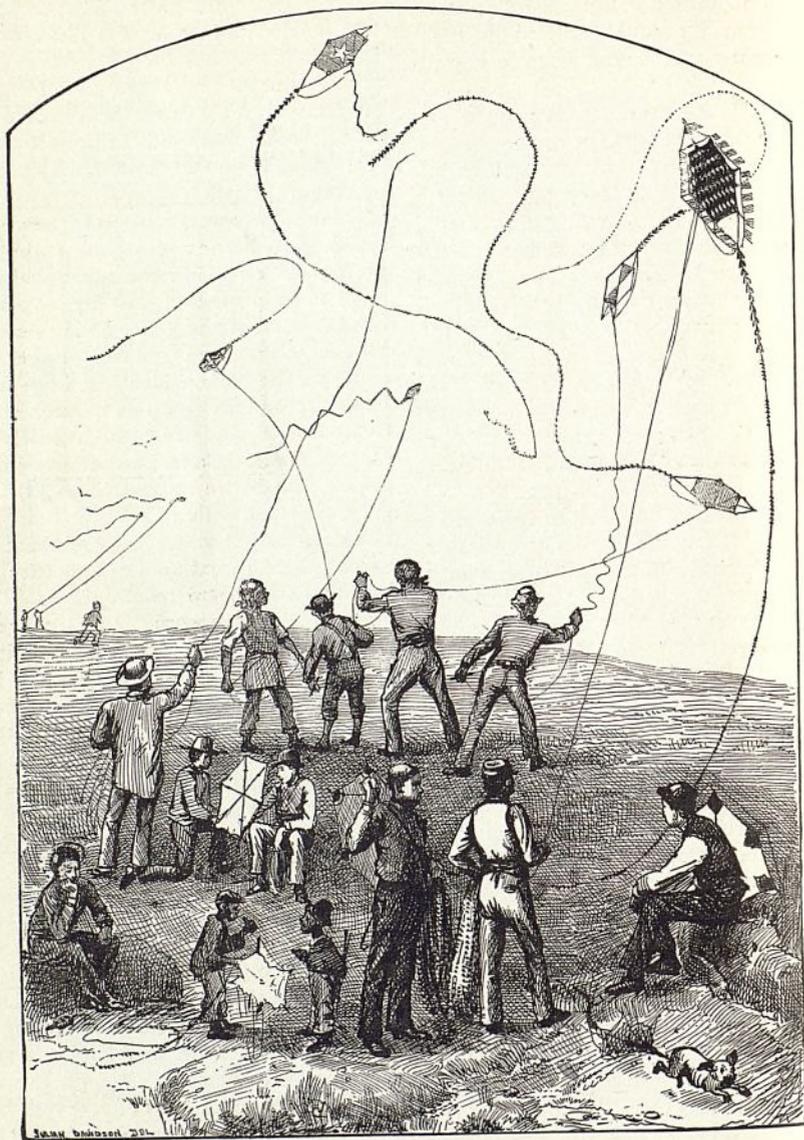
When I had made as many of these cutters as I needed, or had used up all the bottles I could get, I would go home to mount them. This was the hardest part of the work. I took four short pieces of reed, shaved so thin that they would bend easily, and put them together lengthwise, with two cutters between each two, at right angles to each other and to the reeds. Each cutter would then point in a different direction. The pieces of reed were then wrapped with string, so that they would hold the cutters firmly; and where there was any danger of the string coming against the edge of a cutter, a little raw cotton was used to protect it. This made what we called "a set of cutters." Then this set had to be fastened to the tail of the kite in such a way, that when the tail was dragged across a kite's string there would be no danger of the string slipping between the pieces of reed and the tail of the kite. If it did this, instead of cutting the string your kite would soon be hanging from it, head down, perfectly helpless. I used to manage this by putting the upper ends of my reeds between the ends of one of the pieces of cloth that formed the tail, and tying all smoothly down to the reeds.

Now you know how the cutters are made and fastened on, the next thing is to tell you how to use them.

With a good, steady breeze, you must put your kite up about twenty yards, and have your ball of string so arranged that you can let out or pull in, as you wish. Your object is to bring your kite's

tail across the string of your opponent, and so cut it, letting his kite fly off. You have the right to cut every other kite that carries cutters, and you are fair game for any of them; but you are bound in honor, of course, not to interfere with those who you know are not armed.

A certain bend of the creek was usually the farthest point to windward that we could reach in our "kite-ground." Sometimes the cutting would be fast and furious there. It was thought a great honor to keep your kite flying there, when every other one was down.



KITE-CUTTING.

Your best plan is to get what the sailors call "the weather-gage" of the other kite. If the wind is blowing from your kite to his string, you have him at your mercy, for you can make your kite fall to his by letting out string. If you are to leeward of a kite, with the wind blowing to you past it, you can hardly hope to get at it.

On one occasion, I had been very lucky; and, after cutting half a dozen kites and having several narrow escapes myself, only mine and one other were left. We were both on the bank of the creek, and the only chance left for one to cut the other, was to get one kite over the other's string, either by making the kite go straighter up, or by reach-

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ing up and putting one string over the other. He had a little more string out on his kite than I had, but he was taller. I ran off down the bank, and he followed me. He thought that he would cut me soon, for there was a high fence that would compel me either to stop or to turn off and give him the chance he wanted. But I had a plan of my own. As I ran, I gradually pulled in about thirty feet of string and coiled it in my right hand.

When I reached the fence, I turned to leeward a dozen feet, and then, when my enemy was not more than five yards off, I wheeled round, threw my ball of string over his string, caught it on the other side, let loose the string in my hand, and started back, pulling in with both hands. Before my adversary knew what I was doing, his kite was cut, and I was alone on the battle-field, my kite soaring up in triumph.

Sometimes we would make up sides and have a regular battle. One of these, between a dozen boys on each side, was very exciting. We would agree not to go out of a certain field; but there would be more leaning over fences and throwing up of balls than you ever saw in all your life.

Besides cutting kites, we had other less warlike sports with them. A favorite one of these was to send up a kite, at night, with a paper lantern on it. Some of the boys would put the lantern on the end of the kite's tail; others would tie it in front where the string was fastened to the kite. I liked the end of the tail best, because there the lantern was less apt to get tangled with the tail.

Hummers were another thing that we put on our kites. A hummer was a thin piece of wood, bent like a bow, holding a piece of silk ribbon, stretched tight, instead of a bow-string. It was fastened to the upper part of the kite, so that the ribbon would catch the wind. You would be surprised to hear how much noise they make. Sometimes we would have two or three hummers of different sizes, one within the other, and the mingling of the different tones made a curious effect.

THE CUBAN "WAR-KITE."

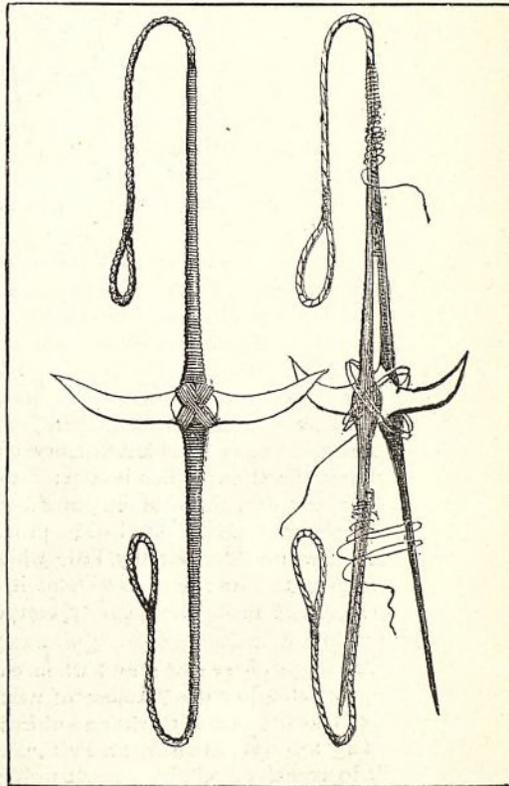
This kite is different from the Mexican kite, and the knife is a more effective and costly weapon.

The sport in Cuba is not confined to boys alone, but youths and men take part in this exciting and health-giving pastime.

TO MAKE THE CUBAN KNIFE.

Take two pieces of whalebone four inches long, whittle them to a point at each end (see diagram), and, inserting a piece of cord at each end, tie firmly.

The knife, made of a *pen-knife* blade or *piece of clock-spring*, ground to the right shape, is placed between the whalebones and lashed firmly with fine brass, copper, or artificial flower-maker's wire, and the whole is bound together with wire or silk. To the lower end of knife add one yard of tail (heavier than the rest). This serves to keep the knife from



THE CUBAN KNIFE.

entangling its own tail. The knife is now complete.

You now know how to make different kinds of "cutters" and how to play this game; but always be very careful never to "cut" a kite that is not armed like your own, and ready for the fray.

ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

BY MRS. E. W. LATIMER.

I.

LONG back in the far-off ages, when low lay the might of Rome,
 When the Crescent had not yet risen, and Mohammed had not yet come,
 A knight crossed the desert of Egypt, riding slowly at close of day,
 His good horse drooping and weary, as he toiled his trackless way.
 Just then, far over the sand-hills,—for daylight was almost done,—
 He saw three palm-trees standing dark on the rim of the setting sun,
 And his horse, with a joyful quiver, threw his weary head up high,
 For he sniffed the hope through his nostrils, that his master saw with the eye.
 On over the shifting ridges, they strained and struggled their best,
 To the water under the date-trees, and the grass where they longed to rest.
 Under those trees lived a hermit, who, many a year ago,
 Had shaken off the dust of his feet on a world of evil and woe;
 And into this haunted desert, where no servant of Christ had trod,
 Had come to pray for the world he had left, and to dwell alone with his God.

Kindly the hermit received them,—cool water and dates and corn,
 He set before weary man and beast, and he bade them rest till morn.
 But himself all night kept vigil,—kept vigil and wept and prayed;
 All night Sir George heard him crying, “Dear Lord, help my Christian maid,—
 The only creature that loves me! Ah, God! so pleasant and good!
 When late she was here to see me, I made her a cross of wood,—
 Two poor little sticks together, just tied by a sackcloth thread;
 But she knows the blessed story of Him who lives and was dead.
 I put the cross in her bosom; I told her there it must stay,
 For fear that the heathen should find it and scorn it and fling it away.
 My Sabra! My Sabra! My princess! That thou art dead or distrest,
 I know, my love, for thy little white dove came flying into my breast.
 I know that the dear Lord sent it as a sign I must wrestle in prayer;
 Oh, God! make the cross or temptation no more than the child can bear!”

All night he prayed; and when early dawn began to redden the sky,
 The knight, at the moment of parting, besought him to tell him why,
 And who was the Christian princess, so fair and so good, in distress,
 And how she came to honor the name of our Lord in Heathenesse.

“She is the king’s own daughter; she dwells in yon city of On,
 Whose porphyry columns and golden gates are lit by the rising sun.
 There reigns the king,—her father,—there blossoms in heathen shade
 My Lily, my Rose of Sharon, my Sabra, my Christian maid!
 Nine weeks ago a dreadful curse on the king and his people fell;
 I know not whether ’t was sent from God, or whether it came from hell.
 A ravening dragon, with blood-shot eyes and a mouth that vomited flame,
 With gaping jaws and sharp-curved claws, from the slime of the river came.
 He raged and ravaged the growing crops, the barley, the rye, and the wheat,
 Tore the grazing kine, uprooted the vine,—for he spoiled what he could not eat.
 The people fled, destruction spread, the king, from his royal city,
 Sent nobles great, in splendor and state, to implore the dragon’s pity,
 And the way to show (if he would but go) to the lands of some other king,—
 To Goshen fair, or Nubia where soft rains make the valleys sing.

‘Not so, my lords,’ growled the dragon, ‘in these reeds I mean to abide;
I like my lair, and I like my fare, by your ancient river’s side;
But if you will bring me a maiden each day,—rosy, and tender, and good,—
And tie her fast where the lightning blast has stricken yon oak in the wood,
I will take your maid, as tribute paid, and refrain from other spoil,
And your land may be at peace for me, and your peasants resume their toil.’
So every day a virgin is torn from her mother’s embrace,
Each noon a fresh, fair victim they lead to the fatal place,—
Lead to the place and leave her to horrors that none may know,
While the city’s pent-up wrath bursts forth in bitter pleading and woe.”

II.

How came the little white pigeon to fly to the hermit’s breast,
And bear him a sign, from the Lord divine, that his Christian maid was distrest?

That eve there had risen a wailing from every house in the city,
The mothers flocked to the palace gates and implored their king for pity.
The king on his throne sat weeping. “O women!” at last cried he,
“Do you believe I have hardened my heart till your grief is nothing to me?
All know how I love my Sabra. But what other thing can be done?
Must we let the monster ravage and waste till he levels the walls of On?”
No woman made him an answer. Only more wailing and woe.
Then a loved voice sent a thrill to his heart: a child’s voice, tender and low.
“O father! The wondrous story of One on a throne I ken
Who forsook all His power and glory, to perish for other men,
And I think if a royal maiden be given the dragon to-morrow,
The Lord above, in pity and love, may send us help in our sorrow.”
She stood at the edge of the dais, and she strained her hands to her breast,
Where, hidden away, the rude cross lay, that the hermit had made and blessed.
“I offer myself to the dragon,” she said, “in the name of my Lord who died,
That these may be absolved through me, and the curse be satisfied.
O father, dear! If all now here will pray to Christ in Glory,
And you let me do as He prompts me to when I think of His wondrous story,
I seem to see, by an inward light, how blessed my death may be.
O father, spare those shrinking hearts, and visit the curse on me!”
“No!” cried her father, “Never!” But the Chief Priest’s voice arose.
“Fling a nesting pigeon into the air, and watch which way she goes.
If she fly North, or South, or West, this thing may not be done,
But IT SHALL if the dove fly straight to the East, in line from the setting sun.”

They brought a brooding dove from her nest. The tumult and wailing ceased.
She soared; she circled thrice in the air; then winged her flight to the East.

III.

Who pricks so fast through the golden gates? Who seeks the ivory throne?
Where, in sackcloth—mourning his daughter’s fate—now groans the king of On?
Who humbly craves permission to lay his lance in rest,
And go to the ground where she stands fast bound, with her hands still clasped on her breast?
All dread to anger the dragon; but they bid the knight good speed;
And swift from the ground, he springs with a bound to the back of his steel-clad steed.
Not yet to the wood he rideth, but down by the flowing tide,
Where dwells a caulker cunning in boats, in a hut by the river side.
“Am I obeyed?” the good knight said, as he galloped along the shore,
And rapped with the point of his glittering lance on the caulker’s humble door.

The lance they pass through a pitchy mass that looks like a human fist,
 Ugly and black, like a giant's hand, lopped short from a giant's wrist.
 Then high his spear did the knight uprear, and fast he rode to the wood,
 Where under the blasted oak, close bound, the martyr princess stood.
 She heard the tramp of his horse's hoofs; she deemed the dragon drew near.
 She pressed her cross to her beating heart, but she showed no sign of fear.
 "In the name of our Holy Savior, who died for thy sins and mine,"
 Cried the voice of the knight, as he came in sight, "I bear thee help divine;



For I know, sweet fellow-Christian, by the wonders wrought to-day,
 That I bring thee good deliverance,—and shall the dragon slay."
 She heard his words; her heart beat fast; she gazed at his lion-crest,
 And joy and surprise came into her eyes, as she saw the Cross on his breast.
 But loud through the wood came a roaring before they could utter more,
 And fiercely out of the brushwood the furious dragon tore.
 "Presumptuous knight! Out of my sight! Dare trouble no prey of mine.
 Get hence! For know, on no pretense may mortal see me dine!"
 "I challenge thee, my gauntlet see! Vile reptile, take thy stand!"
 The thing he bore from his lance he tore, and poised it in his hand.

And, as the monster gaped his jaws, he, with good aim and true,
 Into their midst the sticky mass of pitch and oakum threw.
 The furious dragon leaped with rage. His teeth stuck fast together.
 He lost the power to use his fangs. Sir George! Sir George forever!
 With skill and might on came the knight, his good horse swerved and quivered;
 His stout lance struck on the monster's hide; and with the blow it shivered.
 A muffled roar, like waves on a shore, from the dragon's throat there came.
 He reared his head; his nostrils spread; they snorted living flame.
 Into his horse's heaving sides Sir George the rowels prest,
 And urged him, till he seemed to stand close under the dragon's breast.
 Then, ere the curved and cruel claws or man or steed could harm,
 The knight uprose, and dealt three blows, with the strength of his good right arm.
 One spot there is in a dragon's throat,—one spot,—and only one,—
 Where a deadly thrust may do its worst. The dragon dropped like a stone.
 Blood gushed from his throat, like a rushing stream when river freshets are high;
 Like a prisoned wave in a fissured cave, it spouted up to the sky.
 And Sabra sank at the foot of the oak, all faint at the reptile's blood.
 But her champion raised her swift to his horse, and rode from the darkening wood.

IV.

"Watchman! Who comes!" cried the king of On; and his voice his anguish showed.
 "No man, my lord," was the watchman's word; "all 's quiet along the road."
 "Watchman! What comes?" "A rising dust I see in the distance now;
 A little dust,—and I see a horse . . ." "His master is slain, I trow."
 "I see a knight on the steel-clad horse . . ." "He has 'scaped the wood in fear:
 Ho, porters! look to the city gates, for the dragon will soon be here!"
 "I see the knight, and he waves his sword: a maiden lies on his arm . . ."
 "I'll follow the faith of the Christian knight, if he bring her safe from harm."
 "I see her now; but her robe of snow is draggled and red with blood . . ."
 "Alas! alas! For he rode too late,—too late he entered the wood."
 "Nay,—nay my liege, for she waves her arm! I see a cross in her hand."
 "Now, God be praised,—the Christian's God,—and this be a Christian land!"

V.

He bore her in through the golden gates. Too happy to speak she lies
 Close to the breast of her father pressed, and gazes into his eyes.
 And the mother dove sits cooing love, with two eggs under her breast,
 For the hermit gray, at the close of day, has brought her back to her nest.
 Now round him, eager and fervent, flock crowds who beg him to preach
 Of the wondrous Christian story the maid would have died to teach.
 And hundreds (yesterday Pagans) to-day God's praises are singing,
 And into the river, to reptiles and fish, their household idols are flinging.
 And Sabra has seen her father count his glory and crown but dross,
 As down in the river lowly he took the sign of the cross;
 Now thousands out of the city flocked to look at the monster dead,
 And the burghers buried the dragon lest a plague should arise and spread.
 St. George became patron of England: the master of English knights.
 There the queen bears his cross on her bosom: there brave men wear it in fights.
 No honor more great in that Christian state can be paid to a hero this day,
 Than to give him the right to the cross of the knight who did the dragon slay.

A BURIAL AT SEA.

(See Frontispiece.)

IN the great annual art exhibition of France, the Paris Salon, a picture by Henry Bacon, an American, attracted a great deal of attention last season. Many lingered before it to admire the fine skill of the painter, and because it was known that the figures in the group were actual likenesses of young American artists and writers. But perhaps a greater number were attracted by the subject itself, so full of mournful interest.

Through the kindness of Mr. Bacon, we are enabled to give you a good engraving of the picture. It is a sad scene to present to our happy young readers, but sometimes it is well to contemplate sad scenes, and rest in the shadows for a moment.

Few persons excepting those who have had the experience of witnessing a burial at sea, know how much more solemn and impressive such a service is than a funeral upon land.

It is not necessary, on the ocean, to carry the dead body of a friend or relative to some distant cemetery or grave-yard. A great cemetery, large

enough to contain the bodies of all the people in the world, is beneath the feet of those who must attend to the burial, and all that is necessary to do is to perform the proper religious services, and then to gently drop the corpse to the bottom of the great ocean.

With a heavy weight at its feet, to make it sink quickly, it goes down, and down, and down, and is forever lost to the sight of human beings.

There is no mark to show the place of the watery grave,—no tombstone, no grassy mound; nothing but the same tossing, heaving waves that toss and heave for hundreds of miles on every side.

But, although the man who dies at sea is buried deeper than any one for whom a grave was ever dug on earth, and although the exact spot of his burial is lost forever as the ship moves on, his body is of as little worth, and just as useless, and his soul is just as immortal, as those of the men who lie beneath the green sod of any grave-yard in any land.



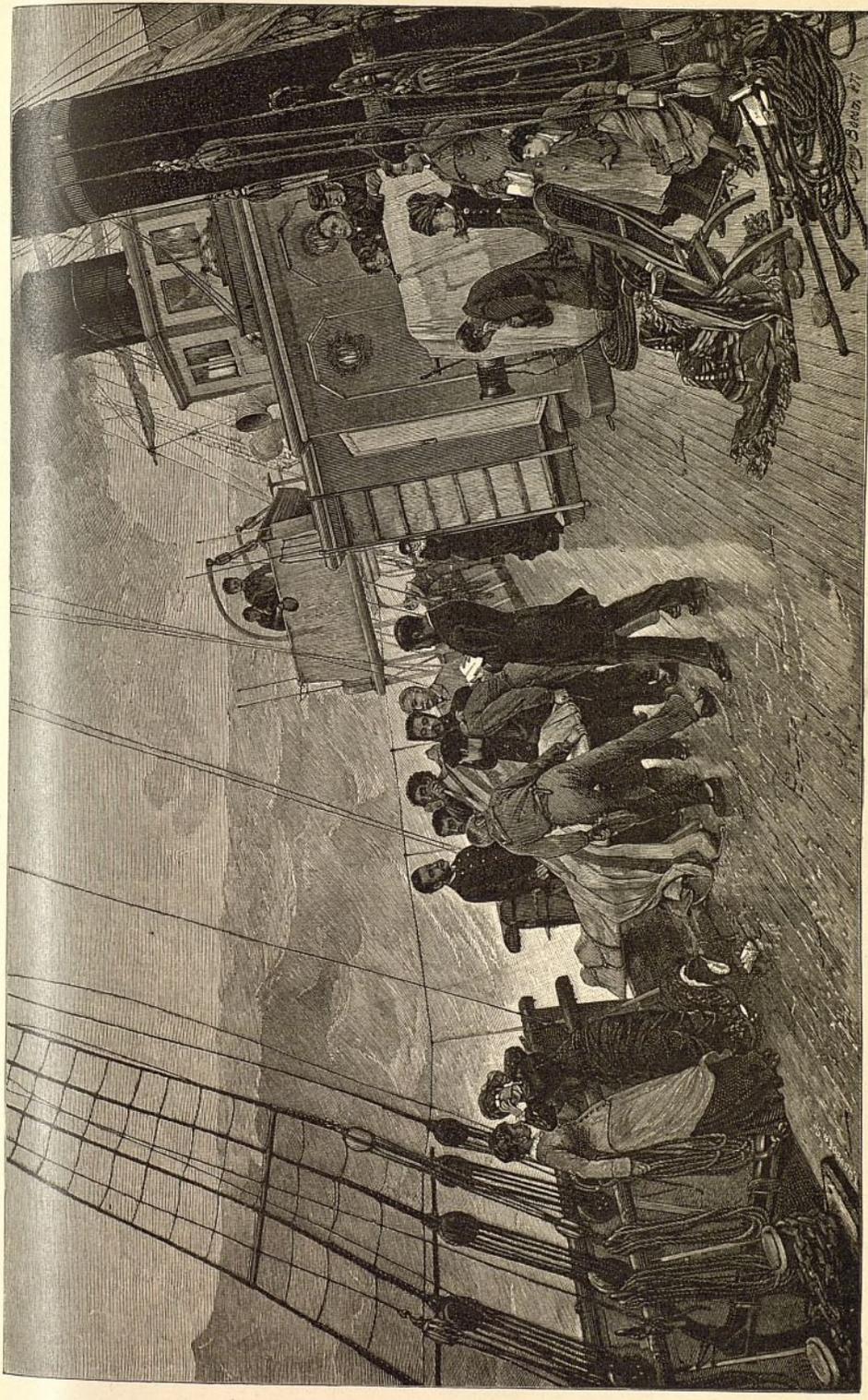
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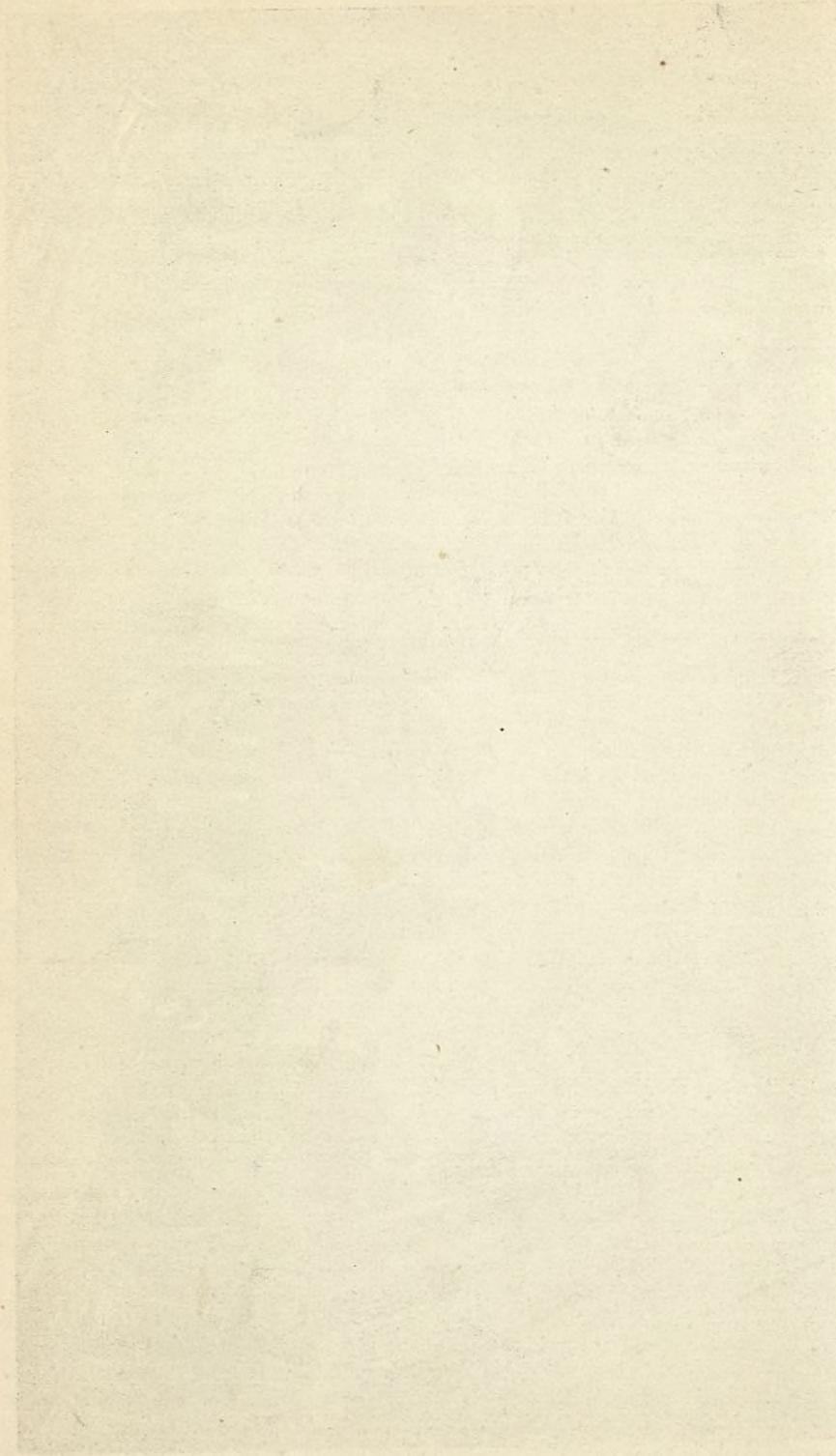
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A BURIAL AT SEA.

[See Page 498.]





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AMONG THE LAKES.

(A Farm-house Story.)

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD, AUTHOR OF "DAB KINZER," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

THAT Friday had been looked forward to, as all such days must be, by the academy school-boys with mingled feelings of fear and hope.

Fear of the examination, hope of getting through it fairly well, and that it would not be a very long day after all.

At the academy a good deal of tribulation was caused by what Bill Young and Kyle Wilbur declared was: "Just the meanest kind of trick."

Instead of calling up the boys in the order of their names on the roll-book, which always had been done before, beginning with A and on to Z, their names were written on slips of paper and folded up, one by one, and tumbled together in a box.

Then the teacher of the class picked up one paper, just as it came, and read the name on it, and the boy with that name had to begin.

"Is n't it rough?" said Bill Young, but, before he could say more, his name was called out and he had to go forward.

That was in geography, and Bil was better posted in that than in almost anything else.

Indeed, if the examining teacher had stuck to the text-book, and asked him the questions in the printed form, Bill might possibly have come off with credit to himself. As it was, he did fairly well until he was asked:

"What is the boundary line between North and South America?"

"The Ohio river," said Bill, without a moment's hesitation, and he was not a little flustered by the laugh that followed.

He hit the mark again once or twice, however, and then came the question: "Where is the equator?"

Bill knew, and he was as prompt as lightning, in spite of the nervous condition he was in.

"Right in the middle of the map!"

"That will do, Master Young," said the examiner. "You may take your seat." The teacher picked up another slip of paper, and read: "Master Kyle Wilbur."

Poor Kyle! He had heard all the laughter at his friend's expense, and it had not at all improved his condition for his trial. He arose to his feet with a dim wish in his mind that he could see Piney Hunter's pet heifer making a charge on the academy "faculty," but when he was merely asked: "What is Great Britain?" he said, quite correctly: "A large island near the coast of France."

"Not a doubt of that," remarked the examiner, "but how is it separated from the United States?"

"By the Revolutionary War and the Declaration of Independence."

"Well, yes; but the Atlantic ocean has something to do with it, has it not?"

"No, sir," said Kyle; "it does n't keep them from holding on to Canada."

He felt that he was getting adrift somehow, and the brindled heifer came to his mind again just as the examiner recovered from a sharp spell of coughing, and asked him: "Who were the human inhabitants of this continent at the time of its discovery?"

Of course he knew. He was sure he ought to be able to answer that question, but the right words were slow in coming. He looked at the ceiling and hesitated just an instant, and then he heard the voice of Roxy Hunter, prompting him, in a loud whisper, from the front seat where she sat between Mr. Sadler and Aunt Keziah:

"Pilgrim Fathers, Kyle, Pilgrim Fathers!" And Kyle mechanically repeated it after her:

"Pilgrim Fathers."

And then the laugh was louder than it had been over Bill Young's reply to the equator question.

"That will do, Master Wilbur. The young ladies in the audience will please show no favoritism."

"I can recite the whole of it," whispered Roxy to Mr. Sadler, "but I don't believe Kyle Wilbur can."

When the bell called them in, after recess, the class in algebra was the first one examined. It was a large one and the largest room in the academy was a little too small to hold both the scholars and their anxious friends.

Piney thought he had never seen anything wear quite so threatening an expression as did the great blackboard which covered one side of that room. It seemed to say: "Here I am, stupids! I've got you!"

And just then the academy principal himself held up a slip of paper and read, in a loud, sonorous voice: "Master Richard Hunter!"

All the peonies in Aunt Keziah's tub were hardly so red as their namesake's face when he walked forward and picked up his piece of chalk.

Another slip of paper was given to him, with

the problem on it, which he was expected to work out before that crowd, on that awful blackboard.

For almost a minute it seemed to him as if he never before in all his life had seen any such letters or figures as those. Some of them stood for "plus" and some for "minus," and there was a hint of that dreadfully ridiculous and impossible thing a "square root."

"There never was one," said Piney to himself, as he stared at the paper, but somehow the marks and signs were beginning to look more and more like old neighbors and acquaintances. Somewhere or other, he had seen those things before.

He knew very well that his mother and Aunt Keziah and the rest were watching him anxiously. He could feel their eyes on the back of his head, and he would not have turned around for anything.

"I declare," he suddenly said to himself, "if it is n't the very problem I had such a fight with, the other night. Why, it's just the freshest thing in the whole book. I've got it on my finger ends!"

His heart gave a great jump, and the blackboard itself seemed to put on a more cheerful expression of countenance as Piney's piece of chalk began to skip along over its surface. He worked with an almost nervous rapidity and his mother turned and looked very proudly in Aunt Keziah's face.

Roxy whispered to Mr. Sadler: "It's just like Piney. He'll use up all the chalk."

Not quite that. But he solved the problem.

It must have been a little tiresome to Mr. Sadler, and he deserved credit for sitting it out. Uncle Liph himself was not half so patient, and Grandfather Hunter did not come back at all after the noon recess. Bi did, however; that is, he managed to come in time to hear Piney recite in grammar. As for Greek, and all that sort of thing, it had not yet got into that academy.

There were to be prizes, but they were not to be given out until the close of the exhibition, next day, and as soon as Piney's last class was dismissed, he and his friends set out for home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THAT evening, Piney took a whole boat-load of his visitors for a moonlight ride on the lake. Roxy and Susie were allowed to go, but Chub was put to bed in spite of a very vigorous protest on his part.

The lake was very beautiful by moonlight, and they stayed out on the water for nearly an hour and a half, and when they got back to the landing there were Aunt Sarah and Aunt Keziah waiting for Susie and Roxy.

Saturday was to be Exhibition, and it was to be held in the afternoon, because if it were held in the

evening a good many of the country-people could not come.

Just before noon, Piney saw Kyle Wilbur coming along the road from the village, and went out to meet him, asking, "What on earth took you over before dinner?"

"Oh," said Kyle, on whose face there was a gloomy sort of look, "I've got a new idea."

"A new idea? What is it?"

"I'll show you before the day's over. They wont laugh at me to-day as they did yesterday."

"Oh, they wont laugh at your piece; it's sober enough."

"Well, it is. And I guess they'll have all the 'burning deck' they want, too."

But Piney was unable to get out of Kyle the particulars of his "new idea," and Kyle seemed unusually anxious to get home.

"It's a pity Roxy can't wear the things she practiced in," Piney said to himself. "How it would bring down the house!"

He hardly thought they were likely to get anything quite so funny at the academy that day, but he did not know what was in the troubled mind of Kyle Wilbur.

Nobody else did, for he had concealed his purposes from even Bill Young.

The upper story of the academy building was more than half of it thrown into one great room, with a raised platform at the west end, and with seats all around like a church.

There was a small gallery, too, but that was occupied by a brass band on such great occasions as Exhibition day and Fourth of July orations.

The young gentlemen and young ladies who were to recite always came upon the stage through a door at the side, from a stair-way that led to the room below. On the stage at one side was a piano, at the other were some arm-chairs for the principal and the teachers, and in the middle was a wide, open space, for the speakers.

The hall was well filled at an early hour, and was quite crowded by the time the recitations began. All sorts of people were there, and Bi Hunter said to Mr. Sadler that he "would n't have missed seeing that crowd for a good deal."

Piney was to be one of the first speakers, just after a dialogue between some young ladies, and his mother and Aunt Keziah thought that dialogue never would come to an end. But it did, and the young ladies walked off, and Piney walked on.

"Mercy sakes!" exclaimed Aunt Keziah, in a whisper to Mary Hunter.

"What is it?"

"Don't you see? Piney's pale."

"So he is. Poor fellow!"

It was only for a moment, however, and his

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color came again as he went on and found himself remembering the piece perfectly. He recited fairly well, too, and Bill Young whispered to Kyle Wilbur: "You can't beat that."

"Wont I, though?" said Kyle. "You'll see." There was a sort of rumor among the boys that Kyle meant to try on something uncommon, but his turn was not to come for a good while yet.

There were piano-music and singing, and more dialogues, and other boys, and then the



ROXY'S ORATION.

time arrived for Roxy to say "The Breaking Waves."

Cousin Mary had gone with her as far as the door that opened upon the stage, although Roxy knew the way well enough, and did not seem one bit afraid. Then Mary stood at the door, with it open just a little, to see how Roxy got along.

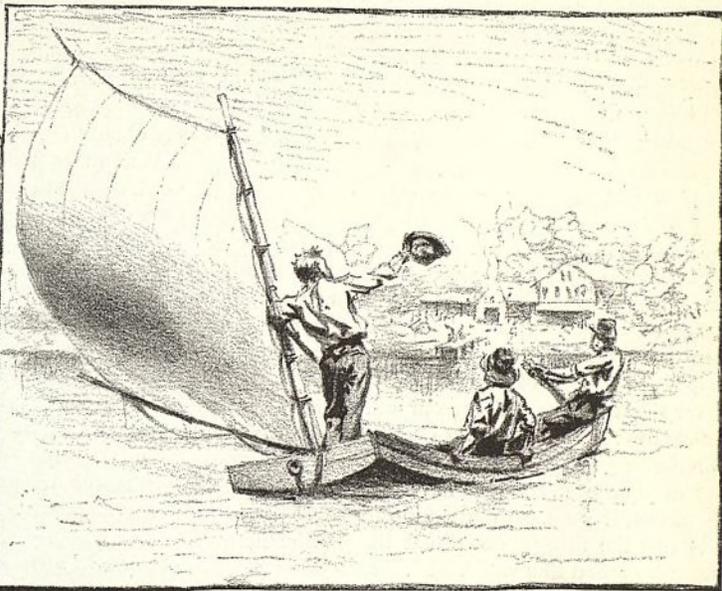
She began nicely, after she had made her bow, with only a slight tremor in her clear, childish voice, and everybody was delighted, especially her mother and Aunt Keziah and Aunt Sarah and Uncle Liph and Grandfather Hunter. Stanza followed stanza, just as if she had been at home, till she was more than half through.

Then the first line of the next stanza seemed to have got away from her, and she hesitated. It was a dreadful moment for her.

"What sought they thus afar," whispered cousin Mary, through the crack of the side door.

"That 's it! I remember now!" said Roxy, triumphantly, and she went on to the end amid a perfect storm of applause.

And now came Kyle Wilbur's turn, and all the boys nudged one another with their elbows.



THE SAIL.

"Something 's coming," said Piney to Bi, as he crowded into a seat beside him.

And so there was. Kyle Wilbur was coming and bringing something else with him. It had cost him half the money he had saved up for his next Fourth of July fire-works, and he stepped behind the door, when his name was called, just long enough to scratch a match on the top stair.

Then he marched on, carrying in each hand one of those queer fire-works called "flower-pots," of the largest size he had been able to find.

Each of those "flower-pots" was already beginning to fizz a little on top, but Kyle gravely set them down on the floor, one on each side of him, at arm's length, and plunged into the recitation of

"The boy stood on the burning deck
Whence all but him had fled."

Before he was into the third stanza his fire-works began to throw out their showers of fire and stars, and the audience was shouting and stamping most enthusiastically. The boys yelled with delight, but Kyle went steadily on, regardless of the astonished looks of the teachers on the other side of the stage.

Just before he got through, one of the fire-works

came to the loud "bang" they all make at the last, and the other went off as he was saying:

"There came a burst of thunder sound
The boy, O, where was he."

Nothing could have worked better, and the academy principal hardly knew what to do till Kyle made his bow. Then, just when he ought to have walked off, he exclaimed: "There, Piney Hunter, is n't that better than birch-bark?"

Of course there was more stamping and cheering, and by the time it was over, Kyle Wilbur was outside of the academy.

CHAPTER XIX.

THERE probably was not a more popular boy in or about Parable Centre, for the rest of that Saturday, than Kyle Wilbur, but for some reason or other he did not stay to enjoy it. He preferred to walk home with Piney and Bi Hunter.

"Kyle," said Piney, as they strolled along, "I've got an idea about our old scow. We're going up through the lakes next Monday, if the weather's good, and it'll be a long row."

"Rather long, that's a fact," said Kyle.

"Now, if we had a mast and sail—"

"Just the thing," exclaimed Bi. "She'll bear it. I've sailed in a yacht. I've seen all sorts of boats."

"Can you show us how to rig up a sail for the scow?"

"Of course I can. You'll want a keel first."

"But how about the mast and sail?" said Kyle.

"Easy enough," answered Piney. "I've got a piece of straight spruce sapling that'll make a good mast. It's more'n ten feet high. We can bore an auger-hole in the middle seat."

"No," said Bi, "in the seat next to the front end, if there's any front end to a scow like that. I'll show you how to step it,—that is, how to fit it in. Then there'll have to be a boom and a yard."

"To rig the sail on?" asked Kyle.

"Yes. Piney, how about the sail?"

"Got an old sheet that'll do. We can cut it out and have it hemmed. There's lots of rope around the house."

"And we can put in stones for ballast. Hurrah!" shouted Bi. "We'll make her go. Let's hurry to the house."

The Exhibition was forgotten sooner than anything like it had ever been forgotten before, and it was wonderful how soon those boys got home.

The boat was hauled out on the grass, and turned bottom upward, and then the work began.

It seemed nothing at all to them to make the

keel, and then bore an auger-hole in one of the seats and to nail a block of wood with a hole in it just under the hole in the seat, on the bottom.

"The rudder puzzles me a little," said Piney. "How about that?"

"Put in a couple of thole pins in the middle at the stern, and we can steer with a paddle."

"I see. That'll do," said Piney. "Now let's shove her into the water."

Nobody would have known that the old scow had a keel now, to have looked at her. She sat on the water just as quietly as usual, without a word to say about it.

When they stuck in the mast, however, it made her look a little queer, and just then the bell rang for supper.

"We can fix up the sail this evening," said Piney. "Mother and Aunt Keziah'll help us."

And so they did, and Cousin Mary, too, and the sail was cut and fitted all the better for that.

It was pretty hard to keep from "talking boat" that Sunday, and Piney and Bi retired to their own rooms at night a little earlier than usual.

Piney and Bi could hardly eat their breakfast next morning, and came near going off without the basket of luncheon which Aunt Keziah had prepared for them.

The mast was put in its place, the boom and the yard, with the sail between, were fitted to theirs. Bi took the steering paddle, Kyle stowed away the luncheon and bait, Piney shoved the boat off, and then, as the breeze filled the sail, they heard a sound of cheering from the house.

The whole family were out, waving their hands and handkerchiefs, and Roxy and Susie were running across the lawn toward the landing so fast they could not even say "Hurrah!"

As for the old scow, she really made a fair "cat-boat" and slipped along pretty fast.

CHAPTER XX.

THAT Monday promised to be for Susie and Roxy the very best since Uncle Liph and his family came to the farm-house. Not only was the weather out-of-doors all that could be asked, but everything else seemed arranged to suit the two girls. Aunt Keziah had taken a notion to have Chub with her all the time. Uncle Liph and Grandfather Hunter were planning a ride with Aunt Sarah and Roxy's mother. Piney and Bi were gone off a-sailing. Mary Hunter and Mr. Sadler were playing chess in the front parlor. In fact, the two girls were left to take care of themselves, and what more could they have asked for?

That was the way it seemed to them, and they did not ask for anything.

They just took their dolls, put on their wide-brimmed sun-bonnets, and marched out through the front gate and up the north road.



"OH, THERE 'S A DARNING-NEEDLE!"

"The farther north you go," said Roxy, "the cooler it is;" and the next moment, she added, with a start of surprise: "O, Susie, there 's a darning-needle lit on your sun-bonnet!"

"A darning-needle? Lit on my bonnet? What 's it, Roxy?"

Susie's voice sounded a little scared, for Roxy was watching the great, brilliant dragon-fly which had paused on her cousin's hat, with a look that expressed some dread of it.

"Take it off and look at him. There he goes. That 's his needle. Is n't he beautiful?"

Susie had snatched off her sun-bonnet and she gazed after the dragon-fly with wide open mouth and eyes.

"Let 's go home, Roxy."

"What for?"

"Why, I don't like those flies."

"It is n't a fly."

"Is n't it? Is it a sort of bird?"

"Now, Susie, they don't hurt anybody. They don't even sting. They only scare you a little."

Susie looked at her bonnet carefully, but it was unharmed, and she decided not to go back to the house for a while.

There were plenty of thistles at the roadside, here and there, with large, red flowers, and Roxy and Susie stood by a patch of them for some minutes, watching the bees, wasps and hornets that flew by or settled near them.

Indeed, as they walked along, Roxy was able to point out to her city cousin quite a number of insects and birds. A crow, a robin, a cat-bird, a meadow-lark, a bobolink, a blue-jay, one after the other, were made the subject of admiring comment.

"Are there any snakes?" asked Susie.

"Yes, but they don't live in the road. They 're over in the swamps and among the rocks up on the hill where we pick huckleberries."

"O, I would n't go there for anything."

"Snakes don't hurt anything. Aunt Keziah says there used to be more of 'em, but the country is too poor to raise snakes, nowadays."

Neither of them had any idea how far they had walked, they had been so busy with their birds and insects, and their talk; but they were beginning to feel a little tired, and they were about to have a real "scare."

"What noise is that?" asked Susie, turning her head the way they had come.

"That? Don't you know? That 's cows."

"But how loud it is!"

"So it is," said Roxy. "O, dear me, there must be a drove of cattle!"

"Oh,—oh! Wont they run over us?"

"Of course they will. Cattle are just dreadful!"

"O, Mother! Mother!" exclaimed poor Susie.

"I wish I was home!"

"Come, now, Susie, don't cry," said Roxy, putting her little arms about her cousin. "It 's a good deal better just to climb the fence."

It was a nice rail fence, easy to climb, even for such little girls as those two were, but they were not on the other side of it any too soon. The drove of cattle was a large one, and some of the great oxen in front acted as if they were angry. The road was crowded, and if the girls had been in it they would surely have been hurt.

They were safe behind the fence, but it made

them a good deal frightened to hear so much noise, and to see so many pairs of long, dangerous-looking horns.

There were some men on horseback and one or two on foot behind the drove of cattle, and a man coming from the other way, in a lumber-wagon, with two horses, stopped right in front of where the girls were. He had driven through the drove slowly, and he seemed angry.

"There ort to be a law agin' it," he shouted to the men on horseback. "Drivin' a drove like that on such a traveled road as this, at this time o' day! Somebody might be killed."

"Got any critters to sell?" returned one of the horsemen. "Beef 's goin' down."

"S'pose somebody's children,—I declare, if there aint two little gals, now,—they might have been just trampled!"

"Why, Susie, it 's Deacon Simmons," exclaimed Roxy, and then she shouted at the top of her voice: "Deacon Simmons! Deacon Simmons!"

"Is that you, Roxy? Well, if you aint a pilgrum to-day, wuss 'n you was a Saturday! How 'd ye git so far from home?"

"We walked," said Roxy.

"You did, did ye? Why, it 's a good four mile. Well, you 'll just git in with me and ride home, you will. Did the drove scare ye?"

"It scared Susie, but we remembered to climb the fence," said Roxy.

"It 's well ye did."

Roxy and Susie climbed back into the road, and the good deacon ceased scolding the drover and helped them into the wagon.

"What could have got into Keziah Merrill," he said, "let alone your mother, to have let two such bits of things ramble off alone? If my wife was here, she 'd give her a piece of her mind. Don't know but I will myself."

For all his indignation, however, Deacon Simmons chatted with Roxy and Susie all the way to the front gate of their own home.

There stood Aunt Keziah and Roxy's mother and Cousin Mary, looking up and down the road, and Mary exclaimed: "There they are, sure enough! Dear me, I sent Mr. Sadler the wrong way!"

CHAPTER XXI.

SOMEBODY or other said, a great while ago, that the funniest thing about a river was that its head and its mouth were so far apart. For all that, every river seems to know just where to go. You never heard of one trying to climb over a hill. Even such a little bit of a river as the Ti-ough-ne-au-ga, that ran through those little lakes and on down the

valley, was wise enough to pick out the easiest course to run in. For that reason the banks of it were quite low, except in one or two places where it had made or found a channel through a ridge of ground. Here it was narrow, and there were ledges of rocks on one side or the other; but they helped make the scenery beautiful.

The three boys thought they had never seen anything finer in their lives. Kyle Wilbur and Piney Hunter had seen it all before, and had visited all of it in that very boat. But then the old scow did not have a mast and sail in it until that morning, and that made a great difference in everything else.

They narrowly watched Bi in his management of the sail, and their respect for the city boy was very much increased. The curiosity was that while the wind blew from the south-west all the while, and the river made any number of crooks and turns, Bi kept the boat in motion in the right direction by changing the position of the sail. Now it was right over the boat, then it would swing out a little on one side or the other, and then he would let it away out at right angles, or even farther.

They soon came out into the middle lake. It was about as large as the one by the farm-house, but a little wider.

As the scow moved swiftly on from the narrow place where the river went out of the lake, Bi noticed that both his friends were busy with their fishing-tackle.

"O, boys," he exclaimed, "let 's sail. Don't stop to catch fish."

"No," said Piney, "we wont stop. Only I've always thought how I could troll for pickerel if I had a sail-boat. I've got the neatest kind of a spoon-hook, and here 's one for you, already rigged."

"A spoon-hook!" shouted Bi, "that 's splendid. Why, I've often trolled for blue-fish on Long Island Sound. Hurrah!" he continued. "I 'll set the boat steady right up the lake, and we 'll all try our hands."

The "spoon-hooks" were just what their name indicated. They were of pretty good size, with what was shaped like the bowl of a spoon just above them, and when they were pulled through the water the shining metal twirled and glittered in a way to make a pickerel think he saw the prettiest kind of a "shiner," just ready to be eaten.

In the course of two minutes or so there were three of those hooks leaping and flashing along the little waves in the wake of the old scow.

It was magnificent fun. No worry about bait. No rowing to do. Nothing but to lie there in the stern of the old scow and watch for bites, while the light breeze carried the boat northward.

Piney could have sung something, if he could have thought of a song that would not scare the

fish, and Kyle Wilbur's sallow face began to look red and earnest.

The first bite came to Bi's hook, and he "struck it," as fishermen say, in a way that told a story for his blue-fishing. That is, the other boys saw that he knew how to do it, and again they wondered that a city boy, and a bit of a dandy, too, should know so much about some things when he knew so little about others.

"Guess he might say the same of us," thought Piney, "if he had us in the city."

But Bi pulled in his pickerel hand-over-hand, and landed him safely in the bottom of the boat.

Just then there was a tug at Piney's line that almost took it away from him.

"You've got one!" shouted Bi.

"Not too hard, Piney," said Kyle, coolly. "You might pull it out of his mouth."

"Or break my line," exclaimed Piney, his face blazing with excitement. "I say, boys, this one's a regular cod-lamper. See him jump!"

"Give him line," screamed Bi. "That one won't hold him on a dead pull."

It was not very easy for Bi and Kyle to keep their eyes away from Piney's fight with that big fish, and it took a good while to master that pickerel with that tackle. If Piney had been in too much of a hurry he would surely have lost his game, but he stuck to it bravely and patiently, and at last he pulled him alongside the boat.

"Hold him steady," said Kyle, "till I give him a lift."

"Quick, now," shouted Piney.

And Kyle was quick, and in an instant more the pickerel was in the boat, the biggest fish either of them had ever seen caught in those lakes.

Bi Hunter lost a capital bite while he was looking at that pickerel, and Kyle Wilbur said:

"Now it's my turn. I guess I'll catch something."

And so he did, only it was not a pickerel but a fine, large yellow perch.

"They don't often strike a spoon hook," said Piney, "but they do, sometimes—the larger ones."

Four or five more fish were pulled in, before they reached the end of the lake.

The river between the middle lake that they were in and the upper one, was merely a short "strait," hardly half a mile in length, windings and all.

"Not so many farms around this lake," said Bi, as they sailed in. "More woods. Hullo, Piney, is n't that an island?"

"Rockiest kind of one," said Piney. "We'll eat our luncheon there. Let's sail all around it and troll as we go."

That may have been a "better fishing-ground," and it was true that they pulled in a greater number, but neither of them caught a match for Piney's big pickerel. The island looked wonderfully attractive, with its tall trees rising among the rocks, and the boys soon began to feel hungry.

"It's like going into the wilderness," remarked Bi, as he lowered the sail and the boat put her nose against the shore.

"That's a big word," said Kyle, "for an island that is n't more 'n an acre 'n a-half of land, and that nobody'd live on if you'd give it to 'em."

"I brought some matches," said Bi; "we'll have a fire in less than no time."

"And we'll cook some of our own fish," said Piney. "Soon as I've put 'em on a string I'll wash some stones to cook fish on. It's the way the Indians did. Heat your stones good and hot. Use flat ones, you know. Beats a broiler all hollow."

His first care, however, was to "string" all his fish, except the few small pickerel which he meant to cook, on a stout piece of twine, and then he lowered the whole string into the water and fastened it to the boat to keep them fresh.

"Now for dinner. O, but I'm hungry!"

Kyle Wilbur had gathered bark and dead wood and started a fire, and Bi had helped him actively. Then Kyle said: "Now, Bi, you 'tend fire, and I'll help Piney clean fish."

Aunt Keziah had put up a liberal luncheon and a nice one, but nothing in the basket tasted half so good as those fish.

"Best picnic I ever heard of," exclaimed Bi. "If I lived out here I'd come to the island once a week."

After dinner the boys spent nearly an hour in rambling over the island and climbing among the rocks, till Piney said, at last:

"Well, let's go for some more fish, for we'd better be starting for home pretty soon."

The scow was right there waiting for them, and the heavy "string" of pickerel and perch was lifted out of the water and into the boat.

"Boys," said Bi, as he raised the sail, "shove her off. But I just hate to leave that island."

"So do I," exclaimed Kyle and Piney, almost in the same breath.

CHAPTER XXII.

AT the very time their friends at home were talking with Deacon Simmons about the girls, Piney, Bi and Kyle were pushing away from the island. There was just about wind enough to fill the sail, at first, but the old scow went along very slowly, and before they had gone far, the water was as still as a wash-tub, and the sail hung limp and idle.

"What a dead calm!" said Bi.

"Never mind," said Piney, "we can't troll, but we've plenty of bait. We can just anchor and fish."

Something like an hour went by, and the lake and the rocks and woods were a perfect picture of peace and quiet. It was enough to make the boys feel sleepy, and not one of them had thought to notice the sky. To be sure, there were not many clouds to be seen, only a sort of misty cloud-bank in the east, but pretty soon Kyle looked up from putting a bull-head on the string and remarked: "I say, boys, there's some wind a-comin'. We wont have to row home."

"Wind?" exclaimed Bi. "So there is. It'll be here quick, too. Let's have up the anchor."

He began at once to pull on the anchor-rope, and Piney and Kyle, just to be good sailors and help him, hoisted the sail.

"Hold on!" shouted Bi. "We're not half ready. It looks like a squall."

There had been a ripple on the water, away toward the eastern shore of the lake. Just a little rough patch at first, but it grew and spread, and darkened with sudden swiftness, and came sweeping on toward the boat while Bi was lifting the anchor.

"It's coming," shouted Kyle, as he gave an extra tug to the halliards of the sail.

"Here it is!" exclaimed Piney, as the cool breeze blew sharply on his cheek.

"Kyle, drop that rope," shouted Bi, excitedly, and Kyle dropped it; but a knot on it caught on one of the seats and held it firmly, just as the sail swelled out with the full force of the fierce gust of wind which followed.

It seemed, for a moment, as if the mast would break, but it was a tough, well-seasoned piece of spruce, and it bent without breaking.

If it had broken then, the boat would not have been upset; but as it was, the wind seemed to take hold of the sail more and more fiercely, and forced it over further and further, till one of the flat stones they had put in for ballast slipped out of its place, and over went the old scow, and Piney, Bi and Kyle went over with it.

The next moment, they were all puffing around in the water, and Bi was especially glad of the fact that he knew how to swim.

"Shall we strike for the shore or the island?" he asked. "The island's nearest. Guess I could swim ashore, though, with one of the paddles to help keep me up."

"No, sir-ee!" shouted Piney. "We'll just right the old scow and bail her out."

"Can we do that?"

"Course we can," said Kyle, "if the water

is n't too rough. We've tipped her and righted her, lots of times."

Bi had not thought of that, but he took hold manfully with the other two.

"I see what's the matter," he said, after they had worked in vain for a few minutes. "It's the sail. We must manage to get it down."

"Of course," said Piney. "What a stupid I am, not to have thought of that."

There was nothing very difficult about it, and before long they had the old boat righted, but she was nearly full, and her sides were only an inch or two above water. Half the waves that came went right over into her.

Still the boys worked away with their hats, and were gaining pretty fast, when Piney exclaimed:

"Look here, Kyle, don't you see? Bi's getting tired out. He can't swim like you and me."

"What'll we do?"

"I could hold on awhile," began Bi, very bravely, although his face was a little pale, but Piney interrupted him with:

"No, you can't. You go to the end of the boat and climb over in. She'll carry you, all alone."

Bi did so, for he felt pretty well exhausted, and he was delighted to find that his weight only sank the boat down to about where she had been when they began.

"Try to pull in the anchor," said Piney. "We'll help you. But don't upset her again."

It was what Kyle Wilbur called "mighty ticklish business," but the anchor was lifted in and Bi began to bail as fast as he could with his hat.

"Work away," said Piney, "while Kyle and I tow her toward the island."

"Pity we've lost all our fish," said Kyle, mournfully.

"Lost em?" said Piney. "Not a bit of it. But I'd forgotten 'em. We never can tow the boat with those strings of fish dragging alongside."

"They're hitched to the boat!" exclaimed Kyle. "So they are! Why, we can throw 'em right in."

"Careful!" said Piney. "Take it easy or we'll have the boat over. Bi's bailing like a good fellow. If it was n't for the waves washing in he'd get ahead fast. Now, Kyle."

Bi helped them put the fish in, and his face wore a sort of mortified expression as he saw Piney strike out toward the shore, with the hitching-chain of the boat fastened to his coat-collar, while Kyle Wilbur pushed with all his might at the stern.

Bi envied them their strength and skill as swimmers, but he tried to do his share of the work with his hat. The paddles and seats had all been saved, and the fishing-rods. As for the trolling-lines, they had been tied to the thole-pins and

were safe. All that was lost was the bait-box, they thought, until Piney turned over in the water and exclaimed: "The luncheon basket!"

"Bottom of the lake," replied Kyle.

"That 's too bad," said Bi.

"Aunt Keziah 'll think so," said Piney, ruefully. "Basket, napkins, plates, forks, knives, spoons, pepper-box, and pickle-bottle, all drowned."

"Can't be helped," said Kyle. "It was too deep to dive for 'em."

Altogether too deep, and the boys worked their way manfully to the shore.

Once there, it was easy enough to drag the boat half out of the water on a sloping beach, and turn her up on one side to drain. It was easier than bailing in that hot sun. Some more stones were put in for ballast when they launched her again, but the afternoon was pretty well used up when they started for home.

So were the boys, but then the wind was fair and strong, so that they had no more hard work before them.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LATE that afternoon Uncle Liph Hunter came back with the carry-all. Of course he brought the mail, but they were all a little surprised to see Grandfather also, and both he and Uncle Liph were more than usually bright and smiling.

"What makes you look so happy?" said Aunt Keziah.

"O, because we 've some news for the family," said Uncle Liph.

"News! What can it be?"

"I 'll tell you. They 've been giving the prizes for the Exhibition. The teachers, of course, reported who were best in all the classes, but they selected a committee of gentlemen in the audience to decide on the prizes for declamation."

"That was fair," said Aunt Keziah.

"Fair!" said Uncle Liph. "Yes; but who do you think got the prizes?"

"Do tell us," said Aunt Keziah.

"Well, the report of the committee says, 'First prize for excellence in declamation, Kyle Wilbur.'"

"You don't say!" exclaimed Aunt Keziah. "His fire-works did that."

"The teachers said as much, and I think they only half liked it. But there was a second prize. The first is a big dictionary, and the second, a fine copy of 'Stockton's Roundabout Rambles.'"

"O!" exclaimed Susie. "Who got it?"

"A young lady named Roxy Hunter."

O, what a shout there was from all the aunts and Cousin Mary, and Mr. Sadler picked up Roxy and tossed her almost to the ceiling.

"Piney and Bi and Kyle are out sailing yet,

but it's pretty near time they were home," said Aunt Keziah. "I do hope nothing has happened to 'em. They 're gone clean through to the upper lake."

Another hour went by, however, and another, and the people at the farm-house began almost to feel uneasy, as tea-time drew near and there were no signs of the return of their young sailors.

Just then a tall lady came in through the front gate, and Aunt Keziah exclaimed:

"If there is n't Kyle's mother! Wonder if she's alarmed about him?"

Mrs. Wilbur came in and was introduced to the visitors from the city.

"Did n't my Kyle go a-boatin' with your Piney?" she asked of Piney's mother.

"Yes, and with his Cousin Bayard."

"Well, don't it seem to you as if they 'd been gone long enough? Kyle's got his cows to go for, and there 's the pigs to feed and lots of other chores. But then it's vacation, and boys are boys."

"Your boy seems a very promising one," said Uncle Liph. "Have you heard from the village to-day?"

"Not a word. Do you mean from the academy? Now, I do declare! I know that caper of his on Exhibition day 'll get him into a scrape, but I could n't help laughin'."

"Everybody laughed," said Uncle Liph. "And what's more, the committee awarded him the first prize."

"You don't say! The first prize to my Kyle? Now, if that is n't somethin' worth while. It 'll be the makin' of him. All he 's been a needin' this ever so long was a little settin' up."

"He's got it now," said Grandfather Hunter. "It's a dictionary. Largest size that 's printed."

"He 'll read it through, then, he will. You see, he and Piney are neighbors, and they 're good friends; but Piney beats him too bad on books and such things. But now he 's won a prize right over Piney's head. I declare!"

They all sympathized too much with Mrs. Wilbur's pleasure to say anything just then about Piney's school record. Even Aunt Keziah shut her lips resolutely, but Roxy marched forward with:

"Kyle got one prize, Mrs. Wilbur, but I got the other. I did n't forget a word of my piece."

"You got a prize, my dear?" said Mrs. Wilbur. "I'm glad of it. But, Mrs. Hunter,—Keziah, don't you think those boys ought to be home by this time?"

Mr. Sadler and Mary had walked out on the lawn while the rest were talking, and just at that moment they heard him shout: "Here they are! All three of them. Boat and all."

There they were, indeed, and they rapidly sailed

in toward the landing, where their friends came hurrying down to meet them. But they were not the neatly dressed party of young fellows that had sailed away that morning. To be sure, they had been pretty well dried by the sun and wind on the way home, but there was no need for them to tell that they had all been in the water. And then, such looking hats! It does not improve a straw hat at all to bail out a boat with it.

The boys were in splendid spirits, however, and, as they came in, they lifted their strings of fish and swung them proudly around, and then the next half hour was taken up in telling the story of the upset and in answering questions.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE evening after what Bi Hunter called "the cruise of the scow" was by all odds the brightest one he had had at the farm-house. Not only were he and Piney better acquainted, so that they understood each other, but there were no school-books nor lessons in the way; that is, Piney was free, and vacation had really come.

It was a beautiful evening, and Piney's mother and Cousin Mary played on the piano and sang; and, after the children were in bed, Grandfather said he was tired and went too, and Bi and Piney got out the chess-board.

Then Piney's mother came and sat down by the boys, and Uncle Liph and Aunt Sarah went and sat on the front piazza. All of a sudden, Aunt Keziah looked up and said to Piney's mother:

"Elizabeth, where are Mary and Mr. Sadler?"

"They've gone for a walk, Keziah. To-morrow's the last day he can stay here."

"Is it?" exclaimed Piney. "Then, we must show him some fun in the hay-field. The men say there are more bumble-bees' nests than they ever knew before. Some of 'em are in the grass where they're mowing. The mowing breaks up the nests, anyway, and we might as well have the honey."

Whether Piney was right about that or not, he had always considered bees' nests fair prey, as all country boys do; and he and Bi awoke the next morning with a sort of a buzzing in their ears.

"Let's go and practice with my bow and arrows till breakfast," said Piney.

"All right," said Bi. "I want to go for some pickerel, while I'm here, and I might as well learn to shoot."

It was easy enough to set up a target out on the lawn, but Bi very quickly discovered that, as he expressed it, he was "not one bit of an Indian."

"Hullo!" he added, turning about: "Mr. Sadler and Mary are coming. Let him try a shot."

That was what they were coming for, and Cousin

Mary stood, with her beautiful new white straw hat swinging from her hand, while Mr. Sadler took the bow and one of the blunt, wooden-headed arrows, to see what he could do with them.

"Oh, Susie," shouted Roxy, on the piazza, "they are bow-and-arrowing out on the lawn!"

"And Mr. Sadler's going to shoot!" said Susie. "Let's go and see."

Mr. Sadler had fitted the arrow on the string just then, and was beginning to pull on it; but the bow was harder to bend than he had expected, and, just as he was beginning to raise it and was turning toward the target, his finger slipped from the end of the arrow. Cousin Mary had been looking hard at the target, as if she expected to see that arrow sticking in the middle of it the next moment, but Mr. Sadler exclaimed: "Well, now!"

And Roxy, who was running across the lawn like a little deer, in a short dress, shouted:

"Oh, Cousin Mary, he's shooted your new hat!"

Bi and Piney tried hard not to laugh, but the more they tried the more they looked as if they wanted to. There was no mistake about it. There was the hat, ten feet away, on the grass, with the arrow sticking through the middle of the crown!

"Oh, never mind!" said Mary; "the arrow is n't hurt a bit."

"But the hat is," said Roxy, as she breathlessly picked it up.

"Take another arrow, Mr. Sadler," said Piney. "You made a center shot that time."

Poor Mr. Sadler's face was pretty red, and he hardly knew what to say; but Cousin Mary's face wore so kind and smiling a look, that he just took the fresh arrow from Piney and turned toward the target. Such a pull as he gave that bow-string!

And, when he let go, the arrow never stopped to make a dent on the target. It went twenty feet above it, and on, on, on, till it was tired out and tumbled into the lake.

"Never mind," said Piney. "It'll float ashore. We'll find it. There goes the breakfast-bell."

After breakfast, they were all soon ready for the hay-field and on their way through the barn-yard and into the lane.

About half-way up the lane they came to some bars in the fence, and Piney let them down, so they could all walk through. He led them right across that field and a little way down the hill-side, and through some more bars, and then they were in the hay-field.

It certainly was a fine field of hay, but one of the mowers motioned to them to stay where they were. He shouted to Piney that they had "just been clean driven away from that easterly swath by the biggest nest of bumble-bees ever stirred up. They're all mad, and they'll go for ye, sure."

"Hurrah, Bi," shouted Piney. "There 's Kyle coming across the meadow. Do as I do."

Out came his handkerchief. He spread it over the back of his head and down over his ears, and tucked it under his shirt-collar, and put his hat on hard.

"They wont get in through that," he said, as he saw Bi and Mr. Sadler imitating him. Then he gathered a handful of long grass and weeds.

"Get a good brush, like that," he said to Bi. "Don't mind 'em unless they 'light on a place where they can sting through."

Cousin Mary and Aunt Keziah and the children remained where they were. They even took up rakes and made believe "make hay," but they could not help watching Piney and the rest as they went for that nest of bees and honey.

The bee-hunters had no difficulty in finding about where that nest was. Not only the mowers pointed it out to them, but both Kyle and Piney were familiar with the business they were on. As they drew nearer, more than one angry bee made a dash at them, but Bi and Mr. Sadler followed the example of the two country boys, and merely brushed their enemies away.

The trouble was that the insects did not seem to know what fear was, and charged again and again, no matter how often they were knocked into the grass.

"Here it is," shouted Piney. "It 's a big one. Now, Kyle, keep 'em off while I take it out. They 're coming."

He stooped down as he spoke and dug with his bare fingers in the grass at the side of a large, round stone. Not many boys would have had the nerve to pry out that nest and pick it up, but Piney Hunter did, and all the while Kyle Wilbur was thrashing away like mad in all directions against a swarm of angry bumble-bees. Bi and Mr. Sadler came running up, and they, too, were compelled to work with their bunches of grass and weeds, as if they were earning very large wages, indeed.

"Had n't we better run?" asked Bi.

"Run, then. That 's what I 'm going to do. But keep on whipping. They 'll follow you."

It was good advice, for the bees did follow, ever so many of them. Piney held the nest in one hand and fought with the other, and somehow he and Kyle got off without a sting. Perhaps it was because they ran along together and kept a good look-out on each other. If a bee alighted on either of them he was instantly brushed away.

"In union there is strength," and Mr. Sadler and Bi got separated as they ran.

Mary saw them running, and exclaimed: "O, Aunt Keziah! The bees are after them."

"Of course they are. But look at Piney. He 's got the nest."

Mr. Sadler should have been wiser than to have run in the direction he took. To be sure, he had whipped himself free of his enemies, except one that managed to settle for a moment on his nose, but another dashed on ahead and, while poor Cousin Mary was thinking of anything but her own safety, she suddenly felt something terribly hot on her under lip.

"Oh, Aunt Keziah, I 'm stung!"

"Are you, my dear? I 'm sorry for that. Where did he sting you?"

"On my lip. Oh, dear!"

It really pained her very much and Roxy said, as Mr. Sadler came up: "There, Mr. Sadler, you brought a bee with you, and he 's stung Cousin Mary on her lip. It 's awful."

He, too, seemed to think it "awful," for he took his hand away from his nose and began to say so, but Aunt Keziah exclaimed: "Nonsense! All that fuss about a bee-sting. Put a little mud on it and let 's go and see 'em mow."

In a few minutes Piney came in with his prize. It was indeed a large nest, with several tablespoonfuls, more or less, of the most delicious honey any of them had ever tasted. So they all said, but, not long after, Mr. Sadler and Cousin Mary walked back together toward the bars.

By that time, however, Piney and Bi and Kyle were fighting with another lot of bumble-bees.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE fun of the hay-field, for Cousin Mary and Mr. Sadler, had been spoiled by two angry bumble-bees, but that was no reason why all the rest should give it up, and they did not.

The bees of that next nest managed to get a good sting at all three of the boys, and Bi Hunter learned more respect for them than he had had before. His handkerchief had got out of his neck and a very angry bumble-bee had stung him. Piney and Kyle had each been stung too, but it was an old story to them and they did not seem to mind it much.

As for Aunt Keziah, she was more interested in seeing what a good crop of hay she was to have, and Roxy and Susie began to turn their attention to it also. They had brought their dolls with them, of course, and it was capital fun to put them to sleep and make houses for them in the low, soft mounds of hay, where it had been pitched into hay-cocks. And then they kicked the hay about in the "winnows," where it had been raked together.

"Is n't hay nice?" said Susie.

"Of course it is," said Roxy, "but they 're

going to load a wagon pretty soon. Then we'll have a ride to the barn."

"That'll be splendid!"

A good deal of the hay in that field was sufficiently cured to be carried home, and before noon a great wagon, drawn by two horses, with a wide wooden frame on top of the wagon-box, was slowly pulled along from one heap of hay to another.

Piney and his two friends were getting pretty warm over their fun, by this time, and Bi was troubled by a feeling that it was not exactly right.

"The bees own the nests," he said to himself, "and it's their honey."

He had to give up making Kyle and Piney see it in that way, however, for Kyle told him:

"The bees own the honey till haying-time, Bi,—then it's ours. Why, even if they sting a fellow they leave their sting in him."

Bi put his hand gently on the back of his neck, where a hot lump was growing, and he had very little pity for that particular bee.

"I say, boys," he exclaimed, as he looked across the field, "they've loaded that wagon and they're lifting the children on it for a ride. Just hear 'em scream. S'pose we go and ride in with 'em."

"All right," said Piney, "but who shrieked then?"

Not Roxy nor Susie, decidedly, and the next thing they saw was Aunt Keziah, running across from where she had been standing, and whipping her head with her apron.

"There's a bee after her!" said Kyle.

"That's too bad," said Bi.

Piney was already on a run to Aunt Keziah's assistance, but before he reached her she stopped, stood still a moment, and then walked slowly back toward the hay-wagon.

"What is the matter, Aunt Keziah?" asked Roxy, from the top of the hay-wagon. "Did they try to lift you up?"

She and Susie had enjoyed being lifted, but they had screamed pretty loudly, all the same.

"Did he sting you?" shouted Piney at the same moment.

"Sting?" said Aunt Keziah. "What do I care for a bee-sting? I'm going back to the house, along with this load. I've been fooling around here long enough."

Somehow or other, though, her right hand went up to her ear just then, for all the world as if something was smarting there.

"Come, boys," shouted Piney, "let's climb up!"

The wagon was soon in motion, and it tilted this way and that over the rough places of the field, on its way to the bars, in a very exciting way.

How the two girls did hold on to their brothers!

"Does hay ever upset?" asked Susie.

"Does it, Piney?" said Bi.

"Oh, sometimes, but not on a straight, easy road like this. We're all safe enough. Hold tight when we go down the lane, that's all."

Roxy and Susie screamed with delight and fear, as the load of hay climbed the ascent to the bars leading into the lane, and then began to roll slowly down to the barn-yard. Right in front of the wide barn-doors, the horses stopped.

"I see now," said Bi, "why barn-doors are made so high. Why, the load can but just get in."

"That's so," said Piney; "we must all get down, or we'll be scraped off. Slip down the back end, Bi; I'll let the girls down to you."

Bi did so, and Roxy and Susie clambered close behind him. They were trembling a little, but Roxy said: "Piney knows, Susie. It's awful high, but we'll get down."

Aunt Keziah was right there, with her hand on her ear, telling one of the farm-hands—a tall, strong man—to "help down those children, so they wont break their little necks."

Could she have been angry at that bee for stinging her? She would not have said so for anything, but she was plainly in a hurry to get to the house.

Bi took hold of Roxy's hand, and let her slip, slip, slip down the smooth surface of the hay, till the man below could reach up and touch her. Then he let go, and just as she was screaming, "Oh, Aunt Keziah!" she was caught in a pair of strong hands and landed safely on the ground.

"Come, Susie," she said at once. "Come on. Don't be scared. It just is n't anything at all."

Susie thought differently, but she took Bi's hand and began to slide; and then, almost before she could believe it, she was standing beside her cousin.

Kyle Wilbur was there, too, for he had swung himself down from the forward end of the wagon.

It was easy enough for a pair of active boys like Piney and Bi to come down without help. They would have scorned asking any.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AUNT KEZIAH did not go back to the hay-field that day. None of the older people did, and Roxy and Susie were prevailed upon to play in the neighborhood of the house, where there were no nests of angry bumble-bees.

When the boys came back from the hay-field they were hot and tired, and that evening was a quiet one at the old farm-house.

The next day Mr. Sadler had to return to the city, and very little could be done till after the carry-all came to the door to take him away. Uncle Liph and Aunt Sarah and Cousin Mary went over to the village with him, and when they came back Uncle Liph said to Piney's mother that he should have to cut short his visit.

"I may have to spend a week in the city, on business, and then we are all going down to the sea-shore," said he.

About noon the boys came marching in a slow procession toward Uncle Liph, who sat upon the front piazza.

"What?" said he, as they handed him some curious objects. "Six new arrow-heads! I declare, there's one big enough for a spear-head. That war-club is a noble one, and so is the stone hatchet."

"Kyle found them. There are plenty of such things scattered about the old fields near here," said Piney. "They're his present to you."

"Kyle? Well, now, I thank him very much," said Uncle Liph, and then he seemed to be thinking for a moment before he added:

"Kyle, would you like to visit the city?"

"O, yes, sir. I guess I would. Why, I never was in one in all my life."

"Well, I'm going home next Monday, and I'm to take Piney and Roxy with me, to stay a week. I'd be glad to have you come and visit me with them."

Poor Kyle! It was almost too much to come at once. He blushed and stammered and did not know what to say, for it sounded very much as if he had been promised a peep into fairy-land.

"Ask your mother when you go home. I'll show you all my curiosities and Bi will show you the city. You can see the houses and streets and the ships in the harbor, and the forts, and we'll all go some day and have a look at the ocean."

Kyle's eyes seemed to be growing bigger while Uncle Liph was talking. But that was the first Piney had heard about the visit to the city, and Aunt Keziah exclaimed: "Do look at that boy! Piney, you aint going to burst, are ye?"

"I'd like to do something. Mother, are you going to let us go?"

"Yes, my son. You and Roxy too."

"O, Chub, I'm going to the city," shouted Roxy, as she hugged her fat little brother. "I'm going to the city where the oshung is, and Piney's going, too, and Kyle Wilbur, and Kyle never was there before, and it'll scare him half to death."

"I'll ask my mother," said Kyle, as he began to edge away toward the door. "I guess she'll let me go. It's only for a week, and Bill Young'll go for my cows while I'm gone."

Mrs. Wilbur was glad enough to let Kyle make such a visit as that, and Mr. Hunter promised to send him home safely at the end of the week.

"That's what comes of his speakin' so well at the Exhibition," she said.

The boys did all they could to make Friday and Saturday pleasant for Bi, but it was hard to talk of anything but the city, and poor Bi had to answer an endless string of questions. Then came Sunday, and Piney and Roxy thought it was the longest Sunday they had ever heard of.

Aunt Keziah and Piney's mother had been doing everything they could to get him and Roxy ready, and Mrs. Wilbur had been over to see them about Kyle's clothes again and again, until Aunt Keziah exclaimed: "Overcoat! Yes, and he'd better take his skates, too, so's to be ready if there's a summer freeze while he's there."

"It's a tryin' piece of business, Keziah. He's never traveled any."

"Well, he must learn," said Aunt Keziah.

It was indeed a trying piece of business to get Roxy and Susie off in proper shape, that Monday morning; but Piney had become, as he said, "kind o' settled down to it," and Kyle Wilbur was trying his best to imitate him.

Such a grand start they made, with the older people in the carry-all, and the trunks and the children in one of Aunt Keziah's farm-wagons.

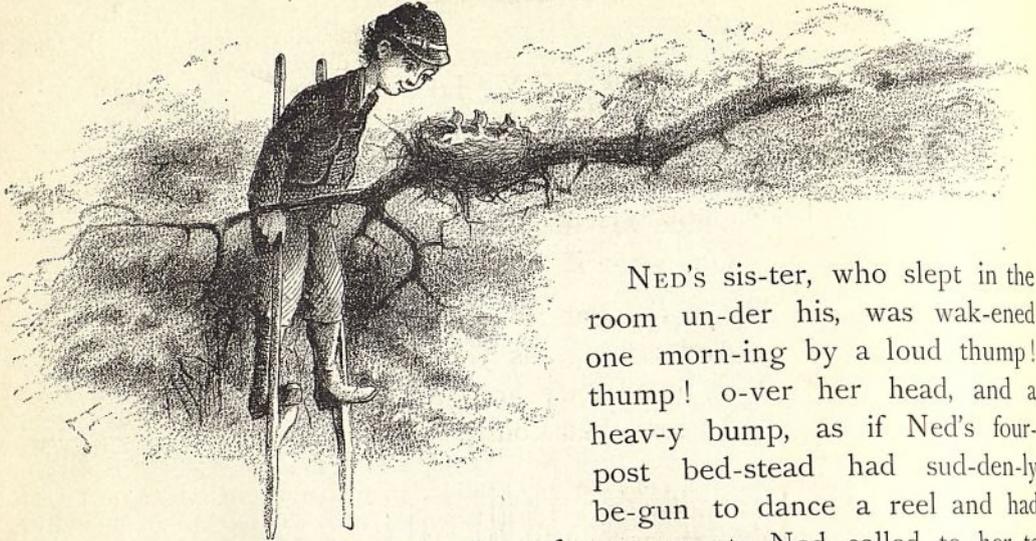
Piney and Roxy looked a little sober when they kissed their mother good-bye, and Mrs. Wilbur came to the front gate with Kyle's dictionary under her arm; but for all that, the three boys managed to stand up in the wagon just after it started, and give "three cheers and a tiger" for the old farm-house and the lakes, and the dear, good friends who were gazing after them from the front piazza.

We could tell our readers the particulars of this happy visit to town. Of the sights the boys saw and the sights they did n't see, of the wisdom they found and the ignorance they lost—of how life seemed to widen before them when they saw the vast workings of business, trade and manufacture in a great city—and how, after they returned home, they never were quite the same that they were before. But the story would have no thrilling ending after all—not even if it carried them out of boyhood into manhood and old age. The lives of the great crowd of human beings about us are more interesting in the living than to those who look on. You have looked on while Piney and Bi and Kyle were passing through some happy weeks of boyhood, and if you have been interested and pleased, the author is satisfied.

THE END.

NED'S STILTS.

BY LUCY G. MORSE.



NED'S sis-ter, who slept in the room un-der his, was wak-ened one morn-ing by a loud thump! thump! o-ver her head, and a heav-y bump, as if Ned's four-post bed-stead had sud-den-ly be-gun to dance a reel and had fall-en a-part in the at-tempt. In a few mo-ments Ned called to her to come in-to the gar-den and see him walk on his stilts. At first he found it hard, for his legs went just where he did not want them to. He had al-most a hun-dred tum-bles and a-bout twen-ty bruis-es be-fore he could walk firm-ly. "Hur-rah!" he cried then. "These stilts make me as tall as my fa-ther! I can see as much as he can, with-out wait-ing to grow up. Hur-rah! I can see the world!"

While walk-ing a-bout, he came to an old ap-ple-tree. His head was high up a-mong the branch-es. There was a great flut-ter a-bout his head, and a low cry of "Peep! peep! peep!" just un-der his nose. He found him-self close by a nest with some lit-tle new-born rob-ins in it. "Oh!" he cried. "Here is some-thing I nev-er should have seen with-out my stilts. I knew those two birds that come to our kitch-en door ev-er-y day had a nest near by, and here it is. How the poor old birds cry! They think I am a great big stork, with my stilt-legs, and that I am go-ing to eat up their young ones this ver-y min-ute. Well, you fun-ny, lit-tle snip-per-snap-pers! You need not think *you* can eat up a big fel-low on stilts, not if you split your heads a-part, o-pen-ing your bills so wide! And I will just tell you one thing be-fore I go: boys are not so bad as you think they are. I don't be-lieve there ev-er was a boy who could look three lit-tle young rob-ins straight in the face and then do them a-ny harm at all. Tell that to your pa-rents. Good-bye!"

Ned went a-way on his stilts, and be-gan at once to tell his sis-ter what he had found; and soon she, too, had a peep in-to the nest.

NAUGHTY JACK.

JACK stole and ate an ap-ple-pie,
 And said it was the cat.
 To hide his theft he told a lie!
 Oh, what is worse than that?
 Up in the gar-ret he is locked,
 And cry-ing, as you see,—
 Two lit-tle mice are great-ly shocked
 At such bad com-pa-ny.



Wa-ter and bread he has for food,
 No cake, nor jam, nor cheese,
 Un-til he says: "I will be good,
 For-give me, if you please."
 And he must pray that God his sin
 Will par-don, if he try
 Nev-er to steal—not e-ven a pin,
 And nev-er tell a lie!



JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

YOUR Jack has several things on his mind this time to talk over with you, although he feels the awkwardness of having to do so much of the talking himself.

In the first place, he would like to make sure that every sizable boy in the land has read, or will read, Brother Gladden's paper about city boys in the March ST. NICHOLAS. The dear Little School-ma'am says it is "perfectly splendid," and Deacon Greene declares it is "invaluable." Now these two always mean what they say; and it strikes me that a perfectly splendid, invaluable paper must be well worth reading, if only for the oddity of the thing.

Besides this matter, there's a dubious bit of school news,—then some funny things I have heard about beavers, and cats, and swallows, and water-worms, and villages on house-tops, besides an insectivorous letter from that wonderful Little School-ma'am, to be delivered, and a choking story, that is appropriately hard to swallow,—and,—and—

Well, the only way is to begin.

"NO MORE TRUANTS."

A LITTLE school-ma'am writes from a town in Massachusetts that soon there are to be no more truants from schools. The reason is that there is to be a new way of teaching, in which the scholars are to ask the questions and the teachers are to answer them, or show the scholars how to do so. And, besides, the reading-books are to be full of pretty stories, fairy-tales and poems. What do you think of that, my chicks? Mind and let your Jack know just as soon as the new, happy times begin with you—if ever they do.

BEAVERS COASTING.

ONE of my friends in Iowa sends word that when her brother—now a General in the United States Army—was a boy, he was very fond of hunting,

and a great favorite with the grown-up hunters. One of these took him on a bright moonlight night in winter to see a strange sight.

The pair crept through the cold, clear air to the home of some beavers. At the dam which the beavers had built, the moon was reflected from the ice with a great glare, and, in this light, the lookers-on saw the beavers have a splendid game of coasting down a long slide, from the top of the dam to the ice-covered stream below. The old beavers gave the young ones rides on their broad, flat tails; all slid down as gravely as judges, and then climbed up to have another. They kept it up until one of the watchers sneezed. At this, the beaver sentinels sounded the alarm, and then all was still—excepting that the lookers-on went away laughing heartily at what they had seen.

HOUSES ON THE ROOF.

NOT bird-houses, but real dwellings of men; and the roof on which they are built is that of the vast Cathedral of St. Peter, in Rome. The traveler who tells about this says that the houses make quite a little village, and that the persons who live in it are the workmen who take care of the great building beneath them.

HAVE INSECTS HEARTS?

DEAR JACK:—Please tell me if spiders and other insects have hearts. A. E. C.

Here is the Little School-ma'am's letter in reply:

MY DEAR JACK:—At your request, and for the benefit of all your inquiring youngsters, I send my answer to A. E. C.'s question. Of course spiders have hearts.

The heart, you know, is a kind of small force-pump. There are muscles around it which keep squeezing and letting go, squeezing and letting go, all life through. These muscles act without any wishing or direction by their owner. Every time they loosen their grasp on the heart, the blood rushes in to fill it, and it becomes a tiny reservoir; every time they squeeze, the blood is forced out into the arteries with a throb, and starts on its long and winding journey through the body. Finally, having done its errands by leaving all along its path the materials for building up bone, and flesh, and skin, and every other part of the body, the blood is gathered in a thousand delicate veinlets, and at length finds its way in a single stream to the lungs, where the exhausted blood is rested and mixed with air and sent back to heart-headquarters to start on a new journey with a new burden of supplies. This is the way every sort of animal lives, and each has a heart, though, in some of the small, shapeless creatures that dwell in the water, and whose blood is thin and white, the heart is not easy to find.

The spider's heart is large, and shaped more like a banana than anything else. It lies a little way under the skin of the back, in the largest part of the body, and from each side of it start off branches through which the blood flows to the head, the legs, and the rest of the body. Although other insects are not formed precisely like this one, yet all have hearts.

But now, why is the spider called an *insect*? That is what I should like to have A. E. C. or somebody tell me.

THE LITTLE SCHOOL-MA'AM.

WELL-BEHAVED SWALLOWS.

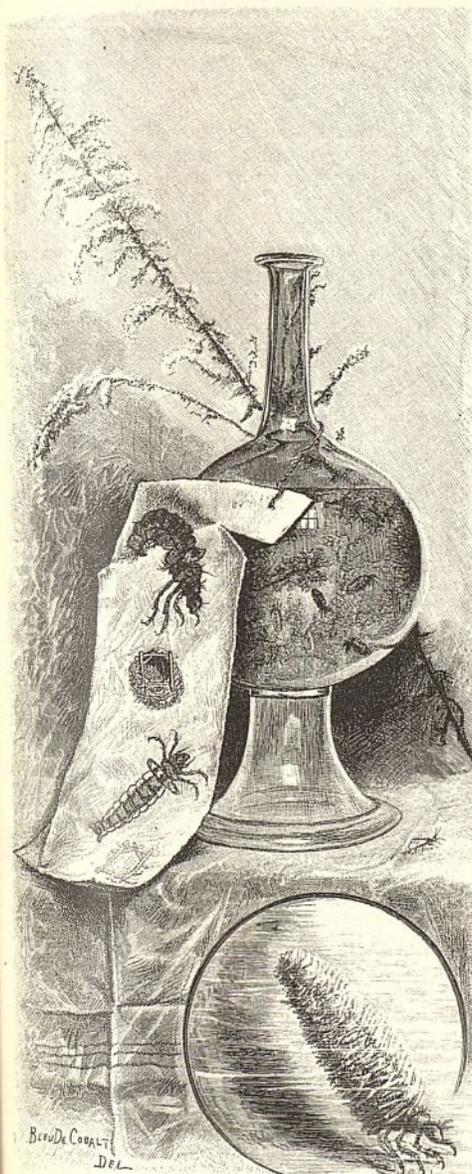
OF course, your Jack knows very well that birds are not quite as good as human beings—are they? You need not answer, my dears, until you have read the following paragram:

"Up in the Rocky Mountains, parent swallows take tender care of their brood. After the little ones are grown up and can look well after themselves, the mother-bird lays more eggs, and, when these are hatched, the older brothers and sisters join with the father and mother in getting food for the new little ones. The young birds that are able to fly go hunting for grasshoppers, moths, and so on,

and carry these to their tiny brothers and sisters in the nest, feeding them as carefully and lovingly as if they were their parents."

A WATER-WORM THAT BUILDS A HOUSE.

"THERE is a curious little fellow called a caddis-worm," says D. C. B., "and he lives in the water



and builds his own house. The picture shows him in the bottle of water swimming among plants. The piece of paper leaning against the glass gives near its top a side view of him, without his house; below there is a front view of this dwelling, and,

next, a back view of the little chap with the bumps and hooks that dove-tail him securely in his home. At the corner of the paper is a plan showing how he builds,—crossing the straws and splinters near their ends, and binding them together with a fine silk, which he spins from himself.

"In the circle you see him floating along in his house, which is very light and gives him no trouble. This is lucky for him, because, if he were to be long without his covering, some hungry fish would surely eat him up. But the house looks too prickly to be comfortably swallowed.

"In time, the caddis-worm comes to anchor, closes up his front door with a strong silken net, and becomes a pupa, with hooked jaws. These jaws bite through the net, and the pupa gayly swims away. By and by, it rises to the top of the water, where its stiff skin breaks open and forms a kind of boat, and in the boat appears a slender little fly with beautiful wings. One of these flies is shown on the table-cloth in the picture, near the foot of the bottle.

"I once had a caddis-worm in my aquarium, and gently took away his house. Then I gave him some tiny bright-hued straws. At the close of that same day, when I looked at him; I found that the busy little fellow had built himself a new house with the tinted straws, and it was as gay and bright as Joseph's coat of many colors."

Now, my hearers, who has seen a live caddis-worm? Look sharply for one in future, and, when found, let your Jack hear about it.

BRUNEL'S MOST IMPORTANT JOB.

DEAR MR. JACK: You may be interested in hearing about a curious piece of engineering, by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the great English bridge-builder and engineer, by whom the Box Tunnel and the "Great Eastern" steam-ship were made. These were great achievements, but what I am going to tell you may be counted the most important work of his life, for if it had failed he would have lost his life.

One day, he was amusing his children by making a gold coin disappear and re-appear by sleight of hand. At length, he tossed the coin with a sudden swift movement into his mouth; it went a great deal farther than he had meant, however, and slipped into his windpipe, and almost choked him.

While the surgeons were hesitating, and calculating as to the best point for cutting into the windpipe, Mr. Brunel suddenly took his case into his own hands, as a mere piece of engineering. He had found, while coughing and choking, that, when his body and head were in a certain position, the coin lay edgewise in the windpipe; so he caused a platform to be made on which he could lie in that position, his head down. On this platform he stretched himself, and had his body rigidly fixed. Then he made an assistant strike blow after blow sharply on the foot of the platform. As he had anticipated, each stroke jerked the gold-piece, and it slipped by its own weight along the windpipe. It required many hammer-taps, but at length the coin rolled through the throat, into the mouth and out upon the floor.

G. M. K.

A CAT-TELEGRAPH.

IN a certain Belgian town, cats are being trained to run with messages, after the manner of carrier-pigeons; only, of course, the cats go afoot.

Your Jack is glad that a new way has been found to keep puss out of mischief, and give her something to do instead of catching birds. And there's another encouraging side to this scrap of news; boys in Belgium must be growing gentler in their ways with cats, for people would never trust a cat alone with a message where the boys were ordinary boys—or, at least, like some boys I've heard of.

BYE, BABY, BYE!

Words by MARY MAPES DODGE.

Music by HUBERT P. MAIN.

Slow, with simplicity.

p Legato.

f p

1. Bye, ba-by, day is o-ver, Bees are drows-ing in the clo-ver;
 2. Bye, ba-by, birds are sleeping; One by one the stars are peep-ing;
 3. Bye, ba-by, moth-er holds thee, Lov-ing, ten-der care en-folds thee;

Bye, ba-by, bye! Now the sun to bed is glid-ing,
 Bye, ba-by, bye! In the far off sky they twin- kle,
 Bye, ba-by, bye! An-gels in thy dreams ca-ress thee,

Rit.

All the pret-ty flow'rs are hid-ing—Bye, ba-by, bye!
 While the cows come, tin- kle, tin- kle,—Bye, ba-by, bye!
 Thro' the darkness guard and bless thee—Bye, ba-by, bye!

Rit.

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THE LETTER-BOX.

WALTER and Robert Lowry ask: "Will you please tell us how to tell a quail from a woodcock, by the markings?" Who will answer the question?

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: A poem in the January number, entitled "Bidding the Sun 'Good-Night' in Lapland," says the sun sets in Lapland, and does not rise again for seven or eight months. Is that true? My parents and teachers say it is not true; and I read that in Nova Zembla, which is farther north than Lapland, the nights are only three months long. I am eleven years old.—Yours truly, F. H. ROPER.

Here is what the author of the poem says in reply: It is too much to say of Lapland in general that its people do not see the sun "for more than half a year." But we know there are many places, even among the White Mountains of New Hampshire, where the sun rises so late and sets so early that the day is much shorter than in ordinary localities near, and we can easily conceive how, in a time when the sun rises but a little way above the horizon, and that for only a few hours out of the twenty-four, a range of hills, in the direction where it rises, must prevent its being seen from the dark side of the hills, and from the valleys, "for more than half a year."

An article in "Chambers' Journal" entitled "A Winter in Lapland," on which the poem was based, says: "A Night that begins in early October, and ends in June," and "I had actually seen the sun go down into an obscurity that was to last the better part of a year." This was written of Kublitz, a village where the writer remained through one of these winter nights, and his account of it is exceedingly interesting. JOY ALLISON.

FANNIE M. B.—Your question about the truth of the story, "A Faithful Friend," printed in the February number, is answered in the "Letter-Box" of the same issue.

THE AUDIOPHONE—M. E. MANNING AND OTHERS.—The audiophone, that wonderful instrument described by Aunt Fanny in the February number, does enable deaf people to hear. The inventor's agents are Messrs. Caswell, Hazard & Co., 1099 Broadway, New York.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Last spring papa got sister and me four prairie-dogs. They like sweet cake, and mamma gives us a piece now and then for the dogs. They eat it just as sister and I do, sit straight up, and put it into their mouths with their fore-paws. They don't eat hazel-nuts, because their teeth are not strong enough, and then, too, hazel-nuts don't grow near western prairie-dog towns. They never drink water, but appear to be afraid of it, and never leave their holes on damp or rainy days. They pile the dirt around. Prairie-dogs look just like wee bears, but they don't stay in their burrows all winter. Up to this time, ours have been out every pleasant day, that is, 'most every day, because our Nebraska winter days are nearly all pleasant. From your friend, GEORGE H. PALMER.

We have received a letter from a good friend of ST. NICHOLAS finding fault with our Frontispiece in the January number, saying that while it illustrates the meaning which is usually given to the old nursery jingle—

"Hark! hark! The dogs do bark; the beggars are coming to town;

Some in rags, and some in jags, and some in velvet gowns,"

it does not illustrate the historical meaning of the rhyme. He adds:

The couplet is not descriptive of a band of ordinary mendicants, but of the entrance into a town of a company of English strolling players, who, when the rhyme was made, and long after, were in British law not only classed as vagabonds, but were debarred the rites of Christian burial.

The most trustworthy writers upon the drama have used this couplet to illustrate the low condition of those early actors of old England, who were not permitted to bear the distinguished title of "His Majesty's Servants." The motley garments of "the beggars," that is, of the actors, are fully described in the last line, and the "velvet gown" distinctly indicates that the wearer was no ordinary alms-seeker. These strolling actors, of the early period indicated by the

couplet, strolled from town to town, played in barns, and charged no regular price for admission to the play, but accepted gifts, or, in other words, "took up a collection" from the spectators.

Both by the statutory law and the unwritten law of custom, these strollers were "vagabonds" and "vagrants," and they were as widely known by the name "beggars" as by any other. Yet they were not maimed, halt, blind, nor wretched, but very merry "vagabonds," and the memory of them is very pleasant to me. L. C. D.

The letter is printed as an act of justice to the strolling players, and because it will interest our older readers.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Mamma and Papa, and all of us children, have fine times making words for each other to spell. Each letter is on a little piece of card, and we shuffle them all together. Here are some that we had the most fun over—my aunt brought them to us from North Elba, in the Adirondack Mountains: L A S E I: Papa made out this word. N C O T A E S R S; my brother found out this one. And here is another which they say was made by the Earl of Beaconsfield one evening for the Queen, and which she was delighted with after she made it out. B A L Y E R T A. We have n't got it out yet. I send these to you, because I think some of the boys and girls may like to try them. They are good English words in common use. I wish some of the St. NICHOLAS boys and girls would send some good ones to the "Letter-Box."—Your affectionate reader, C. D.

ELLA B. AND OTHERS.—All readers of ST. NICHOLAS, whether they are subscribers or not, are welcome to send letters to the "Letter-Box." But there is room only for the best of those letters which are likely to interest the greatest number of readers.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: This evening the girl turned the gas bracket so that the flame came close to the sash and under the window-shade, throwing a bright light into the yard. And then she went into the yard to take down the clothes from the line. Of course, the gas flame set fire to the shade, which blazed up. Our Beta, a little girl of ten years, was in a front room and saw the blaze through the doorway. So she ran, got upon a table, tore down the shade, threw it on the floor, and poured water on the shade until the fire was out. When asked how she came to think of doing this, she said: "I read about the Practical Fairy in the January ST. NICHOLAS, and thought I could do as she did." We all think it was brave of her, and that the other ST. NICHOLAS girls will like to know about it.—Yours truly, B. T.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Please tell me whether or not the story of "How the Elephants turned back" in the December number of ST. NICHOLAS is true, and where an account of it can be found.

LOUIS L. CURTIS.

The story is given in McClintock and Strong's "Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature," under the head of "Maccabees—Third Book."

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: In looking over your pages I saw in the March number of 1876, an account of the "Man in the Iron Mask," and that his name had never been found out. Not long ago, I saw in a paper an account that at last he had been found out, in this manner:

One day, it is said, a few days before his death, the door of his cell being open, a certain Jean Aumont received furtively, during a few moments' absence of the jailer, a letter from the "Iron Mask," which, for precaution's sake, doubtless, had been written in indecipherable characters. The prisoner, on remitting it to Aumont, began to explain the method of reading it, when suddenly the jailer returned. Jean Aumont kept the letter until his death, being unable to read it, and then it passed into the hands of his son Auguste Aumont, who, after great labor, managed to read it. This is the letter: "If my sad captivity is necessary for the happiness of France, grant me, Lord, the strength to endure it. Louis Louvais and ye, their accomplices, whose names I may not mention, God will one day judge you most severely. What crime have I committed, unless that of being born a French prince? I have offered you to quit France, to go and live and die far away, unknown. Was it not enough? Alas! royalty seems to me very terrible, when it thus renders kings criminals. Oh, Louis, hast thou then no remorse when thinking of the sufferings that I endure? May these lines escape one day from my prison and belong to history. From my tomb, I will bless him who will have transmitted them. May God bless the beloved France—such will my prayer ever be. You who

will read these lines, pity the poor 'Iron Mask,' and pray to God for him. From the Bastille, the 20th of June of the year 1703."

He died on the 19th of November, 1703, and was buried, under the name of "Morchialy," in the cemetery of St. Paul, his parish. He died on Monday and was buried on Tuesday.

Your reader and friend,

CARROLL L. MAXCY.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: One day, a little Western boy had his pet dog photographed, and, when he saw the portraits, he said to his father:

"May n't I send one to the man in America who loves dogs the best?"

"Certainly," said his father.

After a time, they sent the picture to Mr. James H. Beard. "For," said they, "he could not paint dogs so well if he did not love them very much."



I hope you will print this and the picture, for it will surprise the boy and Mr. Beard, neither of whom knows anything about my sending the photograph to you. I dare say, too, that it will surprise the dog, who was a smart little chap when last I saw him.—Yours truly,
B. H. M.

THE remarkable clock mentioned in the article about "Wonderful Automata," in the February number, was the first of its kind made in America; but J. Willie Stone sends a description of a later American clock, even more wonderful than this, and made in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, by Stephen D. Engle. The clock has forty-eight moving figures; but its description is printed at great length, and so only the gist of it can be given here. The whole machine looks like the front or façade of a cathedral, with three square towers, the middle tower being the tallest, about ten feet high.

The towers spring from a base, which is eight feet wide and rather more than four feet high. The sides of this lower part are ornamental, but the middle has a small globe representing the earth and some complicated astronomical mechanism.

In the lower half of one of the side towers is an organ, and, whenever this plays, two figures appear, with harp and pipes, in the upper half of the tower.

In the lower part of the other side tower a mechanical life is hid, and in the upper section are twenty figures of soldiers of Revolutionary times, including Moll Pitcher. When the life plays, the troops march boldly on to take part in some battle—that of Monmouth, perhaps.

The middle tower contains in the lower part a clock, to show the time, the tides, the seasons, the changes of the moon, the months, and the days of the week. At the top of this tower, a Roman sen-

tinel keeps marching to and fro behind battlements, facing about at each end of his beat.

In the middle parts of the tower are more figures, some in niches, some shut in by doors that lead into a small open court, and others upon a balcony. These figures act as follows:

When the hour-hand approaches the first quarter, Father Time reverses his hour-glass and strikes "one" on a bell with his scythe, a bell inside the clock responding, and Youth appears. Three minutes previous to the half-hour a bell strikes, followed by the music of the organ. At the half-hour, Time reverses his glass and strikes two on the bell, a bell inside responding. Then Youth passes and Manhood appears. One minute after this, a chime of bells is heard, a folding door opens in the lower porch and another at the right of the court, and the Savior comes out. Then the Apostles appear in procession, Peter in the center and Judas in the rear. As the first one approaches the Savior, a folding door opens in the balcony above, and the three Marys come out in single file and stand—Mary, the sister of the Virgin, on the left, the Virgin Mary in the center, and Mary Magdalene on the right. As the Apostles come opposite the Savior, they turn toward Him. The Savior bows to them, except to Peter, who turns in the opposite direction; then a cock on the right flaps his wings and crows, and Satan appears above at a window, and a figure of Justice raises her scales. Judas, as he advances, does not look upon the Savior; Satan follows immediately after on foot, and goes back the same way he came, to appear again above at another window. Satan appears six times at different places. At the third quarter, Father Time strikes three with his scythe and turns his hour-glass, when three bells respond.

Then Manhood passes and Old Age comes into view. Three minutes previous to the hour, the organ peals again, and as the hour arrives, the skeleton figure of Death strikes its number with a human thigh bone on a skull. One minute after, the procession of the Apostles again takes place. Besides these two regular movements, the Apostles' procession may be made to occur twice on the first quarter, and twice again on the third, making, in all, six processions each hour.

P. J. B.—The "Legend of the Ground-hog," which you ask about, is explained in the following letter from the author of the poem in the March number:

The ground-hog, a bright, wary little rodent, chiefly abounds in the Southern States. He makes his winter quarters in a deep hole which he burrows into the ground, and in this he sleeps throughout the cold season, far below the reach of frost. His only sustenance during this time is the sucking of his paw, which, curiously enough, is always the left one. On February 2, never sooner, he comes out from his hole, and, if the day should happen to be a bright one, so that he sees his shadow, he is frightened, and hurries back to his hole, there to stay six weeks longer. If the day is dull, and he cannot see his shadow, he keeps out until the cold weather sets in again.

Now, as to his foretelling the weather. February Second is Candlemas Day, and tradition says that if Candlemas Day is bright and sunshiny, six weeks of hard winter weather are sure to follow,—if the contrary, winter will speedily break up. This tradition became linked with the habits of the ground-hog, and what is called Candlemas Day, according to English tradition, is called Ground-hog Day in this country.

WILLIAM M. PEGRAM.

A LITTLE boy of ten years, who has lived all his life in a poor quarter of New York without once being in the country, and who, perhaps, never saw a real live ox or cow close by, wrote the following "composition" about "The Ox:"

Kingdom.	Type.	Class.	Order.	Family.
Animal,	Vertebrate,	Mammal,	Cud-chewing,	Ox.

The ox has a long and round body, it has a large and broad head, its tail is made into soup, its hair is put into mortar, its skin made into leather for our shoes. The ox has a cloven hoof; its hoof is made into glue. The female ox is called the cow, from which it gives us milk; the young ox is called the calf.

GEORGE R. C.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: My cousin had such a curious dream a few weeks ago, that I thought I would write and tell you about it. She dreamt there was a sign on the moon telling the people that the earth was wearing out and that they must fly to Venus. It also told them to make feather belts and fasten them around their waists so they could fly. Just as every one was flying up to Venus, my cousin's belt broke, she fell to the earth and woke. She is eleven years old, and so am I.—Your reader,
H. S. GORDON, JR.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

EASY SQUARE-WORD.

1. A POINT in the heavens, directly under the place where we stand.
 2. To worship. 3. Birds of the pigeon family. 4. An Empress of Constantinople. 5. To put into place again. D. W.

DIFFICULT DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The heads united spell a poet's name;
 The tails set forth a work that earned him fame.

First cite an actress great, Old England's pride;
 A famed philosopher set by her side.
 Add to the pair a fiery Spanish saint;
 A great Italian, next, who loved to paint.
 Choose then a holy and a festive day;
 And name a king of France long passed away.
 A Yankee chief call next, who, long ago,
 Fought off and bravely 'gainst the British foe.
 Take what can not be paired how'er you strive;
 And what is never less than fifty-five.
 For tenth a Jew who bears o'er England sway;
 Eleventh, a prophet-priest of David's day;
 For twelfth, a writer old, a wonder, too;
 Thirteenth, a Queen in "fourteen ninety-two."
 The next is less than nothing and yet more;
 The last a Roman bard in days of yore.

PICTURE PUZZLE.



The name of this man's race is to be found, and then the letters of that name are to be re-arranged so as to spell the name of an East Indian dye of a deep blue color, and the name also of a space set apart for a special purpose.

METAGRAM.

I HAVE five letters, and am welcomed once every year. In me you may find: 1. The ocean that enwraps the earth. 2. A slight

illness. 3. A couple. 4. What two persons tried to carry up-hill. 5. What one of them received on his head. 6. That on which he perched, bemoaning his ill-luck. 7. What the other found in her dress. 8. Where she sat while her mother soothed her. 9. Many a jar has it. 10. One who defies conscience through fear. T.

DIAMOND.

1. IN accurate. 2. A pole. 3. A pleasant beverage. 4. The female of the fallow-deer. 5. In acre. N. B. L.

DROP-LETTER WORDS.

EACH of the following examples gives part of the name of some mountain or range of mountains; every other letter being represented by a dash. With each example is given the name of the continent or country to which the name belongs.

1. -i-i-a-d-a-o; Eastern Africa. 2. -r-r-t; Armenia.
 3. -o-g; Western Africa. 4. -t-a-; Algeria. 5. -l-s; Central Europe. 6. -r-l; Russian Empire. 7. -o-i-a-; Afghanistan. JACK.

LETTER SYNCOPATIONS.

[TO SYNCOPATE is to shorten a word by taking away from the middle of it a letter, or letters, or a syllable.]

1. Syncopate kingly and leave genuine. 2. Syncopate a soldier's reward, and leave a necessary part of every day's living. 3. Syncopate firm, and leave old. 4. Syncopate speedy, and leave an invasion. 5. Syncopate a ditch, and leave a European fresh-water fish. 6. Syncopate grim and leave a substance that oozes out of trees.

HOOR-GLASS PUZZLE.

ACROSS.—1. A seat for one. 2. A short poem. 3. In adumbrate. 4. A beverage of English people. 5. Wants. Central Perpendicular, To render corrupt. Diagonals (downward): From left to right, Systems of laws; from right to left, Part of a fortification. C. D.

BURIED CITIES.

THE balmy Spring in beauty re-appears.
 Sweet April, either smiles or tears, has come.
 Pausing to kiss the earth, she disappears.
 Then May doth wander by to coax it into bloom.

Down by the brook whose water looks so clear,
 Now from each bank the greening willows sweep
 To kiss the little eddies circling near,
 And lean as though entranced above the sparkling deep.

The stream, all dimpling at those kisses, slides
 Past many a grassy knoll and darkling cave,
 Till clearer, deeper than before, it glides
 Into the waiting lake, welmed in a watery grave.

The crocus wakes to keep its tryst with Spring,
 Kissed and caressed to life by April's sun.
 Laden with sweets, soon June will roses bring,
 And May repose because her work is done.

EASY DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

THE initials name a city of Scotland, the finals a city of England. Cross-words: 1. A title of nobility. 2. A city of Hindostan. 3. Four. 4. Part of a church. 5. A shield. 6. Rise! 7. A famous bridge in Venice. 8. An Italian who planned a beautiful tower, which he did not live to finish. 9. A shed. D. W.

EASY ENIGMA.

My first is in come, but not in go;
 My second in arrow, not in bow;
 My third is in mountain, not in hollow;
 My fourth is in pain, but not in sorrow;
 My fifth is in rosin, not in gum;
 My sixth is in toy, but not in drum.
 Of a bird of song here find the name,
 And the isle from which the song-bird came.
 GORDON L. WARNER.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

WE are two words often heard at this season, and we have twelve letters in all. A little girl once said of us that, if she should happen to be caught in any 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, they and the mud they make would be sure to 12, 8, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 9, 3, 1, 2, 6.

