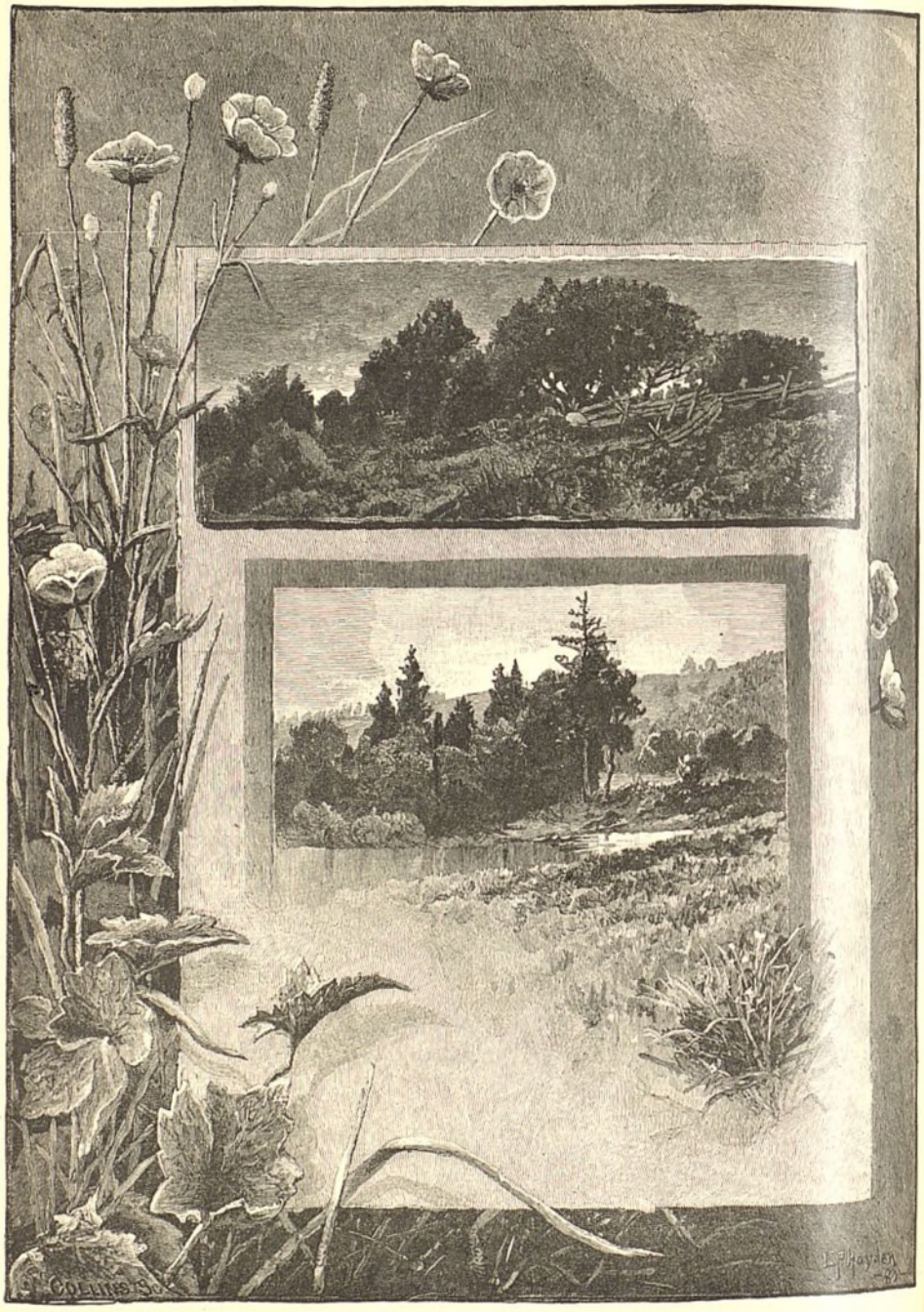

JUST BEFORE THE SUMMER.

ST. NICHOLAS:

AN

ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE

FOR YOUNG FOLKS.

CONDUCTED BY

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VOLUME VIII.

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ST. NICHOLAS.

VOL. VIII. MAY, 1881. NO. 7.

THE SISTER MONTHS.

BY LUCY LARCOM.

WHEN April steps aside for May,
Like diamonds all the rain-drops glisten;
Fresh violets open every day;
To some new bird each hour we listen.

The children with the streamlets sing,
When April stops at last her weeping;
And every happy growing thing
Laughs like a babe just roused from sleeping.

Yet April waters, year by year,
For laggard May her thirsty flowers;
And May, in gold of sunbeams clear,
Pays April for her silvery showers.

All flowers of spring are not May's own;
The crocus can not often kiss her;
The snow-drop, ere she comes, has flown;
The earliest violets always miss her.

Nor does May claim the whole of spring;
She leaves to April blossoms tender,
That closely to the warm turf cling,
Or swing from tree-boughs, high and slender.

And May-flowers bloom before May comes
To cheer, a little, April's sadness;
The peach-bud glows, the wild bee hums,
And wind-flowers wave in graceful gladness.

They are two sisters, side by side
Sharing the changes of the weather,
Playing at pretty seek-and-hide—
So far apart, so close together!

April and May one moment meet,—
But farewell sighs their greetings smother;
And breezes tell, and birds repeat
How May and April love each other.

PIPPO'S RANSOM.

By Florence Scannell.

"Now, SIT still, Nina *mia*, and turn your head a little more this way, so—that will do."

"But, Pippo, I want to see you draw."

"Impossible, little one; you shall see it directly. Ah! if only I had one of Padre Stefano's nice, clean, white sheets of paper, it would be as good as the wall of the stable, eh, Nina!"

"But wont Father be angry when he sees the great black cow you have drawn on the stable-wall, Pippo? I expected to see her turn her head and look at me when I went in. And then Mother's face on the plate on which you had your sweetmeats! I have not washed it off yet."

The speaker was a dark-haired little girl, with a brown face, and large dark eyes, which she fixed in tender admiration on the young artist, a boy of about ten years, with thick, fair hair, and a bright, intelligent countenance, who lay stretched on the grass, and drew, on a carefully chosen white stone, with a piece of burnt stick, the portrait of his pet sister as she sat before him.

The sun was sinking behind the mountains, the great dome of the Cathedral of Florence was beginning to look dark against the clear blue sky, and the children were thinking of driving the sheep they had been sent out to watch toward the little farm where they lived, when dash!—rush!—into their peaceful little retreat burst a crowd of wild, dark-looking men, with fierce black eyes, and rough beards and hair. The leader called out:

"Ha, excellent! Some fine fat sheep, and only two small children to guard them. Don't let them run off and give the alarm, now, Giacomo."

Little Nina's bright color faded from her cheeks, and her eyes dilated with terror, as she flung her spindle to the ground and flew to her brother, hiding her face in his sheep-skin jacket, while he, tears springing to his eyes, implored the brigands (for such they were) to take pity on them, and leave their sheep.

"Father will beat us both, and Mother will cry, oh, so much! Please, good brigands ——"

"Hold your tongue, you little fool, or I will give you a worse beating than ever you had before," said Giacomo, who, in obedience to the order of his captain, held the two poor children firmly with his strong hands.

"Now, then, let us be off, quick!" said the captain to his men, who had been tying the sheeps' legs together, and had slung them on their backs.

"Ah, well, I know your faces now, and I shall describe them to my father, and then we shall see if we can't find you, you rascals!" cried Pippo, stamping his feet in impotent rage.

"Very well, young Spit-fire; you shall come along with us, and so you wont be parted from your precious sheep," said the captain, with a laugh. "The boy has a spirit of his own; he is worthy of becoming one of us, so pack him up, Giacomo, and make him hold his tongue, or he will have some one upon us."

At this, Nina burst into a passion of sobs:

"Oh, good sirs, leave him; oh, don't take Pippo! I will give you my little gold cross, my ear-rings, anything, only leave me my brother; it will break Mamma's heart, and Father will have no one to help him in the fields; oh, do listen to me!"

"Thank you for the cross, little one, and the ear-rings too, since they are gold. And now, good-bye; don't cry your pretty eyes quite out; as for Pippo, he goes with us; and you may thank your stars we don't take you too, but you would be in the way, pretty one!"

So saying, the robbers started off with their booty, regardless of the prayers and struggles of little Pippo. But he was blindfolded, and was soon quieted by the coarse threats of the ruffians, who journeyed swiftly through the country. They hid themselves behind trees and rocks whenever a sound was heard; this, however, happened but seldom, as they kept away from the roads and any houses or cottages near which their way led them.

At last, they reached a large cave, the approach to which was hidden by trees and shrubs. On entering, a huge, burly form raised itself from the ground, and greeted them with:

"Well, what news? I hope you have brought something for supper; the fire is lighted, but I have nothing better than chestnuts to cook. Hallo! a boy! and a very pretty one, too; but by his clothes, I should say not a *principino* [young prince] nor a *marchesino* [young marquis], therefore not much of a ransom to be had for him, eh, Capitano?"

"Well, who knows, Bonifaccio? Some of these *contadini* [peasants] have plenty of money, and, besides, he seems a bold little lad, and may prove useful to us. However, just now we are all starving, so let us have some supper. You see, we have something else besides the boy."

The brigands all busied themselves in preparing the meal, and ere long a joint of one of poor Pippo's sheep was smoking on the table, flanked with a

huge bowl of chestnuts, several flasks of wine, and two or three loaves of brown-looking bread. Bonifaccio, who looked somewhat less rough and fierce than the rest of the troop, made room for Pippo beside him on the rude wooden bench, and pressed him to eat. But the poor little fellow's heart was too full, and though he struggled bravely to keep back his tears, yet there was an uncomfortable feeling in his throat that took away all his appetite, particularly when he thought of his home, with the kind, gentle mother, the dear little sister, and his father, who, although sometimes rather rough and stern, yet loved him dearly. How distressed they would be at his having been carried off!

Meanwhile, the supper continued; the robbers, after each draught of wine, began to talk loud and tell wild stories of their venturesome exploits. Then, after some noisy games with a pack of cards, they laid themselves down on heaps of straw, and covered themselves with blankets and skins. A huge dog was then set at the opening of the cave to guard them while they slept, and soon they all were snoring.

Bonifaccio showed Pippo a little corner of straw beside him, saying: "Come with me, little boy, you shall have a bit of my blanket. It 's of no use to look at the door; Moro would tear you to pieces if you should try to get past him. So, good-night; sleep well."

Pippo, when the darkness quite hid him, quietly sobbed himself to sleep, worn out with grief and fatigue, the tears hanging on his long lashes, and his pretty curls lying in a yellow tangle on his uncomfortable pillow.

Little Nina, left alone after the departure of the brigands who carried off her brother, threw herself in despair on the ground, sobbing bitterly, but the darkness, at last, made her think of home, and accordingly, she set off, running. Meeting her mother, who had come to the door of their little farm-house, wondering and anxious because the children had not returned, Nina burst forth with an account of what had befallen them, but in such a state of despair and agitation, that it was some time before the mother could succeed in understanding what had really happened.

PIPPO DRAWING HIS SISTER'S PORTRAIT.

Then she, also, was overcome with grief, and rushed to the door, hoping to see her husband returning from the town, where he had gone to sell his wheat. At last, wheels were heard, and the father, tired, but pleased at getting home, jumped down with a merry shout. He was about to enter the house, when his wife and Nina came out, weeping, their faces pale; and, as they stood wringing their hands, they told him the disastrous news.

"Ah, you see, Maria," said the farmer, "the rascals knew that all the men would be in town, as it is market-day, but still, it was very daring. My poor boy! I 'll go back immediately to Florence, to consult the authorities, but it will be very difficult to get a hearing at so late an hour."

Not long after, the father returned, saying he

could obtain no assistance till morning, and even then, the officer to whom he had spoken said he feared there was not much chance of finding those brigands, as they were in strong force and very bold, and were hiding somewhere in the mountains, where it would be very dangerous and difficult to approach them. They all went to bed with heavy hearts, and it was long ere the anxious parents slept, wondering on what sort of couch their poor child was lying.

The next morning, the brigands made a hasty meal of the remainder of their supper, and started off, saying they expected a rich booty that day, for the carriage of a nobleman was to come along a road near by, and they intended to waylay it. Bonifaccio was left on guard, and seemed pleased to have a little companion.

"Don't be down-hearted, little man; it 's a very jolly life we lead, and a lad of your spirit will much prefer it to tending sheep, or working in the fields all his time."

So saying, he filled his pipe, and sat down to smoke.

"What is this, Signor Bonifaccio?" timidly inquired Pippo, taking up a wooden palette from a bench by the wall. It had lain some time, for the colors were dried upon it.

"That is something to do with painting, my boy, though I don't know what, exactly, and there is a box with the colors and brushes, if you look a little farther. Last time I went out with the band, we came across a tall artist, sitting in the fields, preparing to sketch, and, as he had no money, we took away his box, brushes, and even his canvas, thinking they would, at least, do for fire-wood, if they should prove of no other use to us. He was very angry, but he ought to have been only too glad that we left his skin whole and sound."

"Tell me some more of your adventures, Signor Bonifaccio."

"Very well;" and Bonifaccio proceeded to relate how they had once found a richly dressed little boy, of about Pippo's age, and had carried him off to the cave, and then sent one of his little embroidered shoes to his father, threatening to kill the child unless a large ransom were paid, or if any attempt were made to rescue him by force. How the ransom was paid, and the little boy taken back by Bonifaccio, disguised as a peasant, and how happy the mother was to have her child back again.

When he had finished the story, Pippo took him the canvas, on which he had, roughly, but pretty accurately, painted the head of Bonifaccio.

"Bravo! Why, I never saw a boy so handy as you. Why, there are my eyes, my nose, my beard,—everything complete! Well, you ought to be an artist, Pippo, not a farmer!" cried Bonifaccio, dropping his pipe in his astonishment, and stroking his beard, evidently much gratified, and looking with great admiration at his portrait, while Pippo's cheeks flushed with pleasure.

"Oh, what joy it would be if only I could have a box like that, and paint every day!" exclaimed Pippo. "Do, dear Signor Bonifaccio, let me run home now. I can never be a brigand, and should only be a useless trouble to you all."

"Run home, indeed!" said Bonifaccio, not ill-naturedly. "Well, wait till the captain comes home, and we shall see what can be done for you."

Pippo described his home, and his little sister, who had been so distressed at losing him, and had only just finished his account, when the brigands came trooping in, very hungry, but in excellent spirits, throwing money on the table, to astonish their comrade, Bonifaccio. He, in return, showed Pippo's work, and the captain, who, being a little more educated than the rest, appreciated the painting still more than Bonifaccio, was surprised to find so much talent in the little peasant.

"You shall paint me, now, and then we shall see what reward you shall have," said he. Pippo took pains, and succeeded in rendering the fierce black eyes, and long, pointed mustache, to the satisfaction of the noble captain, and then he begged, as his reward, to be allowed to return home. Bonifaccio seconded the boy, representing to the captain the uselessness of keeping the child, and, at last, the leader consented to let him go, first making him promise solemnly not to betray their retreat. He ordered him to be led some distance blindfolded, so that he never could find the way back, even if the soldiers should try to compel him.

When the evening twilight had arrived, he sent Pippo, accompanied by one of the band, and, to his great delight, with the paint-box and palette in his hands, down the rough mountain path. At last they arrived at a forest, and the brigand, telling Pippo he had but to go straight on toward the dome of the cathedral, uncovered his eyes, said "Addio," and left him.

Pippo trudged joyously on, thinking of the account he would give to his parents of his time in the cave, and of the arguments he would employ to induce his father to let him go to Florence and study painting. After the art had been his ransom from the cave, surely his father would not think it of no use, and a mere waste of time!

But night was fallen, and he no longer saw the friendly dome. So, fearful of going still farther from home in the darkness, and being very weary, he at last crept into a large hollow tree, and, pillowing his head on the treasured paint-box, fell fast asleep.

The sun was shining when he awoke, feeling

very hungry. Fortunately, Bonifaccio had given him some bread, so he refreshed himself with this, and a little spring water, and set off in the direction of his home. At last the dear home roof came in sight, and Pippo, shouting in his joy, was answered by the bark of a dog, that came rushing toward him. Nina followed soon, with sparkling eyes, and after her came the father and mother, scarcely able to contain their joy. Pippo was embraced by all three at once, and even the little dog appeared to share in the delight, for he kept jumping up and frantically trying to lick his hands.

"Let him have some breakfast, poor child," said the mother, "and after that, he can tell us all his adventures."

"Here, Nina, is your little cross—the captain sent it back to you; and Father, look here!" cried Pippo, eagerly, showing his box.

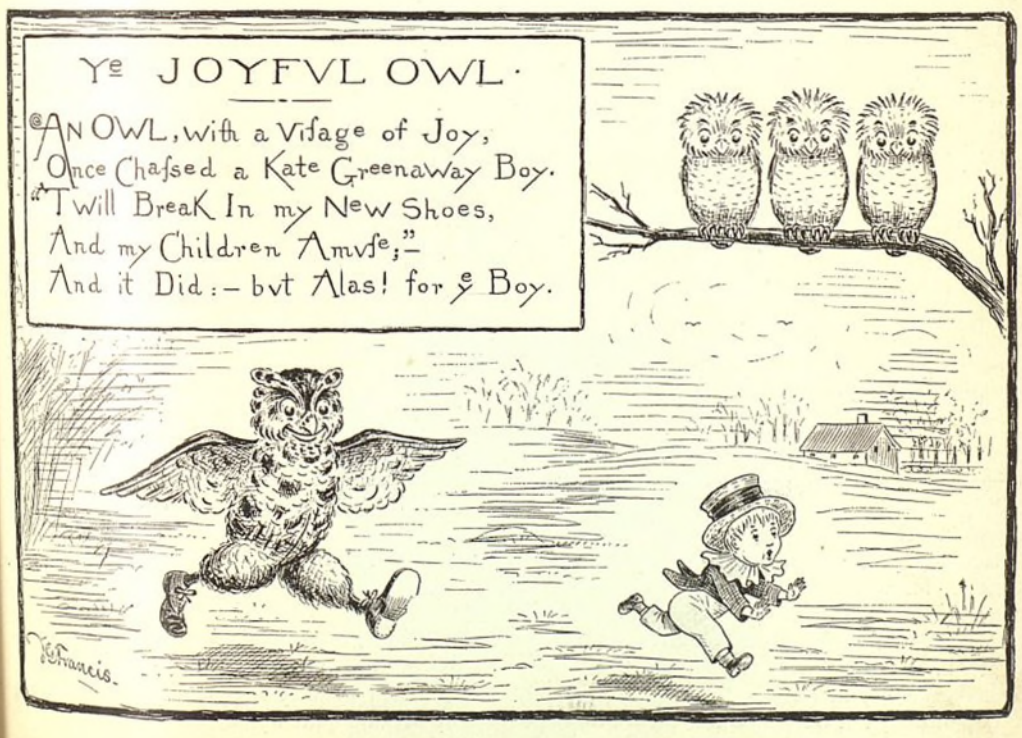
After his breakfast, he related all his doings in the robbers' cave, and the means of his deliverance. He ended, coaxingly: "And now, Padre *mio*, I may go to study in Florence, may I not?—and become a painter like Giotto. You will see what pictures I shall make; do, please, let me go."

"Well, Pippo, my boy, I shall see. I am afraid you are not worth much to guard the sheep, so I shall talk to Padre Stefano, and see if I can afford it. Meanwhile, paint a portrait of Nina, that I may take with me to some painter and ask his opinion of it."

Pippo set to work, and, inspired by the hope of gaining the long-wished consent, produced a likeness, which the Florentine artist looked at with great interest, finally declaring that it showed much talent, and expressing astonishment on hearing the youth of the painter.

"Send him to me, my friend," said he to Pippo's father; "you have there a genius. I shall be delighted to guide his efforts, for I am sure he will hereafter do me honor."

And these words came true, for this little boy was no other than Filippo Lippi, one of the great painters of Italy. And his pictures, now more than four hundred years old, are of priceless worth. Travelers from all parts of the world go to see them. Most of them are collected and exhibited in Florence, his native town, where he was employed for many years by a great Duke of that time.



THE BOTTOMLESS BLACK POND.

BY JOHN LEWEES.

ABOUT half a mile from the town of Danford, there was an extensive and beautiful piece of forest land. Many of the trees were large and picturesque; the ground beneath them was generally free from unpleasant undergrowth and bushes, and, in some places, it was covered with moss and delicately colored wild-flowers; there were green open glades, where the bright sunshine played fantastic tricks with the shadows of the surrounding trees, and, altogether, the Danford forest was a delightful place, and any visitor, of ordinary reasoning powers, would have supposed it to be a favorite resort of the towns-people.

But it was not; very few persons, excepting now and then some boys of a disobedient turn of mind, ever visited it. The reason for this was the fact, that near the center of the woods there lay a large pond, which had a bad reputation. This pond was so large, that in some parts of the country, where such bodies of water are not common, it would have been called a lake.

In ordinary cases, the presence of such a sheet of water would have greatly added to the attractions of the place, but this pond exercised an influence which overbalanced all the attractive beauties of the woods, and made it a lonely and deserted spot.

The reason of this was the peculiar reputation of the Black Pond. A great many strange things were said about it. Its color was enough to mystify some people, and terrify others, for it was as black as ink. Persons who had stood upon its edge and had looked down upon it, and over its wide expanse, were unable to see an inch below the surface of the water, which, instead of being in the least transparent, appeared, when there was no wind, like one of those dark-colored mirrors called "Claude Lorraine glasses," in which a whole landscape is reflected like a little living picture, with all its proportions, its perspective, and its colors, perfectly preserved.

It might have been supposed that this lake would have presented an attractive picture, on bright days, when the sky, the clouds, and the overhanging foliage were reflected in its smooth and polished surface; but water which is as black as ink is not the kind of water that people generally like to look at. There are ordinary ponds and lakes and rivers, in which the sky, clouds, and trees are reflected, in a way that is good enough for anybody.

But although it was, in color, such a blot upon the beauty of the Danford woods, the blackness of this pond was not the greatest objection to it. The most dreadful thing about it was that it had no bottom! There is something truly terrifying in the idea of a body of water that is bottomless. There are persons who would feel much safer in sailing over those portions of the ocean which have been proved to be five or six miles deep, than over the vast expanses of rolling billows, where bottom has never been found.

And it was well known that bottom had never been found in the Black Pond. Sons had heard this from their fathers, and fathers from their fathers, for Danford was an old town, and the Black Pond had always been the same, as far back as the local history and traditions went.

For a long time no attempts at sounding, or examining, in any way, the waters of the pond had been made. Any undertaking of the kind would have been too dangerous. There was no boat on the pond, and it was not easy to carry one there, and if persons wished to go out in the middle of the pond to make soundings, a raft would have to be built, and the consequences to any one falling off this would be too terrible to contemplate. Even the best swimmer would fear to find himself in water where he would probably become cramped and sink, and be sucked down, and down, and down, nobody knows where.

In winter, when the pond was frozen over, and so might have offered a temptation to the skating boys of the town,—for there are boys who think that any kind of water is safe, if it is covered with ice,—the parents and guardians of Danford so sternly forbade any venturing on the surface of that dangerous pond, that no owner of skates ever dared to try them on the dark ice which covered a still darker mystery beneath.

In fact, those boys who had ever ventured to the edge of the pond, in winter or summer, had generally been fellows, as has been intimated before, who had been told never to go near it.

And so it happened that the presence of this dismal piece of water made people unwilling that their children should go into the woods, for fear that they might wander to the pond. And, as they did not wish to do themselves what they had forbidden to their children, they took their own rural walks in other directions, and the woods, thus getting a bad name throughout that country, gradually became quite lonely and deserted.

At the time of our story, there lived in the town of Danford, a man named Curtis Blake, who was well known on account of a peculiar personal characteristic. He had no arms. He had been a soldier, and had lost them both in battle.

Curtis was a strong, well-made man, and as he had a very good pair of legs left to him after the misfortunes of war, he used them in going errands and in doing anything by which walking could be made useful and profitable. But, as there was not much employment of this kind to be had, he frequently found himself with a great deal of time—not on his hands exactly—but which he could not advantageously employ. Consequently he used to ramble about a good deal in a purposeless sort of way, and, one summer afternoon, he rambled into the Danford woods.

He found it very cool and pleasant here, and he could not help thinking what a pity it was that the towns-people could not make a resort of these woods, which were so convenient to the town and so delightful, in every way. But, of course, he knew that it would never do for families, or for any one, in fact, to frequent the vicinity of such a dangerous piece of water as the Black Pond.

And, thinking of the Black Pond, he walked on until he came to it and stood upon its edge, gazing thoughtfully out upon its smooth and somber surface.

"If I had arms," said Curtis to himself, "I 'd go to work and find out just how deep this pond is. I 'd have a boat carted over from Stevens' Inlet—it 's only four or five miles—and I 'd row out into the middle of the pond with all the clothes-line I could buy or borrow in the town, and I 'd let down a good heavy lead, that would n't be pulled about by currents. I 'd fasten on line after line, and I think there would certainly be enough rope in the whole town to reach to the bottom. But, having no arms, I could n't lower a line even if I had a boat. So I can't do it, and I 'm not going to advise any other folks to try it, for ten to one they 'd get excited and tumble overboard, and there would be an end of them, and I 'd get the blame of it. But I 'd like to know, anyway, how soon the bottom begins to shelve down steep. If we knew that, we could tell if there 'd be any danger to a little codger, who might tumble in from the shore. And if it does shelve sudden, the town ought to put up a high fence all around it. I 've a mind to try how deep it is, near shore."

If Curtis had been like other men, he would have cut a long pole, and tried the depth of the pond, a short distance from land. But he could not do that, and there was only one way in which he could carry out his plan, and that he determined to try. He would carefully wade in, and feel with his feet for the place where the bottom began to shelve down. This was a rash and bold proceeding, but Curtis was a bold fellow and not very prudent, and he had become very much interested in finding out something about the bottom of this pond. It was not often, now, that he had anything to interest him.

He wore high boots, in which he had often waded, and his clothes were thin linen, of not very good quality, so that if they became blackened by the water, it would not much matter. As for taking cold, when he came out, Curtis never thought of that. He was a tough fellow, and could soon dry himself in the sun.

Having made up his mind, he did not further delay, but stepped cautiously into the water. Even near the shore, he could not see the bottom, and he moved very slowly out, feeling his way carefully with one foot before he made a step. He did not expect that the bottom would begin to descend rapidly, very near the shore, but as he got out, ten or fifteen feet from land, and found the water was considerably above his knees, he began to take still greater precautions. He advanced sidewise, standing on one foot and stretching the other one out, as far as he could, to make sure that he was not on the edge of an unseen precipice. In this way he went slowly on and on, the water getting deeper and deeper, until it was up to his waist. He now felt a slight rise in the bottom before him. This made him very cautious, for he knew that where there was a great opening down into the bowels of the earth, there was, almost always, a low mound thrown up around it, and this mound he had probably reached. It sloped up very gently on the side where he was, but on the other side it might go down, almost perpendicularly.

So no man ever moved more slowly through the water than did Curtis now. A few inches at a time, still feeling before him with one foot, he went cautiously on. He was very much excited, and even a little afraid that he might unaware reach the edge of the precipice, or that the ground might suddenly crumble beneath him. He had not intended to venture in so far. But he did not turn back. He must go a little farther. He had almost reached the edge of the great mystery of the Black Pond!

But he had not reached it yet. The ground on which he stood still rose, although by slow degrees, so that he was really higher out of water than he had been, ten minutes before.

Suddenly, he looked up from the water, down on which he had been gazing as if he had expected to see some deeper blackness beneath its black surface, and glanced in front of him. Then he turned and looked behind him. Then he stood still, and gave a great shout.

The shout echoed from the surrounding woods; the birds and the insects, and the rabbits, which flew, and hummed, and jumped about so freely in those solitudes, must have been amazed! Such a shout had not been heard near the Black Pond in the memory of any living thing.

It was repeated again and again, and it was a shout of laughter!

No wonder Curtis laughed. He was a good deal more than half way across the pond! He had walked right over the place where that mysterious depth was supposed to be, and the water had not reached his shoulders. The gradual rise in the bottom, which he supposed to be a mound, was the rise toward the opposite shore!

When Curtis Blake had finished laughing, he pushed through the water as fast as he could go,—he almost ran,—and in a very few minutes he stood on the bank, at the other side of the pond. He turned and looked back over the water. He had crossed over the very middle of the pond!

Then he laughed and laughed again, forgetting his wet clothes, forgetting everything but the fact that he, without ropes or leads or boat or raft, or even arms, had found the bottom of this dreaded piece of water, that he had actually put his foot upon the great mystery of the Black Pond!

When his merriment and delight began to quiet down a little, he waded into the water again, at a different point from that where he came out, and crossed the pond in another direction, this time walking freely, and as rapidly as he could go. Then he ran in again, and walked about, near the middle. In no place was it much above his waist.

When Curtis was fully convinced that this was the case, and that he had walked pretty nearly all over the bottom of Black Pond,—at least, that part of the bottom where the water was the deepest,—he came out and went back to the town.

Curtis met no one as he hurried along the road from the woods, but as soon as he reached the town he went into a large store, where he was well acquainted. There were a good many people there, waiting for the afternoon mail, for, at one end of the store was the post-office.

"Why, Curtis Blake!" exclaimed a man, as he entered. "You look as if you had been half drowned."

"I ought to look that way," said Curtis, "for I 've been to the bottom of the Black Pond."

No one made any response to this astounding assertion. The people just stood, and looked at one another. Then Mr. Faulkner, the owner of the store, exclaimed:

"Curtis, I am ashamed of you! You must be tipsy."

"No man ever saw me tipsy," said Curtis, without getting in the least angry. He had expected to astonish people, and make them say strange things.

"Then you are crazy," replied Mr. Faulkner, "for no man could go to the bottom of Black Pond, and come back alive."

"There is n't any bottom!" cried one of the little crowd. "How could he go to the bottom when there is no bottom there?"

This made the people laugh, but Curtis still persisted that what he had told them was entirely correct. Not a soul, however, believed him, and everybody began to try to prove to him, or to the rest, that what he had said could not possibly be true, and that it was all stuff and nonsense. There was so much interest in the discussion, that no one thought of going to see if any letters had come for him. There could be no more exciting news in any letter or newspaper than that a man avowed he had gone to the bottom of Black Pond.

"Well," said Curtis, at last, "these clothes are getting to feel unpleasant, now that I 'm out of the sun, and I don't want to stay here any longer to talk about this thing. But I 'll tell you all, and you can tell anybody you choose, that to-morrow morning, at nine o'clock, I 'm going again to the bottom of Black Pond, and any one who has a mind to, can come and see me do it."

And, with these words, he walked off.

There was a great deal of talk that evening in Danford about Curtis Blake's strange statement, and about what he had said he would do the next day. Most persons thought that he intended some hoax or practical joke; for a man without arms, and who, therefore, could not swim, could not go to the bottom of an ordinary river and expect to come back again alive. Of course, anybody could go to the bottom and stay there. There was certainly some trick about it. Curtis was known to be fond of a joke. But whatever people thought on the subject, and there were a good many different opinions, every man and boy, who could manage to do it, made up his mind to go, the next day, at nine o'clock, and see what Curtis Blake intended to do at Black Pond. Even if it should turn out to be all a hoax, this would be a good opportunity to visit the famous pond, for, with so many people about, there could not be much danger. Quite a crowd of interested towns-folk assembled on the shore of the Black Pond, the next day, and Curtis did not disappoint them.

About nine o'clock he walked in among them, wearing the same boots and clothes which he had worn the day before, and then, after looking around, as if to see that everybody was paying attention, he deliberately waded into the pond.

At this, everybody held his breath, but, in a

moment, there arose calls to him to come back, and not make a fool of himself. He had no board, no life-preserver, nor anything with which he could save himself, when he should begin to sink. But fearful as the people were for his safety, not one dared to run in and pull him back.

On he went, as he had gone before, only walking a good deal faster this time, and the people now stood still, without speaking a word or making a sound. Every minute they expected to see Curtis disappear from their sight forever. The birds, the insects, and the rabbits might have supposed that there was no one about, had it not been for the

CURTIS STARTS ACROSS THE BOTTOMLESS POND.

swashing of the man who was pushing through the water.

As Curtis approached the middle of the pond, the excitement became intense, and some men turned pale; but when he hurried on, and was seen to get into shallower water, people began to breathe more freely, and when he ran out on the opposite bank there went up a great cheer.

Now all was hubbub and confusion. Most people saw how the matter really was, but some persons could not comprehend, at once, that their long-cherished idea that the Black Pond had no bottom, was all a myth, and there were incredulous fellows, who were bound to have a reason for their own way of thinking, and who asserted that Curtis had built a bridge under water, and that he had walked on it! As if a man, without arms, could build a bridge, and walk on it, without seeing it!

Curtis, however, soon put an end to all conjectures and doubts by walking over the bottom of the pond, from one side to the other, in various directions, and by wandering about in the middle in such a way as to prove to every one that there was no mystery at all about the Black Pond, and that it was nothing but a wide and nearly circular piece of water, with a good hard bottom, and was not four feet deep in any part.

The news of this discovery by Curtis Blake made a great sensation in Danford. Some people felt a little ashamed, for they had taken a good deal of pride in telling their friends, when they went visiting, about the wonderful pond, near their town, which had no bottom; but, on the whole, the towns-people were very glad of the discovery, for now they could freely enjoy the woods, and many persons were astonished to find what a delightful place it was for picnics and afternoon rambles.

As if no portion of mystery should remain about the Black Pond, even the color of its water was investigated and explained. Some scientific gentlemen from a city not far away, who came to Danford about this time, and who heard the story of the

pond, went out there and examined into the cause of its inky hue. They said that it was due, like the darkness of the water of many creeks and pools, to the overhanging growth of pine, hemlock, and similar trees which surrounded it. They did not explain exactly how this darkening process had been carried on, but they said it probably took hundreds of years to make the pond as black as it now was, and nobody doubted that.

But although the woods and the pond now became a favorite summer resort with the Danford people, it was in winter that they really enjoyed the place the most. Then the Black Pond was frozen over, and it made the finest skating ground in that part of the country. And its greatest merit was its absolute safety. Even if a small boy should break through,—which was not likely to happen,—any man could step in, or reach down and take him out. The ice was generally so thick that there was scarcely three feet of water beneath it, in the deepest parts.

On fine days, during the cold months, people came out to the pond, in carriages and on foot, and they had gay times, with their skating, and their games on the ice. But they were hardly so gay as the folks who could not come in the day-time, but had to do their skating in the evening. On moonlight nights, the pond was beautiful, but the skaters came on dark nights, all the same, for lamp-posts were set up in different parts of the pond (holes were cut in the ice, and they were planted firmly on the bottom), and thus the pond was made as bright and cheerful as the merriest skater could desire.

Among the merriest skaters was Curtis Blake, for skating was one of the few things he could do, and Mr. Faulkner gave him a capital pair of skates.

But this was not all the reward he received for solving the mystery of the Black Pond. Several of the leading citizens, who thought that the town owed him something for giving it such a pleasant place of resort, consulted together on the subject, and it was decided to make him keeper of the woods and pond. He had a couple of old men under him, and it was his duty to see that the woods were kept in order in summer, and that the pond was free from snow and obstructions in winter.

And thus the great mystery of the Black Pond came to an end. But there were elderly people in the town, who never went out to the pond, and who believed that something dreadful would happen there yet. There used to be no bottom to the pond, they said, and they should not wonder if, some day, it should fall out again.

"Yes," said Curtis Blake to one of these, "I expect that will happen,—just about the time my arms begin to grow."

SOMEDAY.

BY NORA PERRY.

OH, tell me when does Someday come,
That wonderful bright day,
Where all the best times are put off,
And pleasures hid away!
I know the rest of all the days
Just as they read and run;
Can say and spell them week by week,
And count them one by one.

They bring me, now and then, fine things,
Gay toys, and jolly play;
But never, never such fine things
As are kept hid away
In that great wonder-land that lies
Forever out of sight,
Which I can never, never find
By any day or night.

But sometime, ah, I 'm very sure,
When I grow big and tall,
I 'll find the way to that Someday,
And, hidden there, find all
The treasures I have wanted so,
And missed from day to day—
The treasures they have always said
That I should have Someday.

MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER.

By Emily Huntington Miller.

She never expected me to tell you about it; in fact, she never expected me at all. People do not begin by being great-grandmothers, though you might have thought she looked very like one, if you had caught sight of her in her quaint dress, tripping along the wide gravel-walk that wound about the spacious grounds; or if you had seen her leaving the steps of the old family mansion for the visit that I shall tell you about. It was Sunday morning, and, although she was not going to church, she had a leather-covered prayer-book folded in her handkerchief in one hand. In the other was a small basket covered with a napkin. Her name, "Melicent Moore," was written in the book. She went out and climbed upon the tall horse-block, and stood there tilting about, first on one foot, and then on the other, for she had not begun to feel grandmothery, and it was hard to keep still with the sun twinkling at her through the sweet gum-tree, and all the birds singing their merriest. Her father came out presently, and when he was settled in his saddle, and her mother on a red velvet pillion behind him, he reached out a strong arm and lifted Melicent up in front of him. The great horse stepped off as easily as if he considered the load not worth mentioning, and so they rode on through the piny woods; for this was in Virginia, in the good Old Colony times, when people lived in peace, and prayed for Parliament and King George. The sandy road was carpeted with brown pine-needles, and everything was so sweet, and warm, and spicy, that Melicent began to chatter, but her father said gravely:

"The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him."

Melicent did not quite understand, but she kept silence, and wondered—wondered why the birds sang on Sunday, and where the Lord staid on week-days, and why He did n't like to hear little girls talk.

By and by, they came to a shallow brook. It was as full of sunshine as it could hold, and carried it right down through the woods. The road crossed it, and went on beyond it; but at the ford a narrow foot-path came in, leading along the bank as if it was lonesome, and kept close to the brook for company.

Melicent knew the path very well. She traveled it every day to the next plantation, when she went to lessons with her three cousins and their governess. She was going now to see Phillis, a very old negro woman, who had been her mother's nurse, and who insisted upon living by herself in a little cabin out in the woods. Phillis was born in Africa, and had been a princess in her own land, she said, which might very likely have been true. She loved her mistress, but she scorned the other servants, and to the day of her death was an obstinate old heathen at heart, recognizing the Bible and the prayer-book, and the heaven they taught about, as very good for white folks, but expecting beyond a doubt to go straight to Africa the moment her spirit should be free.

Melicent's father stopped at the ford, and put her carefully down from her perch.

"Remember the Sabbath day, my daughter," said her mother, "and read to Phillis the lessons I marked in your prayer-book."

"Yes, Mamma," said Melicent, and stood a moment to watch the black horse step slowly into the bright water, and put down his head to drink right in a swirl of dancing ripples. It looked as if the little flecks of gold were running into his mouth, and she laughed to herself very softly, and then went on up the brook. Phillis's cabin stood in a little hollow, so that you could not see it until you suddenly found the brown roof right at your feet, as you sometimes find a ground-bird's nest. The cabin was so weather-beaten, and so covered with creepers, that it looked a good deal like a nest in the tangle.

Melicent went on watching the brook, and the birds, and the squirrels, and thinking that, when she should become an old woman, she, too, would have a lovely little cabin in the woods, when, all of a sudden, she stopped on the top of the knoll, and looked down into the little empty hollow.

The brown nest was gone as completely as if

some great tricksy fellow had picked it up and carried it off in his pocket!

Melicent's heart thrilled with fear and astonishment. The sunshiny woods seemed awfully lonesome, and she tried to call out, but her voice only made a faint little sound. She thought of earthquakes and everything horrible. She remembered that somebody had said Phillis was a witch and would never die, but would just disappear. What if she had gone, and taken her house with her? doubt of that; she could see the ashes and a few charred logs, but where was poor old Phillis? May be they had taken her away to Uncle Hil-

My Great Grandmother Starts To See Aunt Phillis.

Just then she remembered the verse she had learned that morning: "Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed." She felt as if some one had spoken the words to her, and she walked bravely down into the hollow. The cabin had been burned: there was no dreth's, and Melicent looked down the path with an idea of going to see, when she caught sight of a handkerchief waved feebly from a little play-house of rails and pine-branches which she and her cousins had made just back among the trees. She was there in a moment, down on her knees by

Phillis, kissing her wrinkled, old face, and calling her as loving names as she might have lavished upon her own beautiful grandmother.

"Oh, Phillis! I thought you were burned up. I was *so* frightened. What made the house burn?"

"Don' know; fire mos' likely; could ye make me a cup o' tea, honey? The things is all in that heap, whar I dropped them. The tea is in a blue mug, and I kivered up some coals in the bake-kittle; but I 'se powerful weak this mornin'."

Melicent remembered her basket, and brought out a bottle of blackberry cordial which seemed to refresh Phillis wonderfully, and then the child made her a cup of tea. She was sorry for Phillis, but it was prime fun to have the old woman in her play-house, and actually to make tea herself, out there in the woods. There was enough for both of them in the little basket, and Melicent conscientiously read the lessons in the prayer-book, though Phillis went to sleep. It was a long day, after all, for Phillis was too tired to tell her stories, yet insisted that she should not go away.

Once, when Phillis had been asleep, she began to talk in a strange language and throw her arms about, and Melicent was afraid.

"Phillis," she said, "I think I 'd better call Uncle Hildreth. I 'll run all the way."

"Set still, honey. I 'se mighty comf'table; my j'ints is wrenched draggin' the bed and things out o' the fire," and Phillis went off in a doze again.

Melicent read her prayer-book, and listened for the sound of the hunting-whistle that would tell her that her father was coming to the ford. But it seemed to her that ages and ages went by, and an awful stillness crept up from the woods. The brook was all in the shadow, now. What if they should forget to stop for her, and she and Phillis should have to stay there all night? She looked at Phillis again, and crept a little farther away. She was so still, and there was something cold in her face, it made her feel lonesome to be near her. She got up softly and sat under the big pine, and watched and listened, and fell asleep.

Away down at the ford the hunting-whistle sounded sweet and clear. Not very loud, for it was Sunday, and the stillness was too sacred to be profaned. The black horse waited, but no Melicent came dancing down the path, so her father came, and found her asleep under the pine-tree.

"TRIPPING ALONG THE WIDE GRAVEL-WALK."

"Oh, father," she said, when she waked in his arms, "the cabin is burned up, and Phillis is so tired, she sleeps and sleeps."

Her father was a quiet man, and he only kissed her, and carried her to where the black horse was waiting impatiently, bearing her mother.

"Take her home," he said to her mother, "and send Homer back to me. Old Phillis is dead."

Melicent's mother put one arm about her as they rode home, but she did not ask many questions.

"Is Phillis in heaven?" asked Melicent, timidly.

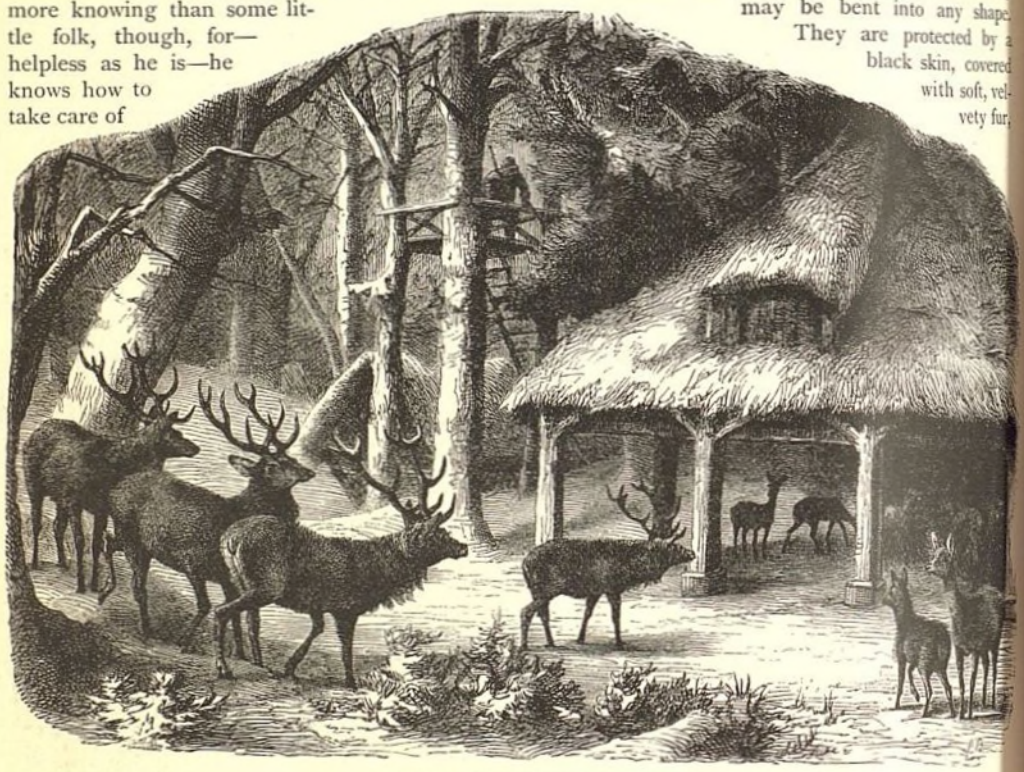
"I hope so," said her mother.

"Because," said the little girl, "if they let her choose, I know she 'd go to Africa, and then I never shall see her again."

THE ROYAL STAG.

By Olive Thorne.

The Royal Stag is born a pretty little black-eyed baby, called a *fawn*. His coat is a soft golden-brown, spotted with white, and he is very weak and helpless—like most other babies. He is more knowing than some little folk, though, for—helpless as he is—he knows how to take care of himself when men and horses come out to hunt, and his mamma has to run for her life, leaving him far behind. This is the baby's only trick, and it is simply to lie down and keep perfectly still. In that way he generally escapes being seen, and when hunters and horses have gone home, and the mother comes back, she is pretty sure to find her little one all safe and well.



WINTER IN A GERMAN DEER-PARK.

When the fawn is a year old, he arrives at the dignity of his first horns, and is called no more a fawn, but a brocket. Each succeeding year he gets one more branch to his antlers, and increases in beauty till he is full-grown and worthy of his proud name—the Royal Stag.

His antlers are his glory, and are as wonderful as they are beautiful. Every year the whole great structure falls off, and a new pair starts out. For about two months he hides himself in the deepest solitude he can find, while the antlers grow to their full size, for during the time they are so soft they may be bent into any shape. They are protected by a black skin, covered with soft, velvety fur, and are said to be "in the velvet." When his antlers are fully grown and hard, the proud stag rubs them against trees and bushes till he tears off the velvet in strings and tatters, and then he is ready to take his place in society once more.

Hunting the stag has been the favorite sport in Europe from the days of flint-head arrows till now, when the few that survive the long war upon their race live in parks provided for them, cared for by armed keepers, and protected by strong laws.

The deer-parks are large, and inclose ample forests, for though the beautiful shy creatures will come hesitatingly around the sheds that men have built, and timidly eat of the hay, and lick the salt that men have provided, they are not tame. Ages of hunting have made them quick to take fright.

In summer, when trees are green, and buds tender and plentiful, they wander into the deepest parts of the woods, and enjoy peace and solitude.

The picture shows a winter scene in a deer-park. The fawns and their mothers, perhaps more confiding, or more ignorant of the world than the fathers of the herd, are eating the sweet hay under the shed, while the stags draw near cautiously, watching carefully for dangers on the way.

At his post in the tree, is the gamekeeper or forester, looking with interest at the herd, counting the animals, and noting their age by the number of branches on the antlers. He is also a hunter, and so has a rifle, for when venison is wanted, it is he who must select and bring it in; and he never goes into the forest unarmed, since it is a part of his duty to keep poachers away from the deer.

This park is in Germany, and under the shed-roof is a loft for hay, which is put in through the door you see in front. At the back, where the deer are feeding, the fodder is thrown down into the ricks, where the animals can get it.

The stag has an American cousin—the wapiti—which is more interesting because it can be tamed. Judge J. D. Caton, of Illinois, has kept a herd of wapiti in a park for more than fifteen years, and has written many interesting things about them.

The baby wapiti is a pretty, spotted little fellow, with one very cunning trick. It "plays 'possum"; that is, it pretends to be dead. One may take it up and handle it, lay it down and walk off, and it will be limp as a wet rag, not showing a sign of life, yet—and this is what is funny—it does not shut its eyes, but watches every motion with lively interest. The first time Judge Caton saw one play the trick, he thought it was paralyzed.

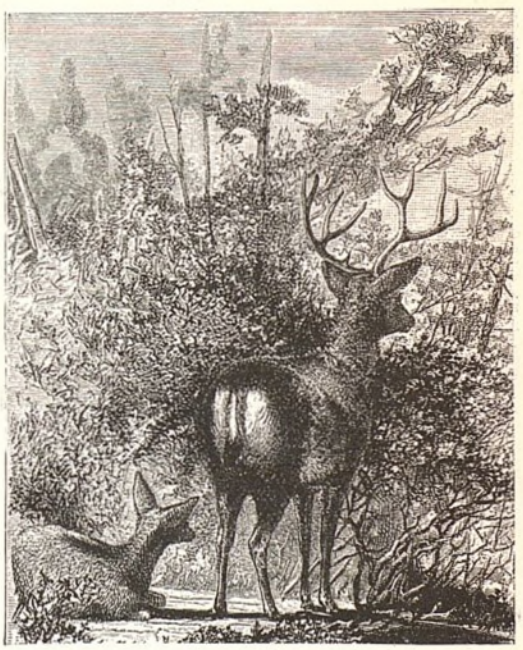
In this family, the does—or mothers—are often tame and familiar, will eat out of the hand and submit to be stroked; but when they have young fawns they are usually very shy, though the judge had one that not only would let him pat her little one and lift it to its feet, but really seemed to be proud of his attentions. There is one thing, however, that always exasperates them to the wildest fury, and that is the sight of a dog. No matter how innocent and well-meaning, still less how big and fierce, no sooner does a dog show his head in the deer-park than every doe throws forward her ears, shows her teeth, and flies at him.

No dog is brave enough to face the enraged creature. To drop his tail and tear madly away, yelping, and glancing fearfully back at his enemy, is his irresistible instinct. When the doe overtakes him, she strikes with her fore feet, and, if the first blow knocks him down, the second finishes him. Then the does lay back their ears, and glance about in a defiant manner, as though they said: "Now show us another dog!"

The bucks care less about dogs, but they usually join in the chase, following their excited partners, probably to see the fun, and find out who wins. Forty or fifty full-grown deer, furiously chasing one small cur, is a funny sight. But often a whole pack of dogs chase one poor deer, in Europe, so a lover of fair play can not be very sorry that in this part of the world the dogs have the worst of it, sometimes.

In winter the wapiti, in Judge Caton's park, come on a run when the keeper calls, and readily take food from his hand, crunching a large ear of corn at one mouthful. He can go among them and put his hand on them, and they are very tame. But in summer, when food is plenty in the woods, and they are comfortably settled in the cool shade, or lying in a delightful pool, the keeper may shout himself hoarse, and they pay no attention.

The wapiti is generally silent, but when angry he utters a fearful squeal, so loud and high that it sounds like a steam-whistle. When one hears that



THE ROYAL STAG AT HOME.

sound, he may be thankful to have a good wall between him and the fierce creature.

It has been often said, and perhaps as often denied, that deer shed tears. Judge Caton settles the question by a story of genuine tears shed by one of his own animals, when caged and very much frightened. He says, also, that the wapiti can smile, or rather, can show "a horrid grin." It is

when angry and threatening that he throws up his head, draws back his lips, and uncovers his teeth, which grate together horribly, as though longing to bite one. When he is in this smiling mood, visitors retire. A dig with his antlers, or a blow with his sharp fore foot, is not to be desired.

However tame the wapiti becomes, and however many things he submits to, there is a place where he draws the line. He will not be driven through a gate. One may open a gate, and leave it, and he may walk through; but try to drive him, and he 's off to the other end of the park.

All of this family change their dress twice a year. The winter suit is of soft, thick fur, with an overcoat of long, wavy hairs. When this is shed, it falls off in great patches, hanging down a foot or more; but the summer coat, which then comes to light, is silky, fine, and of a bright russet brown.

Young wapiti may be broken to harness, taught to live in a barn, and to draw loads.

The stag and wapiti have antlers sometimes five feet long, and every branch has its name. The body of the antler is called the "beam," the large branches are called "tines," and the small ones "snags." The first pair of branches, standing out from the forehead, are called the "brow-tines"; the next pair the "bez-tines"; the third, "royal-tines"; and the fourth, "sur-royal-tines."

BABEL.

BY ROSA GRAHAM.

THREE little maidens chanced, one day,
To meet together while at play;
"I 'm very glad you came this way,"
The first, a social little maid,
Delighted, to the second said:
"Tell me your name, and I 'll tell mine,—
It 's Cora Dora Waterpine."

The second giggled as she said
These words; she shook her curly head.
"Ach, ach! ich kann dich nicht versteh'n,"
Back laughingly the answer sped,
Whilst to the third she spoke again:
"Was sagt das Mädchen? Wenn du 's weisst,
Zu hören würde ich gereizt."

The third—she was a merry wight—
Stood giggling, too, with all her might:
But, suddenly, her cheeks grew bright,
"En vérité! En vérité!"
Softly, the others heard her say,
"Je sais que ce n'est pas poli—
Peut-on me blâmer si je ris?"

Three little maidens standing there,
Each with a puzzled, solemn air,
A moment silent, paused to stare
But, "If I ever!" Speedily
The first one cried: "It can not be
That my words are as yours to me;
Come, tell your names, and I 'll tell mine,—
It 's Cora Dora Waterpine."

But still the second shook her head,
Backward the merry answer sped,
E'en merrier than before she said:
"Ach, ach, ich kann dich nicht versteh'n!"
So to the other spoke again.
"Was sagt das Mädchen? Wenn du 's weiszt,
Zu hören würde ich gereizt."

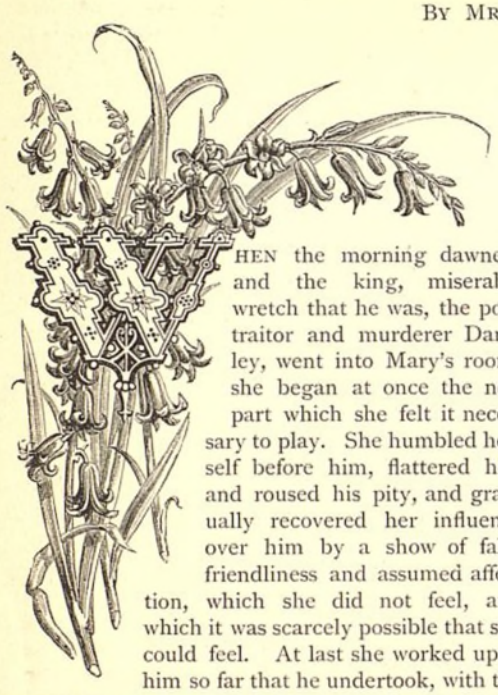
And still the third—this jolly wight—
Stood giggling, too, with all her might;
Till once again her cheeks grew bright,
And once again they heard her say,
With accent soft and motion gay:
"En vérité! En vérité!
Je sais que ce n'est pas poli—
Peut-on me blâmer si je ris?"

Three little maidens, side by side,
Sat down and laughed until they cried,
And cried until they laughed again;
"Ach, ach, ich kann dich nicht versteh'n!"
Uproarious burst the old refrain,
"Tell me your name, and I 'll tell mine,"
Cried Cora Dora Waterpine,
"En vérité! En vérité!"
It might have lasted all the day,
But such confusion breeding there,
There came a sudden deep despair—

With fingers in their ears, they say,
Three little maidens ran away.

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.—PART II.

By Mrs. Oliphant.



When the morning dawned, and the king, miserable wretch that he was, the poor traitor and murderer Darnley, went into Mary's room, she began at once the new part which she felt it necessary to play. She humbled herself before him, flattered him and roused his pity, and gradually recovered her influence over him by a show of false friendliness and assumed affection, which she did not feel, and which it was scarcely possible that she could feel. At last she worked upon him so far that he undertook, with the conspirators, to answer for her that she would not punish them for what they had done, but would sign an indemnity and pardon, and forget all that had occurred, if they would withdraw and leave her undisturbed. They consented to do so reluctantly, with very little faith in the promises made them, feeling themselves betrayed as Mary had been, and by the same hand. It was on the Saturday evening that Rizzio had been murdered. On Monday Ruthven and all the rest withdrew from Holyrood sullenly with their men, leaving Mary under the guardianship of her false and foolish husband. At midnight, on the same night, her bold heart revived by the first chance of liberty, Mary left the defenseless walls of Holyrood, and, accompanied by Darnley and the captain of her guard, rode off secretly, flying through the dark and cold March night to the castle of Dunbar. She was in delicate health, and she must have been terribly shaken by these events, but she was one of those people whose spirits rise to every danger, and whom no bodily depression can daunt or hinder. Fancy her riding through the night, along the rough roads, with the traitor husband by her side, whom she could not forgive, yet pretended to regard with unchanged affection.

Mary, however, was soon at the head of public affairs once more. She called her faithful nobles about her at Dunbar, and quickly collected an army, before which the conspirators fled, and she once more entered Edinburgh in triumph. Then Darnley covered himself with greater shame than before. He published a proclamation declaring he had had nothing to do with "the late cruel murder committed in presence of the Queen's majesty," swearing on his honor as a prince that he never knew of it, or assisted, or approved. It would seem that he deceived Mary by this protestation, and that she was disposed to believe him; but his fellow-conspirators were so indignant that they sent to her bonds which he had signed, containing the bargain between them; which was, that they should bestow the royal power upon him, if he helped them in the murder of Rizzio. After this discovery, Mary had no pity for Darnley. She turned away from him, and would hold no intercourse with him. He was scorned and shunned by everybody. Though he was called king, he was left alone wherever he went, and was despised by all.

A few months later, their only child, James, who was afterward James VI. of Scotland, and I. of England, was born in a little room in Stirling Castle. It was a strongly fortified place, and only in such a castle could the Queen of Scotland hope to be safe, she and her baby, from the fierce bands that were roaming the country. Armed men, angry faces, and drawn swords might soon have surrounded her if she had been in the more commodious rooms of Holyrood.

Stirling Castle is built on a rock, in the midst of a beautiful valley; the mountains round about are blue and beautiful, and the Links of Forth, the windings of the silvery river, flow away through rich levels to the sea. There could not be a place more beautiful in a June morning like that on which the little prince was born. He was to be the successor of both the queens who then were reigning within the British seas, and the greatest monarch of his name; but he was born in a little bare room of the great, stern castle, with a gray precipice of rock below; and with soldiers at their posts, and warders looking out from the walls to see that no fierce army was coming against them to disturb the rest, or, perhaps, take away the liberty or the life of the mother and child. It was not a safe lot in those days to be a queen. But I think, on the whole, Mary, with her high spirit and her love of adventure, took more pleasure in all those risks, defying her nobles, heading her army, sometimes flying, sometimes conquering, always in danger and excitement,

than if she had lived safely and splendidly all her life, and never known what trouble was.

Now, however, all was dark and terrible before this unhappy queen. Not long before, she had recalled from exile a young nobleman, James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell. He was a man as brave and daring as herself, fond of pleasure as she was, full of resolution and boldness,—not a weak youth, like Darnley, but a bold and strong man.

And here begins the question which has disturbed historians ever since, and still makes people angry in argument, almost as ready to fight for Mary, or against her, as when she was a living woman. Some say that Mary and Bothwell loved each other, and that from this time it became the great object of both to get rid of Darnley, in order that they might marry; while others tell us that Mary was innocent both of loving Bothwell and of desiring to procure her husband's removal, and that it was Bothwell alone who was guilty. I can not clear up this question for you. I do not think Mary was innocent; and yet I can not believe that she was so guilty as some think her.

One thing we may be sure of is, that she was very unhappy. It was impossible for a woman such as she was to do anything but despise the weak-minded, cowardly young man who had betrayed and deceived both her and his own friends. She had made a terrible mistake in her marriage, and she knew not how to mend it. "I could wish to be dead," she said, again and again, at this terrible time. Once, the trouble in her mind really brought on a violent illness, in which she thought she was dying. All her friends gathered round her sick chamber in deep anxiety, and her husband was sent for; but Darnley did not come until she was out of danger, and then only for a single night. She was left alone, as far as he was concerned, to bear the struggle in her own breast and everywhere around her. Even when she received the embassadors, they would find her weeping, and nothing seems to have roused her from her melancholy.

Then her nobles, among whom were some of the conspirators she had pardoned,—the very men who had killed Rizzio, but who had made their submission, and had been allowed to return to their places,—began to pity the unhappy queen; and there was a proposal made to her to get a divorce, and so be free of the husband who was her worst enemy. She did not accept this proposal, but neither did she reject it. "Better permit the matter to remain as it is, abiding till God, in his goodness, put remedy thereto," she said. Perhaps she meant only what she said; but perhaps Mary knew that there were plots going on which were more of the devil than of God. And the fierce nobles about her, who thought no more of the life of a man than sportsmen do of a deer's, were not likely to hesitate about a murder. Bothwell was her chief counselor, the boldest and fiercest of all; and whether it be true or not that she loved him, it is certain that he loved her, and was ready to risk everything for the hope of marrying her.

There are a number of letters, which were found afterward in a casket, and are always called the casket letters, from which the chief evidence against Mary is taken. They are supposed to have been written by her to Bothwell. If they are true, then she knew all that was going on, and meant her husband to be killed; but many people do not believe them to be true. I am afraid I am one of those who do believe in them. They are full of misery and sorrow, yet of a wild love that pushes the writer on when her better self draws her back. "I am horrified to play the part of a traitress!"—"I would rather die than commit these things!"—"My heart bleeds to do them!"—"God forgive me!" she writes. Though these letters are full of the most wicked purpose, you could scarcely help being sorry for the wretched lady who wrote them, and whose heart and life, you could see, were torn in two. But I must not say more about this, for it is too difficult a question for you or for me. There are some very good authorities, and very able judges, who think these letters are forgeries, and were not written by Mary at all.

But this is the history that followed: Darnley fell ill at Glasgow, where he then was. He had small-pox, which, you know, is a dangerous and dreadful disease. Mary had been altogether estranged from him, and had not seen him for a long time; but when he was getting better she went to him suddenly, without any warning, sat by his bedside, talked to him of all the complaints they had, one against the other, explained her own conduct to him, accepted, or pretended to accept, his explanations on his side, and, in short, became reconciled to her husband. It was a thing no one had hoped for, or thought possible; but so it was. They mutually promised to each other that all was to be with them as at first, as soon as Darnley should be well enough to resume his usual life. In the interval, he was to be brought back to Edinburgh, but not to Holyrood, lest the little prince should take small-pox from his father. This made it appear quite natural that Darnley should have a house prepared for him in an airy and open place, just outside the gates of Edinburgh. The place was called the Kirk of Field, and several people of rank had houses there, with gardens, in the fresh air outside the smoke of the town.

The strange thing about it was that the house selected was a small and unimportant one; but excuses were made for this, and the queen herself

went there to receive her husband, and remained with him for a day or two, occupying rooms no better than his. The house belonged to a dependent of Bothwell's. Mary slept in a room immediately below that of her husband, with a staircase between them, which was left open and unprotected. For was not the queen the guardian of the invalid?

One night, the Sunday after his arrival, Mary, who was with Darnley, suddenly recollected that she must go back to Holyrood, to the marriage supper of one of her servants. She had either forgotten it or pretended to have forgotten it till the last moment, and she and her train of attendants then swept away, leaving the sick man lonely and alarmed in his room with his page. Down-stairs, in the room which Mary ought to have occupied, her bed had been pushed out of the way, and heaps of gunpowder laid in its place.

What happened in the darkness of that night is imperfectly known. Darnley was a wretched creature, not much worthy of pity, but when you think of him there in that desolate room all alone, with only one poor page to take care of him, sick and weak, and full of fears, you will be sorry for the unhappy young man. It is said that the two doomed creatures read the 55th Psalm together, before they went to bed. Do you remember that psalm? "Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me. The fear of death has fallen upon me. It is not an open enemy that has done me this dishonor; but it was even thou, my companion." Perhaps, as they read it, they heard the heavy steps below, the rustle of the powder emptied out of the bags. A number of Bothwell's men were in full possession of the house, occupying the room which Mary had left vacant. Darnley went to bed and fell asleep, with these enemies under the same roof; but woke by and by, and stumbled to the door in the darkness, where he was seized and strangled, he and his page, and their bodies were thrown into the garden. Then there was a blaze of light, an explosion, and the house was blown up to conceal the secret crime. But the bodies were found unharmed next morning, notwithstanding this precaution; the secret was not one that could be hid.

You may imagine what a tumult and confusion was in Edinburgh next morning, when the dreadful news was known. Everybody had heard the explosion, and the people were wild with excitement. Mary shut herself up in Holyrood, as if overwhelmed with grief, and saw nobody but Bothwell, to whom every suspicion pointed as the murderer.

If she were really innocent, it is impossible to understand her conduct at this time. While the town was ringing with this one subject, and the names of the conspirators were bandied about from mouth to mouth, she took no steps against any of them, and kept Bothwell, the chief of them, constantly with her. In a little while she went out of Edinburgh to Seton Castle, the house of Lord Seton, one of her most faithful servants, and there recovered her gayety all at once, and resumed her favorite amusements,—Bothwell always remaining with her, her companion and closest counselor. Edinburgh, meanwhile, was wild with horror and rage, putting up placards in the streets, with the names of the murderers, and beginning to suspect and to loathe the queen also, who had been so much loved in her capital. This horror and suspicion ran like fire through all the courts of Europe. Wherever the story was told, Mary was suspected. Everywhere, from England, from France, from her own kingdom, entreaties came to her to investigate the murder, and bring the murderers to justice. But time went on, and she did nothing; she who had been so energetic, so prompt and rapid in action. It was not until a month after that she would do anything. Then there was a mock trial of Bothwell, before a jury of his partisans, where no one dared to bring evidence against him, and he was acquitted shamefully.

After this trial, the course of events was very rapid. Three months after Darnley's death, Mary married his murderer. In the interval, she had been like a creature in a dream, and all that happened to her was feverish and unreal. To veil the haste and horror of the marriage, Bothwell pretended to carry her off by force, and the nobles of his party advised and urged her to marry him; but these were things which deceived nobody at the time. The two had scarcely been separate since the moment of Darnley's death, and no one doubted what their intention was. One of Mary's most devoted friends, Lord Herries, took a long journey to entreat her on his knees not to take this step, which would convince all Europe of her guilt. But no argument had any effect upon her. She had taken her own way and done her own will all her life hitherto, without much harm; but the same rule was her destruction now.

Poor Mary! She was as much disappointed in Bothwell as she had been in Darnley. The one was too feeble and too fickle to be worth her consideration, the other was harsh and cruel, and treated her like a master from their wedding-day. "She desires only death," the French embassador says; "ever since the day after her marriage she has passed her time in nothing but tears and lamentations." And now everybody was against her,—Elizabeth of England, the king of France, all her relations and allies; and, within a month, all Scotland was roused in horror of her and her new husband. She summoned her forces round her, an appeal which always, heretofore, had placed

her at the head of a gallant army; but this time no one heeded the summons; and she had to flee in disguise from one castle to another, in order to escape the hands of her revolted nobles. To give a color to their rebellion, they represented Mary as being "detained in captivity" by Bothwell, so that she was "neither able to govern her realm, nor try the murderer of her husband." How many then, and how many even now, would be glad to believe that this was the case! In June, Bothwell and she together managed to collect a little army, quite unable to cope with that of the indignant nobles. They met at Carberry Hill, but the queen's little force melted away before the other army, and she was left at last with a forlorn guard of sixty gentlemen, who would not forsake her. Then Bothwell and she had a last interview apart. They took leave of each other "with great anguish and grief"; they had been a month married, and it was for this that they had shown themselves monsters of falsehood and cruelty before all the world. They parted there and then for the last time. Bothwell rode away with half a dozen followers, and Mary gave herself up into the hands of those nobles who had opposed her so often, who had been overcome so often by her, but who now were the victors in their turn.

You must remember, however, that though these nobles had justice on their side, this had not been always the case, nor was it the first time that a Stuart had been a prisoner in their hands. Almost all her forefathers had known what it was, like Mary, to struggle with this fierce nobility, often for selfish, but sometimes, too, for noble ends. But now the people, as well as the nobles, were against her. They waved before her eyes a banner on which was painted a picture of the slain Darnley, with the baby prince kneeling beside him and praying: "Avenge my cause, oh Lord!"; they hooted her in the streets; they had adored her, and now they turned upon her. She was taken to Holyrood, not as a queen, but as a criminal, surrounded by frowning faces and cries of insult. Thence she was sent a prisoner to the castle of Lochleven; Lochleven is a lake in Fife, full of little islands. On one of these there was a monastery, on another a little castle. The island was just big enough to make a green inclosure, a little garden round the old walls, now in ruin. Low hills stretch round, and, excepting in summer, the landscape is dreary and stormy. The house was small, with narrow, bare rooms, and shut round by the waters of the lake, which is, at times, almost as rough as the sea. Here Mary was placed in the most rigorous confinement. She had two of her ladies with her to take the place of the gay court and all its amusements, and she was not allowed to step forth once from this prison, nor to send letters, nor to receive them. No imprisonment could have been more rigid or more hard. She was but twenty-five, most beautiful, most fascinating and accomplished; the fairest queen in Europe, the admired of the whole world.

What a bitter change from all her mirth and amusements, her gay and free life, her royal independence and supremacy! Do you not say "poor Mary!" notwithstanding all the wrong she had done? And can you wonder that those who thought she had done no wrong (and there are many still who do), those who think she was only imprudent, and that she had been forced to marry Bothwell, and knew nothing about Darnley's death?—can you wonder that they are still almost ready to weep over Mary's sufferings, though they have been over these three hundred years? She lived for twenty years after this, but, excepting for a very brief interval, was never out of prison again. Nor did she ever again see Bothwell, for whom she had suffered so much.

You will find the story of the queen's captivity in Lochleven in one of Sir Walter Scott's novels called "The Abbot." No one else could give you such an idea of what that was, and what Mary was. Sir Walter loved the Stuarts, and persuaded himself that Mary had not done much wrong. In his description, you will see her at the best, most winning, most charming, with her sympathetic mind and her beautiful smile, and the kindness which made people love her, and the wit which made them fear her. If you read it, you will be angry with all of us who do not believe in Mary; and, when I read it, I should like to forget that miserable Darnley, and try to think what a woman she might have been had she married a man who was her equal, or had she been like her cousin Elizabeth, wise and crafty and clever, and never married at all.

She remained about a year in Lochleven, suffering all kinds of indignities; was forced to sign her abdication, and was allowed no communication with her friends save when she could, by elaborate artifices, elude the vigilance of her jailers; but at last, in May, 1568, she escaped with one small page, a boy of sixteen, who rowed her across the lake to where her friends awaited her.

In a moment she was again the Mary of old, with courage undaunted, and hope that was above all her troubles. She rode all through the summer night to Niddry Castle, knowing neither fatigue nor fear; and there issued a proclamation, and called, as so often before, her nobles round her. This time many answered the call, and she was soon riding in high hope at the head of a little army. But the Regent Murray, on the other side,—who was a wise and great statesman,—collecting a large force, hurried after her, and at once gave battle.

Soon, it became apparent that Mary's day was over. Her army was defeated, her followers dispersed. She herself, thinking it better to take refuge with her cousin Elizabeth, in England, than to fall once more into the hands of her enemies at home, crossed the Border, and there ended all her hopes.

She was promised hospitality and help. She found a prison, or rather a succession of prisons, and death. She thought she was to be received by Elizabeth herself, but, on the contrary, she was removed from one castle to another, from one set of keepers to another, and never was admitted to the presence of the Queen of England. I have not space to tell you all the story of her long bondage. All the events of her life which I have told you occupied scarcely ten years.

For twenty years longer she lived a prisoner, and if I were to tell you about all the schemes on her behalf, and all the plots that were thought of, and how many times she was to have made a new marriage and begun a new life, I should want a whole book to do it in.

But all Mary's schemes and hopes were now in vain. For she had Elizabeth to deal with, who was stronger than she was, and she had no loyal and loving nation behind her, but only enemies and stern judges wherever she turned. She was never free of guards and spies and jailers, who watched everything she did, and reported it all to the English queen.

You must remember, at the same time, that it was very difficult for the English government to know what to do with this imprisoned queen. Had Elizabeth died, Mary was the next heir, and she was a woman accused by her own subjects of terrible crimes. And she was a Catholic, who would have thrown the whole country into commotion, and risked everything to restore the Catholic faith. If they had let her go free, she would have raised the Continent and all the Catholic powers against the peace of England. In every way she was a danger. What was to be done with this woman, who was braver and stronger and more full of resources than almost any other of her time? They could not break her spirit nor quench her courage, whatever they did. They moved her from one castle to another, and gave to one unfortunate gentleman after another the charge of keeping her in safety. Some men who loved her and took up her cause, had to die for it. And every year she lived was a new danger, a continued difficulty. At last, after twenty years, Elizabeth pronounced against this dangerous guest, this heiress whom she feared, this cousin whom she had never seen.

Mary was removed to Fotheringay Castle, in Northamptonshire, and there tried for conspiring against Elizabeth, and trying to embroil the kingdom. She was found guilty, and, indeed, it was true enough that she had conspired, and endeavored, with every instrument she could lay her hand on, to get her freedom. She was left alone to defend herself against all the great lawyers and judges brought against her—one woman among all these ruthless men. Even her papers were taken from her, and nothing was heard in her favor excepting what her own dauntless voice could say. She was as brave then, and as full of dignity and majesty, as when all the world was at her feet. But her condemnation was decided on, whatever there might have been to say for her. She appealed to the queen; but of all unlikely things there was none so unlikely as that Elizabeth should consent to see or hear her kinswoman. After her condemnation, however, a considerable time elapsed before Elizabeth would give the final order for her execution. It was sent at last, arriving suddenly one morning in the gloomy month of February.

Nothing is more noble and touching than the story of her end. The sweet and gracious and tender Mary of Scotland, who had taken all hearts captive, seemed to have come back again for that conclusion; her gayety all gone, but none of her sweetness, nor the grace and kindness and courtesy of her nature. She thought of every one as she stood there smiling and looking death in the face; made her will, provided for her poor servants who loved her, sent tender messages to her friends, and then laid down her beautiful head, still beautiful, through all those years and troubles, upon the block, and died. It was on the 8th of February, 1587, almost on the twentieth anniversary of that cruel murder of her husband, which had been the beginning of all her woes.

Thus died one of the most beautiful and renowned, one of the ablest and bravest, and perhaps the most unfortunate, beyond comparison, of queens. A queen in her cradle, an orphan from her youth, every gift of fortune bestowed upon her, but no happiness, no true guidance, no companion in her life. The times in which she was born, and the training she had, and the qualities she inherited, may account for many of her faults; but nothing can ever take away the interest with which people hear of her, and see her pictures, and read her story. Had she been a spotless and true woman, she might have been one of the greatest in history; but in this, as in everything else, what is evil crushes and ruins what is great. As it is, no one can think of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, but with interest and sympathy, and there are many in the world, and especially in Scotland, who even now, three hundred years after her death, are almost as ready to fight for her as were the men among whom she lived and on whom she smiled.

TOO HOT TO BE A TEMPTATION.

ON A GRINDSTONE.

By Henry Clemens Pearson.

"There 's a new stone just been put into the grindin'-room, an' Thompson says that some one will have to be taught to run it."

The superintendent of the File Works looked up from his paper at the speaker, and a smile broke over his face as he scanned the grotesque figure before him. It was a boy of thirteen, who seemed to have been suddenly plunged up to the neck in a pair of men's overalls. His sleeves were rolled up, and the small arms had tide marks around the wrists, showing how high the water rose when he washed his hands. A similar mark encircled his neck. A square paper-cap adorned his head. There was an air of anxiety about him that at once fixed the attention of his listener, who said:

"Well, did your foreman send you to me to ask who should do it?"

"No, sir," was the reply. "I thought that as long as some one must get it, perhaps 't would be me. 'T would be a savin' to the company, 'cause I know how to run it a'ready, and any other fellow would have to be taught."

"Can you grind a file now?" asked the superintendent, in a tone of surprise, and eyeing the lad as if doubtful of his skill.

"Yes, sir. Old Sunset said I could grind small files better than the Englishman that 's doin' it on Number Three."

Half a dozen files lay upon a paper on the office table. The gentleman pointed to them, saying:

"See if you can detect flaws in any of these."

The boy took them one by one, and, holding them deftly between thumb and finger, struck the "tang" a ringing blow upon the iron radiator.

Five of them rung as clear as silver bells; the sixth had a slight jar in its music. The boy rang it again.

"That one 's cracked," he said.

He next took them one by one, and, holding them up to the light, looked into the lines of parallel grooves. He laid two more beside the cracked one, and, pointing to the others, said:

"Those are perfect."

"What is the matter with those two beside the cracked one?" was the question.

"They wer' n't ground true."

"How do you know?"

"Well, ye see," said the little fellow, assuming, unconsciously, the important air of an experienced workman,—"ye see, when ye look through the grooves they *all* ought to look dark and nice, but there are light streaks in some of these. Now, *this* is an awful pretty file," he continued, taking up a perfect one; "just as good a piece of work as ever was done in this place!"

"I suppose if you got this job you could afford to use more tobacco, and drive a better team on Sundays?"

"I s'pose I could," said the boy, "only I don't happen to use tobacco, sir, an' a fellow like me, that has a sick mother an' seven young ones to help along, is n't apt to hanker after top-buggies on Sundays."

"Send Old Sunset here," said the gentleman, turning to his desk with a smile.

The boy departed, and soon a tall, raw-boned Scotchman, wearing a pair of immense green glasses, entered the room.

"McFadden," said the superintendent, "do you know a boy named Will Storrs, who runs a truck from the annealing-room?"

"Wull Storrs?" was the deliberate reply. "Wull Storrs? I ken a lad named Wull, but I dinna ken what his surname may be."

"This is a little fellow about thirteen, who looks as if he wore his grandfather's overalls."

"Oh, aye—I ken him weel; but ye 're wrong aboot the overalls bein' his grandfeyther's. They belonged to mysel', but were too sma', so I sold them to him for fufteen cents, simply to make him feel that they were not a gift, ye ken."

"What kind of a workman is he?"

"The verra best. There 's not a job that he lays hand on but he can do as weel as any aboot the eestablishmunt."

"Could he learn to grind small files, do you think?" was the next query.

"Lerrn? He kens the whole notion already. One mornin', when most o' the grinders were oot on a spree, he took one o' the worst stanes in the room, and dressed it sae weel that ye could na' tal whether it was going or stoppit, when it was running at full speed!"

"Well, I think he can be trusted to run Number Eight, then. He might just as well commence now. Suppose you tell him that he can spend the rest of the day in dressing the stone, and getting ready to grind small files and cutters to-morrow."

Will was standing in the door-way of the grinding-room when the Scotchman delivered his message. The news seemed too good to be true. To run Number Eight! That meant a dollar and a half a day,—perhaps more, for the grinders all worked by the piece. His mother would be able to have her washing done for her, after this, and his brothers and sisters could go to school looking as if they belonged to somebody.

The grinding-room was long and narrow, iron-roofed and well lighted. Twelve grindstones stood side by side, with only passage-ways between them. These massive stones, some weighing several tons, were monsters compared with the grindstones that are frequently seen on the farms, or in the machine-shops. When they were all in motion, each with a man sitting on a small wooden saddle above his stone, it seemed to an outsider as if twelve men always abreast were racing on twelve stone bicycles.

Will's Number Eight was one of the largest stones in the room, and thought to be the best. After he had told the foreman of his good luck, he took some pieces of charcoal, a blunt chisel, and a kind of steel adz, and, climbing into the saddle, set the great stone in motion. Resting his hands on the pommel of the saddle, he held a piece of charcoal toward the stone, moving it nearer till the first rough bumps on its wide face were blackened; then he threw off the belt, and cut down these blackened places with the adz. Starting the great wheel again, he let it turn for a while against the blunt chisel, after which he again tried the charcoal. It was hard work—the adz was heavy, the chisel would "gouge" a little when his hands grew tired; but he kept at it, and, some time before the whistle sounded for noon, the charcoal made an even black line around the whole circumference.

Old Sunset, who ran a "donkey grinder" on the stone next to Will's, told him that it was "weel dune," which meant that it was perfect.

The boy, indeed, felt proud of his work, as, standing a little way off, he looked at the beautiful proportions of the revolving stone. As there was still a part of the day remaining, Will began to get the tools and fixtures necessary in file-grinding.

A half barrel of lime and oil was obtained, in which to thrust the files when ground, to keep them from rusting. This he mounted upon a stand within easy reach. He next went to the office and got a set of "file-grinder's" tools, the most important of which were a level and a square, both very small, and made purposely for this work. These he put in the little case that hung on his saddle.

He tried the water and found that it was all right. Everything was ready. Old Sunset had given him a pair of "thumb-cots," in case his hand came in contact with the stone, and one of the other grinders made him a present of a pair of leather stirrups, to keep the slate-colored mud from his shoes. The boy was fully equipped, and fairly aching to begin work, when the "speed" slackened and the whistle blew, which signaled that the day's work was over.

THE BURSTING OF THE GRINDSTONE.

The next morning Will was promptly on hand, eager to begin the day's toil, but an unexpected obstacle presented itself. An accident had happened in the "annealing shop," and there were no files ready to be ground. Old Sunset and most of the other workmen took it easily, and sauntered off; but Will was too much excited to do any such thing. He staid by his stone, started it half a dozen times to see if it was still true, looked over his tools, tried the saddle, put on the thumb-cots, and finally wandered away to watch the annealers. Had he known who was standing behind the next stone, jealously watching his every motion, he would never have left Number Eight with no friend to protect it.

As soon as Will was fairly out of sight, the watcher stealthily advanced to Number Eight.

He was a red-headed, thick-set boy, about Will's age, and his inveterate enemy. The news of Will's good luck had been more than his jealous nature could bear, and he was going to have some sort of revenge. After looking cautiously around, he clambered awkwardly into the saddle, and set the big stone in motion. It almost frightened him to have the great smooth wheel turning so swiftly close between his knees. He felt as if he were going to topple over upon the monster. The first dizzy feeling, however, passed away in a moment, and he looked about him for means to injure the smooth surface that Will Storrs had labored so hard and so skillfully throughout the previous day to obtain.

At his right, on a frail stand, lay the blunt chisel. He took it and struck the whirling stone repeated blows with the instrument. Growing bolder, he laid the chisel across the "rest," and, pressing its edge against the stone, cut out great uneven patches, till its circumference began to have a wavy

appearance, even at the high speed at which it was running.

But the boy was not satisfied yet, so he held the sharp corner of the chisel firmly against the stone, making parallel grooves a quarter of an inch deep throughout the whole surface.

Just as the young rascal had given the finishing touch to this piece of malice, Will, coming slowly in from the annealing-room, saw the red head bending over his stone, and heard the sharp "scratch" of the chisel.

Uttering a shout, he darted forward. But another avenger was before him.

The giant stone, as if unable to bear longer the mutilations and torture of the young vandal, gave a strange, rending roar, and, tearing itself free from the whirling shaft, sent one-half of its mighty body crashing through the iron roof. An instant later, a dull thud in the yard told where it had fallen. The other half crushed its way through the water-soaked planking, and lay buried in the ground.

The whole thing happened in an instant. The stone and its fixtures were blotted out so suddenly that Will was dazed. He hardly knew what was the matter; but others did. The same rending noise had been heard before, and the word went around that a stone had burst.

Within a few seconds the door-way was thronged with men. Will was pushed forward by the eager, questioning crowd till he stood close to the wreck. The wooden saddle lay shivered in pieces some feet from the place. Around the jagged hole in the roof were great spatters of oily lime, and the tools had been flung in all directions. But where was the boy who had been on the stone?

In the sudden mist of flying objects, Will had lost sight of him. A moaning cry, and a rush of feet to the other side of Old Sunset's stone, told where he was.

Will caught a glimpse of a pale face; then, as the crowd opened a little, he could distinctly see his enemy lying across a pile of unground "saw-files." One of the workmen lifted him up, and, as he did so, a shudder ran through the crowd: three great saw-files had cruelly torn and wounded the limp figure. He was laid upon a table, the sharp "tangs" were pulled out, and the blood was stanched. Finally a faint color came back to the pale face, and consciousness returned, but only to bring with it exquisite suffering. A physician being called, the wounded boy was sent off to the hospital.

Gradually the hands settled back to their work, the grinders feeling especially sober. The machinery resumed its clatter and whirl, the great black cogs buffeted each other as usual, and the accident began to fade from the memories of the men.

A new stone was rolled in and named Number Eight. A new set of tools came from the office, another saddle was built, and Will began his business afresh. He soon was considered one of the best grinders in the room.

One day, some months later, as he was grinding busily, a boy entered the room on crutches.

The men did not recognize him. He halted by Will's stone, and looked up. As soon as he had finished the file upon which he was at work, Will threw off the belt, leaped down, and grasped the other's hand.

"Why, Tom," he said, "I 'm very glad you 're back. When did you leave the city?"

"Last night," said the boy. Then, conquering a little choke, he said: "I treated you very badly, Will, an' I 've thought of it a heap since I 've been laid up. So I thought I 'd like to give you something,—this is the only thing that I had. A good old sailor uncle o' mine gave it to me when I was a little chap. He said it had been picked up from a wreck, and was a queer, risky thing, and he promised to show me how to fire it. But he was drowned off the coast afore he had a chance to keep his promise, and mother 's made me save it as kind o' sacred ever since. But this mornin' she told me I could give it to you for a keepsake, if I was so set on givin' you something."

He thrust a small package into Will's hand, and hobbled off.

Will untied it in amazement, and found a piece of iron pipe, an inch and a half in diameter, mounted on a curiously carved wooden block. It was a queer sort of a toy cannon. He examined the breech. It was made of a piece of lead, which was pounded into one end of the pipe and smoothed over; a small touch-hole had been drilled below the leaden plug.

Old Sunset came up just then, and Will showed him the gift. The Scotchman looked it all over carefully, saying:

"Wull ye stand in front or behind it when ye fire it off, lad?"

"Behind, of course!"

"Aye! so I thocht. Ye 'll stand behind it and catch the leeden plug, na doot."

"Do you think it will blow out?" asked Will.

"Of course it wull. The lad that gave it ye did na' ken it, probably, and na doot he would hae fired it himsel' without thinkin'. So you can hae the satisfaction o' feelin' that while he once saved you from injury by accident, now you save him from being blown up by a cannon that shoots baith ways at once."

LITTLE DORA: "OH, MAMMA! KITTY 'S *awfully* FOND OF BUTTER!"

"I WONDERED WHAT MADE ROBIN SAD."

BY GEORGE NEWELL LOVEJOY.

I WONDERED what made Robin sad,
Out on the garden wall;
Though Spring in loveliness was clad,
He could not sing at all.

Above him, in the flower-blown tree,
With drooping head and wing,
Sat his dear mate, as sad as he,
With never a note to sing.

I did not know, until too late,
Why joy had gone away
From Robin and his little mate,
On that sweet morn in May;

Until I found upon the grass,
Ah, mournful sight to see!—
A fair young red-breast dead, alas!
Beneath the flower-blown tree.

A CHAPTER ON SOAP-BUBBLES.

By Daniel C. Beard.

"A SOAP-BUBBLE" is an uncouth, inelegant name for such an ethereal fairy sphere. It is such a common, every-day sight to us, we seldom give it much attention, or realize how wonderful and beautiful is this fragile, transparent, liquid globe. Its spherical form is typical of perfection, and the ever-changing, prismatic colors of its iridescent surface charm the eye.

It is like a beautiful dream; we are entranced while it lasts, but in an instant it vanishes, and leaves nothing to mark its former existence excepting the memory of its loveliness.

Few persons can stand by and watch another blowing bubbles without being seized with an uncontrollable desire to blow one for themselves. There is a peculiar charm or pleasure in the very act, which few persons who have known it ever outgrow.

In the accompanying illustration are shown several kinds of soap-bubbles and a variety of ways of deriving amusement from them.

It is generally known that a bubble will burst if it touch any hard or smooth surface, but upon the carpet or a woolen cloth it will roll or bounce merrily.

If you take advantage of this fact, you can with a woolen cloth make bubbles dance and fly around as lively as a juggler's gilt balls, and you will be astonished to find what apparent rough handling these fragile bubbles will stand when you are careful not to allow them to touch anything but the woolen cloth.

It may be worth remarking that the coarser the soap the brighter the bubbles will be. The compound known as "soft soap" is the best for the purpose.

One of the pictures shows how to transform your soap-bubble into an aërial vapor-balloon.

If you wish to try this pretty experiment, procure a rubber tube, say a yard long, and with an aperture small enough to require considerable stretching to force it over the gas-burner. After you have stretched one end so as to fit tightly over the burner, wrap the stem of a clay pipe with wet paper, and push it into the other end of the tube, where it must fit so as to allow no gas to escape. Dip the bowl of your pipe in the suds and turn the gas on; the force of the gas will be sufficient to blow your bubble for you, and as the gas is lighter than the air, your bubble, when freed from the pipe, will rapidly ascend, and never stop in its upward course until it perishes.

Another group in our picture illustrates how old Uncle Enos, an aged negro down in Kentucky, used to amuse the children by making smoke-bubbles.

Did you ever see smoke-bubbles? In one the white-blue smoke, in beautiful curves, will curl and circle under its crystal shell. Another will possess a lovely opalescent pearly appearance, and if one be thrown from the pipe while quite small and densely filled with smoke, it will appear like an opaque polished ball of milky whiteness. It is always a great frolic for the children when they catch Uncle Enos smoking his corn-cob pipe. They gather around his knee with their bowl of soap-suds and bubble-pipe, and while the good-natured old man takes a few lusty whiffs from his corn-cob, and fills his capacious mouth with tobacco-smoke, the children dip their pipe in the suds, start their bubble, and pass it to Uncle Enos. All then stoop down and watch the gradual growth of that wonderful smoke-bubble! and when "Dandy," the dog, chases and catches one of these bubbles, how the children laugh to see the astonished and injured look upon his face, and what fun it is to see him sneeze and rub his nose with his paw!

The figure at the bottom, in the corner of the illustration, shows you how to make a giant-bubble. It is done by first covering your hands well with soap-suds, then placing them together so as to form a cup, leaving a small opening at the bottom. All that is then necessary is to hold your mouth about a foot from your hands and blow into them. I have made bubbles in this way twice the size of my head. These bubbles are so large that they invariably burst upon striking the floor, being unable to withstand the concussion.

Although generally considered a trivial amusement, only fit for young children, blowing soap-bubbles has been an occupation appreciated and indulged in by great philosophers and men of science, and wonderful discoveries in optics and natural philosophy have been made with only a clay pipe and a bowl of soap-suds.

JOHN.

BY S. M. CHATFIELD.

WHISTLE sounding loud and clear,
Laughter that I love to hear,
Marbles rattling far and near;
Must be John!

Out at elbow, out at knee,
Hat-brim tattered wofully;
Turn him round and let me see
If it 's John.

Dimples in a ruddy cheek,
Eyes that sparkle so they speak,
Turned-up nose, reverse of meek;
Yes, 't is John!

Yet this morning, clean and sweet,
Speckless collar, hat complete,
Trousers mended, down the street
Whistled John.

"What 's the matter with you, lad?
Where 's the hat-brim that you had?
Whence came all these rents so sad?
Answer, John!"

"Marbles." And he kicks his toe.
"Breeches will wear out, you know;
'Knuckle-down' is all the go,"
Falters John.

In his pockets go his hands,
Looking foolish, there he stands.
"S'pose you 'll scold?" For stern commands
Lingers John.

Catches mother's laughing eye;
In a flash the kisses fly,
And I hear, as I pass by,
"Bless you, John!"

PHAETON ROGERS.*

BY ROSSITER JOHNSON.

CHAPTER XI.

A COMICAL COMET.

THE business of the printing-office went on pretty steadily, so far as Ned and I were concerned. Phaeton's passion for invention would occasionally lead him off for a while into some other enterprise; yet he, too, seemed to take a steady interest in "the art deservative." The most notable of those enterprises was originated by Monkey Roe, who had considerable invention, but lacked Phaeton's powers of execution.

One day, Monkey came to the door of the office with Mitchell's "Astronomy" in his hand, and called out Phaeton.

"There 's some mischief on foot now," said Ned; "and if Fay goes off fooling with any of Monkey Roe's schemes, we shall hardly be able to print the two thousand milk-tickets that John Spencer ordered yesterday. It 's too bad."

When they had gone so far from the office that we could not hear their conversation, I saw Monkey open the book and point out something to Phaeton. They appeared to carry on an earnest discussion for several minutes, after which they laid the book on the railing of the fence and disappeared, going by the postern.

Ned ran out and brought in the book. On looking it over, we found a leaf turned down at the chapter on comets. Neither of us had studied astronomy.

"I know what they 're up to," said Ned, after taking a long look at a picture of Halley's comet. "I heard the other day that Mr. Roe was learning the art of stuffing birds. I suppose Monkey wants Fay to help him shoot one of those things, or catch it alive, may be, and sell it to his father."

Then I took a look at the picture, and read a few lines of the text.

"I don't think it 's quite fair in Fay," continued Ned, "to go off on speculations of that sort for himself alone, and leave us here to do all the work in the office, when he has an equal share of our profits."

"Ned," said I, "I don't believe this is a bird."

"Well, then, it 's a fish," said Ned, who had gone back to his case and was setting type. "They stuff fishes, as well as birds."

"But it seems to me it can hardly be a fish," said I, after another look.

"Why not?"

"Because I don't see any fins."

"That 's nothing," said Ned. "My book of natural history says a fish's tail is a big fin. And I 'm sure that fellow has tail enough to get along very well without any other fins."

This did not satisfy me, and at length we agreed to go and consult Jack-in-the-Box about it.

"Jack," said Ned, as soon as we arrived at the Box, "did you ever stuff a fish?"

"Do you take me for a cook?" said Jack, looking considerably puzzled.

"I don't mean a fish to bake," said Ned. "I mean one to be put in a glass-case, and kept in a museum."

"Oh," said Jack, "I beg pardon. I did n't understand. No, I never stuffed a fish."

"But I suppose you know how it 's done?" said Ned.

"Oh, yes; I understand it in a general way."

"What I want to get at," said Ned, "is this: how much is a fish worth that 's suitable for stuffing?"

"I don't know exactly," said Jack, "but I should say different ones would probably bring different prices, according to their rarity."

"That sounds reasonable," said Ned. "Now, how much should you say a fellow would probably get for one of this sort?" and he opened the Astronomy at the picture of Halley's comet.

Something was the matter with Jack's face. It twitched around in all sorts of ways, and his eyes sparkled with a kind of electric light. But he passed his hand over his features, took a second look at the picture, and answered:

"If you can catch one of those, I should say it would command a very high price."

"So I thought," said Ned. "Should you say as much as a hundred dollars, Jack?"

"I should not hesitate to say fully two hundred," said Jack, as he took his flag and went out to signal a freight-train.

"I see it all, as plain as day," said Ned to me, as we walked away. "Fay has gone off to make a lot of money by what father would call an outside speculation, and left us to dig away at the work in the office."

"Perhaps he 'll go shares with us," said I.

"No, he wont," said Ned. "But I have an idea. I think I can take a hand in that speculation."

"How will you do it?"

"I 'll offer Fay and Monkey a hundred dollars for their fish, if they catch it. That 'll seem such a big price, they 'll be sure to take it. And then I 'll sell it for two hundred, as Jack says. So I 'll make as much money as both of them together. And I must give Jack a handsome present for telling me about it."

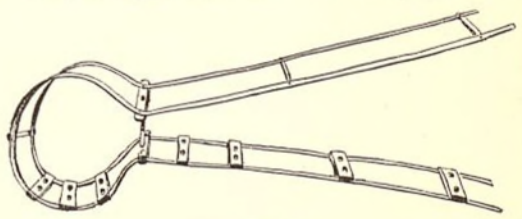
"That seems to be a good plan," said I. "And I hope they 'll catch two, so I can buy one and speculate on it. But, then," I added, sorrowfully, "I have n't the hundred dollars to pay for it, and there 's no Aunt Mercy in our family, and we don't live on the Bowl System."

"Never mind," said Ned, in a comforting tone. "Perhaps you 'll inherit a big fortune from some old grandmother you never heard of, till she died and they ripped open her bed-tick and let the gold tumble out. Lots of people do get money that way."

As we arrived home, we saw Phaeton and Monkey coming by the postern with half a dozen hoops —that is to say, half a dozen long, thin strips of ash, which would have been hoops after the cooper had bent them into circles and fastened the ends together.

"That 's poor stuff to make fish-poles," said Ned, in a whisper; "but don't let them know that we know what they 're up to."

They brought them into the office, got some



THE FRAME.

other pieces of wood, and went to work constructing a light frame about ten feet long, three feet high at the highest part, and a foot wide — like that shown in the engraving.

"What are you making, Fay?" said Ned.

"Wait a while, and you 'll see," said Phaeton.

Ned winked at me in a knowing way, and we went on printing milk-tickets.

When the frame was completed, Monkey and Phaeton went away.

"I see," whispered Ned. "They 're going to catch it with a net. The netting will be fastened on all around here, and this big end left open for him to go in. Then, when he gets down to this round part, he 'll find he can't go any farther, and they 'll haul him up. It 's as plain as day."

But when Monkey and Phaeton returned, in about half an hour, instead of netting they brought yellow tissue-paper and several candles.

We pretended to take very little interest in the proceeding, but watched them over our shoulders. When we saw them fasten the tissue-paper all around the frame, except on the top, and fit the candles into auger-holes bored in the cross-pieces at the bottom, Ned whispered again:

"Don't you see? That is n't a net. They 're going to have a light in it, and carry it along the shore to attract the fish. It 's all plain enough now."

"If you 'll be on hand to-night," said Monkey, "and follow us, you may see some fun."

"All right! We 'll be on hand," said Ned and I.

In the evening we all met in the office—all except Phaeton, who was a little late.

"Monkey," said Ned, in a confidential tone, "I want to make you an offer."

"Offer away," answered Monkey.

"If you catch one," said Ned, "I 'll give you a hundred dollars for it."

"If I catch one?" said Monkey. "If—I—catch—one? Oh, yes—all right! I 'll give you whatever I catch, for that price. Though I may not catch anything but Hail Columbia."

"I wont take it unless it 's the kind they stuff," said Ned.

"The kind—they—stuff?" said Monkey. "Did you say the kind *they* stuff, or the kind *of* stuff? Oh, yes—the kind of Hail Columbia they stuff. That would be a bald eagle, I should think."

At this moment Phaeton joined us.

"It 's no use, Fay," said Monkey. "Jack wont let us hoist it on the signal-pole. He says it might mislead some of the engineers, and work mischief."

"Hoist it on the signal-pole," whispered Ned to me. "Then it 's a bird they 're going to catch, after all, and not a fish. I see it now. Probably some wonderful kind of night-hawk."

"Well, then, what do you think is the next best place?" said Phaeton.

"I think Haven's barn, by all odds," answered Monkey.

"Haven's barn it is, then," said Phaeton, and they shouldered the thing and walked off, we following.

Before we arrived at the barn, Holman, Charlie Garrison, and at least a dozen other boys had joined us, one by one.

The numerous ells and sheds attached to this barn enabled Monkey and Phaeton to mount easily to the ridge-pole of the highest part, where they fastened the monster, and lighted all her battle-lanterns, when she blazed out against the blackness of the night like some terrific portent.

"Now you stay here, and keep her in order," said Monkey, "while I go for Adams."

Mr. Adams was an amateur astronomer of considerable local celebrity, whose little observatory, built by himself, was about fifty rods distant from Haven's barn. Unfortunately, his intemperate habits were as famous as his scientific attainments, and Roe knew about where to find him. I went with him on the search.

We went first to the office of the "Cataract House, by James Tone," but we did not find our astronomer there.

"Then," said Roe, "I know where he is, for sure," and he went to a dingy wooden building on State street, which had small windows with red curtains. This building was ornamented with a poetical sign, which every boy in town knew by heart, and could sing to the tune of "Oats, peas, beans."

W. WHEELER KEEPS IN HERE,
SELLS GROCERIES, CIDER, ALE, AND BEER;
HIS PRODUCE IS GOOD, HIS WEIGHT IS JUST,
HIS PROFITS SMALL, AND CAN NOT TRUST;
AND THOSE WHO BUY SHALL BE WELL USED,
SHALL NOT BE CHEATED NOR ABUSED.

"Is Professor Adams present?" said Monkey, as he opened the door and peered through a cloud of tobacco-smoke.

An individual behind the stove returned a drowsy affirmative.

Roe stepped around to him, and with a great show of secrecy whispered something in his ear.

He sprang from his chair, exclaimed, "Good-night, gentlemen! You will wake up to-morrow morning to find me famous," and dashed out at the door.

"What is it?" said one of the loungers, detaining Monkey as he was about to leave.

"A comet," whispered Monkey.

"A comet, gentlemen—a blazing comet!" repeated the man, aloud; and the whole company rose and followed the astronomer to his observatory. When they arrived there, they found him sitting with his eye at the none-too-reliable instrument, uttering exclamations of thankfulness that he had lived to make this great discovery.

"Not Biela's, not Newton's, not Encke's—not a bit like any of them," said he; "all my own, gentlemen—entirely my own!"

Then he took up his slate, and went to figuring upon it. Several of the crowd, who were now jammed close together around him in the little octagonal room, made generous offers of assistance.

"I was always good at the multiplication-table," said one.

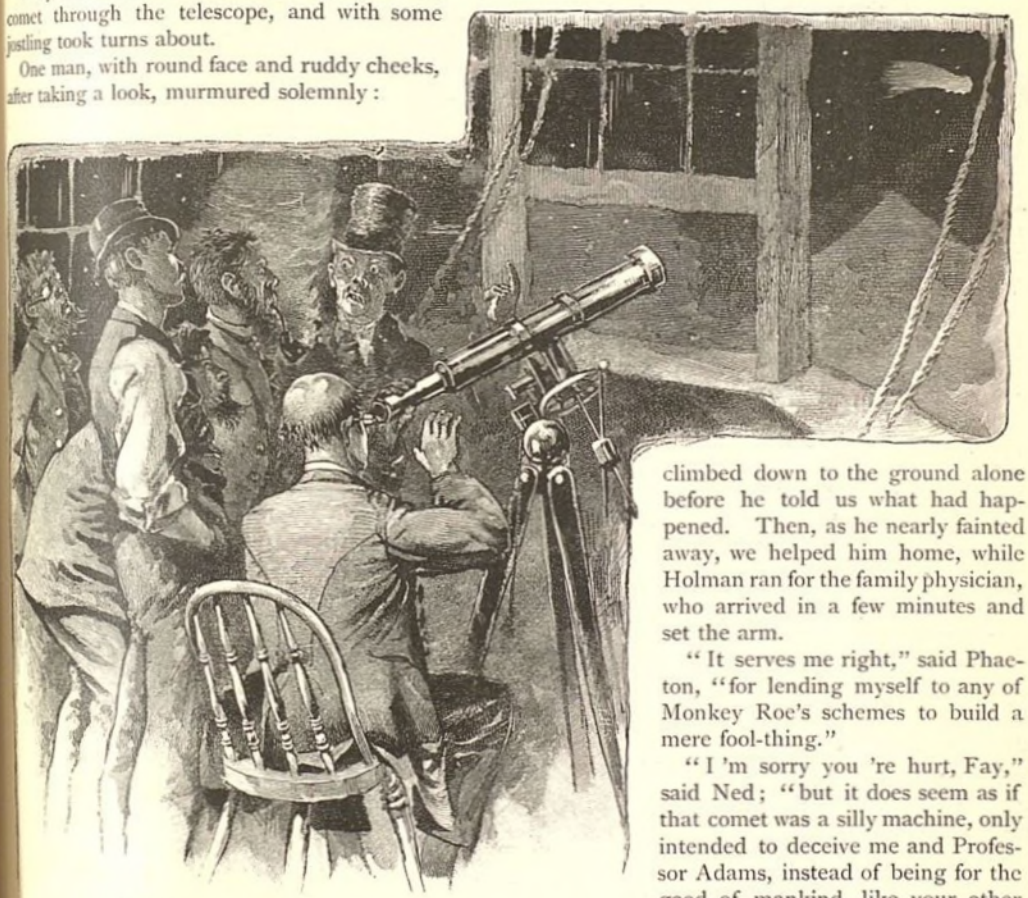
"I have a fine, clear eye," said another; "can't I help you aim the pipe?"

This excited a laugh of derision from another, who inquired whether the man with the fine, clear eye "did n't know a pipe from a chube?"

Another rolled up his sleeves, and said he was ready to take his turn at the crank for the cause of science; while still another expressed his willingness to blow the bellows all night, if Professor Adams would show him where the handle was.

They all insisted on having a peep at the comet through the telescope, and with some jostling took turns about.

One man, with round face and ruddy cheeks, after taking a look, murmured solemnly:



"A COMET, GENTLEMEN—A BLAZING COMET!"

"That old thing bodes no good to this city."

"Ah, Professor," said another, "your fortune 's made for all time. This 'll be known to fame as the Great American Comet. I dare say it 's as big as all the comets of the Old World put together."

Mr. Wheeler took an unusually long look.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I don't believe that comet will stay with us long. We 'd better leave the Professor to his calculations, while we go back and have a toast to his great discovery."

But nobody stirred. Then Mr. Wheeler left the observatory, and walked straight up to Haven's barn. He picked up a cart-stake, swung it around his head, and hurled it; and, in the twinkling of an eye, that comet had passed its perihelion, and shot from the solar system in so long an ellipse that I fear it will never return.

Unfortunately, the flying cart-stake not only put out the comet, but struck Phaeton, who had been left there by Monkey Roe to manage the thing, and put his arm out of joint. He bore it heroically, and climbed down to the ground alone before he told us what had happened. Then, as he nearly fainted away, we helped him home, while Holman ran for the family physician, who arrived in a few minutes and set the arm.

"It serves me right," said Phaeton, "for lending myself to any of Monkey Roe's schemes to build a mere fool-thing."

"I 'm sorry you 're hurt, Fay," said Ned; "but it does seem as if that comet was a silly machine, only intended to deceive me and Professor Adams, instead of being for the good of mankind, like your other inventions. And now you wont be able to do anything in the printing-office for a long while, just when we 're crowded with work. If you were not such a very good fellow, we should n't let you have any share of the profits for the next month."

CHAPTER XII.

A LITERARY MYSTERY.

THE printing-office enjoyed a steady run of custom, and, as Ned had said, we were just now crowded with work. Almost every hour that we

were not in bed, or at school, was spent in setting type or pulling the press. It was not uncommon for Ned to work with a sandwich on the corner of his case; and, as often as he came to a period, he would stop and take a bite.

"This is the way Barnum used to do," said he, "when he started his museum—take his lunch with him, and stay right there. It 's the only way to make a great American success"—and he took another bite, his dental semicircle this time inclosing a portion of the bread that bore a fine proof-impression of his thumb and finger in printer's ink.

Though Phaeton was not able, for some time, to take a hand at the work, he rendered good service by directing things, as the head of the firm. He was often suspicious, where Ned and I would have been taken in at once, as to the circuses and minstrel shows for which boys used to come and order tickets and programmes by the hundred, always proposing to pay for them out of the receipts of the show. The number of these had increased enormously, and it looked as if the boys got them up mainly for the sake of seeing themselves in print. Sometimes they would make out the most elaborate programmes, and then want them printed at once, before their enterprises had any existence excepting on paper. One boy, whose father was an actor, had made out a complete cast of the play of "Romeo and Juliet," with himself put down for the part of *Romeo*, and Monkey Roe as *Juliet*.

One day, a little curly-headed fellow, named Moses Green, came to the office, and wanted us to print a hundred tickets like this:

MOSE GREEN'S

MINSTREL SHOW.

Admit the Bearer.

"Where 's your show going to be?" said Phaeton.

"I don't know," said Moses. "If Uncle James should sell his horses, perhaps I could have it in his barn."

"Yes, that would be a good place," said Phaeton. "And who are your actors?"

"I don't know," said Moses. "But I 'm going to ask Charlie Garrison, because he has a good fife; and Lem Whitney, because he knows how to black up with burnt cork; and Andy Wilson, because he knows 'O Susanna' all by heart."

"And what is the price of admission?" said Phaeton.

"I don't know," said Moses. "But I thought that, may be, if the boys would n't pay five cents, I 'd take four."

"I 'll tell you what 't is, Moses," said Phaeton; "we 're badly crowded with work just now, and it would accommodate us if you could wait a little while. Suppose you engage your actors first, and rehearse the pieces that you 're going to play, and get the barn rigged up, and burn the cork, and make up your mind about the price; and then give us a call, and we 'll print your tickets."

"All right," said Moses. "I 'll go home and burn a cork, right away."

And he went off, whistling "O Susanna."

"Fay, I think that 's bad policy," said Ned, when Moses was out of sight.

"I don't see how you can say that," said Phaeton.

"It 's as plain as day," said Ned. "We ought to have gone right on and printed his tickets. Suppose he has n't any show, and never will have one—what of it? We should n't suffer. His father would see that our bill was paid. I 've heard Father say that Mr. Green was the very soul of honor."

"Ah, Ned, I 'm afraid you 're getting more sharp than honest," said Phaeton.

From the fact that our school has hardly been mentioned in this story, it must not be inferred that we were not all this time acquiring education by the usual methods. The performances here recorded took place out of school-hours, or on Saturdays, when there was no school. The events inside the temple of learning were generally so dull that they would hardly interest the story-reader.

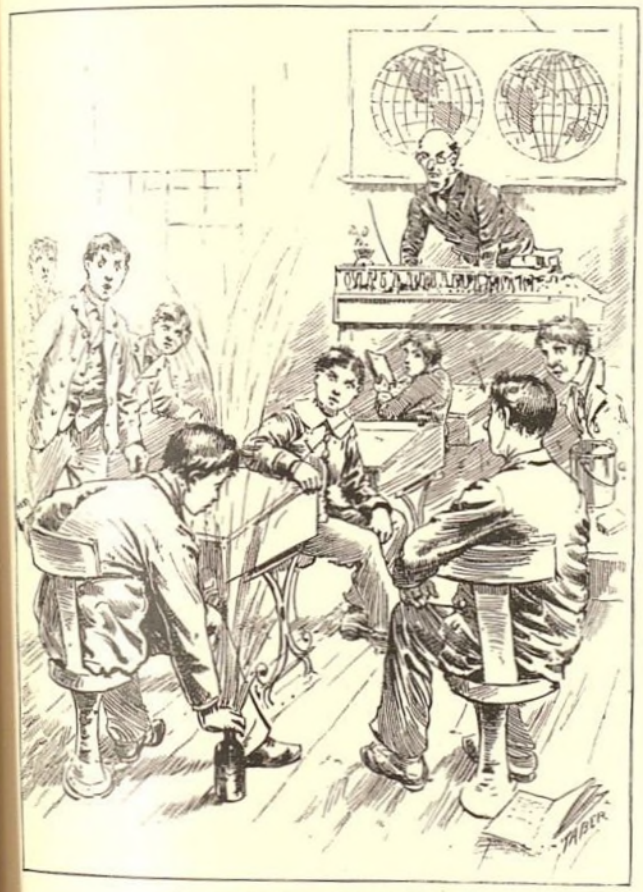
Yet there was now and then an accident or exploit which relieved the tediousness of study-time. One day, Robert Fox brought to school, as part of his lunch, a bottle of home-made pop-beer. An hour before intermission we were startled by a tremendous hissing and foaming sound, and the heads of the whole school were instantly turned toward the quarter whence it came. There was Fox with the palm of his hand upon the cork, which was half-way in the bottle that stood upon the floor beside his desk. Though he threw his whole weight upon it, he could not force it in any farther, and the beer rose like a fountain almost to the ceiling, and fell in a beautiful circle, of which Fox and his bottle were the interesting center. Any boy who has attended a school taught by an irascible master will readily imagine the sequel. Holman recorded the affair in the form of a Latin fable, which was so popular that we printed it. Here it is:

VULPES ET BEER.

Quondam vulpes bottulum poppi beeris in schola tulit, quod in arca reponebat. Sed corda laxa, ob

vim beeris, cortex collum reliquit, et beer, spumans, se pavimento effudit. Deinde magister capit unum extremum lori, et vulpes alterum sentiebat. Hæc fabula docet that, when you bring pop-beer to school, you should tie the string so tight that it can't pop off before lunch-time.

When Jack-in-the-Box saw this fable, he said it was a good fable, and he was proud of his pupil, though he felt obliged to admit that some of the sentences were a little out of joint.



"IT ROSE LIKE A FOUNTAIN."

Holman said he put the moral in English because that was the important part of it, and ought to be in a language that everybody could understand.

Monkey Roe said he was glad to hear this explanation, as he had been afraid it was because Holman had got to the end of his Latin.

Charlie Garrison, in attempting to criticise the title of the fable, only exposed himself to ridicule.

"It must be a mistake," said he; "for you know you can't eat beer. It 's plain enough that it ought to be, *Vulpes*" (he pronounced the word in one syllable) "*drank beer.*"

This shows the perils of ignorance. If Charlie had had a thorough classical training, he would n't have made such a mistake. It was a curious fact that the boys who had never studied Latin, and to whom the blunder had to be explained, laughed at him more unmercifully than anybody else.

But Holman's literary masterpiece (if it was his) was in rhyme, and in some respects it remains a mystery to this day.

One evening he called to see me, and intimated that he had some confidential business on hand, for which we should better adjourn to the printing-office, and accordingly we went there.

"I want a job of printing done," said he, "provided it can be done in the right way."

"We shall be glad to do it as well as we possibly can," said I. "What is it?"

"I can't tell you what it is," said he.

"Well, let me see the manuscript," said I.

"There is n't any manuscript," said he.

"Oh, it is n't prepared yet?" said I. "When will it be ready?"

"There never will be any manuscript for it," said he.

I began to be puzzled. Still, I remembered that small signs and labels were often printed, consisting of only a word or two, which did not require any copy.

"Is it a sign?" said I.

"No."

"Labels?"

"No."

"Then what in the world is it? And how do you suppose I am going to print a thing for you, unless I know what it is that I am to print?"

"That 's the point of the whole business," said Isaac. "I want you to let me come into your office, and use your type and press to print a little thing that concerns nobody but myself, and I don't care to have even you know about it. I want you to let me do all the work myself, when you are not here, and I shall wash up the rollers, distribute the type, destroy all my proofs, and leave everything in the office as I found it. Of course I shall pay you the same as if you did the work."

"But how can you set the type?" said I. "You don't even know the case, do you?"

"No," said he; "but I suppose the letters are all in it somewhere, and I can find them with a little searching."

"And do you know how to lock up a form?" said I.

"I 've often seen you do it," said he; "and I think I 'm mechanic enough to manage it."

"When do you want to go to work?"

"*Duo eques, rectus ab*—to-night, right away."

"Very well—good-night!" said I.

When I went to the office next day, I found Ned busily at work trying to fit together some small torn scraps of paper. They were printed on one side, and, as fast as he found where one belonged, he fastened it in place by pasting it to a blank sheet which he had laid down as a foundation. When I arrived, the work had progressed as far as shown in the card on this page.

"Here 's a mystery," said Ned.

"What is it?" said I.

"Did you print this?" said he, suddenly, looking into my face suspiciously.

"No," said I, calmly; "I never saw it before."

"Well, then, somebody must have broken into our office last night. For when I came in this morning, I found the oil all burned out of the big lamp,—I filled it yesterday,—and these torn scraps in the wood-box. I got so many together pretty easily, but I can't find another one that will fit."

"It looks as if it had been a poem," said I.

"Yes," said Ned; "of course it was. And oh, look here! It was an acrostic, too!"

Ned took out his pencil, and filled in what he supposed to be the missing initial letters, making the name VIOLA GLIDDEN.

"It *may* have been an acrostic," said I; "but you can't tell with certainty, so much is missing."

"There is n't any doubt in my mind," said Ned;

TO ON ED.

Vainly trive sweetness—
Instantly comet back:
Over rt rol dream its fleetness,
with its tor and rack.
how I sigh my . od,
Going in fan long agone,—
Lookin8 cross he jo
I knew er me dawn
earest and bes augqters,
aspire t . ove regard?
Even in otus dext aters,
Never again to ai ward.

"and it 's perfectly evident to me who the burglar must have been. Everybody knows who dotes on Viola Glidden."

"I should think a good many would dote on her," said I; "she 's the handsomest girl in town."

"Well, then," said Ned, "look at that 'otus dext.' Of course it was *totus dexter*,—and who is the boy that uses that classic expression? I should n't have thought that so nice a fellow as Holman would break in here at midnight, and put his mushy love-poetry into print at our expense. He must have been here about all night, for that lamp-full of oil lasts nine hours."

"There 's an easy way to punish him, whoever

he was," said Phaeton, who had come in, in time to hear most of our conversation.

"How is that?" said Ned.

"Get out a handbill," said Phaeton, "and spread it all over town, offering a reward of one cent for the conviction of the burglar who broke into our office last night and printed an acrostic, of which the following is a fac-simile of a mutilated proof. Then set up this, just as you have it here."

"That 's it; that 'll make him hop," said Ned. "I 'll go to work on it at once."

"But," said I, "it 'll make Miss Glidden hop, too."

"Let her hop."

"But then, perhaps her brother John will call around and make you hop."

"He can't do it," said Ned. "The man that owns a printing-press can make everybody else hop, and nobody can make him hop—unless it is a man that owns another press. Whoever tries to fight a printing-press always gets the worst of it. Father says so, and he knows, for he tried it on the *Vindicator* when he was running for sheriff and they slandered him."

At this point, I explained that Holman had not come there without permission, and that he expected to pay for everything.

"Why did n't you tell us that before?" said Phaeton.

"I was going to tell you he had been here," said I, "and that he did not want any of us to know what he printed. But when I saw you had found that out, I thought perhaps, in fairness to him, I ought not to tell you *who* it was."

"All right," said Ned. "Of course, it 's none of our business how much love-poetry Holman makes, or how spoony it is, or what girl he sends it to, if he pays for it all. But don't forget to charge him for the oil. By the way, so many of the boys owe us for printing, I 've bought a blank-book to put the accounts in, or we shall forget some of them. Monkey Roe's mother paid for the 'Orphan Boy' yesterday. I 'll put that down now. Half a dollar was n't enough to charge her; we must make it up on the next job we do for her or Monkey."

While he was saying this, he wrote in his book:

Mrs. Roe per Monkey 12 *orphan boys* 50 *Paid.*

Hardly had he finished the entry, when the door of the office was suddenly opened, and Patsy Rafferty thrust in his head and shouted:

"Jimmy the Rhymer 's killed!"

"What?"

"What?"

"I say Jimmy the Rhymer 's killed! And you done it, too!"

I am sorry that Patsy said "done," when he meant *did*. But he was a good-hearted boy, nevertheless; and probably his excitement was what made him forget his grammar.

"What do you mean?" said Ned, who had turned as pale as ashes.

"You ought to know what I mean," said Patsy. "Just because he had the bad luck to spill a few of your old types, you abused him like a pickpocket, and said he 'd got to pay for 'em, and drove him out of the office. And he 's been down around the depot every day since, selling papers, tryin' to make money enough to pay you. And now he 's got runned over be a hack, when he was goin' across the street to a gentleman that wanted a paper. And they 've took him home, and my mother says it 's all your fault, too, you miserable skinflint! I wont have any of your gifts!"

And with that, Patsy thrust his hand into his pocket, drew out the visiting-cards that Ned had printed for him, and threw them high into the room, so that in falling they scattered over everything.

"I 'll bring back your car," he continued, "as soon as I can get it. I lent it to Teddy Dwyer last week."

Then he shut the door with a bang, and went away.

We looked at one another in consternation.

"What shall we do?" said Ned.

"I think we ought to go to Jimmy's house at once," said I.

"Yes, of course," said Ned.

And he and I started. Phaeton went the other way—as we afterward learned, to inform his mother, who was noted for her efficient charity in cases of distress.

Ned and I not only went by the postern, but we made a bee-line for Jimmy's house, going over any number of fences, and straight through door-yards and garden-patches, without the slightest reference to streets or paths.

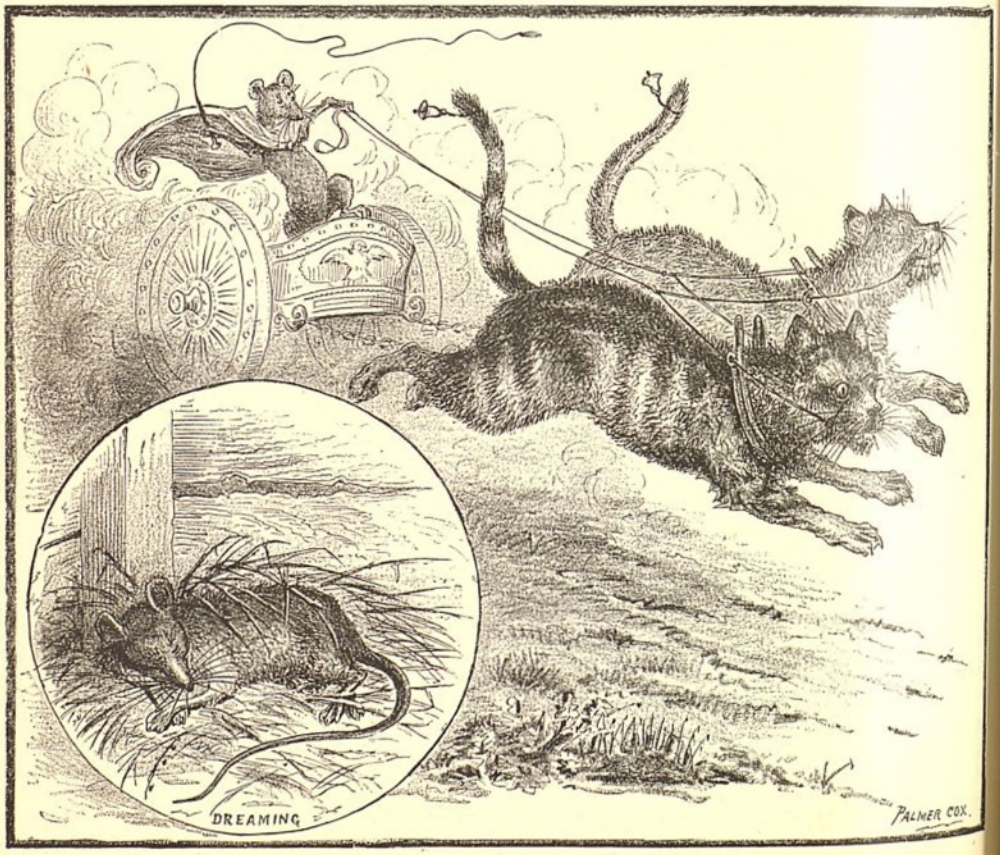
We left in such a hurry that we forgot to lock up the office. While we were gone, Monkey Roe sauntered in, found Holman's acrostic, which Ned had pieced together, and, when he went away, carried it with him.

(To be continued.)

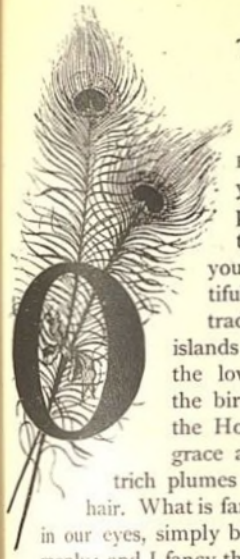
"THE SHINING DAYS OF MAY."

By Lucy M. Blinn.

Oh, the shining days of May!
Don't you hear them coming, coming,—
In the robin's roundelay,—
In the wild bee's humming, humming?
In the quick, impatient sound
Of the red-bird's restless whirring,
In the whispers in the ground
Where the blossom-life is stirring?
In the music in the air,
In the laughing of the waters;
Nature's stories, glad and rare,
Told Earth's listening sons and daughters?
Surely, hearts must needs be gay
In the shining days of May!



THE RAT'S HAPPY DREAM.



THE PRINCE OF THE BIRDS.

By Ernest Ingersoll.

Of all the beautiful birds you ever saw, is not the peacock the most beautiful and showy? Have you ever thought how beautiful it is? I suppose the trader of the South Sea islands has no appreciation of the loveliness that we see in the bird-of-paradise, nor does the Hottentot fully know the grace and richness of the ostrich plumes which he sticks in his hair. What is familiar to us loses beauty in our eyes, simply because we see it commonly; and I fancy that if we came suddenly upon a peacock, his glorious tail spread before our delighted gaze for the first time in our lives, we should not hesitate to consider him the prince of the feathered race.

Peacocks have been domesticated fowls for a great many years, but have not degenerated and lost their original tints or shape as have the barnyard fowls and ducks, and, to some extent, the turkeys. Nevertheless, travelers tell us that the wild peacocks are far handsomer than the tame ones. It seems impossible. The peafowl is a native of India, and some of the islands of the Indian or Malayan archipelago. Various parts of Java abound with them, yet there are none in Borneo nor in Sumatra, though these islands are close by. But then, some other birds of the family to which the peacocks and pheasants belong occur plentifully in Sumatra and Borneo, and are unknown to Java. On the main-land of Asia, peacocks of some sort—for there are half a dozen species—abound, from southern India to the northern table-lands, and even through the high passes into the forests and steppes of Thibet. Our domesticated variety is the common one in India, where it is known as the crested peacock. The peacock of Java is different, "the neck being covered with scarlet-like green feathers, and the crest of a different form," but the eyed train is equally large and beautiful. The remote Thibetan species has a lesser train, and its general color is white, upon which ornamental feathers are distributed in a most striking manner.

These birds prefer wooded districts, especially low, tangled, thickety forests, partly cane and partly hard-wood growths, called "jungles," and there they congregate in large flocks. One writer says that from an eminence he once saw the sun rise upon more than a thousand of these dazzling birds. What a sight that must have been! How the level golden beams of light must have been reflected in a hundred crossed and gleaming rays from the trembling and iridescent plumes! I can not understand how any foreground to a sunrise could be devised better than the waving green summit of a forest, covered with a thousand swaying peacocks.

The food of these birds, like that of the argus pheasant and other such fowls, consists of seeds, small fruits, buds, or the juicy tops of tender plants, and insects—particularly beetles. To get this food, the peacock, of course, spends much of his time on the ground, and he is sometimes caught there by being run down with dogs, or by men on horseback. He can make good speed on foot, however.

The nest is a rough little heap of grass and straw, placed on the ground, and hollowed out enough to keep its dozen eggs from rolling away. The young are at first as dull-colored as the hen, and it is only after the third year that the male gets his full regalia.

It would seem as if a bird carrying so long and cumbersome a train would find it very difficult to mount into the air, but he manages to do so by running a little way upon the ground and then leaping upward. Once started, he can rise to a considerable height, and gracefully swing his broad tail over trees that it would try your muscle to cover with an arrow from the stoutest bow. One way of peacock-hunting, which used to be much pursued, was by falcons. Here was game well suited to falconry. It gave a glittering prize to the eager kestrel or gyrfalcon or goshawk, and fitted the gayly dressed lords and ladies who followed the falconer, and watched with lively excitement the flights of their brave hunter of the air.

The peacock's train is his glory. It eclipses all the burnished tints and reflections of his proud little head and jaunty crest. I have read a very good and minute description of this most superb specimen of Nature's feather-work, which I would rather quote than try to equal:

"The train derives much of its beauty from the loose barbs of its feathers, whilst their great number and their unequal length contribute to its gorgeousness, the upper feathers being successively shorter, so that when it is erected into a disk, the eye-like or moon-like spot at the tip of each feather is dis-

played. The lowest and longest feathers of the train do not terminate in such spots, but in spreading barbs, which encircle the erected disk. The blue of the neck; the green and black of the back and wings; the brown, green, violet, and gold of the tail; the arrangement of the colors, their metallic splendor, and the play of color in changing lights, render the male peacock an object of universal admiration."

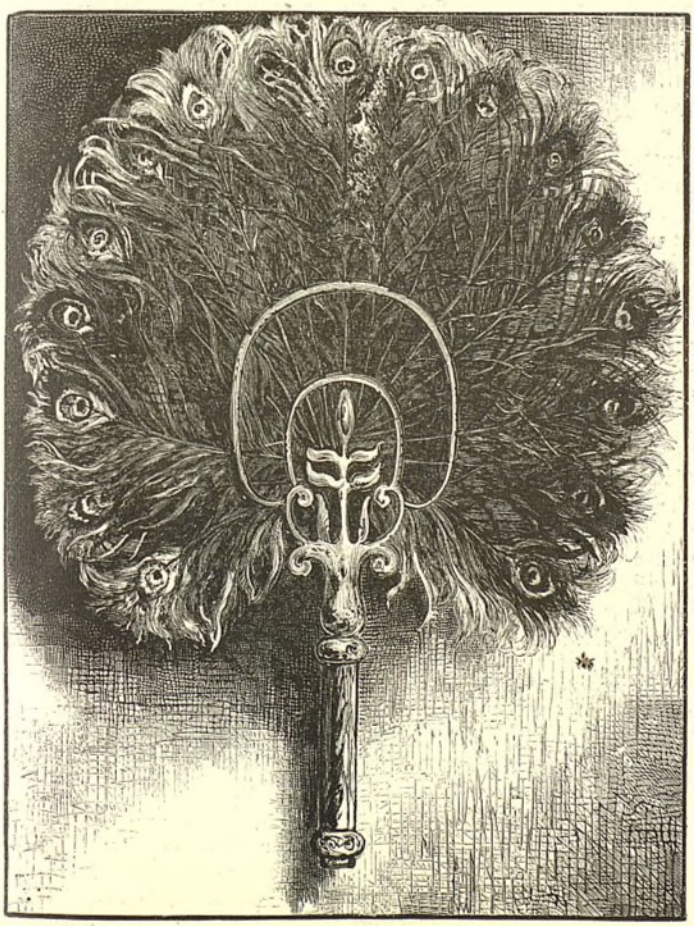
But this description, good as it is, cannot give as true an idea of the bird's appearance as any child may have after taking one glance at his magnificent lordship. Nearly all my readers probably have had this pleasure, although some of you city children may, perhaps, have seen only the beautiful plumes, made up into fans, or displayed as decorations in parlor and library. But we of to-day are far from being the first to discover this decorative value of peacock feathers. The gorgeous plumage ornamented the thrones

and palaces of Eastern monarchs, and the houses of the rich, in far-off centuries; and the beautiful fan, shown you in the picture on this page, was copied from one made more than two thousand years ago, in Etruria, a country of ancient Italy.

The peacock appears very early in history as a domestic fowl, since the Hebrews had it long before the days of Solomon. From Asia it went westward into Europe, as soon as civilization began to penetrate what then were savage wilds. In those old days of Rome, which the poets call its golden age, when the luxurious life of that splendid city was at its height, no great feast was without its peacocks, cooked as the most ostentatious dish. The body of the bird was roasted, and when placed upon the table was wrapped in a life-like way in its own skin, with the tail-feathers spread. Could anything be more ornamental to a dinner-table? The custom of having peacocks served at banquets continued into the Middle Ages, but it is rarely that one is cooked nowadays, for most persons consider the flesh dry and tasteless.

The peacock seems filled with an intense admiration of his own beauty. He poses in a stately attitude, or struts about, inviting your attention to his magnificence; then he slowly bends his proud head from one side to the other and rattles the quills of his tail, as he marches off with the parade of a drum-major, and turns to let the sunshine glint upon his plumes in some new way. "As vain as a peacock" is a well-founded proverb, no doubt; but, perhaps, in justice to the beautiful bird, it would be wise to remember a short sermon on this text from your good friend, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, who said to you, in March, 1874:

"I gave a peacock a good talking to, the other day, for being so vain. But he made me understand that vanity was his principal merit. 'For,' said he, 'how in the world should we peacocks look, if we did n't strut? What kind of an air would our tail feathers have, if we did n't spread them?' I gave in. A meek peacock would be an absurdity. Vanity evidently was meant specially for peacocks."



IN NATURE'S WONDERLAND; OR, ADVENTURES IN THE AMERICAN TROPICS.

By Felix L. Oswald.

Chapter VII.

"Rocks and lonely flower-leas,
Playgrounds of the mountain breeze."

The Republic of Guatemala is as far south as Egypt, but its mountains are so high that the weather is by no means very hot, and when we approached the heights of the Sierra Gorda we had to unstrap our blankets to keep our poor monkeys warm. The upper sierra was so lonely that we became a little uneasy about our road, but the confidence of our guide re-assured us.

"There is no doubt about the right direction," said he; "we have to keep straight south, and if we get up to the ridge before sundown, you will see the Valley of Antigua."

"I don't think we shall reach a house before night," said Menito; "this looks like ——" He stopped and clutched my arm. "Look up there," he whispered; "there 's somebody ahead of us—something moving in the cliffs over yonder."

The moving something looked like a big red bag with two little feet,—a traveling bundle of red shawls, as it seemed when we came a little nearer.

"Oh, I know," laughed Daddy Simon, "that 's the old sergeant's daughter, with her pack of dry-goods; I have met her twice before."

"What sergeant?" I asked.

"He used to belong to the mounted police," said the guide, "and he 's living somewhere in this sierra now. His wife makes woolen shawls and things, and they peddle them all over the country. Yes, that 's the same girl," he whispered, when we overtook the red bundle.

The bundle turned, and under a heap of woolen shawls, caps, and mittens, we saw the owner of the little feet, a black-eyed infant with a sharp nose and a big walking-stick—a mere baby, of eight or nine years, I should say, certainly not more than ten, but quite self-possessed.

"Fine evening," she observed, after answering our greeting. "Traveling?"

"Yes, we are going to Antigua," I replied; "do you know which is the shortest road?"

"I 'll show you by and by, when we get up to the ridge," said she; "you are all right thus far. Strangers, I suppose?"

"Not altogether," said our guide; "did n't I see you in San Mateo two years ago?"

"Of course you did," said she; "I go there every Christmas."

"Quite alone?" I asked. "Don't the sierra Indians bother you?"

"Not if I know it," said the little milliner; "they would find out that my father owns a musket. My name is Miss Cortina, you know."

"But what about ghosts?" said Menito; "they don't care for muskets. Suppose you should meet the Wild Spaniard, or the Three Howling Monks?"

"Howling Monks? They had better leave me alone," said Miss Cortina, with a glance at her walking-stick. "I 'd give them something to howl about."

The sun went down before we reached the summit rocks, and it was almost dark when we halted, in a grove of larch-trees on the southern slope.

"I must leave you now," said Miss Cortina, when we had pitched our tent. "That black smoke-cloud over yonder is the Volcano of Mesaya, so you see that you are going in the right direction. I 'll show you the trail to-morrow morning."

She shouldered her bundle and took camp under the branches of a fallen tree, some fifty yards from our bivouac.

"No wonder she is n't afraid of ghosts," laughed Tommy; "would n't she make a good witch herself? She uses that bundle of hers for a bed, it seems, but I wonder if she has anything to eat?"

"Here, Menito," said I, "take her these cakes and figs, and ask her if she needs anything else."

Menito started for the tree, but soon came back laughing.

"She would n't let me come near her wigwam at all," said he; "she tells me that she can't receive any callers after eight o'clock!"

About midnight, we were awakened by a strange light that penetrated our tent and threw a reddish glare on the opposite trees.

"That can't be the moon," said Tommy; "may be the woods are afire—wait, I 'm going to see what it is. Oh, come out here, all of you," he cried,—"the whole sky is ablaze!"

We stepped out, and, sure enough, the whole southern firmament was suffused with a lurid glow, and, when we had made our way through the bushes, we saw the fire itself, a whirl of bright red flames that seemed to rise from the heart of the

central sierra, and illuminated the wild mountains near and far. Every now and then a fiery mass shot up into the clouds and fell back in a shower of burning flakes.

"That 's the Volcano of Mesaya," said Daddy Simon. "May the saints help all the poor people in that sierra!"

He and Menito looked on in silence, but Tommy had never seen a volcanic eruption before, and was almost beside himself with excitement.

"Come this way!" he cried. "Step on this ledge, uncle, you can see it more plainly. Why, talk about battles and fire-works! All the gunpowder in the world could not make a flame of that

At sunrise the smoke of the volcano stood like a black cloud-pillar in the southern sky, and when we continued on our road, we noticed a strange dust in the air, a haze of fine ashes, that had drifted over with the night-wind. The lowlands at our feet, however, were sunlit for hundreds of miles, and through a gap in the south-western coast-range we could see the glittering waters of the Pacific Ocean. The southern slope of our sierra was very steep, till we reached a sort of terrace formed by the upper valley of the Rio Claro. Here our little guide stopped, and pointed to a stone house that stood like a watch-tower at the brink of the river-valley.

"That 's where my folks live," said she. "You

DISTANT VIEW OF THE VOLCANO OF MESAYA AT MIDNIGHT.

height! But how strange,—it is all so still! That volcano must be a long way from here."

"About eighty miles," I replied. "It is beyond the border, in the State of Nicaragua."

"What 's the matter?" said a squeaking little voice behind us.

"Who 's that?" I asked. "Miss Cortina?"

"Yes, it 's I," said she. "What 's up?"

"Can't you see it?" said Tommy. "Look over yonder."

"That? Then I had better go to bed again," said the little lady. "Well, well; I thought there was something the matter. Never mind that old volcano; you can see that any day in the year."

We were not quite sure about that. The night was a little chilly, but we stood and looked till the wonder was veiled by the rising morning mist.

can't miss your way now. Where you see that cross-road, there, I have to turn off to the right. I have been gone longer than I expected."

"I suppose you did not sell much on this trip?" inquired Menito, "though it 's none of my business."

Miss Cortina cocked her sharp little nose.

"You had better mind your own business, then," said she. "I shall find a hundred customers before you sell one of your old monkeys."

"That 's right, sissy," laughed Tom. "But we do not sell our monkeys; do you know anybody hereabouts who does? We want to buy all the pets we can get—kittens, cats, and catamounts."

"You do?" said she; "why did n't you say so before? How would a couple of young bears suit you? My father could find you a pair of nice ones."

"What will he take?" asked Menito.

"That 's no business of mine," said the little shrew. "You just follow this road; if my father is home, he will overtake you before you cross that river. The bears are somewhere in the sierra."

A mile farther down we came to a bridge, where we had to wait half an hour, till at last a man with a large musket came running down the river-road.

"Yes, that 's the old sergeant," said Daddy Simon. "I know him by that big gun of his."

"Hallo! So my girl was right, after all," said the sergeant. "Her mother would n't believe that you wanted to buy those bears."

"Where are they?" I asked.

"Up in the sierra; if you are bound for Antigua, it 's a little out of your direction," said he. "But you might as well go by way of San Miguel, and get the *viatico*."

"What 's that?"

"San Miguel is a convent," explained the sergeant. "And the viatico is the luncheon they give to all strangers."

"All right!" I laughed. "We must n't miss that for anything. Come on, then."

The sergeant was a fast walker, but we managed to keep up with him some eight miles, up and down hill through the mountains, till he brought us to the brink of a deep ravine, where our mule refused to advance another step.

"You had better leave her up here and let that boy take her along the hillside," said our new guide. "They can meet us at the mouth of the next creek."

When we had reached the bottom of the ravine the hunter stopped and pointed to a pile of bowlders on the opposite slope. "That 's the bear's den," said he; "she has two cubs, nearly a month old, I should say; let 's fetch them right now."

"Then we had better get our guns ready?" said Tommy.

"Never mind the guns," said the sergeant; "I 'll get the bears for you; they are only cubs, and the old one is n't at home."

"How do you know?"

"She 's out marmot-hunting," said he; "there 's a colony of *marmottos*" (a sort of prairie-dogs) "on the ridge of this sierra, and they never come out till the sun gets pretty high, a little after noon, generally. Now hold my musket a moment," said he, when we reached the bowlders. He untied a little bundle, took out a sack and a pair of large buckskin gloves, and after looking carefully up and down the ravine, he crawled into a cleft in the bottom rocks of the pile.

"There 's something wrong—may be the old bear was at home, after all," said Tommy, when we had waited about twenty minutes, without seeing any sign of the sergeant.

HIDE AND SEEK WITH THE OLD BEAR.

"No, I think he knows what he 's about," said Daddy Simon; "he 's the best hunter in this sierra, and quite as sharp-nosed as his daughter. Yes, here he comes. Listen!"

A whimpering howl came from the depths of the cave, and, a moment after, the hunter crawled out and handed us a creature like a fat, black poodle-dog. "Here, take charge of this old howler," said

he; "they are bigger than I expected; I am going to get his brother now."

"There is n't much time to lose," said he, when he re-appeared with the second black poodle; "the old bear will come home before long. We shall have to play her a trick, or she may come after us."

"What are you going to do?" I asked.

"I 'll show you," said he; and taking hold of the two cubs, he soused them in the creek at the bottom of the ravine; and then, holding them close together, he walked slowly toward another pile of bowlders a little farther down. The drenched cubs trickled like two watering-pots, and after holding them over the top of the pile, he rubbed their wet fur against some of the projecting rocks. "Let me see that bag now," said he; "chuck them in, please; that 's it. And now let 's get out of this as fast as we can. Come this way; straight uphill; the shortest way is the best."

We clambered up the slope on our hands and feet, till we came in sight of the place where Menito was waiting with the mule. But before we reached them, the hunter suddenly threw himself flat behind a rock and motioned us with his hand to keep down and hide ourselves. "I knew there was no time to lose," he whispered; "here comes the old one!"

Down below, at the bottom of the valley, a big fat bear came trotting along the creek with her nose close to the ground, making straight for the wet bowlders. There she stopped, and after nosing about here and there, she raised herself on her hind legs and began to tear down the rocks, one after another, though some of them could not weigh less than a ton. Now and then she raised her head and looked silently all around, and then, with a fierce growl, she fell upon the rocks again. I wondered how she would manage the enormous bowlders at the bottom of the pile, but before she had finished her work, the hunter slipped away and beckoned us to follow him.

"We are all right now," said he, when we got back to the hill-road; "she has n't seen us yet, and before she has finished there, we shall have a start of a mile at least. How do you like the cubs—don't you think they are worth four dollars?"

"Certainly," said I; "but I 'll give you five, for showing us how to outwit a bear."

"Yes, but look here," said Daddy Simon, "Mr. Cortina must n't leave us yet; we should be sure to lose our way; I have never been in this part of the sierra before."

"Don't trouble yourselves about that," laughed the hunter; "I want to get my share of that viatico. But, in the first place, we must have some dinner now; I 'll take you to a place where we can get any amount of bread and honey."

"What! Is there a house up here?" I asked.

"No, but a honey-camp," said the sergeant; "old Jack Gomez is living there all by himself, hunting up wild bees' nests in the rocks. He 's the funniest old chap you ever saw."

We could not deny that, when Mr. Cortina introduced us to the hermit. The old fellow wore leather knee-breeches, and a short leather waistcoat, but nothing else, and from the top of his bare head to the tips of his toes his skin looked as if he had been painted with yellow ocher and coach-varnish; his beard and his long hair were just one mass of clotted honey.

"How are you, Jack?" said the sergeant, and slapped him on the shoulder, but drew back his hand as if he had touched a pitched kettle.

"Just look at this!" cried he. "Why don't you wash yourself, you old monster?"

"Wash myself!" chuckled the hermit; "what would be the use, my dear friends? I should be covered with honey again the very next day. That 's just the fun of it," he continued, pointing to a big pile of honey-combs. "I find a nest every day! The young chaps in San Tomas would like to find out how I do it, but they can't," he tittered, "they can't! I get a keg full before they can fill a quart-cup. I could get rich at this business," said he, "but my nephew charges me a dollar for every barrel he hauls to Antigua."

"Why don't you take it there yourself?" asked the sergeant.

"To Antigua? The saints bless you!" laughed the hermit,—"the flies would eat me alive! No; I have to stick to the highlands."

"Where do you sleep at night, Don Gomez?" I inquired.

"Right here," said he, "under this tree, or in that dug-out"—with a glance at an excavation in the side of the hill. "If it 's going to rain, I can tell it by my weather-prophets, up there."

Behind the cliffs of the honey-camp rose a limestone ridge, so absolutely perpendicular that some of the rocks looked like tower-walls. On top of this natural fortress roosted a swarm of king-vultures—big, black fellows with red heads, taking their ease as if they knew that their citadel was inaccessible to human feet. The ridge was honey-combed with caves similar to the holes in the lower cliffs, and, as the vultures flew to and fro, their young ones thrust their heads out of the holes and seemed to clamor for their dinner.

"If it 's going to rain, the old ones go to roost in those holes," said the hermit. "I never knew them to make a mistake."

The vulture-rock was too steep to climb, and it would have been useless to shoot the poor fellows, but the hermit sold us a pair of *marmottos*, or

mountain weasels, lively little chaps, looking almost like yellow squirrels with stump-tails. He had tamed several dozen of them, and fed them on the refuse of his wax-caldron. These marmots and a little dog, he said, had been his only companions for the last five years.

"Let 's go," said the sergeant, as soon as we had finished our dinner; "we can not get to San Miguel before to-morrow noon, but it wont rain to-night, if we can trust those vultures, and I am going to take you to a very comfortable camp."

The southern chain of the sierra seemed to be almost entirely uninhabited,—wild rocks and lonely mountain meadows stretched away before us for miles and miles; but there was not a trace of a human settlement. Toward sunset, however, we passed an abandoned cottage that reminded me of the shepherds' cabins in the Austrian Alps.

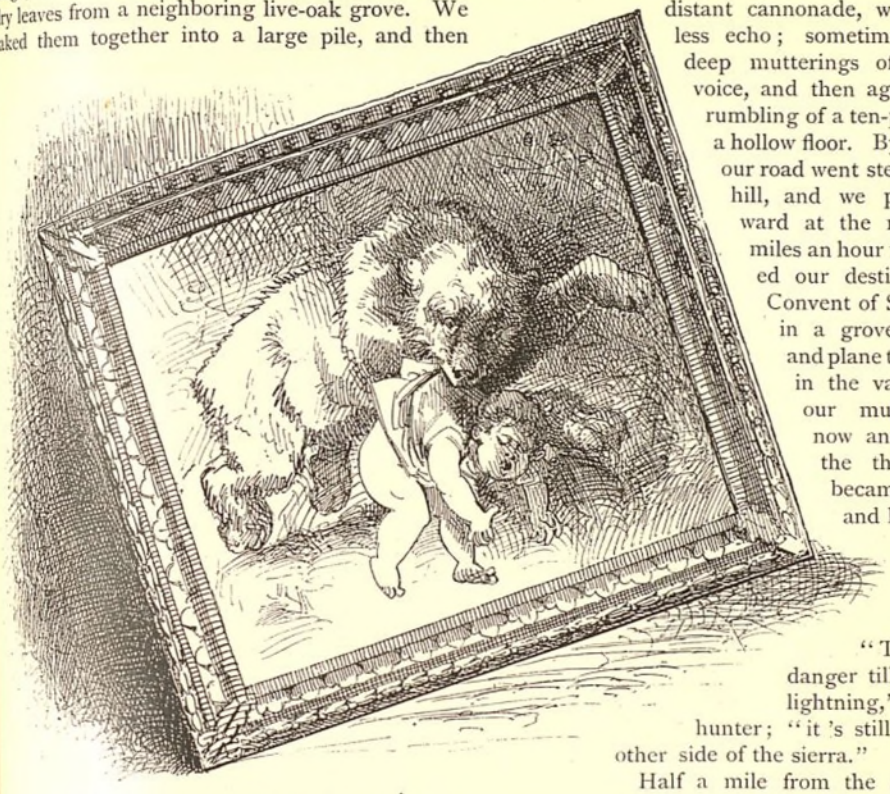
"I once tried to camp in that shanty," said the sergeant, "but I did not sleep a wink; there 's a nest of mountain parrots somewhere on the roof or in the chimney, and the old ones screamed all night like wild-cats."

THE PETS OF THE CONVENT.

"I wish we could find some kind of a shelter-place," I observed; "it will be chilly to-night."

"Yes, but not where we are going to camp,"

said the hunter; "just wait till you see the place." He took us to a dry ravine with an overhanging ledge, where the winds had heaped up a mass of dry leaves from a neighboring live-oak grove. We raked them together into a large pile, and then



THE PICTURE COMMEMORATING A LUCKY SHOT.

spread our tent-cloth on top; but there were still leaves enough left to fill a hundred bed-sacks.

"We 'll pile them on top of our blankets," said the sergeant; "that will keep us more comfortable than any camp-fire. A fire is apt to go out, and if it does you are sure to wake up with cold feet, but these leaves will keep us as warm as a feather-bed."

They did, indeed, and we had never passed a more comfortable night in the wilderness. But toward morning Tommy waked me before it was quite daylight.

"How 's that?" said he. "I have been sitting up in my shirt-sleeves for half an hour, and it 's as warm as ever. It 's going to rain, I am afraid."

After a look at the clouds, I made them all get up and pack their things. The whole sky was overcast with a grayish haze that looked very much like the ash-cloud of the volcano.

"There 's a storm brewing," said the hunter; "I heard something like thunder a while ago. It must be in the central valley, between this sierra and the one we left yesterday morning."

That seemed, indeed, the true explanation. We did not see any lightning, but as we descended the valley the thunder in the mountains boomed like a distant cannonade, with an endless echo; sometimes like the deep mutterings of a human voice, and then again like the rumbling of a ten-pin ball over a hollow floor. By good luck, our road went steadily downhill, and we pressed forward at the rate of five miles an hour till we sighted our destination, the Convent of San Miguel, in a grove of poplar and plane trees. Down in the valley we set our mule trotting now and then, for the thunder-peals became louder and louder, as if the storm were following at our heels.

"There 's no danger till we see the lightning," said the hunter; "it 's still all on the other side of the sierra."

Half a mile from the convent we came to a creek, where we hastily watered our mule and washed our wire baskets and saddle-bags.

"Would n't this be a nice bathing-place?" said Menito; "why, it 's as warm to-day as in midsummer!"

"Yes, but we had better hurry up," said Tommy; "I believe I saw a flash of lightning just now."

"Hallo, your boy is right!" said the hunter; "look at the mountains—it 's coming!"

The summits of the sierra had suddenly turned gray, and even while we ran we could hear the roar of the storm in the pine-forests of the upper ridge.

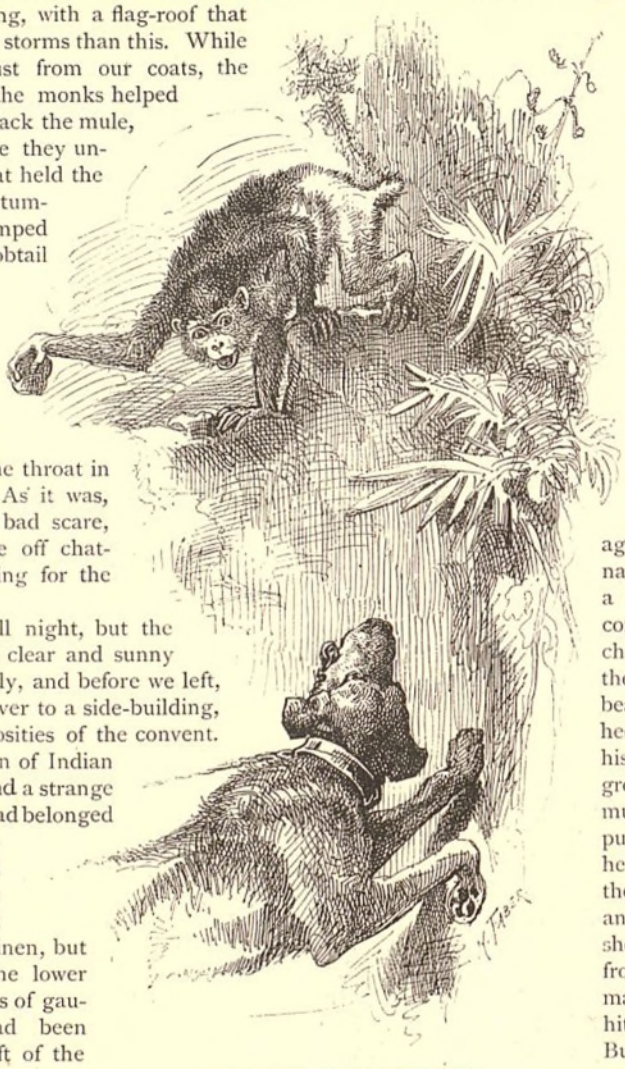
"Forward!" cried the sergeant; "we can reach the convent in ten minutes!"

Black Betsy seemed to understand him, and went ahead, till we had to run at the top of our speed to keep up with her. Dust and leaves flew over our heads, but through the rush of the whirlwind we could hear the loud shouting of the people at the convent; and just before the storm overtook us, we reached the gate, amidst the cheers

of the jolly friars, who met us in the court-yard, and pulled our mule through the portico into the lower hall of the convent.

In the next minute the rain came down like a deluge, but we were safe. The convent was a massive stone building, with a flag-roof that had weathered worse storms than this. While we brushed the dust from our coats, the hunter and one of the monks helped Daddy Simon to unpack the mule, but by some mistake they unbuckled the strap that held the wire baskets. These tumbled down, and out jumped our little friend, Bobtail Billy, and was grabbed almost in the same moment by a savage-looking bulldog, who would certainly have killed him if a monk had not caught him by the throat in the nick of time. As it was, Billy got off with a bad scare, but he did not leave off chattering and whimpering for the next ten minutes.

The rain lasted all night, but the next morning was as clear and sunny as a May day in Italy, and before we left, the abbot took us over to a side-building, to show us the curiosities of the convent. They had a collection of Indian idols and weapons, and a strange feather-cloak which had belonged to a prince of the nation that inhabited Guatemala before the Spaniards came. It was made of coarse linen, but from the collar to the lower seam, continuous rows of gaudy bird-feathers had been stitched into the weft of the cloth, blue and gray ones forming the background, with the brilliant plumes of the yellow macaw set around the collar, and red and purple wing-feathers distributed here and there, like flower-patterns on a gray carpet. They had also an assortment of stuffed snakes, and on the porch of the main building stood a big cage, shaped like a castle, with turrets and weather-cocks, and containing a dozen tame king-vultures. They hopped out as soon as the cage was opened, and followed us all about the porch like dogs.



BILLY BOBTAIL TURNS PERSECUTOR.

"Would you like to sell me one of those pets?" I asked.

"I do not know," said the abbot. "It 's against the rule; but I think I 'll let you have a pair, and Mr. Cortina can get me some new ones."

"Why? Is there a law against it?" I asked.

"No; I 'll tell you how it is," said the abbot. "Come this way, please."

He took us to the refectory of the convent, and showed us a large picture representing a man in hot pursuit of a bear with a child in its mouth.

"This picture was painted to commemorate an actual occurrence," said he. "Some fifty years ago, a gentleman by the name of Yegros owned a large farm near this convent, and while his children were at play in the garden one day, a bear broke through the hedge and ran off with his little son. Don Yegros snatched up his musket and started in pursuit, but, seeing that he could not overtake the bear, he knelt down and fired—a well-aimed shot, as he thought, and from a distance that made it easy enough to hit such a large brute. But the bear kept on, and disappeared in the chaparral [thorn-jungle] of the neighboring hills. After a long search, the child was given up for lost, till, some eight days after, two of our monks, coming home from a visit to an Indian village, saw a number of vultures on a certain tree in the depths of the chaparral, and, making their way to the spot, found the carcass of the bear, and not far off a little boy of four or five years, who told them his father's name, and said that he had lived a whole week on wild raspberries. When Don Yegros got his son

back, he gave this convent a present of fifty acres of land, besides a sum of money, on condition that we should feed twelve king-vultures, because those birds had guided the rescuing party."

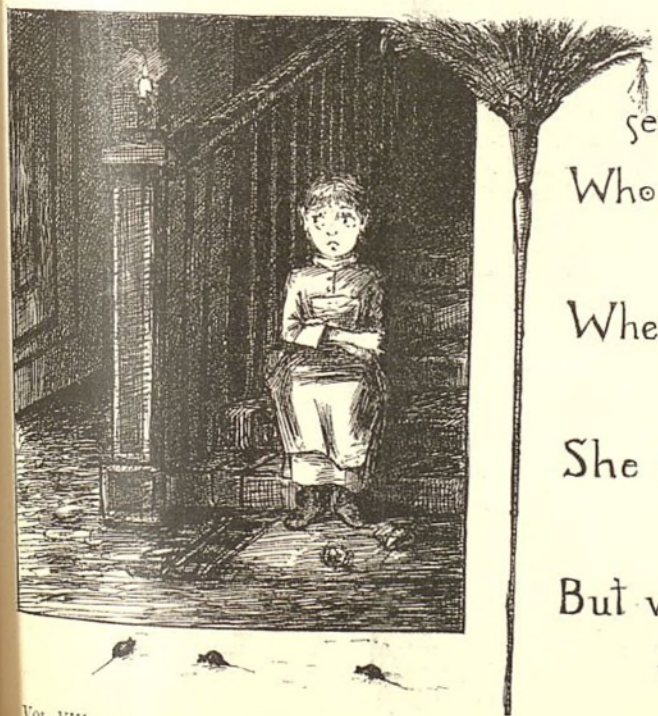
Bobtail Billy, after his last adventure, had taken up his quarters in the convent kitchen, but when we were ready to start, the little chatterbox had disappeared.

"May be, he is in the yard," said the sergeant. "That old bull-dog is keeping up a terrible noise about something or other."

The dog had been chained to a post near an old garden-wall, and we could not imagine what should have put Billy in his way. But the hunter was right: on top of the wall stood our little bobtail, chattering and trying to aggravate the bull-dog in every possible way. The dog barked furiously, and now and then made a savage leap against the wall; but his chain was too short, and whenever he jumped, Billy hit him with a stone or a piece of mortar. Our calls at last attracted the attention of the little bombardier, and seeing that we were waiting for him at the gate, he jumped down on the other side, and tried to reach us by running along at the side of the garden-wall. But, at the end of the wall, he had to cross the court-yard, and here his enemy caught sight of him.

He stepped back, and then throwing himself forward with a sudden leap, he managed to snap the chain close to the post, and came charging down the road like a hunting panther. Billy was trotting leisurely along, but hearing the rattle of the chain, he looked back, and no human voice could have imitated his squeals of horror as he came tearing through the gate-way. The affair might have got us into a scrape, for Tommy had already leveled his shot-gun, resolved to defend his pet against all comers; but the heavy chain saved the bull-dog's life: its weight delayed him, and so he was a moment too late; when he overtook us, Billy had already reached his perch, and was making faces at him from behind the saddle-bag.

(To be continued.)



There was a small
servant called Kate,
Who sat on the stairs
very late;
When asked how she
fared,
She said she was
scared,
But was otherwise do-
ing first rate.

HOW POLLY WENT TO THE MAY-PARTY.

By Mary Bradley.

"Dear me!" cried little Polly Miller, as she looked out of the window one sunshiny May morning. "Dear me; sakes alive! Here comes a percession!"

Polly flew out to the porch, her eyes shining, and her cheeks pink with excitement; for processions did not often go past the little brown cottage where she lived. Down the lane there was a tooting of tin horns, a merry murmur of children's voices, a flutter of gay little flags, bright ribbons, white muslin dresses,—and in a minute more the May-party came marching along. There was a queen, with a wreath of flowers on her head, and a long white veil floating behind her; there were four maids of honor, carrying long wands that were decorated with pink and blue streamers; there were ten girls marching two by two behind the maids of honor; and two big girls to take care of the party; besides any number of boys, who all carried baskets, and had little flags stuck in their hats, and "blew up their horns," as if every one of them was a Little Boy Blue in his own right.

Polly watched them in breathless delight. "Oh!" she gasped, "it 's the loveliest percession I never did see! An' it 's going—why, just as sure as I 'm alive, it 's going up in my woods! So it aint a percession, after all; it 's a picnic!"

Polly always said "*my* woods," although they only belonged to her as they belonged to the birds, and the tree-toads, and the black ants, and the bright-eyed, bushy-tailed squirrels that she loved to watch. She spent a great deal of her time there—almost as much as the birdies and the bunnies themselves; for she had nothing else to do with it,—nothing to signify, at least; and the woods were so close by her home that her mother could call her from the front door, if she wanted her. It 's true Polly did n't always hear her when she called, for she strayed off sometimes to hunt for wild strawberries, or to get the flag-root that grew in the marshy bed of the brook. But her mother knew the woods were safe, and she never worried. There were no snakes, and it was too far away from the high-road for tramps.

Indeed, it was a rare thing for Polly to meet anybody at all in her woods. Once upon a time there had been a picnic in them—a Sunday-school picnic, which came up from New York; and Polly's grown-up sister, who was n't grown-up and married then, had gone to it. She had told Polly all about it a great many times,—about the swings that were put up in the trees; about the long table (made of pine boards resting on stumps) that was covered with good things; about the little girls in white frocks and blue sashes; about the banners and the badges; and the ladies and gentlemen who played games with the children; and the songs they sang; and the ice-cream they ate; and everything! It was a story that Polly was never tired of, and the dream of her life had been to go to a picnic just like that one. No wonder her eyes sparkled when she saw the May-party!

For she never thought of there being any trouble about her going to it. Susan Ann went to the picnic—that was the grown-up sister: why should n't Polly go as well as Susan Ann? The only thing was, they were all dressed up in white frocks. "But never mind!" said Polly. "I have a white frock, too."

And she ran upstairs, pulled it out of the bottom drawer of her mother's bureau, and had it on in a jiffy—as funny a little white frock as you have seen in many a day. Polly's mother made it after the same pattern that she had made Susan Ann's frocks by when *she* was little; and it was long in the skirt, and short in the waist, and low in the neck; it had n't any ruffles, or embroideries, or gores, or pull-backs, such as little girls wear nowadays, but the short sleeves were looped up with pink shoulder-knots, made out of Susan Ann's old bonnet-strings, and Polly's fat little neck and round arms were left all bare. They looked cunning, though; so plump, and white, and babyish that you wanted to kiss them. The bright little face was sweet enough for kisses, too; and the naked little feet—for Polly could n't bear shoes and stockings in warm weather—were bewitching. When she put her Sunday hat on—a big, flapping Leghorn with a wreath of "artificials" round it—she looked as if she had stepped out of a picture-book; and she had n't the least idea that there was anything funny or old-fashioned about her.

There was nobody around when she went downstairs, for it was churning-day, and her mother was busy. Besides, she never paid much attention to Polly's movements, so there was no one to hinder the little one from following the May-party. They had only had time to look about them a little, set the provision-baskets in a safe place, and begin to consider how they were going to amuse themselves all day, when Polly overtook them.

"Is you havin' a picnic?" she said, walking up,

with a smiling face, to one of the big girls. "I likes picnics, myself."

"Do you?" said the big girl, staring at her in a rather disagreeable way. "Thank you for the information."

"You 're welcome," answered Polly, innocently. It was what she had been taught to say whenever any one thanked her for a favor. "I did n't go to any picnics yet, though," she added, in a confiding tone. "Susan Ann went once, but she did n't take me. I guess I was n't anywheres 'round then."

"What child is that?" asked the other big girl, who had just discovered Polly. "Where in the world did you pick up such a funny little object, Bertha? Is Noah's Ark in the neighborhood?"

"Can't say, I 'm sure," said Bertha, moving away. "And I have n't picked her up at all. She began a conversation with me, which I 'll leave you to finish."

"Where did you come from, little girl?" asked the other one, rather hastily; for she had various things to attend to. "You don't know anybody here, do you? This is a private party."

"Aint it a picnic?" said Polly, a little shadow of anxiety creeping into her smile. "I thinked it was a picnic, an' I came to stay."

"Oh, you did?" exclaimed the other girl, laughing. "But that wont do, I 'm afraid. Who invited you, Sissie?"

Polly shook her head. "My name aint Sissie; it 's Polly Miller; and I came to stay," she repeated.

A group of girls and boys had gathered around her by this time, and curious eyes were staring at the bare little feet, at the funny white frock, at the old-fashioned, wide-brimmed hat with the artificial roses on it. "What a guy!" the eyes telegraphed to one another; and little ripples of not very amiable laughter ran around the group. Polly's eyes wandered from one face to another with a look that had suddenly grown wistful. Her happy smile faded, and a blush stole up into her cheek.

"Must n't anybody come to picnics?" she asked, tremulously.

"Not unless they are invited," was the quick answer. "And you 're not invited, you see. Besides, you don't know anybody here, and all the other little girls are acquainted with one another. You would n't have a nice time at all."

"Oh, yes! *I* think I should!" cried Polly, hopefully. "I aint hard to get acquainted with," the winsome smile spreading over her face again. "Susan Ann says I 'm a sociable little body."

"You 're a droll one, anyhow," said the big girl, with a merry laugh. "What shall we do with her, children? Let her stay?"

"Oh dear, no!"—a little miss with long yellow curls, and a proud little nose very high in the air, spoke up promptly; and then, with a cold glance at Polly, she added: "We don't want that sort of people at our picnic. Tell her to go away, Lulu."

And two or three others chimed in with—

"Yes, Lulu! Send her away. We can't be bothered with that little barefooted thing all day. She 's no right to expect it. Tell her to go home."

"There, dear," said Lulu hastily, and more than half ashamed of herself, "it wont do, you see; and we 're going to be busy, now, so I guess you 'd better run home right away, little Polly What 's-your-name! Here 's a caramel for you," taking one out of her pocket, with an attempt at consolation.

But Polly did not accept it. After one wondering and wistful glance all around the circle of pretty faces, not one of which had a welcome for her, she turned her back upon them, and walked away slowly and sorrowfully. The children looked after her with an uncomfortable feeling; and Lulu said, "Poor thing!" in a pitying tone. But the little miss in the princesse dress and the long yellow curls tossed her head.

"What else could she expect?" she cried. "As if we wanted a lot of ragamuffins! Why, next thing, 'Susan Ann,' and all the family would have 'come to stay.' I never saw anything so cool in all my life."

"Oh, well; she 's gone now; so never mind," said Lulu. "Let 's go and see if the swings are up yet."

The children scattered about through the woods, some to gather violets and wind-flowers, some to sail boats in the brook, some to go flying sky-high in the long rope-swings that the boys were putting up. They forgot little Polly as soon as she was out of sight; but she did not forget them. There was no anger against them in her innocent heart; only a great disappointment, a puzzled wonder, and an unconquered desire. She could not understand why they did not want her, and she still longed after the unknown delights of the picnic.

The longing grew stronger as she went farther away; so strong at last that it was not to be resisted; and Polly turned about suddenly with a new idea. What was the use of going home, where there was n't anything to do? She could stay around in the woods, and hide in her house when nobody was looking, and "peek" at the picnic, anyhow. That would be better than nothing. Polly's "house" was a hollow tree, and she lived in it a great deal, and brought as many treasures to it as a squirrel does to its hole. She played all sorts of games in her house: that it was rainy weather, and she could n't go out; that it was night-time, and she must make up her bed and go to sleep;

that company was coming, and she had to bake cake and put on the tea-kettle; that her children were all down with the measles, and she could n't get a chance to clean house.

There was no end to the things Polly "played" in her hollow tree; but one of the best games of all was when she played that bears and Indians were around. Then she filled up the door of her house with bushy green boughs that she broke off the young trees, and hid herself behind them. She used to pretend that she was terribly frightened, and sometimes she pretended so well that she really did get frightened, and ran home as fast as if the bears and Indians had truly been behind her. It was only yesterday that that very thing had happened, and the green boughs were still in front of Polly's house, just as she had left them when she ran away. She remembered it now, and it did not take her long to make her way back to the tree. She was nimble as a hop-toad, and knew just where to go; so she was safe in her snug hiding-place before any one got so much as a glimpse of her.

Once there, she could see a good deal of what was going on, and hear more. The green boughs sheltered her, but there were plenty of little openings through which bright eyes could peep. She saw the children running to and fro to gather mosses and ferns, and heard their shouts, their bursts of merry laughter, their chattering tongues, now close by, and now far off. After a while, she heard somebody say:

"S'pose we have the coronation now; what 's the use of waiting till after luncheon?"

Then somebody else said, "Well, call the children."

And Polly heard a very loud trumpet-blowing, and all the boys and girls began to flock together in a green open space which was just below her "house." She had no idea what a coronation meant; but she thought it the most beautiful thing in the world when she heard them all singing, and speaking pieces, and saw them dance in a ring around the little girl who was chosen Queen of the May. There was nothing like that at Susan Ann's picnic, Polly was sure; and she was so happy, looking at the coronation, that she quite forgot she was only "peeking" at the picnic, and not really in it herself.

By and by, before she had begun to be tired, something else happened. The two tall girls, Lulu and Bertha, began to "set the table." They spread a long white cloth on the ground, and in the middle of it they made a little mound of moss, which they stuck full of ferns and wild-flowers. Around this they made a circle of oranges, and then a ring of little iced cakes, pink, and white, and chocolate-colored. At the four corners they had heaping plates of sandwiches; and the rest of the cloth was filled up with loaf-cakes, and dishes of jelly, and cold chicken, and biscuits, and custard-pie. It was a beautiful table when it was all done, but oh, how hungry it made Polly feel!

"Seems as if I had n't had breakfast to-day," she said to herself. "Seems as if I did n't *never* have anything to eat! Oh dear me; sakes alive!"

"Is it all ready? Shall we blow the horn?" she heard Lulu say, presently.

And Bertha answered:

"Yes—all but the Russian tea. Fetch the round basket, Lulu—the brown one, you know. The tea is in that, in a covered pail."

Lulu ran away, somewhere out of sight, and ran back again with a big tin can in her hands—upside down.

"See there, now! Did n't I tell you it would be safer to bring lemons and sugar, and make the lemonade here?".

"Why, what 's the matter? Is it spilled?" cried Bertha, in dismay.

"Every drop of it. The basket was tipped over on its side, and your Russian tea has been watering the moss all the morning. So much for not taking my advice, Miss Bertha."

"Oh dear!" groaned Bertha. "*Is n't* that too aggravating? Now there is n't a thing to drink, and I 'm as thirsty as a fish already."

"Just so. And that brook-water is horrid. I tasted it."

"It would have spoiled the lemonade, then, if I *had* taken your advice. That 's one comfort," said Bertha, laughing.

Lulu laughed, too.

"But that wont quench your thirst," she said. "I begin to wish we had let little Polly What 's-her-name stay. We might have sent her for some water, or milk, or something."

"Some of the boys will have to go," said Bertha, shortly.

"Only they wont know where to go. Little Polly had the advantage of being a native."

"What 's a native?" said Polly to herself, as she slipped through the green boughs, and crept around behind the hollow tree. "What 's a native, I wonder? Is it anything to drink?

She did n't stop to ask anybody; and she does n't know to this day what it meant. She knew something better, though—how to return good for evil—and the bare little feet went flying through the woods as if they had wings. It was churning-day at home, and there would be fresh buttermilk; there was always plenty of sweet milk, too; and Polly was n't afraid of what her mother would say.

Before the picnic had fairly sat down to its luncheon,—for they wasted a great deal of breath in lamenting the Russian tea, and in arguing the

point whether or not it would have been better to bring lemons and sugar, instead,—Polly was back again. And such a breathless little Polly! Her cheeks were redder than roses, her hair was all in a tousle of damp curls, her Leghorn hat hanging at the back of her neck; for she could not spare a hand to put it on her head again when it fell back. Both hands were full—a pitcher of fresh, sweet, morning's milk in one, in the other a pail of buttermilk—and her smile was brighter than sunshine as she set them down in front of the astonished party.

"I did n't come to stay," she said, innocently. "I just came to bring you some milk, 'cos your tea got spilt."

And then she turned to go away, for she did n't imagine—the dear little Polly!—that they would want her now, any more than they had before; and it was dinner-time at home, and Polly was hungry. She turned to go away, but the picnic pounced upon her with one jump, and said they 'd like to see her try it.

"Do you suppose," said Lulu, "do you dare to suppose, you ridiculous little Polly What 's-your-name, that we 'll let you go till we know the meaning of this richness? Come, now! How did you find out that we 'd spilled our tea?"

"I was up in my house," said Polly, not a bit afraid, for all the faces around her now were smiling faces. "I was up in my house, and I heard you."

She pointed to the hollow tree, which showed the hollow, now that the green boughs had tumbled down.

"I did n't want to go home till I saw the picnic; so I staid in my house, and I heard you," she repeated, triumphantly.

"And then you went home to get the milk for us? Now, Bertha; now, children, all of you!" cried Lulu, tragically, "I only want to ask you one question: did you *ever?*"

"No, I never!" said Bertha, solemnly.

And all the other girls screamed, "No, we never!"

And all the boys threw up their hats, and sang out, "Hurrah for Little Barefoot! Three cheers for Polly Buttermilk!"

They made such a noise that the hop-toads went skipping to their holes, and the birds went flying to the tree-tops, scared out of their seven senses.

But Polly was n't scared. No, indeed! She laughed, for Lulu took her in her arms, and kissed her, and said she was the sweetest little humbug that ever lived. And Bertha made her sit down at the table between her and the May-queen, and a plate was put in her lap, and piled up with the best of everything. She had more cake, and custard-pie, and jelly than she could have eaten if she had been *three* Polly Millers; and oh! what fun, what "splenderiferous" jolly fun, playing with all the girls and boys afterward!

Never as long as she lives will Polly forget that picnic. Susan Ann has no story to tell her now—Polly can tell a better one herself; and she does tell it to everybody that will listen to her, though all her friends and relations know it by heart already. As for the folks of that May-party,—well, I don't think *they 'll* forget, either.

WAIFS FROM THE GULF-STREAM.

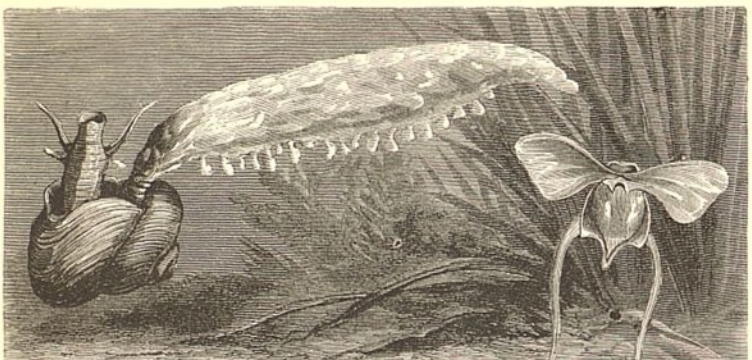
By Fred. A. Ober.

The eastern coast of Florida, from the St. John's River to the Florida Keys, forms one vast stretch of sand, broken only by an occasional inlet. There are no rocky bluffs nor pebbly beaches; all is sand, washed by the heavy waves of the Gulf-stream—a vast body of warm water flowing northwardly from the Gulf of Mexico, like a broad river, across, and yet in, the ocean.

This stream brings to Florida's beaches many a foreign shell and plant, and makes them doubly interesting to stroll upon. Large cocoa-nuts come, wrapped in their shaggy outer bark, and full of sweet pulp and delicious milk; and the remarkable disk-shaped "sea-beans" are always abundant after a gale. This bean forms a fruitful source of speculation and revenue to the natives, who hold it to be a product of the ocean depths, and sell it to wondering visitors, after carefully polishing it. But it is only a waif from the Antilles—the fruit of a vine whose pods, full of these beans, fall into the sea and are drifted hither by the Gulf-stream.

A walk along any beach, with the roar of the mighty surf filling our ears and inspiring reverence, and only the sights and sounds of nature to entertain us, is always profitable. Our eyes notice little things that elsewhere would pass unobserved. We examine the tiny circles traced by the leaf-points of the beach-grass, as they are borne down by the

wind; the timid beach-birds, as they pause upon one foot, eying us suspiciously, or scurry by with a pipe of alarm; the bulky pelicans, that stand in long rows on the sand-bars, or, flying clumsily atop of the waves, drop with a splash upon unwary fishes, gulping them up with their pouched bills. Beautiful shells of every hue—blue, purple, scarlet, crimson, orange, yellow, and pearly white—lie in windrows tossed up by the steady surf, or where the latest gale has heaped them high upon the sand. A curious, earth-colored crab runs rapidly to his hole in the dry sand from the water just in front of us, where he has been fishing, brandishing his claws most threateningly as he waltzes along in his funny, sidelong style.



THE LIVING RAFT, AND THE WINGED SHELL-FISH.

Do you see these depressions in the sand, looking as though some one had thrown out a trowel-full of sand every foot or two, and this broad line marked between the regular rows? That is the trail of the huge sea-turtle, as she comes out of the ocean in the spring to lay her eggs. And narrow escapes from death she has, between her two enemies, bears and men, while she is at this duty. Run a small stick into the sand, where you notice this excavation, and see if you strike anything. If successful, you get a large half-bushel of round, white eggs, covered with a leathery skin, instead of a brittle shell. They make a good omelet, and are much sought after. Those other depressions, such as one might make with his closed hand, but larger, are the tracks of a bear. Bruin walks the beach during the turtling months, and robs every nest on his route. The dweller on the Florida coast may lose his share of turtles' eggs, but he lies in wait for the shaggy thief on moonlight nights, and enjoys exciting sport in shooting him.

Far down the beach, something reflects rainbow hues, and, only stopping to glance at a stranded "ship of pearl," the fabled Argonaut, we go toward it. It proves to be the Portuguese man-of-war*—a sac or bubble of thin, transparent skin as large as one's fist, filled with air. When alive, this bubble has long tentacles or hanging arms, which, with the body, are gorgeously colored—pink, blue, and violet; even in death, the sun playing over it causes a charming iridescence. Well are they named "sea-nettles," for those tentacles are extremely poisonous, causing the hand that touches them to swell and smart for several hours afterward.

A hundred other charming objects claim notice. I want to turn your eyes particularly to two of the least noticeable, and which are excellently represented in the engraving. The figure on the left-hand is that of a beautiful mollusk called the "violet snail,"—*Ian-Thina communis*, in Latin. It is a small shell, and would hardly attract a glance were it not for its rich violet hue and its attachment of what appears to be a group or string of bubbles of sea-foam. Closer examination shows us that these supposed "bubbles" are a collection of filmy little air-cells, proceeding from the mouth of the snail within the shell. They serve several important purposes.

The violet snail lives all over the Atlantic Ocean, and in the Mediterranean, floating about in the open sea. It does not sustain itself by constantly moving hither and thither, but is upheld by means of this buoyant structure of air-cells to which it is attached. Excepting in the most violent storms, the snail thus floats about unconcerned; and when the water is too rough for his comfort, he can suck the air out of the cells and sink to quiet depths. It is a very great convenience to him.

Besides performing the duty of a raft, this bundle of air-cells becomes a sort of family nursery, for to its under surface are glued the egg-cases out of which the young are hatched. These cases contain eggs and young mollusks in all stages of advancement—those farthest from the parent-shell being nearly ready to own a raft of their own, and embark upon it, while those nearest are totally undeveloped.

This little mollusk is said to have no eyes; and

* See "Jack-in-the-Pulpit" for March, 1881.

in its aimless, wandering life, guided at the whims of wave and wind, it would often go hungry but for the fact that its food, minute jelly-fishes, exists in countless profusion over the whole wide surface of the ocean. Its body contains a few drops of violet fluid, which will hold its color for many years, and is sometimes used as ink.

The little picture-mate of this interesting raftsman, somewhat resembling a butterfly in form, is one of a small group of mollusks called *pteropods* (wing-footed), on account of the fin-like lobes or wings that project from their fragile shells, as shown in the engraving. The pteropod uses these wings to fly through the water, just as an insect flies in the air. Pteropods are found swimming in enormous bands, sometimes filling the surface of the sea for leagues in extent; generally these great congregations occur in the deep, warm waters of the torrid zone; but one species, at least, lives northward, for it forms the chief food of the great Greenland whale. Another species, having a glassy, transparent shell, carries a little luminous globe, which emits a gleam of soft light. It is the only known species of luminous shell-fish. Our little friend, represented in this cut, has no lantern to light him on his way; he is remarkable only for his wings, and his two tails, which grow through two holes in his shell, and trail behind him. His Latin name is *Hyalea tridentata*. If, as his family name implies, he really were wing-*footed*, we might call him the Mercury of the sea.

Another curiosity found in these waters is the porcupine-fish. It is often said by old fishermen and sailors that every living object found on land has its counterpart in the ocean. They tell of sea-cucumbers and sea-corn, sea-grapes and sea-beans, which, the simple-hearted old sailor declares, exactly resemble the pride of the little garden patches tended by his wife ashore while he is away.

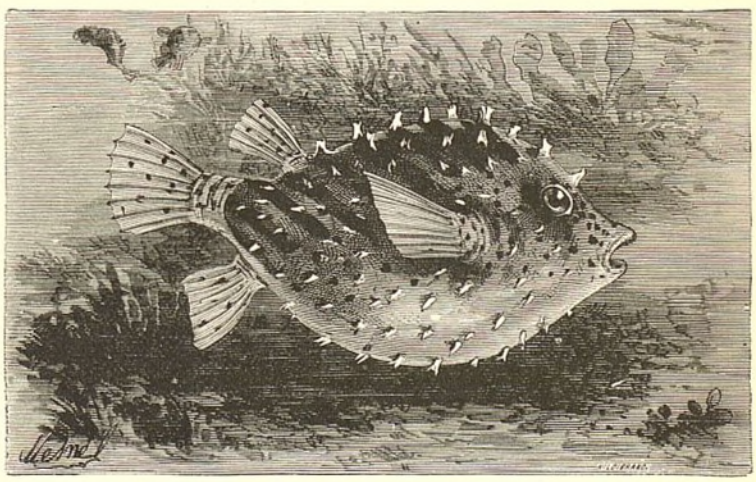
And it is true that many of the inhabitants of the ocean do bear more than an imaginary resemblance to many things found on land. The corals, sponges, and anemones often look much like flowers or ferns, while various fishes owe their names to their likeness to certain terrestrial animals. Among these is the porcupine-fish.

This prickly-looking creature is one of an order of strange fishes containing the sun-fish (not the "sun-jelly" or medusa, so common upon our coast), the globe-fish, the file-fish, and trunk-fish—each named from some peculiarity of shape, or fancied resemblance to a familiar object. Most of these fishes are covered with spines, or bony protuberances, which make them very ugly customers to handle. Some of them possess a peculiar power of inflating themselves with air, swelling up to twice their natural size.

The globe-fish is the best illustration of this strange faculty. It swims near the bottom, next to shore, all its life, and is either so fearless or so stupid that it may be lifted up in one's hand. When so taken out of the water and gently rubbed, it will swell up to its full capacity, until you really fear it may burst. Leave the creature undisturbed, and in a short time it will allow the air to escape, and shrink into almost nothing but a bony skeleton covered with skin.

The porcupine-fish, which belongs to the same family, as I have already said, inhabits the warm waters about the Bahama Islands and the coast of Florida, where it is called among the inhabitants by a variety of titles.

The name I have chosen, however, seems to be the most appropriate, since its spiny protuberances

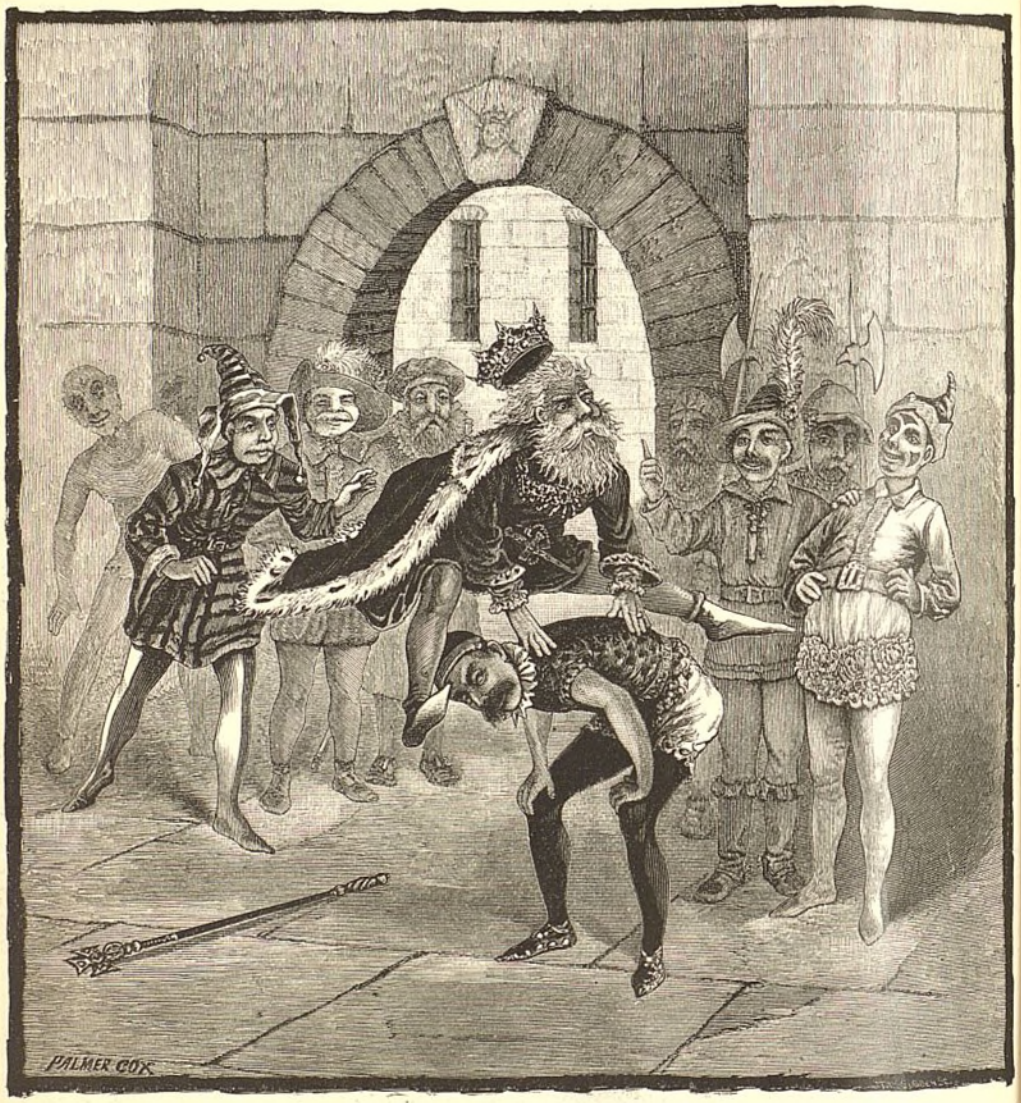


THE PORCUPINE-FISH.

do remind one who looks at it, and much more one who touches it, of the bristling quills of the porcupine. It is not a large fish, being less than a foot in length, and generally as broad (or round) as it is long. Its scientific name is *Diodon hystrix*, the second word being, as you young students may know, the Latin name of the hedgehog.

THE KING AND THE CLOWN.

BY PALMER COX.



THERE lived a queer old king,
Who used to skip and swing,
And "dance before the fiddle," and all that sort of thing.

In princely robes arrayed,
The games of youth he played,
And mingled with the low buffoons at fair or masquerade.

His royal back he 'd stoop
To chase a rolling hoop,
Or romp in merry leap-frog with the wildest of the group.

At last, a cunning clown
Got hold of mace and crown,
And instantly the people hailed him monarch of the town.

Because the crown he wore,
And royal scepter bore,
All took him for the romping king they 'd honored heretofore.

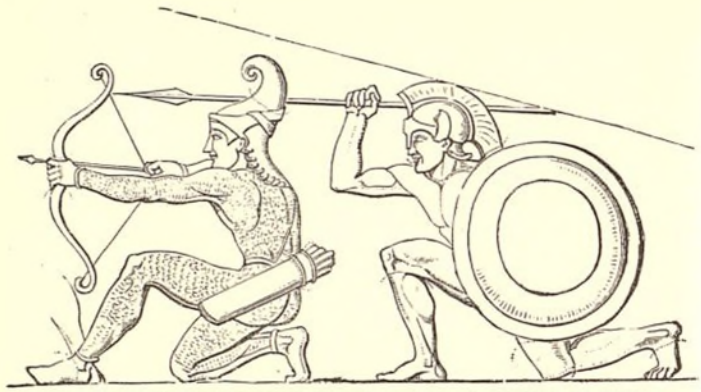
His Majesty would rave,
And bellow "Fool!" and "Slave!"
But still the people bowed and scraped around the painted knave.

Well might the sovereign yell,
And threaten prison cell,
And rope, and ax, and gibbet;—but he could not break the spell.

So passed his power away,
His subjects and his sway,
For king was clown, and clown was king, until their dying day.

STORIES OF ART AND ARTISTS.—FOURTH PAPER.

By Clara Erskine Clement.



FIGURES FROM THE PEDIMENT OF THE TEMPLE OF MINERVA AT EGINA.

Before leaving the subject of ancient sculpture, I wish to speak of some other beautiful works which are still preserved, and which the illustrations here given will help you to understand. The first is from the frieze of the temple of Minerva, or Pallas, at Egina. This word was formerly spelled Ægina, and is the name of an island in the Gulf of Egina, near the south-west coast of Greece. Its chief city was also called Egina, and here a beautiful Doric temple was built about 475 B. C., which was the period of the greatest prosperity and importance of the island.

Many of the columns of this temple are still standing, but large parts of it have fallen down; in 1811 these ruins were examined, and some fine pieces of sculptured marble were obtained, which are the most remarkable works still existing from so early a period. Thorwaldsen, the Danish sculptor, restored these marbles, and the King of Bavaria purchased them; they are now in the Glyptothek, or Museum of Sculpture, at Munich.

The two figures given above formed a part of what is called the western pediment of the temple; this pediment contained a group of eleven figures, almost life-size, and represented in spirited action. I ought to tell you that a pediment is the triangular space which is formed by the slanting of the two sides of the roof up to the ridge-piece, at the ends of buildings, and in the Greek temples the pediment was usually much ornamented, and gave a fine opportunity for large groups.

The figures in the center were the most important actors in the scene or story represented by the sculptures, and were of full size, and usually standing; then, as the space on each side became narrower, the figures were arranged in positions to suit it, and the whole composition was so fitted into the slant as to produce a regular and symmetrical outline; thus the whole effect when completed was grand and imposing, as well as very ornamental to the building.

The figures in this western pediment of the temple at Egina illustrated an episode in the story of the Trojan War; it was the struggle of Ajax, Ulysses, and other Greeks, with the Trojan warriors, over the dead body of Achilles. The Greeks ardently desired to possess themselves of the body of their brave leader, in order to give it a fitting burial, and they succeeded in bearing it off to their own camp.

The myth relates that the god Apollo guided the arrow of Paris which killed Achilles, who could only be wounded in his ankles, because when his mother, the goddess Thetis, dipped him in the river Styx to make him invulnerable, or safe from being hurt by weapons, she held him by the ankles, and as they were the only parts of his body not wetted, it was only in them that he could be wounded.

It is believed that the warrior in this picture who is about to send his arrow, is Paris; he wears the curved Phrygian helmet and a close-fitting suit of mail; in the whole group there is but one other clothed warrior, all the rest are nude. The highest part of this pediment has the figure of the goddess Minerva, or Pallas, standing beside the fallen body of Achilles, which she attempts to cover with her shield, while a Trojan warrior tries to draw the

body away from the Greek who opposes him. The two figures in our plate are placed at one side, where the space in the triangle is growing narrow. You can imagine what spirit there must be in the whole group, when there is so much in these two comparatively small figures; how sure we are that the arrow will shoot out with deadly power, and how the second warrior is bracing himself on his feet and knee, and leaning forward, in order to thrust his lance with all possible force!

These Eginetan statues have traces of color and of metal ornaments about them. The hair, eyes, and lips were colored, and all the weapons, helmets, shields, and quivers were red or blue, and some portions of the garments of the goddess show that the statue must have had bronze ornaments. We know nothing of the artists who made these sculptures, but critics and scholars think that the works resemble the written descriptions of the statues made by Callon, who was a famous sculptor of Egina, and lived probably about the time in which the temple was built.

The next four illustrations are from the sculptures of the Parthenon, the beautiful temple at Athens, which was mentioned in the first paper of these stories. This temple was completed in 437 B. C., a little later than that at Egina. The Parthenon passed through many changes before it was reduced to its present condition of ruin. Probably about the sixth century of our era, it was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and used as a Christian church until, in 1456 A. D., the Turks transformed it into a Mohammedan mosque. In 1687 the Venetians besieged Athens; the Turks had stored gunpowder in the eastern chamber of the Parthenon, and a bomb thrown by the Venetians fell through the roof, and set fire to the powder, which exploded, and completely destroyed the center of the temple. Then Morosini, the commander of the Venetians, attempted to carry off some of the finest sculptures of the western pediment, but in lowering them to the ground they were allowed to fall by the unskillful Venetians, and thus were broken in pieces.

Early in the present century, Lord Elgin carried many of the Parthenon marbles to England, and in 1816 they all were bought by the British Museum. Finally, in 1827, during the rebellion of the Greeks against the Turks, Athens was again bombarded and the Parthenon still further destroyed, so that those who now visit it can only

"Go forth and wander through the cold remains
Of fallen statues and of tottering fanes,
Seek the loved haunts of poet and of sage,
The gay palæstra and the gaudy stage!
What signs are there? A solitary stone,
A shattered capital, with grass o'ergrown,
A mouldering frieze, half hid in ancient dust,
A thistle springing o'er a nameless bust;
Yet this was Athens! Still a holy spell
Breathes in the dome, and wanders in the dell,
And vanished times and wondrous forms appear,
And sudden echoes charm the waking ear;
Decay itself is drest in glory's gloom,
For every hillock is a hero's tomb,
And every breeze to Fancy's slumber brings
The mighty rushing of a spirit's wings."

The British Museum now contains very nearly all that are left of the sculptures of the two pediments of this magnificent temple. The torso which is pictured below is believed to be that of a statue of Theseus.

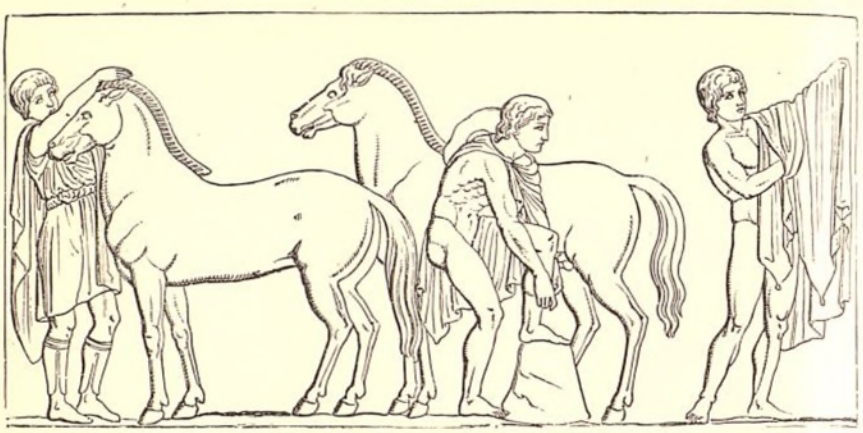
Torso is a term used in sculpture to denote a mutilated figure. This figure made a part of the group of the front or eastern pediment of the temple, in which the story of the birth of Minerva was represented. This goddess is said to have sprung forth, all armed, from the head of Zeus, or Jupiter, and it is fitting that Theseus should be represented as present on the occasion, since he was the greatest hero, and the king, of Athens, of which city Minerva was the protecting goddess. All the sculptures of the Parthenon, as you will remember, are attributed to the great sculptor Phidias, and his school, and are very beautiful.

Next come three illustrations from the frieze of the Parthenon. Perhaps you know that a frieze is a band extending below a cornice, which runs around the outside of a building, or the inside of an apartment. The cornice is placed high up where the roof joins the sides of a building, or where the ceiling joins the walls of a room; the frieze is just below, and may be very narrow or broad, as the proportions of the object it ornaments require. The sculptured frieze of the Parthenon

TORSO OF A STATUE OF THESEUS.

was outside of the walls of the temple or the cella, as it is called in architecture, and was about five hundred and twenty-two feet long, and three feet

and four inches broad. About four hundred feet of this are still preserved, so that a good idea of it can be formed. The portions of this frieze which were carried to England were taken down in slabs. The subject represented is the chief procession of the Panathenæa,* which was the most important of all the festivals celebrated at Athens.



YOUTHS PREPARING TO JOIN THE CAVALCADE.—FROM THE FRIEZE OF THE PARTHENON.

The festival continued several days, which were passed in horse-racing, cock-fighting, gymnastic and musical contests, and a great variety of games; poets, also, recited their rhapsodies, and philosophers disputed over their doctrines in public places; but its chief purpose was to carry in procession, up to the Parthenon, the garment woven and embroidered for the great goddess by the maidens of the city.

This garment was called a peplos, and was made of a crocus-colored stuff, on which were embroidered the figures of the gods engaged in their conquests of the giants; in later days, when the Athenians wished to flatter a man, they sometimes had his likeness embroidered on the peplos, in the company of the gods; but this never occurred while the people were yet uncorrupted by wealthy rulers.

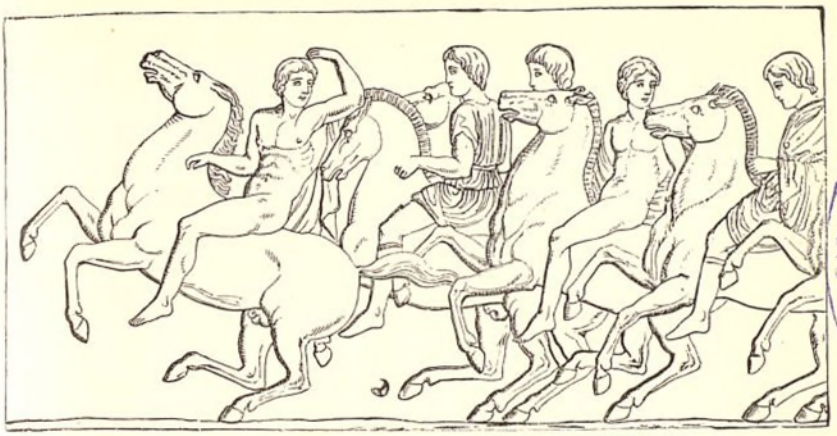
The procession which attended the presentation of the peplos at the temple was as splendid as all the wealth, nobility, youth, and beauty of Athens could make it; a vast multitude attended it, some in chariots, others on horses, and large numbers on foot. The noblest maidens bore baskets and vases containing offerings for the goddess; aged men carried olive-branches; while the young men, in full armor, appeared as if ready to do battle for Minerva. The peplos was not borne by hands, but was suspended from the mast of a ship which was moved along on the land, some writers say by means of machinery placed under-ground. When the procession reached the temple, the splendid

MAIDENS AND MUSICIANS.—FROM THE FRIEZE OF THE PARTHENON.

* See the story, "Myrto's Festival," ST. NICHOLAS for December, 1880.

garment was placed upon the statue of the goddess.

During the festival of the Panathenæa, prisoners were allowed to enjoy freedom, and such men as these plates;—and, finally, the procession ended with numbers of youths on horseback, riding gayly along, and, in one portion, there were others still occupied in bridling their steeds, mounting, and



YOUTHS ON HORSEBACK.—FROM THE FRIEZE OF THE PARTHENON.

merited the gratitude of the republic were then rewarded by the gift of gold crowns, their names being announced by the heralds during the gymnastic games. We do not know exactly the order in which all the ceremonies were observed, but it is believed that the procession of the peplos was celebrated on the last day of the festival.

It is probable that this frieze was executed from a design by Phidias. Near the entrance on the east there was an assemblage of the gods, in whose presence the peplos was being presented to the guardians of the temple; near them were the making other preparations to join the cavalcade. The wonderful excellence of the design of this great work is a subject of which art-lovers never weary; and certainly it is most remarkable that in this great number of figures, no two can be said to resemble each other, and that there are such an endless variety of positions, and so much spirited action in it all. The whole work bears marks of having been produced in the time when sculpture reached its perfection.

There is at Athens a work of a later period than the Parthenon, and much smaller and less impor-

BACCHUS PLAYING WITH A LION.—FROM THE MONUMENT OF LYSICRATES.

heralds and officers of the procession; then there were groups of animals for sacrifice, and, again, groups of people;—sometimes they were lovely maidens bearing their gifts on their shoulders, or musicians playing on the flute, as seen in one of tant than a temple, which also is very interesting: it is the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates. It is decorated with some very amusing scenes from the life of Bacchus, and was erected in the year 334 B. C., when Lysicrates was *choragus;* that is to

say, when it was his office to provide the chorus for the plays which were represented at Athens. The duties of this office were arduous and expensive: he had first to find and bring together the members of the chorus, then to have them instructed in the music, and to provide proper food for them while they studied.

The choragus who presented the finest musical entertainment received a tripod as his reward, and it was customary to build a monument upon which to place the tripod, as a lasting honor to the choragus to whom it had been given. There was in Athens a street formed by a line of these monuments, called the "Street of the Tripods." It was the custom to dedicate these tripods to some divinity, and that of Lysicrates was devoted to Bacchus. The sculptures represent him seated, playing with a lion.

While the handsome young god thus amuses himself, his companions, the Satyrs, are engaged in punishing the Tyrrhenian pirates, who, according to the myth, attempted to sell Bacchus for a slave. In order to revenge himself, he changed their masts and oars into serpents, and himself into a lion; then music was heard, and ivy grew all over the vessel, while the pirates went mad and were changed into dolphins. The frieze on the monument shows the Satyrs venting their anger on the pirates; some have branches of trees with which to beat the unlucky victims,—one pirate is being dragged into the sea by one leg,—some of them are already half changed into dolphins, and leap into the water with great readiness; those with heads of dolphins and with human bodies are very queer, and the whole design is full of humor and lively action. Bacchus was regarded as the patron of plays and theaters, and, indeed, the Greek drama grew out of the choruses which were sung at his festivals.

In comparison with all the works of art which exist in the world, the remaining pieces of Greek sculpture are so few that those people who love and study them know about every one, and almost consider them as they do their friends from whom they are separated. Among these famous sculptures is the statue of the Apollo Belvedere. It is such a favorite with all the world, and copies of it are so common, that I fancy you must know it already.

This statue was found about the end of the fifteenth century, in the ruins of ancient Antium. The Cardinal della Rovere, who was afterward Pope Julius II., bought it and placed it in the palace of the Belvedere, in Rome; from this fact the statue took its present name; the Belvedere was afterward joined to the Vatican, in the museum of which palace the Apollo now stands. We do not know who made this statue, but its beauty and excellence, and, above all, the intellectual quality of the expression on the god's countenance, prove that it belonged to a very high age in art—probably to the early imperial period.

There has been much speculation as to what the god held in his left hand, and it was formerly said to have been a bow; but more recent discoveries lead to the belief that it was the ægis or shield, with the head of Medusa upon it. With this he is discomfiting a host of enemies, for, according to Homer, this ægis was sometimes lent to Apollo by Jupiter, and all who gazed on it were paralyzed by fear, or turned to stone; thus he who held it could vanquish an army.

In the story of Apollo, it is related that, when the Gauls invaded Greece, and threatened to destroy the shrine of Apollo at Delphi, the people appealed to the gods, and when they asked Apollo what they should do to save the treasures which had been dedicated to him, he replied: "I myself will take care of them, and of the temple virgins!" So it happened that while the battle was in progress, a great storm arose, and the thunder and lightning were frightful, and hail and snow were added to all the rest, and in the midst of this war of Nature and of men, Apollo was seen to descend to his temple, accompanied by the goddesses Diana and Minerva; then the Gauls were seized with such fear that they took to flight, and the shrine of the god escaped injury at the hands of its barbarian assailants.

(To be continued.)

SALTILLO BOYS.

By William O. Stoddard.

Chapter I.

"I WONT!"

Mr. Hayne, the new teacher, was a tall, fine-looking young man, with short, curling black hair, and brilliant, penetrating eyes.

He seemed, in spite of the quiet smile on his lips, to be looking right through the young culprit before him.

"You wont?"

Charley Ferris was not smiling at all, but looked a good deal like a sort of boyish embodiment of the two big words for which he had been called up before the school.

The very top of his head, and every inch of his short, sturdy frame seemed to utter them, and his bright, saucy, handsome face had taken on a desperately obstinate expression.

"You wont apologize to Joseph Martin?"

Not a word came from Charley's tight-shut lips, but his black eyes were making all the answer required.

"That will do," said Mr. Hayne, in a calm, steady voice. "We are all gentlemen. If any one of us has not self-control enough to behave himself, or if he is too much of a coward to apologize when he is wrong, he does not belong here."

The defiant look was fading a little in the eyes of the young rebel by the time Mr. Hayne ceased speaking.

The new "select school," with its sixteen scholars, had been open barely a week, and this was its first case of serious misconduct.

Mr. Hayne may have expected something of the kind, sooner or later, and, now it had come, he met it with a firm intention of making it, as nearly as possible, the last case also, and therefore of immense value.

"You may take your books and go home, Mr. Ferris."

Charley was already turning in his tracks, and he now marched steadily away toward his desk, but the boy in the next one to it sprang to his feet.

"Mr. Hayne?"

"Mr. Martin."

"I hope not, sir. Not on my account ——"

"Sit down, Mr. Martin. It is not on your account at all. It is simply because he is not manly enough to do right."

Charley Ferris had been vaguely aware, up to that moment, of a feeling that he had shown wonderful manliness in defying his teacher, but he knew now, and without looking around him, that the public opinion of the boys was against him.

That, too, although he was by all odds a more popular boy than the quiet and studious youth of fourteen, a year older than himself, whom he had offensively described as "Miss Nancy," loudly enough for half the school to hear.

It was a terrible thing—a punishment about equal to a sentence of Siberian banishment—to be compelled to gather his books, dictionary and all, and strap them together before the eyes of such a jury as that, and then to have to walk out of the school-room with them.

Charley was a plucky fellow, however, and he worked right on, conscious that everybody was looking at him, until his pile was complete.

"Cæsar's Commentaries" came at the top, and the strap was barely long enough to draw across it and through the buckle. He got it through, and was straining to put the tongue of the buckle into the first hole, when his fingers slipped, and his whole pack of text-books scattered itself upon the floor.

Joe Martin and two or three other boys forgot the proprieties of the school-room in their haste to pick up the fallen volumes, but their owner had lost all there was left of his unlucky heroism when the end of that strap slipped away from him.

He sat down instantly, his curly head was bowed upon his hands on the desk, and he was sobbing vigorously.

A quick step came down from the little platform at the other end of the room, and a strong, kindly hand was laid upon the rebel's curly head.

"I think, Mr. Ferris, you did not finish what you meant to say."

Sob,—sob,—sob.

"Had you not better do it now? You began with, 'I wont,' and I think the rest must have been, 'do a mean thing.' Am I not right?"

"Yes, sir. Joe 's a real good fellow," sobbed Charley Ferris.

"Young gentlemen," said Mr. Hayne, as he looked smilingly around him, "I do not think we need any further apology from Mr. Ferris, but I hope you understand the matter fully. I am here to teach, not to scold nor to flog. Your behavior is under your own care. Politeness to one another is all that we ask for. Absolute self-government,—that 's all."

It was a short lesson, but every boy in the room understood it.

In fact, a perception of Mr. Hayne's peculiar views had been growing upon them from the beginning, and they had discussed the matter among themselves pretty freely that very morning.

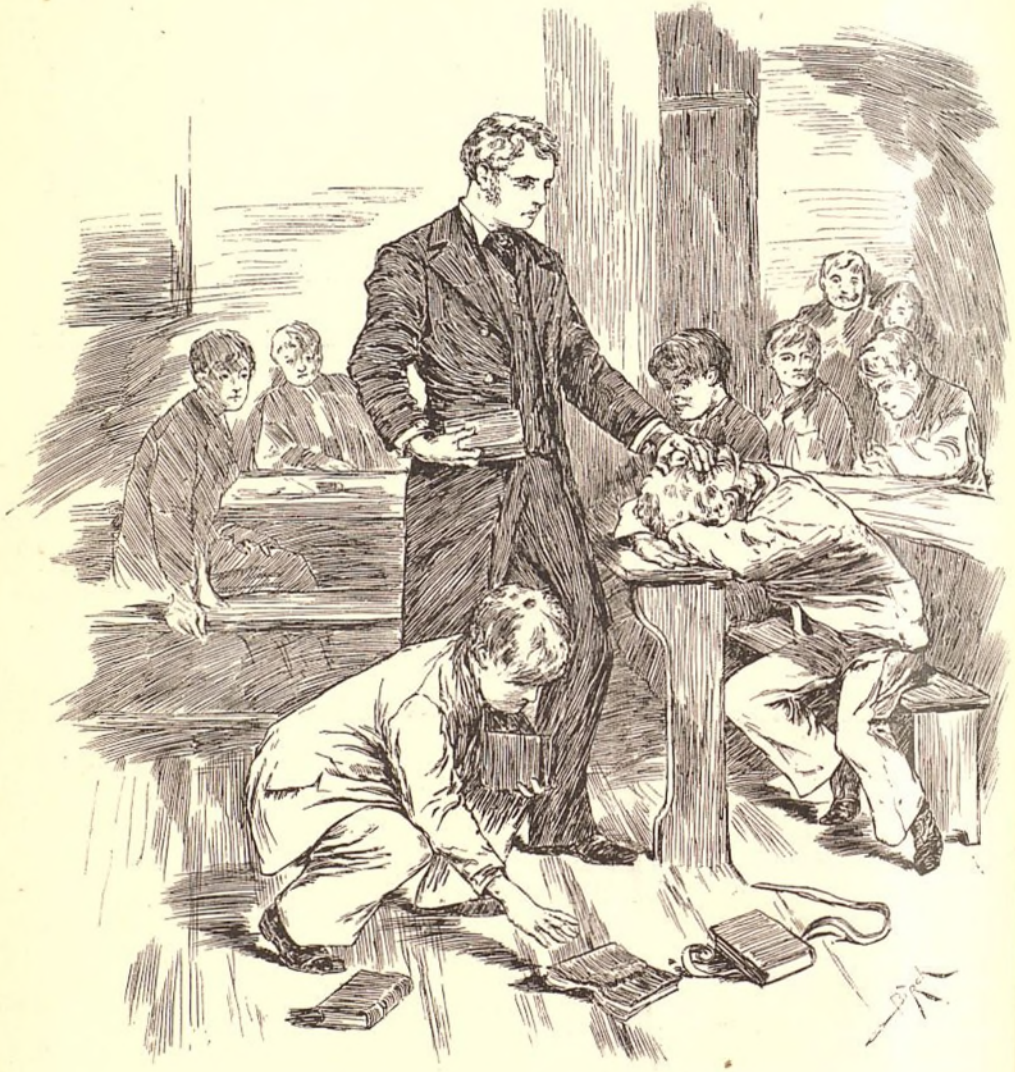
"Got to govern ourselves!" remarked John Derry, the one boy in school who seemed least likely to do it. "I 'd like to know how we can manage that, and no rules to go by, either."

"Rules!" exclaimed Andy Wright. "What do we want with rules? The youngest boy in the lot is over thirteen. I 'm sixteen now, and I think I knew enough to be decent, three years ago."

There was weight in that, for Andy was the "star boy," as well as the oldest, and he was looked upon with a good deal of veneration, as being very nearly ready for college. It had been even hinted, doubtfully, that he would "enter Sophomore," a whole year in advance, after Mr. Hayne should have finished with him. Such a boy as that was entitled to express his opinions, and Will Torrance backed him up with:

"You see, boys, if he 'd make a lot of rules, and write 'em out, we 'd all feel in duty bound to break them, sooner or later. We have n't a thing to break now."

Such an experiment might have been dangerous



"A STRONG, KINDLY HAND WAS LAID UPON THE REBEL'S CURLY HEAD."

with another selection of boys, but the sixteen now gathered under Mr. Hayne were in some respects exceptional.

The little inland city of Saltillo had been promoted but recently from the lower rank of "village," and, although it contained several thousands of people, whose houses were sprinkled over a pretty wide area, it could boast of neither "high school" nor "academy." The district schools were fairly good, but did not answer every purpose. One consequence had been the special prosperity of the Wedgewood School, half a mile away, on the other side of town, and another, lately, the establishment of Mr. Hayne's select school for the "Park boys."

All the other boys in town knew them by that name, by reason of the fact that they lived in the vicinity of a neatly kept and "fenced-in" open square, with a fountain in the middle of it, and were a good deal inclined to be clannish.

Until the arrival of Mr. Hayne, the Park boys had managed, somehow, to recognize other fellows, living in other parts of the city, as human beings, but there was danger that they would hardly be able to do so much longer.

Moreover, if any one of them, more than another, had resolved himself into an exponent of the Park feeling, with possible doubts as to whether he ought to be fenced-in and fountained, that boy had been Charley Ferris. All the deeper, therefore, had been the gulf which seemed to gape before him while he was trying to put the strap around his books.

Those of the volumes which had fallen on the floor had now been picked up for him, and while Mr. Hayne returned to his seat and called for the class in geometry, the whole pile was fast hiding itself away again under the lid of his desk.

Charley had fully received and accepted his lesson, and so had most of the others, but John Derry was satirically wiping his eyes with his handkerchief, and whispering to his "next boy":

"Walk chalk, after this!"

The school-room was a quiet place for the remainder of that forenoon, and the several recitations were performed with a degree of exactness that was all that could be asked for, if it could in any way be made habitual.

The room itself was a pleasant one, large enough, but not too large, in the basement of the new Congregational meeting-house, and the sunny alley-way from the door of it led to an iron gate, directly opposite the "Park" entrance.

Around that precious inclosure were a number of pleasant residences, all detached, and some with grounds and shrubbery.

Take it all in all, the little school and its neighborhood were a thoroughly good example of the best results of what deserves to be called "American civilization."

Mr. Hayne had undertaken to teach that lot of bright young fellows how to work, and his first lesson had been that, to be a good worker, a man needs first to get his faculties under his own control.

"I wont do any driving," he told them. "Every man of you must step forward of his own free will. That 's what you will have to do when I get through with you, and you had better begin now."

He knew, what they did not, that there is no earthly "driving" equal to that which the right kind of boy or man will give himself if he is once properly set about it.

Chapter II.

Court Rivalries.

The young ladies of Miss Offerman's Female Seminary, a square or so above the Park, had matter for serious thought and conversation at that day's noon recess.

Even the necessity of eating luncheon and getting back by one o'clock did not prevent a knot of them from lingering on one of the upper corners of the Park, in what looked very much like a "council."

"You see, Dora, Belle Roberts was May Queen last year. Mr. Ayring thinks it wont do to have another of us this time."

"I don't see why, Sarah. Has he said so to anybody?"

"Madame Skinner says he has. He wants one of his music class or one of her scholars. I suppose he does n't want to offend all that Wedgewood crowd."

"No girls go there."

"But their brothers do."

"I have n't a brother, Sarah Dykeman, nor you neither."

The other girls were listening, thus far. Dora was the tallest of them all, by half a head, and her blooming cheeks gave token not only of a high degree of health, but of a more than half resentful excitement over the matter in hand.

Sarah Dykeman was of slighter frame, with what is called an intellectual cast of features, and with an easy grace of manner that was already doing more to make her the awe of her school-girl friends than was even the acknowledged beauty of Belle Roberts, who was now standing a little behind her, as she said:

"Mr. Ayring will probably have his own way."

"Belle," exclaimed Dora, "has Jack told you what he and the boys mean to do?"

"No, but I 'll ask him. They 'll be sure to pick out one of us."

"They wont care a fig for Mr. Ayring," remarked a smaller girl.

"They 'll be outvoted," said Belle. "He has more than two hundred names on his singing-list now."

"Two hundred! I should say so. And some of them are hardly more than babies," snapped Dora.

"They all vote," said Belle. "They did last year, and they 'll do just what he tells them."

"The boys can't run you again, Belle," said Dora, thoughtfully. "There 's only half a dozen for them to pick from. Most likely it 'll be Sarah —or me."

"Jenny Sewell is pretty," suggested Belle. "She 'd make a nice little May Queen."

"She! She 's a doll. She 's almost as old as I am, and she 's a head shorter than Sarah."

The other tongues were rapidly getting loosened, and suggestions of available names were by no means lacking. It was even noticeable how many seemed to occur to the mind of Belle Roberts, and how they all seemed to lack something or other in the large blue eyes of Dora Keys.

It was a little more than probable that Dora had formed a clear notion in her own mind as to the required qualities of a May Queen for that year. That is, she should be tall for her age, very good-looking, with a full, musical voice for her recitation,—and, in fact, to be absolutely perfect, her first name had better be Dora than anything else.

It was enough to provoke a saint—of the name of Dora—to have Sarah Dykeman remark, so calmly:

"It is Mr. Ayring's own exhibition. He gets it up to help his business, I suppose, or he 'd never take the trouble."

"He makes the money," added Belle, "and the children get the fun."

That was about the whole truth of the May Festival business. The enterprising teacher of vocal music and dealer in all other music and the instruments thereof had managed, for several successive years, to revive the dead-and-gone custom of choosing and crowning a May Queen. The accompanying exercises of song and recitation were performed amid as liberal a show of flowers and green leaves as the season and the local hot-houses would permit. As to popular interest, he was sure of filling the largest hall in Saltillo, at a moderate price for tickets, with the friends and relations of his numerous juvenile performers.

The social interest attending the several "elections," in a limited community like that of Saltillo, had been productive, as a matter of course, of rivalries and heart-burnings not a few. The present occasion bade fair to rival any predecessor in that respect, and its time was at hand, since even a May Queen, her maids of honor, ladies in waiting, marshals, heralds, and all that sort of magnificence, required to be taught and trained for their parts, just as court persons do in real life.

Mr. Ayring was a shrewd man, and anxious to avoid giving offense, and if there was one thing clearer to him than another, it was that the Park—girls and boys—had had glory enough the year before.

The crown could not safely be sent in among any of Miss Offerman's pupils, and even he himself was not half so positive on that point as were the young lady attendants at Madame Skinner's rival "seminary," only two squares away from the Wedgewood School.

Every one of these, indeed, whose years entitled her to aspire to royal honors, felt more kindly toward all the world, that very morning, when the Madame mentioned the matter from the rostrum, after the usual religious exercises.

"Only one of you can be chosen, my dear young ladies, and you cannot yet guess which of you will win the prize."

Her further remarks were well-timed and judicious, but Mr. Ayring had been trying to make a close guess at the name of the winner.

"Fanny Swayne would look splendidly on a platform. She 's been away at boarding-school, but that wont hurt. Jim Swayne goes to the Wedgewood, and there can't be much fuss made. She 'll do. She knows how to dress, too."

What if Mr. Ayring had known that Jim and Fanny already had the matter under discussion?

Jim was the head boy of the Wedgwood in all matters which did not too closely relate to books, and was, therefore, sure of rallying an active "boy interest" to the support of his candidate, whoever she might be. Smaller boys who might have preferences were not likely to air them in the presence of a tongue and hand so ready and so efficient as his.

"I 'll fix it for you, Fanny," he had said to her, and so it was hardly by accident that he and Mr. Ayring had a talk that day, near the latter's music-store, during the noon recess.

The subject opened a little rapidly under such circumstances.

"We must keep still about it till the election, Jim, but I 'll tell you what I 'm doing."

He held out a small, white, shining bit of enameled card-board.

"We 'll have your sister's name printed on

these, for ballots. All the rest 'll waste time writing out their tickets, and the little folks would rather vote these anyhow. By the time the big ones are ready with their written tickets, the voting will be pretty much all done."

It looked as though such a splendid piece of electioneering strategy as that made sure of the defeat of the Park boys, no matter whom they might agree upon, and Jim was jubilant.

"All I want of you, Jim, is to see that I have three or four smart boys on hand to distribute tickets. I 'll try and manage to have half a dozen other girls run, and all Fanny will need will be to come out highest on the list."

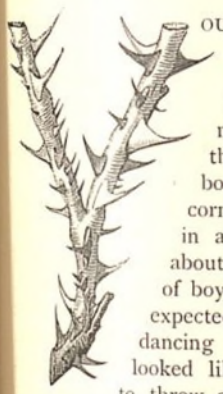
Cunning Mr. Ayring!

That very day he took his tickets to the printing office of the *Daily Trumpet*, and never paused to consider that Mr. Carroll, the editor and proprietor of that journal, was also the father of Mr. Jefferson Carroll, and that the latter was member of Mr. Hayne's "Sixteen."

Very important results will sometimes come from a very small oversight.

CHAPTER III.

DEALING WITH HIGHWAY ROBBERY.



OUTH—especially masculine youth—is apt to be pugnacious. A little before the close of the noon recess that day, there were two good-sized boys on the north-west corner of the Park, engaged in a tussle, while a third, about as small a specimen of boyish mischief as could be expected to wear trousers, was dancing around them, in what looked like an impish endeavor to throw a small clod into some part of the skirmish. Then followed a "clinch," a tug, a roll on the ground, while the small clod was not in the small boy's right hand any longer, but, instead thereof, both hands were hugging to his bosom a monkey-faced cocoa-nut, in its shaggy coat.

"Have you got it, Pug?"

"I've got it!"

"Let go my hair!"

"You let small boys alone, then—will you?"

"He 's no brother o' yourn."

"Let him alone, that 's all."

"Hit him again, Jack Roberts! Hit him again!"

There was a great deal of resentment in the excited face and tone of Pug Merriweather, but Jack did not act on his little friend's advice. On the contrary, he sprang to his feet, followed more slowly by the shabby-looking fellow whose cowardly attempt at a sort of highway robbery had brought on that collision.

The young rowdy, indeed, looked as if he were ready to try the matter over again, for he was not a bad match for Jack in mere size and strength, but a glance up the street showed him three or four more boys coming, each on a clean run, and he knew it was about time for him to make haste in some other direction.

He ran, but he was not followed, for at that moment the clock in the church-tower rang out a sonorous "one," and it was time for Mr. Hayne's scholars to be behind their desks.

"Pug, you run for home. Don't you stop anywhere."

"I will. But did n't I give it to him? Eh, Jack?"

There was glee in that, but he acted on the counsel of his chivalric protector, and his short legs carried him off faster than one would have thought possible.

"Hurry up, Jack—you 'll be late!" shouted Charley Ferris, as he came along, puffing; and a tall, slender, red-haired boy behind him added:

"Don't stop to brush, Jack; walk right along!"

It was a few steps only, and they three were the last boys in, just in time to comply with the rigid rules of punctuality which Mr. Hayne was disposed to insist upon.

Up to that hour there had been no neater, more orderly-appearing young gentleman in the school than the handsome, blue-eyed, light-haired, fun-loving brother of the last year's May Queen.

There was nothing dandified about him, however, at the moment when Mr. Hayne's ruler came down upon the little table on the platform, and the silence of "hours" followed the rap.

"Mr. Roberts."

"Sir?" responded Jack, promptly, rising to his feet.

"There are bruises and dirt on your face."

"Yes, sir; I should say there was, most likely," returned Jack Roberts, quietly, with a polite bow and the ghost of a smile.

"And there is dust on your clothes."

"I had no time to brush them, sir."

"May I ask if you have been fighting, Mr. Roberts? A scholar of this school fighting in the street!"

"Yes, sir; I have."

Before Mr. Hayne could reply, he heard his own

name called from another part of the room, and, turning about, he said:

"What is it, Mr. Ferris?"

"I saw it, sir. I ran to get there and help, but I was n't in time. There was a young rowdy took away a cocoa-nut from little Pug Merriweather ——"

"Ah! That 's it."

which plainly showed how deep an interest they were taking in the matter.

"That will do, Mr. Ferris. You may take your seat. So may you, Mr. Roberts."

"May I go and brush myself?"

"No, sir. No scholar of this school need be afraid to follow your example. The dust you take on in defending the weak when they are wronged

JACK DEFENDS THE OWNER OF THE COCOA-NUT.

"The rascal 's always getting into some scrape," added Charley, in a lower tone.

"Do you mean Mr. Roberts?"

"No, sir; I mean Pug. Jack 's a trump, but he 's always taking the part of those little fellows."

"Did he get back the cocoa-nut?"

"Yes, sir; he did! And he worsted that rowdy ——"

It was clear that Charley was excited.

"Was little Merriweather hurt?"

"No, sir; but he pelted that chap with everything he could lay his hands on. He 's gone home."

Charley was more "worked up" than Jack himself, and the rest of the boys listened with faces

does not need to be brushed off. The second class in Latin, come forward."

Jack blushed to his very ears, and a sort of tingle went around the school, from boy to boy. Even John Derry whispered to the red-haired young gentleman who sat in front of him:

"He is n't such a flat as I thought he was. Good for Jack, too, I say. But what a weasel Pug Merriweather is, anyway."

At least one small boy of that neighborhood had evidently earned a reputation of his own.

As for the young outlaw who had robbed him, he was not likely to forget Pug, until a troublesome lameness should leave his left arm. That had been the landing-place of the small clod.

It was well understood that Jack's "dust" was to be looked upon somewhat in the light of a prize medal.

"Stars and garters," as it was explained to him by Andy Wright, after school.

"That 's it," said the red-haired boy; "but what 'll he remember it by after his face is washed? It wont all turn to freckles like mine?"

"Freckles, Ote?" exclaimed Jack. "That would do. Give me one; you 've enough for two."

There was no denying it, for he had the full allowance that belongs to boys—and girls, too—of his complexion, but the idea of parting with any of them seemed new to him, and he made no reply.

If there was any impoliteness in his silence, his friends were too well accustomed to it to care. They knew Otis Burr, and never wasted precious time in waiting for him to speak.

"If I 'm not mistaken," said Andy, "we 'll have more trouble with those fellows from along the canal. They 've quite taken the notion of coming over here lately."

"Have n't much else to do," snapped Jack. "There 's a perfect swarm of them. And they 're of no more use than so many wasps."

"There ought to be a law to compel them to attend the district school. Then they 'd be shut up part of the time."

"Pity the teachers, then," said Otis.

"They 'd manage it. Might make something out of some of 'em."

"Something or other. It just spoils 'em to let 'em run around loose, with nothing to do. It would spoil me, I know."

"You and Pug Merriweather 'd have a fight on your hands every day."

"He 'd have three, if there was any chance to find 'em. I never saw such a little imp. He gives his mother and sister no end of trouble."

"Glad I 'm not his sister," gravely remarked Charley Ferris.

"You? Well, no," said Andy, "I don't think you 'd shine as a sister."

Charley had a notion that he was born to shine in almost anything he might undertake, but for the second time that day he saw that the public opinion was against him, especially after Andy said something about beauty being required for a complete success, and Otis Burr added:

"That settles it. He would n't do."

"I say, boys," interrupted Jack, "the girls are becoming excited about this May Queen business."

"They all want to be queens, I suppose," said Andy, "and old Ayring only wants one for his show."

"Have they pitched on any one girl to vote for?" asked Joe Martin, as he came up with a lot of books under his arm.

"If they have, they forgot to tell me. I 'll ask Belle about it to-night. There 'll be some work for us before we get through."

"Why, Jack, do you mean to sing at the Festival?" asked Andy.

"Me? Sing? Well, yes, it 's likely Ayring will be 'round after me. I did sing a song once, but nobody 's asked me to sing since that."

"We 'll let the girls and the small fry do the show business," suggested Charley Ferris, with an effort at elderly dignity, "but we must keep our eye on the politics of it. We must n't let the Wedgewood boys walk over us."

"They 'll pick out some girl from Ma'am Skinner's."

"That 's what they 'll do. They did, last year, and they came within ten votes of winning."

"And they did n't all vote for the same girl, either. They wont make that blunder again."

"We must n't, either."

Fresh arrivals of youthful politicians had made quite a caucus of it, but the whole question had to be "laid on the table," as Andy Wright called it, until information could be had as to the purposes of the young ladies. So the group speedily broke up, and the boys went their ways.

It was likely, however, that Jack Roberts would have questions to answer as well as to ask, on his arrival home with so much dust of battle still on him.

(To be continued.)

HEAD-DRESSES OF ANIMALS.

By Sphinx.

Perhaps you think that men and women are the only ones that have distinctive head-dresses and are proud of them; but if you should see some of the animals in other countries, and see how their masters dress them up, you would find that their rigging is sometimes very elaborate.

Look at the picture of a Neapolitan donkey, at the top of the opposite page. This head is perfectly gorgeous, and his owner thinks it is beautiful. In the first place, the hair between the animal's long ears is tied or wound up with bright red worsted, and makes a bright little upright tuft; then his bridle is covered with bits of brass which shine in the sun, and it is all decorated, besides, with red tassels, while on either side, just over his eyes, are two very large bunches of red. Coming down a mountain path against a deep blue sky, or standing against a white wall, he looks very picturesque.

The horse at his side, though so near him in the picture, comes from Arabia, and his head is bandaged up with a most intricate headstall. A great deal of his master's wealth is lavished on this bridle; for the Arabs think the world of their fleet steeds, and even gold and silver, richly embossed, can be seen on some of the favorite horses.

While we are considering oriental animals, we might as well notice next the camel's head in the center of the page; he has on a very odd head-piece, made up of coarse bits of bright colors, with tassels ranging down the sides, interspersed with bells. It looks very ugly in the hand, but on the animal it is very pretty; and they say that the camels become so fond of their bells that sometimes they will not travel without the sound of them.

The great, strong horse near this camel belongs to Normandy, France, and the great hump on his neck is his collar, which is made very large and high, and is covered with a sheep-skin dyed a bright blue; and, although it appears very ungainly here, still it looks well on a fine gray Normandy horse.

Below him you can see the head of an elephant, with an ornament hanging down between his eyes; his trappings are very plain, but some of them in India are rich and dazzling, especially those of elephants that carry the native princes. They cover their animals with the brightest cloths, embroidered with gold and silver, and when they are decorated, they look like great masses of moving color, not at all like the Austrian horse in the corner, who has to work hard all the day dragging heavy loads of beer-barrels, besides the weight of his leathern collar, covered with brass knobs.

The Italian post-horse, seen in almost every town of southern Italy, has a much smaller collar, but much more brass, besides a bunch of feathers sticking straight up on top of his head, a row of bells around his neck, and a long tuft of dyed horse-hair hanging under the jaw. His blinders are of brass, and a coronet of brass stands up on his forehead, while his owner thinks he will complete its beauty by cropping the animal's mane, and making it stand up on its neck like a mule's.

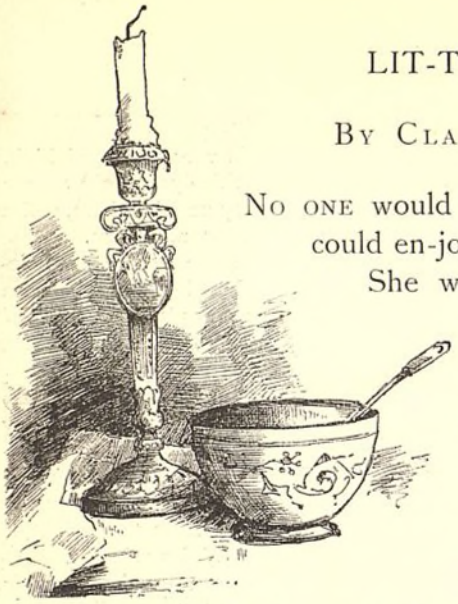
The savage, wild-looking little head, pictured in the lower corner, belongs to a mustang, or wild pony, owned by a Sioux Indian, as wild as his steed; he has no bridle, but the warrior simply fastens a leather thong around his under jaw, and controls him with this and his voice. He also puts eagles' feathers in his mane and tail, and the horse and his rider present a very wild appearance as they sweep over the prairies after the buffaloes, or dash up to and away from enemies in battle.

THE DANDELION.

By Mary N. Prescott.

Little gypsy Dandelion,
Dancing in the sun,
Have you any curls to sell?
"Not a single one!"
Have you any eggs and cheese
To go a-marketing?
"I have neither one of these,
For beggar or for king."

Little idle Dandelion,
Then, I 'll mow you down.
What is it you 're good for,
With your golden crown?
"Oh, I gild the fields, afar,
In the pleasant spring,
Shining like the morning star,
With the light I bring."



LIT-TLE TO-TOTE.

By Clara Doty Bates.

No one would think that lit-tle To-tote was a girl who could en-joy stand-ing on her head.

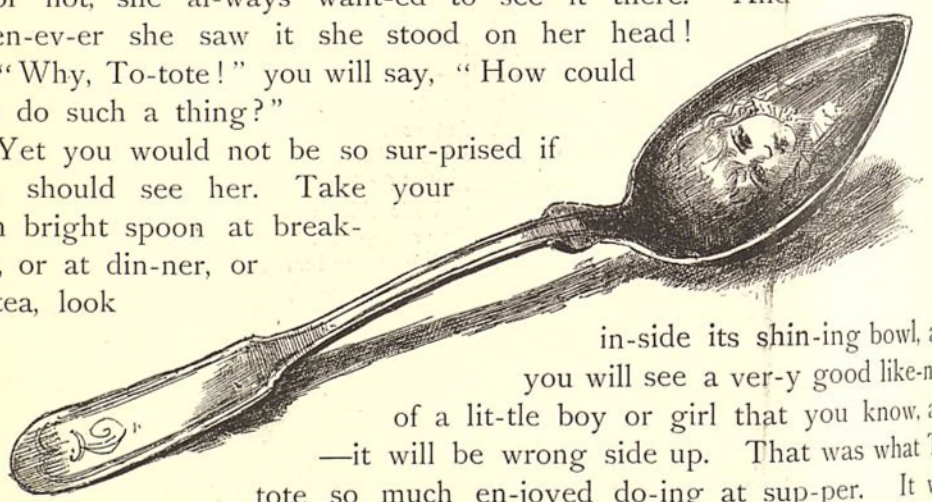
She was as shy as her kit-ten that hid un-der chairs when-ev-er a strange step came near; and she scarce-ly ev-er looked any-one in the face, with-out first let-ting her long, soft eye-lash-es fall up-on her cheek. And yet To-tote's fa-vor-ite de-light was to stand on her head.

Her nurse laughed and cried out, "Oh, To-tote, a-gain on your head!" at which To-tote would laugh too, and go on with her play.

Now To-tote had for a gift from her good grand-moth-er, a gold spoon with a fan-cy T en-graved on the han-dle. With this she ate her sup-per of bread and milk, and with this she sipped her soup at din-ner. In-deed, it was al-ways laid at To-tote's plate, for wheth-er she re-quired it or not, she al-ways want-ed to see it there. And when-ev-er she saw it she stood on her head!

"Why, To-tote!" you will say, "How could you do such a thing?"

Yet you would not be so sur-prised if you should see her. Take your own bright spoon at break-fast, or at din-ner, or at tea, look in-side its shin-ing bowl, and you will see a ver-y good like-ness of a lit-tle boy or girl that you know, and —it will be wrong side up. That was what To-tote so much en-joyed do-ing at sup-per. It was ver-y fun-ny to her pret-ty French eyes to see the smil-ing lit-tle la-dy look-ing as if she were walk-ing with her feet in the air.



"Oh, oh," she would laugh, "you will get diz-zy in there, Miss To-tote!" And nurse would add; "Yes, yes, she is ver-y diz-zy. Now bid her good-night, To-tote, and we will light the can-dle and go up to bed."

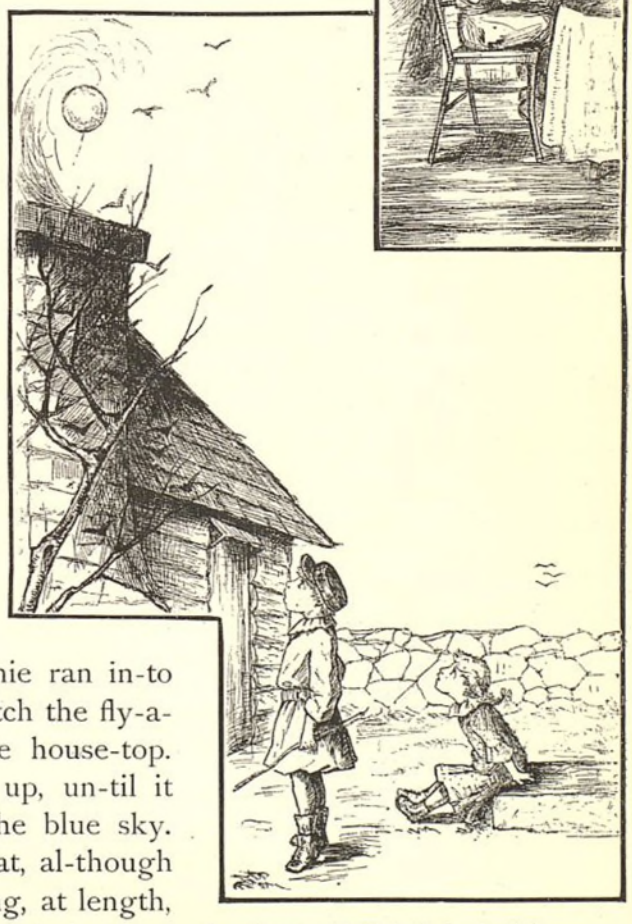
ED-DY'S BAL-LOON.

Ed-dy was a lit-tle boy, who lived on a farm. One day he went with his fa-ther, moth-er, and sis-ter, to the coun-ty fair, four miles a-way.

Ed-dy saw a great man-y won-der-ful things that day, but there was noth-ing there that he want-ed so much as a red bal-loon, so he bought one with some mon-ey giv-en him to spend "as he pleased."

All the way home Ed-dy held the string, and the bal-loon float-ed a-bove the car-riage. When he went in-to the house he tied it to the chair-back, and left it there, while he sat down and ate his sup-per.

Af-ter sup-per he a-mused him-self by try-ing to make the bal-loon stay down on the floor. As soon as it rose, he struck it with the palm of his hand, and made it go down a-gain; but, as it jumped up ev-ery time, he had to strike it a-gain and a-gain.



Now, Ed-dy lived in an old house, with a large, open fire-place; as he was chas-ing his play-thing, all at once he came to the fire-place; the bal-loon slipped a-way from his hand and went right up the big chim-ney.

Ed-dy and his sis-ter An-nie ran in-to the yard, but they could not catch the fly-a-way; it rose high-er than the house-top. They watched it go up, up, up, un-til it was on-ly a speck a-gainst the blue sky. Then it went so ver-y high that, al-though they kept look-ing and look-ing, at length, they could not see it at all; and that was the last of Ed-dy's bal-loon.

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

"APRIL showers bring May flowers," and May flowers bring happy hours,—that is, in the country,—and what can an honest Jack-in-the-Pulpit know about the city, excepting by hearsay? The Little School-ma'am says that in New York, and a few other brick-and-stone conglomerations, the inhabitants have a way of swapping houses with one another on the first day of May, and, in consequence, the streets are filled with carts carrying household goods and chattels to and fro, hither and thither, till the city is nearly distracted. Then in the houses, she tells me, the broom-spirit has full sway; wives rule the home-universe, and husbands and fathers stand aside and weep. Busy times, I should say!

Well, and are not *my* people busy, too? Birds with their cradles and housekeeping; early spiders with their shiny little hammocks and awnings; ants with their apartment-houses, and, above all, dear, rosy, noisy *bipeds* (known by learned naturalists as *boysandgirlses semiwildses)*, running about in the fields and woods, and having the best kind of a busy time. Bless them! They make me think of bees, humming with health and cheerfulness, and storing up sweets and flower-wealth for all to share who will.

Talking of busy times and hours packed full of simple enjoyment, my hearers, consider this bit of true history about

POOR FRITZ.

HOW would you like to have such a bringing-up as befell Fritz, son of Frederick William the Second, King of Prussia? Let me tell you about it.

When the child was in his tenth year, the father wrote out directions to the three tutors as to Fritz's mode of life. The boy was to be called at six o'clock, and the tutors were to stand by to see that he did not loiter nor turn in bed; he must get up at once. As soon as he had put on his slippers, he was to kneel at his bedside and pray aloud a prayer, so that all in the room might hear. Then, as rapidly as possible, he was to put on his shoes and spatterdashes, vigorously and briskly wash himself, get into his clothes, and have his hair powdered and combed. During the hair-dressing, he was at the same time to take a breakfast of tea, so that both jobs should go on at once, in order to save time; and all this, from the calling to the end of the breakfast, was to be done in fifteen minutes!

At half-past nine in the evening he was to bid his father good-night, go directly to his room, very rapidly take off his clothes, wash, and hear a prayer on his knees. Then a hymn was to be sung, and Fritz was to hop instantly into bed.

Poor Fritz! No room for bed-time stories nor pillow-fights!

But, not so fast. "Poor Fritz" afterward became Frederick the Great.

BUTTON-MOLD MOUND.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: If you were a native of central Kentucky you would not think of sending your ST. NICHOLAS children as far as Africa or Buenos Ayres for natural beads, such as you mentioned in your budget of November, a year ago, for in Hardin County, near a place called Rough Creek, where we have sometimes spent the summer, there is a high hill formed of round, flat stones, from the size of a pin-head to an inch across, with a round hole right through the middle. The hill is called, from the shape of these stones, "Button-mold Mound." They look as if they might have been fishing-worms once, had petrified, and been broken up into short pieces. May be, they played around in the mud with the trilobites, when both felt more like playing than they do now. We find trilobites on the hills around Cincinnati, when we go visiting there.—Your affectionate friend,

SHIRLEY MARTIN.

THE CAT-BIRDS ARE COMING!

EARLY in May, my dears,—especially those of you who live in the Middle States,—be ready for the new-coming of the cat-birds.

You will find them a social set, for they seldom nest at a distance from a farm-house or other dwelling of man; and, if you listen carefully, in the morning or evening, you may hear their wild, warbling melody. They belong to the great Thrush family, you know, most of whom have sweet voices. They are lively, quick-tempered fellows, and if they see a snake, will scold fiercely at it; occasionally, too, they will flock together, and either kill their enemy or drive him away. It is funny that their cry should sound so like the "mew" of a cat, for they dislike puss almost as much as they hate snakes; and they often perch impudently just out of reach, and lecture her severely, calling out "mew" every now and then, as if to taunt her.

BIRD MIMICRY.

ON the whole, taking the parrot, mocking-bird, canary, cuckoo, and cat-bird into consideration, it seems to me sometimes that the birds have rather an unfair advantage over other creatures in the way of mimicry.

But I don't know. The Little School-ma'am tells me that on March 32d of this year, she heard just outside her window, a burst of trills and roulades, and roundelays, and ecstatic airs,—varied with soft warbles, and sudden chirps and twitters, and sweet,

low lullabies,—altogether making almost the finest medley of bird songs and glees that ever greeted her ears. Of course, she listened in rapt pleasure until there came a pause, wondering all the time, however, what rival of the nightingale could thus have come back before the buds and flowers. And when, at last, the serenade was ended, she hastened to the window, looked at each bough of every tree, and finally descried—little dirty-faced, ill-clad Tim Milligan, the newsboy, with cheeks puffed out like balloons, and pursed-up lips, whence suddenly issued again that torrent of bird-like melody. Ere long, he raised his hand and took from between his teeth a queer little metallic sheet, and instantly the music ended.

Whence, I say—ho, rollicking, deceitful cat-bird, revel in thy taunting mimicry; but beware thyself, of Tim Milligans, and street-whistles!

A LITTLE SOLDIER-GIRL.

"YES," said a tall man with a sword, as he strolled with Deacon Green along the foot-path in my meadow; "yes, my five-year-old Nelly helped to hold the fort! Bless her!

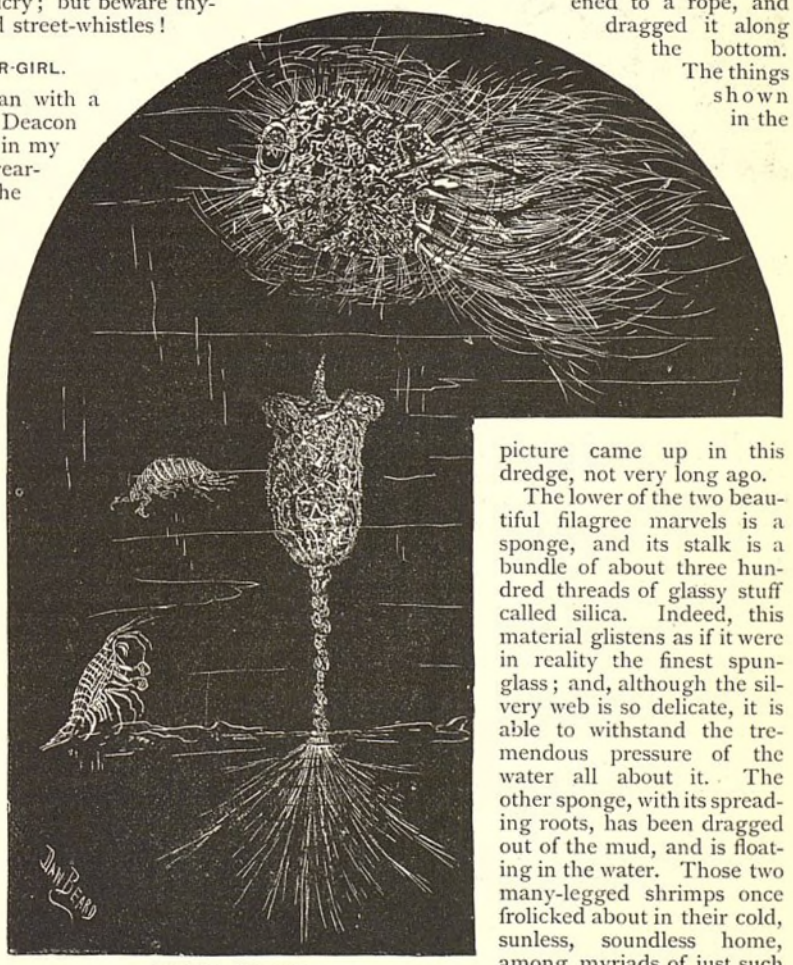
"One day, we soldiers rode off in chase of a band of five hundred Indians. After some hours, we found that more than half of them had turned about and were on their way back to attack the fort. They hoped to capture it; for they knew that it was built chiefly of adobe [sun-dried bricks], and they felt sure that we had left only a few men to defend it. We rode back as fast as our jaded horses could go, and we arrived not a moment too soon!

"The women and children had gone into the block-house and were unhurt; but several of the soldiers had been wounded in running to the same shelter. For three hours my wife fired repeating rifles, one after another. A soldier, hurt in both legs, loaded the rifles, and passed them to little Nelly, who carried them to her mother, and brought back the empty ones to be reloaded. The child grew tired before long, but the attack of the Indians was so fierce and unresting that even she, poor mite, could not be spared. The tears came again and again, and she begged to be let off. But her mother would say: 'Stand to it, my Nelly! Stand to it, my little soldier-girl!' And then the child would straighten herself up, and bravely go on with her wearying task.

"When the little one came to kiss me, after the fighting was done, her face was so streaked with tears and gunpowder that, at first, I failed to recognize my own brave little daughter."

DEEP-SEA WONDERS.

ONE of those prying fellows, the naturalists, has been bringing queer live things from more than half a mile deep in the ocean, where there are no voices, and the day is almost as dark as the night. Of course, he himself did not go down for them, but he sank a dredge, or open-mouthed bag, fastened to a rope, and dragged it along the bottom. The things shown in the picture came up in this dredge, not very long ago.



DEEP-SEA WONDERS.

The lower of the two beautiful filagree marvels is a sponge, and its stalk is a bundle of about three hundred threads of glassy stuff called silica. Indeed, this material glistens as if it were in reality the finest spun-glass; and, although the silvery web is so delicate, it is able to withstand the tremendous pressure of the water all about it. The other sponge, with its spreading roots, has been dragged out of the mud, and is floating in the water. Those two many-legged shrimps once frolicked about in their cold, sunless, soundless home, among myriads of just such lovely forms as these.

That may be all very well for shrimps, but as for your Jack,—give me the lightsome air, the glowing sun, the merry brook, the rustling green things, and my bonny birds, that make happy life about my pulpit, not to mention those rackety, red-cheeked, dear boys and girls of the Red School-house.

THE LETTER-BOX.

AGASSIZ ASSOCIATION—SECOND REPORT.

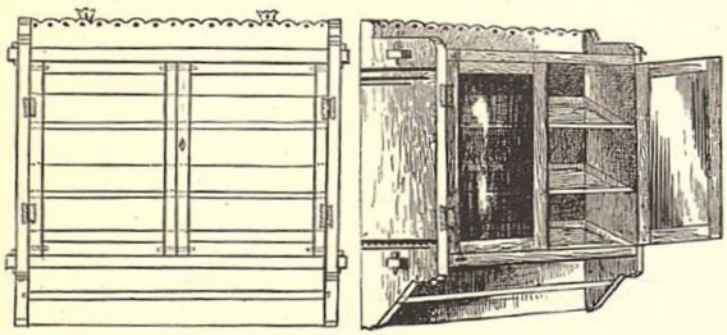
SIX or seven hundred eager questioners to answer at once—and but twice as many words to do it with!

First, to the boys who have asked "How can I make a cheap cabinet?" we offer this simple design.

The right-hand picture shows the cabinet complete, and the plan beside it is drawn so that every measurement in it is one-sixteenth of the corresponding measurement in the finished cabinet. No nails are used. Wood of light color looks well; chestnut is easily worked.

The ends of the top and bottom are mortised into the sides. Close to the side boards holes are bored through the projecting parts of the tenons; and wedges are inserted and hammered tight.

The frames of the doors are doweled at the corners, each joint being made by boring a hole through one piece into the next, and inserting a dowel coated with glue. The short dotted lines in the plan help to explain this. The glass should not be set with putty, but with narrow strips, beading, or rattan, fastened with brads or



"needle-points." Butt-hinges may be used, with ornamental hinge-plates set outside, as shown. Hook one door to the shelf, and it will hold the other door shut.

The shelves may be made with raised edges, like trays,—the front rims are not shown in the picture. These edges will save the contents from rolling off when the trays are taken out. The shelves slope forward, to show the specimens to better advantage; and they rest on dowels let into auger-holes in the side boards. To prevent them from slipping, pegs are set in them underneath, resting against the backs of the forward dowels. The shelves may be put in flat, and may rest on screw-eyes screwed into the sides of the cabinet.

Metal ears are set on the back, projecting above the top, for hanging the cabinet; in addition, it is well to drive a screw from the inside through the back into a stud in the wall.

The scalloping at the top of the back may be done with a fret-saw, the hole in the center of each scallop is bored right through. The ornamental lines across the sides are made with a gouge, and should be painted brown; then the whole cabinet should be covered with two coats of white shellac varnish. Those skilled in fret-sawing may like to set in the top the letters A. A., in Old English text. If you are puzzled over any part of the cabinet, no doubt you "know a fellow down at the shop" who will give you a hint.

And now, while the boys have gone for some boards and the hammer, a word to the presidents of all the ST. NICHOLAS chapters, which are now found in more than twenty States and Territories, to say nothing of England and Germany.

The more specific you can make your work, the better. For instance, if you are much interested in entomology, instead of attempting to cover the whole field, suppose you direct your attention to the scales on butterflies' wings. Are the scales on all parts of the same butterfly of the same shape? Are the scales on butterflies of different sorts different in shape? Are the scales of moths essentially different from those of butterflies? Can *lepidoptera* (butterflies and moths) be classified by their scales, as fishes can?

Let each member of your chapter who has access to a microscope study some one kind of butterfly thoroughly, and make a report, with careful drawings, of the scales of both male and female. Then let your secretary make a report, carefully condensed, from these, and send it to Lenox with the drawings. We will compare the reports sent in, and publish the general result of all your observations.

"And what shall *I* do? I don't like bugs! I love flowers." "How shall I begin? Minerals are my ——"

Patience! Get your cabinets ready and collect as many specimens as you can, until next month, when the flowers will be wondering if it is not time for them to begin teaching again, and when we hope to find you still eager to "consider" them.

AWARD OF A PRIZE.

THE prize for drawings of snow-crystals has been awarded to Miss Mary L. Garfield, of Fitchburg, Mass.

Several other members sent drawings which caused us to hesitate in our decision. The drawings of Corwin Linson, especially, deserve commendation. They came too late to compete with the others, as also did fifty cards of crystal-drawings from Miss Klyda Richardson.

Unfortunately, the request for these snow-flakes was not published until late in the winter, and we prefer, now, to postpone a further report upon them, and to defer printing the drawings, until next winter, when each one of the members in snowy districts can have a good chance to make similar pictures.

But now the snow has got on its summer legs of silver, and has run away from us. Chrysalids are beginning to crack. It is the day of resurrection for the caterpillar. The woods are again sweet with wild flowers. Here is May, and we of New England are just beginning to search for the first violets. But, oh dear me! what a country this is! It spreads so widely that there are all kinds of climates in it at the same time. And we forget that you of California picked your violets in February, and wrote to us in midwinter, inclosing the fragrant blossoms, and asking how to press and preserve them. So, next month, we shall take up this subject, give you a few hints concerning the pressing and keeping of flowers, and perhaps pass on to suggest a few things about insects.

What do you all think of a badge? We now number seven hundred, but we hope to be one thousand before next month.

Address all communications as before.

HARLAN H. BALLARD,
Lenox Academy, Lenox, Mass.

LIST OF ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS.

Address.	*Members.*	*President.*
Philadelphia, Pa., *B*	6	Edwin A. Kelley, 1606 Vine st.
Newberne, N. C	16	Mrs. E. C. Gaskins, care Geo. Allen & Co.
Chicago, Ill., *A*	8	Winnie Schuttler, 72 Grant Place.
San Antonio, Texas	7	P. G. Stevenson.
St. Louis, Mo., *A*	10	Maud M. Love, 1916 Wash. st.
Lima, Ohio	6	Dora Metzger.
Cedar Creek, Wis	4	Dow Maxon.
Philadelphia, Pa., *C*	6	Eleanor J. Crew, 1926 N. 11th st.
Kingsboro, N. Y	12	M. W. Thomas, Fulton Co.
Lakeworth, Fla	6	Lida P. Brown.
San Francisco, Cal	7	Sewall Dolliver, 2201 Fillmore st.
Harlem, N. Y	8	Geo. T. Sanford, 108 W. 133d st.
Oakland, Cal	7	Henry C. Converse, 1305 Broadway.
Columbus, Wis	4	Florence Tyng Griswold.
Mahomet, Ill	5	Dora Brown, Champaign Co.
Chicago, Ill., *B*	6	Annie T. Cromwell, 180 S. Water st.
Osage City, Kansas		John T. Nixon.
St. Louis, Mo., *B*	5	H. B. Crucknell, 1233 N. 21st st.
Newton Centre, Mass	4	Robert S. Loring.

ELIZABETH M. MORRIS.—The first volume of ST. NICHOLAS is out of print, and the publishers know of no place where a copy of it can be obtained. It is not probable that the volume will ever be reprinted. The publishers will pay the full retail price for a limited number of the issues of ST. NICHOLAS for November and December, 1873; January, November, and December, 1874; March and November, 1875; August and December, 1876; and January, 1877; *but the copies must be in good condition, and suitable for binding.* The covers and the advertising pages may be torn, but the magazines themselves must be neither torn nor soiled.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I was much interested in your April article about the cochineal insect, and the colors made from it. One of the sentences said that: "The best carmine can be made only in fine weather"; and this reminded me of a little anecdote that I read in a book, about Sir Humphry Davy, the great chemist.

An English manufacturer agreed to pay £1,000—about five thousand dollars—to a Frenchman, if he would reveal to him the secret through which French makers were enabled to produce carmine of a quality generally so much better than the English. The Frenchman politely took the money, and said: "You must work only on clear, sunny days." And this was the whole of the secret; for, in other respects, the processes followed by both parties were exactly alike. But it was a dear bargain for the Englishman, because—says the story—in his country there is very little of the beautiful sunny weather that is frequently enjoyed in France.—Yours truly,

A. C.

MAY JENNINGS asks us to reprint this little paragraph from the "Letter-Box" of May, 1874:

May-baskets are very welcome as birthday gifts to May children, or as offerings to invalids and to little children in hospitals, or to put before fathers' and mothers' plates on May-day morning. A pretty May-basket can be made by trimming a paper-box (a collar-box will do for a small one) with tissue-paper fringed and crinkled, so as to hang around the outside, and by sewing to opposite sides of the box a strip of card-board for a handle. This, also, can be covered with tissue-paper. Moss, wild flowers, and green leaves will soon make the basket beautiful; and if you have a delicate bit of vine to wreathe about the handle, so much the better. Narrow white ribbon bows, with streamers, where the handle joins the basket, give a pretty effect; and, for very little children, it will do no harm to put tiny round egg-like sugar-plums in the middle of the flowers.

JOHN J. KEAN.—The "Petite Anse Amateur," mentioned in the "Letter-Box" of December, 1879, is edited by Avery & McIlhenny, New Iberia Post-office, La.

CHARLEY G.—You will find a short and lively May-day acting-play in ST. NICHOLAS for May, 1876. It is called "May-day In-doors," and was written by Mrs. Abby Morton Diaz.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Have you noticed that in February and March of this year the days of the week fall upon exactly the same days of the month? For instance, the Saturdays in both months were the 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th; and the Sundays were the 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th. I suppose this happens always when February has twenty-eight days, or four complete weeks.—Truly yours,

B. C. T.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have lived here in Dakota about four months, and have seen many wonderful things. The prairie fire for instance, which at one time entirely surrounded our home. It was beautiful to look at, but at the same time it was frightful on account of the danger to our homes.

Our homestead is two and a half miles from the town (Huron), on the Chicago and North-western R. R. The road is through to Ft. Pierre, on the Missouri River.

Our town is now about eight months old and it has over seven hundred people

We shall soon have two churches and a school-house, and it is also expected to be the county seat.

There is not a tree in sight, but the scenery is beautiful. At times we have imaginary lakes that look perfectly natural to a stranger's eye. There are many antelope here in droves from fifty to three hundred, and during the severe storm in October many were driven to the Jim River, near town, where the sportsmen shot them.—From your admiring friend,

C. M. S.

M. NICOLL AND OTHERS.—You will find good advice as to how to care for canary birds in Mr. Ernest Ingersoll's article, "A Talk about Canaries," printed in ST. NICHOLAS for February, 1877.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Seeing in your February number a small rhyme of the "Small maid of St. Paul," I thought that I would give you something similar, which runs as follows:

There was a small girl in Montana,
I think her name was Susanna;
She walked down the street,
With her basket so neat,
To get her mamma a banana.

Yours, etc.,

A CONSTANT READER, per C. S.

IN good season to appear with Mr. Beard's "Chapter on Soap-Bubbles," in the present number, comes the following letter:

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Did you ever hear of a "soap-bubble party"? Well, an English lady gave one not long ago, and, from the account I read, it must have been very merry. Early in the evening, the guests seated themselves at a long table, on which were a number of pretty bowls, half-filled with warm soap-suds. By the side of each bowl was a common, straight-stemmed clay pipe, ornamented with little bows of narrow ribbon, and painted in pretty colors. The blowing of the bubbles began at once, and it must have been funny to see the guests—all grown up though they were, and some of them with names well known in social and political affairs—vie with each other, and try who could blow the biggest and most beautiful bubble; acting, indeed, as if they had become boys and girls again.

If any of your readers—little folks, grown folks, or folks altogether—should give such a party, they might let each guest carry away a pipe as a memento; and, of course, these souvenirs would be all the more highly prized if prettily decorated, and by the hands of skillful hostesses.

M. V. W.

NELLY B.—It is believed that the Europeans imported brazil-wood under that name from India, before they discovered South America, and that the country of Brazil received its name from this red dye-wood, with which the early navigators were acquainted already, and which they found there in great abundance.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Your girls and boys may like to hear how the children of Kent—"the garden of England"—celebrated May-day fifty years ago. In the morning, numbers of boys and girls went about in little companies, carrying boughs of hawthorn or other trees in blossom. In every group, two children bore a May garland, which was formed of two small willow hoops, crossed, decorated with primroses and other flowers, and green leaves. Now and then there would be, in the middle of the garland, a doll May Queen gayly

dressed. At every house the children sang a carol, expecting pennies in return. Sometimes they sang these two lines over and over:

"This is the day, the First of May,—
Please to remember the Garland."

But generally there were several verses, or perhaps this one, which dates back to the days of good Queen Bess, I believe:

"A branch of May I 've brought you here,
And at your door I stand;
It 's but a sprout, but it 's well budded out,
The work of our Lord's hand."

Later in the day, in some places, boys and girls joined in the merry-making on the village green, around and about the May-pole, as described by Olive Thorne in your May number of 1878.

I am sorry to say that these pretty customs seem to be dying out, but, at any rate, it is pleasant to call them to mind.—Yours truly,

W. H. F.

NEW SUBSCRIBER.—1. The first number of ST. NICHOLAS is dated November, 1873. 2. From time to time, the following magazines have been merged in ST. NICHOLAS: "Our Young Folks," "Little Corporal," "The School-day Magazine," "The Children's Hour," and "The Riverside Magazine." 3. In Paris, a French magazine entitled "St. Nicolas" is published weekly, but it does not at all represent the American ST. NICHOLAS.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Will some of your readers tell me why it is that when you warm a piece of paper by rubbing it between your knees, it will stick to a piece of wood?—Yours truly,

ZELLA (7 years).

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I live in Chicago, near Lincoln Park, and in summer often go to the park and down to the lake. One day, when gathering shells, I found a small snail, which I kept in a bottle of water. And one time, when giving it some clean sand and water, I found in the sand a small beetle. I took a look at him through the magnifying-glass. His shell looked like tortoise-shell, only the beetle-shell had great, deep ridges in it. He was a queer-looking insect, for on his stomach there were a great number of smaller shells, in which live other little insects. Once, when I was looking at him, one half of his shell came off. Inside of his shell he has four wings, two on each side, and they glisten like pearl. Still they are so thin that they look like lace; and you could see the veins and veinlets in them. In the middle his wings parted, and if you could look very closely you could see a small portion of his back. The upper parts of the legs looked very smooth, while the under parts are covered with small, fine hairs. I just wish you could have seen that beetle, with his wings so beautiful and lace-like, his legs so smooth and shiny. I am very sorry I can not write anything about his head, but the poor beetle was minus a head when I found him, so I guess I 'll have to leave the account of that part till I find another beetle, when you may have another note from your little friend.

L. H.

HERE are two capital letters from members of the Agassiz Association:

DEAR MR. BALLARD: Your minerals arrived here safely, they are very nice. We have a live porcupine; I will send you some of his quills if you would like them. There is an opossum in the cage with the porcupine. Papa was one day showing the opossum to the class, when he noticed two or three quills in his nose. I think it was too bad for it must have hurt him. I wonder if they had been quarreling. Thank you for the little book you sent me; when the Spring comes I hope to collect plants. Did you know that the cats have a third eye-lid? If you have a gentle kitty, when she is asleep lift up her upper eye-lid, and you will see a thick veil over her eye. Do you know if cats like music of any kind? We have a little black-and-white kitty that seems to like it when papa whistles. Can you tell me what the pocket in the ear of the cat is for? and if you have ever known of a cat burrowing in the earth to keep warm?—Yours truly,

M. N. W.

OUR cat is 11 inches high and 19 inches long from the root of his tail to the end of his nose and his tail is 10½ inches long. He has four legs and walks on the tips of his toes. He has four toes on each hind foot and on his fore feet five toes on each, one of which he does not use in walking because it is too high on his leg but he uses it in climbing. He walks on little cushions on the end of his toes. He uses his claws, only at will, as when he is climbing, stretching, fighting, etc. His ears are movable at will, but not so much so as a rabbit's. His eyes tip in like a Chinaman's. When he is watching for his prey he moves his tail from side to side. His tail is smooth and tapering. There is soft fur all over his body except on the end of his nose and the cushions on his toes and the inside of his ears. He is gray with lighter and darker stripes of gray all over his body, tail and legs.

He lives mostly on bread and milk and what he catches which are rats mice squirrels rabbits snakes and birds. He will eat dough, sweet corn, cooked potatoes, and turnips, but does n't like the latter very well.

When I rub him I can see sparks, and the longer and faster he is rubbed the more sparks you can see, and at the same time you can hear a snapping noise. I can, too, feel my fingers tingle. It is electricity in the hair.

LINA ALDRICH.

SOLUTIONS to February puzzles were received, too late for acknowledgment in the April number, from "A Hive of Bees," Wimbledon, England, 9. The names of solvers are printed in the second number after that in which the puzzles appear.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE MARCH NUMBER were received, before March 20, from "Jessamine," 3—N. Eyes, all—Willie Bond, 1—Alice Dunning and Julia Palmer, 2—Walter K. Smith, 1—Dora N. Taylor, 1—Willie Ross, 3—Edward Browazki, 2—Warner W. Gilbert, 2—"Artful Dodger," 2—Leon and Naomi, 1—Cornelia Mitchell, 3—Anne V. Gleason, 4—Frank R. Heath, 11—Fordyce Aimée Warden, 8—Walter Monteith, 1—J. Harry Anderson, 3—Eleanor B. Farley, 2—Carrie F. Doane, 4—Juliette S. Ryall, 2—Violet, 2—E. L. Myers, 3—John B. Blood, 3—C. H. McBride, 8—Virginie Callmeyer, 9—"The Blanke Family," 11—J. O., 2—Emma and Howard Collins, 3—Willie R. Witherle, 1—J. Milton Gitterman, 3—"Antony and Cleopatra," 7—Harriet A. Clark, all—Henry Rochester, 3—Will Rochester, 5—Ashbel Green, Jr., 3—"Phyllis," 5—E. L. Gould, 1—Helen M. Drennan, 3—Henry K. White, Jr., 1—Grace Hewlett, all—Alice W. Clark, all—A. B. C., 5—Mary T. Dean, 3—H. Ware, all—Mary Appleton, 1—Gertrude L. Ellis, 5—Johnnie H. Fisher, 2—Sallie Wiles, 8—Livingston Ham, 2—H. and F. Kerr, 4—Bessie S. Hosmer, 11—Ruth Camp, 3—Thomas Denny, Jr., 1—Willie A. McLaven, 6—Margaret Neilson Armstrong, all—Ella Marie Faulkner, 3—Richard Anderson, 2—Gail Sherman, 1—Lizzie C. C. 2—Madge K. L., 2—Herbert N. Twing, all—"Modah," 4—Eddie L. Dufourcq, 4—H. H. D., 2—Caroline Weitling, 6—Fred C. McDonald, all—H. W. R., 11—Bessie Taylor, 6—Edith Boyd, 1—"Delta Tau Delta," 1—Katy Flemming, 7—F. W. C., 2—"Witch and Wizard," 7—Marie L., 4—Robert A. Gally, 9—"Adam and Eve," 10—Willie T. Mandeville, 3—Alice M. H., 3—Dolly, 9—Florence Leslie Kyte, 10—"Three Puzzlers," 8—Lucy B. Shaw, 9—Susie Goff, 8—Allie D. Morehouse, 6—Alice M. Kyte, 6—Frank, Noble, and Anna, 11—Henry C. Brown, 11—Edward Vultee, 11—W. G. and L. W. McKinney, 9—Estelle Weiler, 4—J. S. Tennant, 8—"Unknown," 2—Edward F. Biddle, 6—Jennie M. Rogers, 1—Florence Wilcox, 11—"Chuck," all—Jane Bright, 1—P. C. Hartough, 2—Lizzie D. Fyfer, 2—Lizzie H. D. St. Vrain, 9—Effie H. Talboys, 1—Mabel Thompson, 2—Mattie K. Watson, 3—"Belle and Bertie," 7—A. E. W., 11—Florence G. Lane, 3—Newcomb B. Cole, 6—Walter B. Smith, 3—Alice P. Pendleton, 11—Mors O. Slocum, 6—Bessie Meade, 3—"Georgia and Lee," 7—Lulu G. Crabbe, 12—Fannie Knobloch, 6—Kitty H. Hunt, 1—Neddie and Tillie, 1—Bessie Finch and Bertha Stevens, 1—W. A. T., 2—Norman J. McMillan, 1—"X. Y. Z.," 10—Etta C. Wagner, 2—Mamie L. Fenimore, 5—Lottie G., 2—Susie Evans, 5—Barclay A. Scovil, 1—Tom, Dick, and Harry, all—Effie E. Hadwen, 9—Minnie Hazen, 2—George and Emma Huhu, 4—Anna B Moseley, 7—Jessie R. C., 1—Grace E. Hopkins, all—Frank L. Thomas, 2—O. C. Turner, all—"Two Boys," 5—Willie D. Ward, all—Letitia Preston, 3—Sallie Chase, 3—Lizzie C. McMartin, 1—Hoffman K. Reynolds, 3—Lizzie M. Boardman, 1—Isabel Bingay, 8—A. C. P., 5—Annie Mills and Louie Everett, all—Laura M. Jordan, 1—Ella and Lulu, 8—Mamie W. Aldrich, 3—"Rose and Bud," 3—M. E. H., 3—Walter B. Hull, 1—Jessie White, 9—Helen L. Woods, 2—"James Shriver and Co.," 11—Kate F. Smith, 1—Georgia Jones, 3—Willie F. Woolard, 7—Nellie Caldwell, 5—Charley and Minnie Powers, 1—George H. Brown, 3—Annie Buzzard, 4—William and Adolph Gilhardt, 5—C. D. W. T., 4—John A. Archer, 2—Ella M. Parker, 3—H. Conover, 3—Allie E. Burton, 8—Clementine Bachelor, 10—George R. Mosle, all—L. B. Longacre, 1—"Queen Bess," 10—Abie R. Tyler, 11—F. R. Gilbert, 1—"Guesser," 11—Grace M. Fisher, 4—John S. Hunt, 9—Kenneth B. Emerson, 3—Charlotte F. Potter, 11—Wilbur Lamphier, 9—Glen A. Miscally, 1—Rosemary Baum, 7—Bessie Embler, 1—Gertrude Jenkins, 6—Charlie W. Power, 7—F. W. Hoadley, 2—Florence P. Jones, 2—Hettie, Phebe, and Annie, 4—"Birdie," 3—"C. A. R.," 6—O. and W. Suckow, 3—Mauch Chunk, 9—Hallie B. Wilson, 3—Ellen L. May, 7—B. B. Potrero, 4—Philip Sidney Carlton, 10. The numerals denote the number of puzzles solved.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

WORDS WITHIN WORDS.

THE first word defined is found by beheading and curtailing the second. *Example:* Human beings in auguries. *Answer:* Men-omens.

1. A basin in bondage. 2. Ourselves in a pitcher. 3. An occurrence in a number. 4. A stage-player in a building where goods are made. 5. A fast in abundance. 6. A disturbance in a multitude. 7. Brightness in bunches. 8. An idol in a Chinese temple. B.

PICTURE PUZZLE.

THE faces of what three "characters" in Charles Dickens's story of "Oliver Twist" are portrayed in the above picture?

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

I AM composed of thirty-two letters, and am a quotation from Shakspeare's play of Richard II.

My 4-18-16-30-19 is to accord. My 9-8-11-13 is to venture. My 17-3-31-21 is a water-fowl. My 32-8-6 is an edible root. My 15-10-21-27 is a cavity. My 26-2-22-29-28 is without color. My 25-7-24-23 is to make search for. My 1-22-11 is a title of respect. My 21-5-14-32 is the title given to the wife of a lord. My 12-19-31-20 is adjacent. CHARLOTTE.

DIAMOND IN A SQUARE.

SQUARE: 1. The seat of the affections. 2. Impetuous. 3. Acute pain. 4. Tears in pieces. 5. A place of meeting.

INCLUDED DIAMOND: 1. In May. 2. An era. 3. Acute pain. 4. Conclusion. 5. In May. F. S. F.

PUZZLE.

TO THE name of a famous American, now dead, add a consonant, and you will form a word signifying what, chiefly, he was. IVIE.

WORD-BUILDING.

BEGIN with a single letter, and add one letter at a time, perhaps, also, re-arranging the letter or letters already used. Each addition will enable you to make a new word. In the following presentation of the puzzles, the beginning letter is described first, and then come, one after another, in proper order, definitions of the words formed.

I. Beginning with the vowel A, add a consonant, and form a short appellative for a near relation. Add other letters, one by one, and form, in succession, new words, meaning: an animal; a fruit; to festoon; saved; wretchedness: a place of delight; to become invisible.

II. A vowel; a pronoun; a bond; a flat piece of earthenware; part of a fence; a shining material; feels a prickly sensation; a young bird; attending closely; shining with a fitful luster.

III. A consonant; a first person, present tense, of a verb; a human being; the "high seas"; an exaggerated whim; a living creature; consisting of thin plates or layers; pertaining to a border.

IV. A vowel; a pronoun; an amount; to meditate; one of the supposed founders of ancient Rome; an assembly of troops for parade; a baggage-horse; wind instruments of music. D.

CHARADE.

I 'M a singular creature, it must be confessed,
Yet half of my queerness has never been guessed;
For though I am found near the head of a riot,
I 'm always at home in the center of quiet.
For me, men will sacrifice comfort and health;
For my special behoof they accumulate wealth;
Whate'er the pursuit, if there 's fame to be won,
I—I am the spirit that urges them on!

Disposed to be friendly, with ease I 'm at strife,
And appear at my best in political life;
And though universal dominion I claim,
The French and Italians ne'er whisper my name.
I lead the Iconoclasts when they would break
The idols and images I help to make,
And such is my influence over mankind,
Without my assistance they 'd soon become blind.

With kings and with princes I freely consort,
And with the nobility double my sport,
Yet so independent my rank and my mien
With queens, dukes, and emperors I am not seen.
I 'm quite contradictory, too, in my speech,
And by incivilities help to impeach
My credit; and such a strange creature am I
Before tea I unite—after tea I untie.

JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

THE primals form a motto that is heard upon a celebration day named by the finals.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. A forerunner. 2. A bird sometimes called "golden-robin." 3. Pertaining to coins. 4. Formed of sheets folded so as to make eight leaves. 5. A clergyman. 6. The muse of pastoral poetry. 7. Defensive armor for the head. 8. A high-priest of Israel. 9. A stringed musical instrument. 10. A fixed allowance of provisions. 11. Old-fashioned. 12. A view through an avenue. 13. Springiness. M. C. D.

TWO EASY CROSS-WORD ENIGMAS.

I. My first is in come, and not in go;
My second in bread, but not in dough;
My third is in yes, and not in no;
My whole is a time when daisies blow.

II. My first is in might, but not in power;
My second in branch, but not in flower;
My third is in darkness, and not in light;
My fourth is in battle, but not in fight;
My fifth is in looked, but not in sought;
My sixth is in barter, but not in bought;
My seventh in sound, and also in noise;
My whole is a game much loved by boys.

DYCIE AND LOVEJOY.

PROGRESSIVE ENIGMA.

MY whole, consisting of eight letters, signifies idolatrous nations.

My 1-2 is a personal pronoun. My 1-2-3-4 is to warm. My 1-2-3-4-5 is a cheerless tract of country. My 2-3-4 is to corrode. My 3-4-5-6-7-8 has been called the "City of Minerva." My 4-5-6-7 is afterward. My 5-6-7-8 are domestic fowls. D. C.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

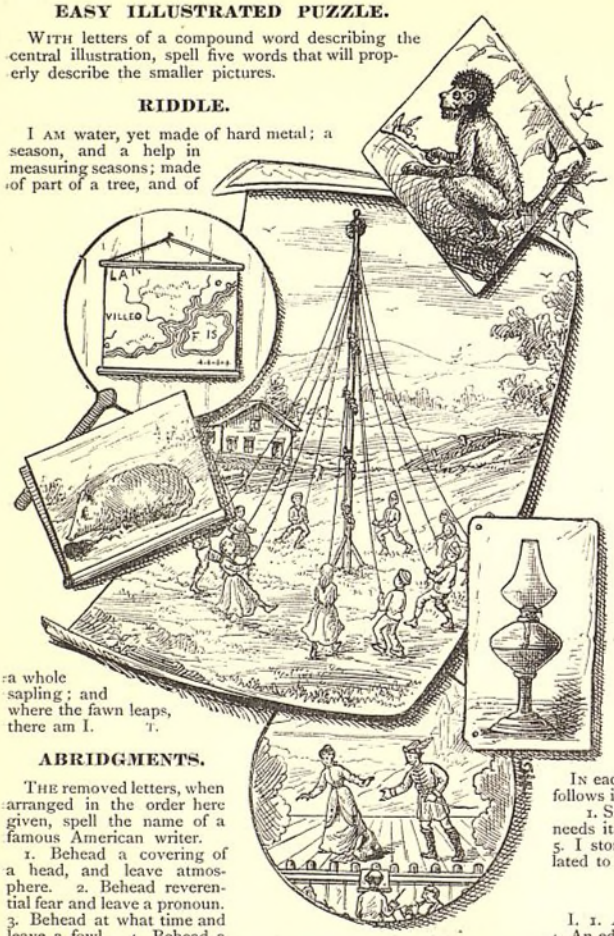
For wee Puzzlers.

I AM composed of fifteen letters, and am a pretty, spring flower.

My 15-12-8-9-2 is a sweet substance. My 13-14-11 is what clothes are washed in. My 10-3-4-5 is sometimes used in making fences. My 1-6-7 is used in making pans. KATIE.

EASY ILLUSTRATED PUZZLE.

WITH letters of a compound word describing the central illustration, spell five words that will properly describe the smaller pictures.



RIDDLE.

I AM water, yet made of hard metal; a season, and a help in measuring seasons; made of part of a tree, and of a whole sapling; and where the fawn leaps, there am I. T.

ABRIDGMENTS.

THE removed letters, when arranged in the order here given, spell the name of a famous American writer.

1. Behead a covering of a head, and leave atmosphere. 2. Behead reverential fear and leave a pronoun. 3. Behead at what time and leave a fowl. 4. Behead a brier and leave the pride of a rhinoceros. 5. Behead a term applied to the measurement of a horse's height and leave a conjunction. 6. Syncopate a garment and leave an animal. 7. Curtail a fruit and leave a vegetable. 8. Syncopate a sovereign and leave cost. 9. Syncopate contemptible and leave a human being.

ST. ANDREW'S CROSS OF DIAMONDS.

THIS cross is formed of five diamonds, as indicated by the diagram, the outer letters of the central diamond being used also in forming the adjacent diamonds, which would be incomplete without them. Each of the four points of the central diamond is used three times; once as a point of its own block of stars, and once as a point of each of the two neighboring diamonds. The words of each diamond read the same across as up and down.

I. Upper Left-hand Diamond. 1. In discover. 2. The name of a fairy-queen. 3. A man's name. 4. An insect. 5. In combat.

II. Upper Right-hand Diamond. 1. In rubber. 2. A meadow. 3. To commence. 4. Purpose. 5. In continue.

III. Central Diamond. 1. In caliber. 2. A period of time. 3. A color. 4. Dread. 5. In diamond.

IV. Lower Left-hand Diamond. 1. In defensible. 2. A fur tippet. 3. A goal. 4. Dexterity. 5. In dwindle.

V. Lower Right-hand Diamond. 1. In union. 2. The Greek name of Aurora. 3. Eminent. 4. Fixed. 5. In ended. DYCIE.

EASY HOUR-GLASS.

CENTRALS: A beautiful fowl. ACROSS: 1. A beast of prey. 2. To make happy. 3. Mournful. 4. One hundred. 5. Watery vapor. 6. Adorns. 7. The Christian name of Mr. Micawber. H. G.

ANAGRAMS, FOR OLDER PUZZLERS.

IN each of the following problems, a definition of the original word follows immediately the anagram made with its letters.

1. SAD show; darkness. 2. A true sign; a written name. 3. Card needs it; aids to identification. 4. No vile rout; violent change. 5. I storm a pit; an estimable quality. 6. A try for more; calculated to improve.

THREE EASY WORD-SQUARES.

I. 1. A shell-fish. 2. A kind of grain. 3. 4840 square yards. 4. An edible root. II. 1. To plunge. 2. A useful metal. 3. Empty. 4. Terminations. III. 1. A small lake. 2. Above. 3. A river in Russia. 4. A dull color. F. A. B.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE APRIL NUMBER.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

"Proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in everything."
Shakspeare's Sonnets, No. xcviii.

RIMLESS WHEEL. All Fools. 1. Amen. 2. Loan. 3. Lean. 4. Fawn. 5. Omen. 6. Oven. 7. Lion. 8. Soon.

QUINCUNX. Across: 1. Pray. 2. Rat. 3. Tire. 4. Ode. 5. Seer.

PI. Drive the nail aright, boys,
Hit it on the head;
Strike with all your might, boys,
Ere the time has fled.
Lessons you 've to learn, boys,
Study with a will;
They who reach the top, boys,
First must climb the hill.

FOUR EASY WORD-SQUARES. I. 1. Hour. 2. Ogre. 3. Urge. 4. Reel. II. 1. Soap. 2. Once. 3. Acme. 4. Peep. III. 1. Over. 2. Vine. 3. Ends. 4. Rest. IV. 1. Gnat. 2. Nine. 3. Anna. 4. Team.

ARITHMETICAL PUZZLES. ADDITION: 1. Redstart. 2. Tomahawk. 3. Catacomb. 4. Capsize. SUBTRACTION: 1. Defaulter. 2. Canister. 3. Defilement. 4. Carpenter. MULTIPLICATION: 1. Tartar. 2. Chowchow. 3. Bonbon. 4. So-so. DIVISION: 1. Dodo. 2. Sing Sing. 3. Aye-aye. 4. Motmot.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA. Plutarch.

OUTLINE PUZZLE. April fool.

CENTRAL SYNCOPATIONS AND REMAINDERS. April fool. 1. BeAds. 2. CoPal. 3. FiRst. 4. BaIrn. 5. TiLes. 6. DeFer. 7. MoOre. 8. DrOop. 9. HoLly.

DROP-LETTER PUZZLE. Panama Canal.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC. Primals: Easter. Finals: Sunday. Cross-words: 1. EaveS. 2. AdieU. 3. SpurN. 4. TimiD. 5. ExtrA. 6. RallY.

EASTER CARD. All hail the Easter morn!

PROGRESSIVE ENIGMA. Palestine.——CHARADE. Abbotsford.

DIAMOND. 1. L. 2. LEa. 3. LeAns. 4. LeaNder. 5. AnDre. 6. SEe. 7. R.

DOUBLE DIAGONALS. 1. Dream. 2. Helen. 3. Utter. 4. Peter. 5. Rover.

THE names of those who sent solutions of March puzzles will be found at the end of the "Letter-Box" in the present number.

SOLUTIONS of the Anglo-Chinese Story were received before March 20, from Katie Payne—Herman A. Vedder—A. G. Gracie—Fordyce Aimée Warden—Juliette S. Ryall—J. O.—Henry K. White, Jr.—Bessie S. Hosmer—Mary R. Magruder—Minnie Glück—Margaret Howard—Bessie Finch—Bertha Stevens—Norman J. McMillan—Barclay A. Scovil—Jessie R. C.—Lizzie M. Boardman—George A. Corson—An Old Subscriber—Helen L. Woods—Albert F. Pasquay—M. McLure—F. R. Gilbert—Bessie Embler—Robert A. Gaily—Lucy B. Shaw—Susie Goff.