



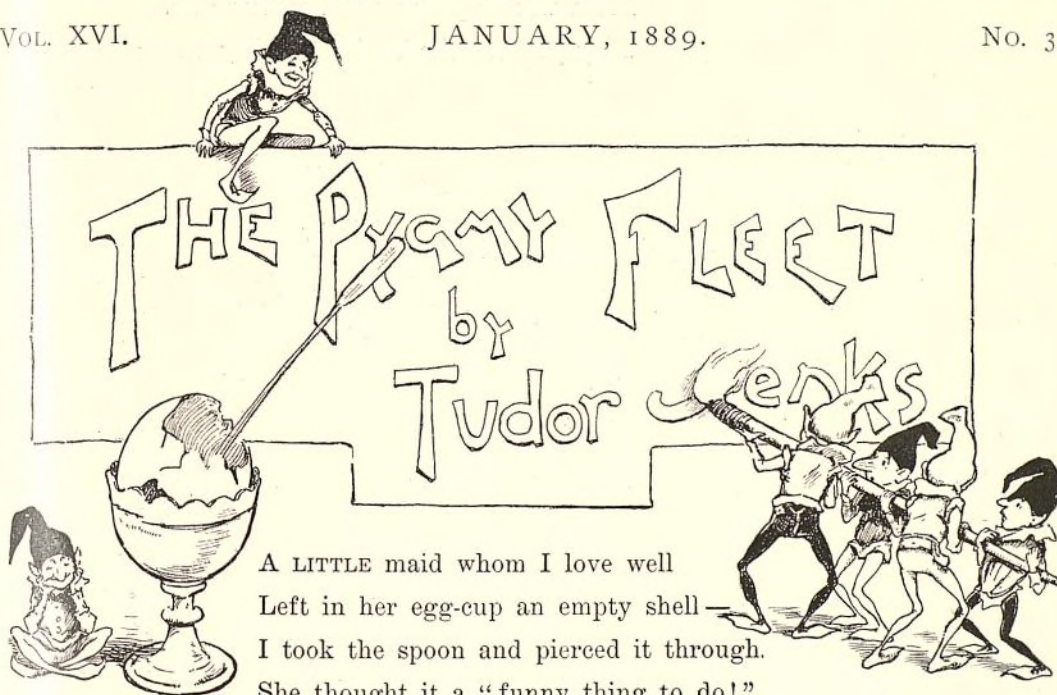
"REMEMBER THE TALE OF THE PYGMY FLEET."

ST. NICHOLAS.

VOL. XVI.

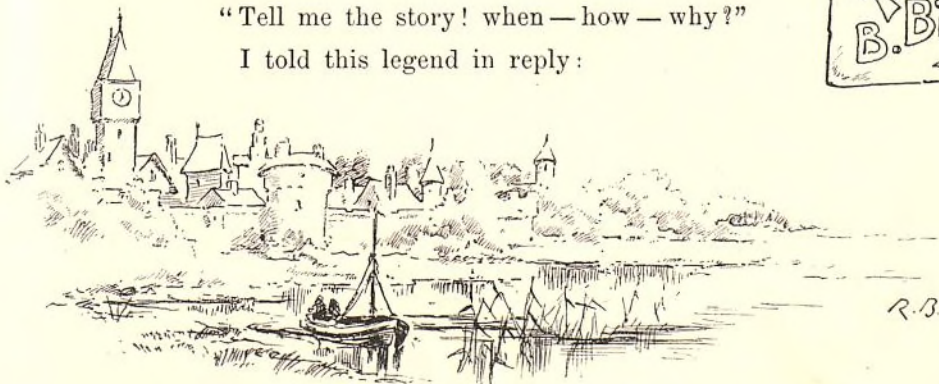
JANUARY, 1889.

No. 3.



A LITTLE maid whom I love well
Left in her egg-cup an empty shell —
I took the spoon and pierced it through.
She thought it a "funny thing to do!"
But I said, "It is best to be discreet;
Remember the tale of the Pygmy Fleet!
I shall obey the King's Decree."

Up she clambered to my knee —
"Tell me the story! when — how — why?"
I told this legend in reply:

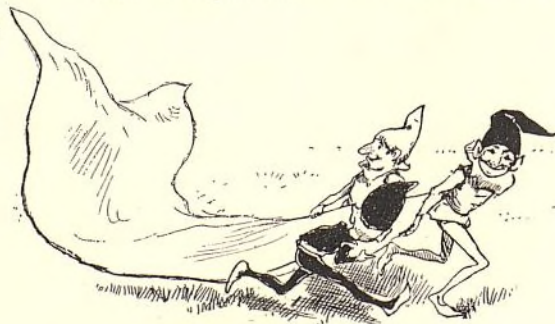


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Meddlesome pygmies long ago
 Swarmed in a little kingdom so
 That night or day there was no rest
 From willful prank and heedless jest.
 They pinched the babies till they cried;



The hives they robbed, the bees defied;
 They stole the clothes hung out on lines,
 And changed about the merchants' signs.

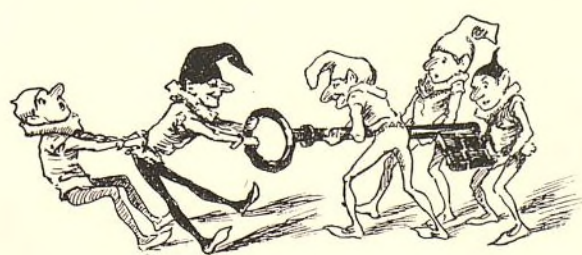
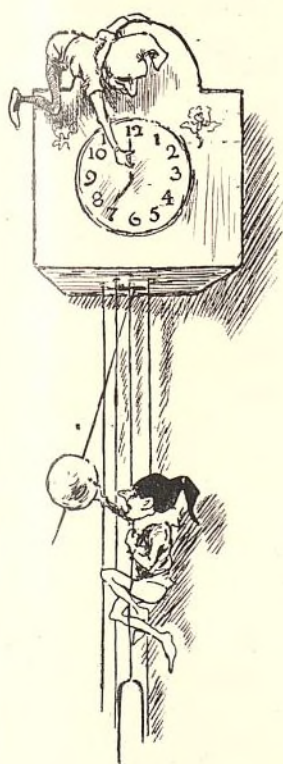


They turned the guide-boards all astray,
To make poor travelers lose their way;



Ten times a day they stopped the clocks,
And stole the door-keys from the locks.
To tell you half the tricks they played
I fear would tire my little maid.

R.B.





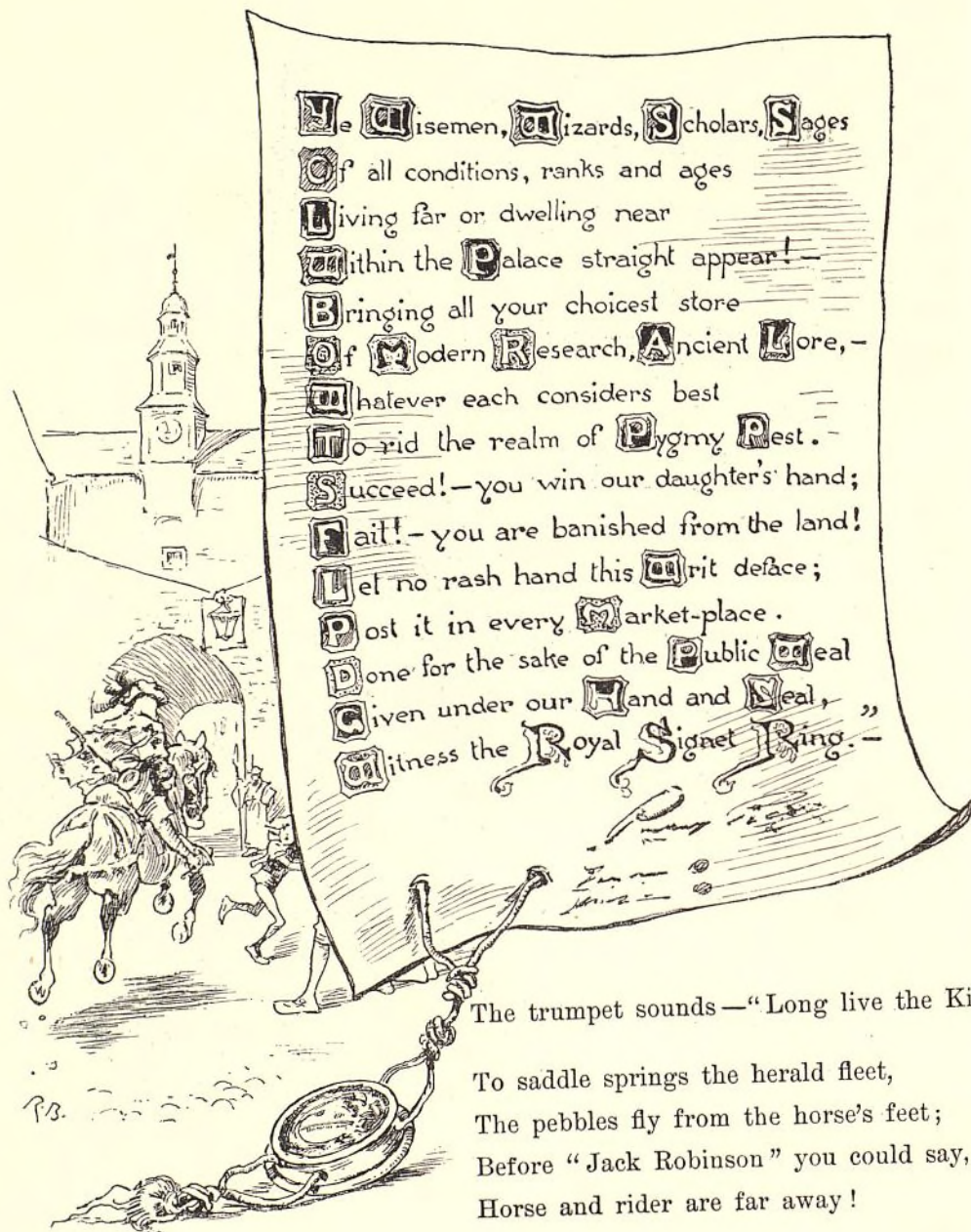
At length their impudent assurance
Exceeded even saints' endurance.
Rich and poor o'erwhelmed the King
With bulky rolls, petitioning
For quick relief — no matter how !
Mobs were formed and raised a row
Which might have led to revolutions
Threatening ancient institutions !

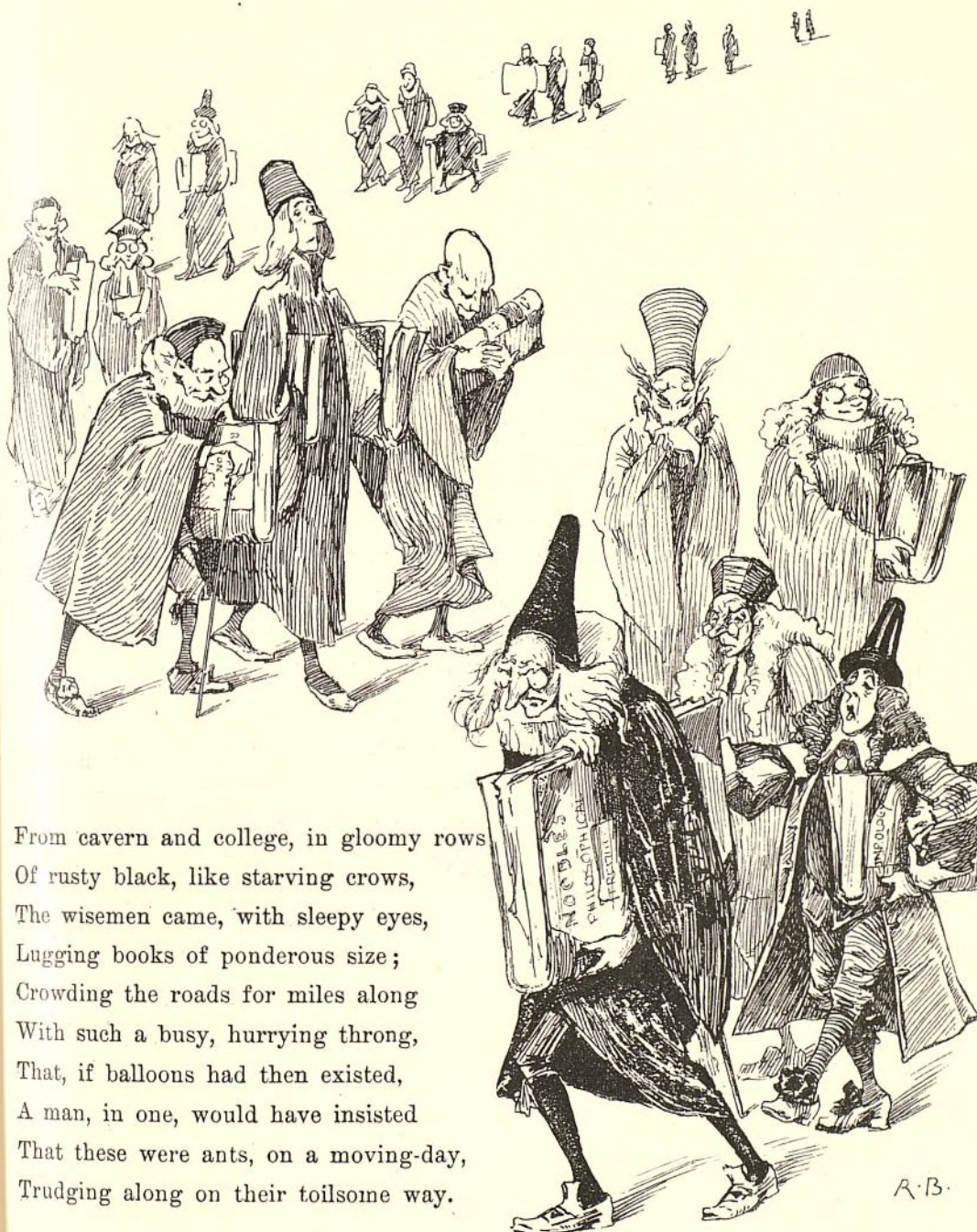


The monarch, seeing they were serious,
Sent decrees in terms imperious,
By chosen heralds riding fast
Who read them thus, to the trumpet's blast:



"Oyez!—Oyez! Now draw ye near,
The sovereign's gracious words to hear!





From cavern and college, in gloomy rows
Of rusty black, like starving crows,
The wisemen came, with sleepy eyes,
Lugging books of ponderous size;
Crowding the roads for miles along
With such a busy, hurrying throng,
That, if balloons had then existed,
A man, in one, would have insisted
That these were ants, on a moving-day,
Trudging along on their toilsome way.

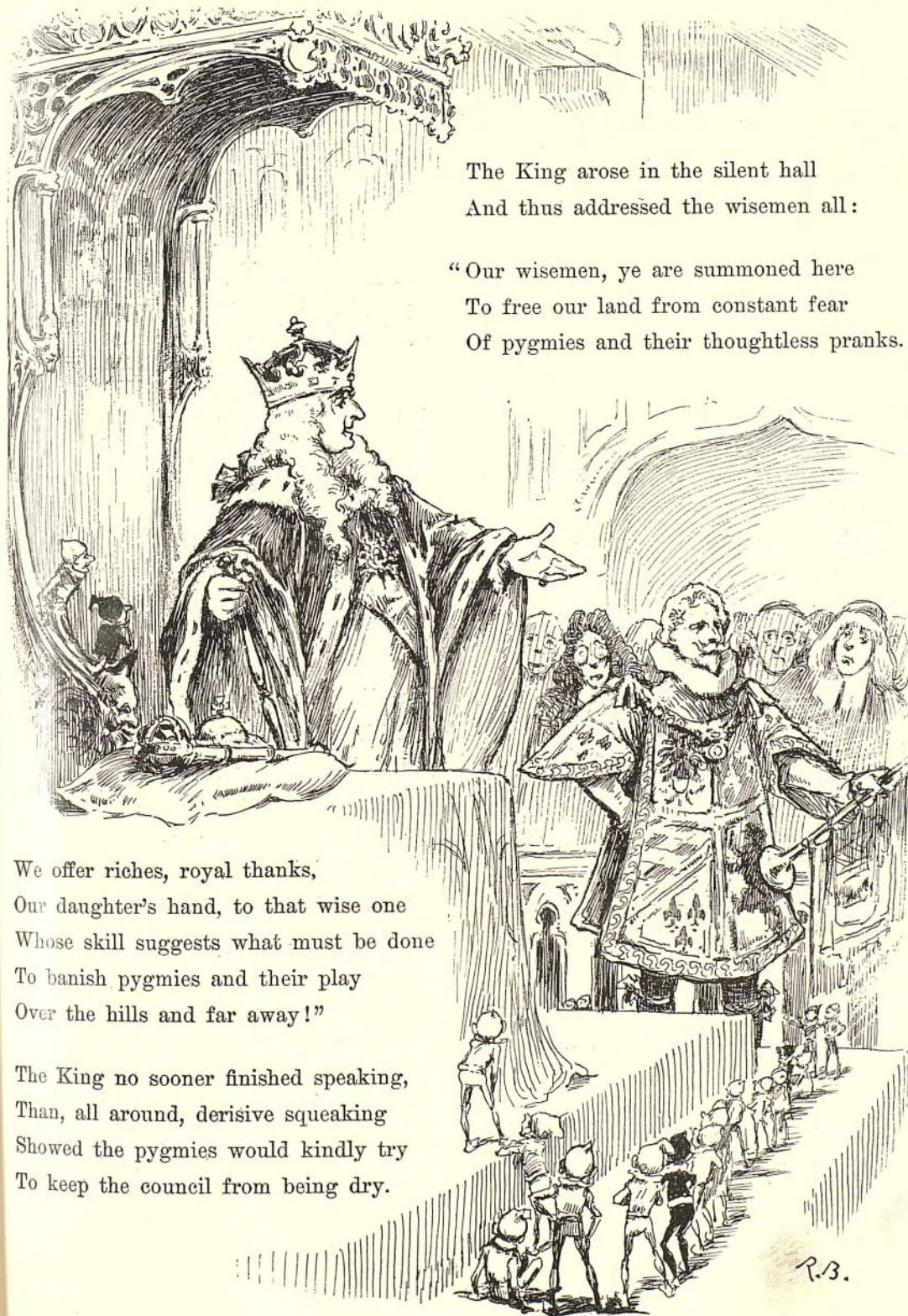
A.B.

Throughout the realm there was no quiet;
 Dispute and argument ran riot;
 They carried their squabbling and their malice
 Even into the royal palace!



But when one dotard with the gout,
 Though very lame, walked quickly out
 (His speed was great to the palace yard
 By the zealous help of a royal guard),
 And when, despite his snowy hair,
 He was banished, then and there—
 Strange to say, they ceased their din;
 You might have heard a falling pin!

R.B.



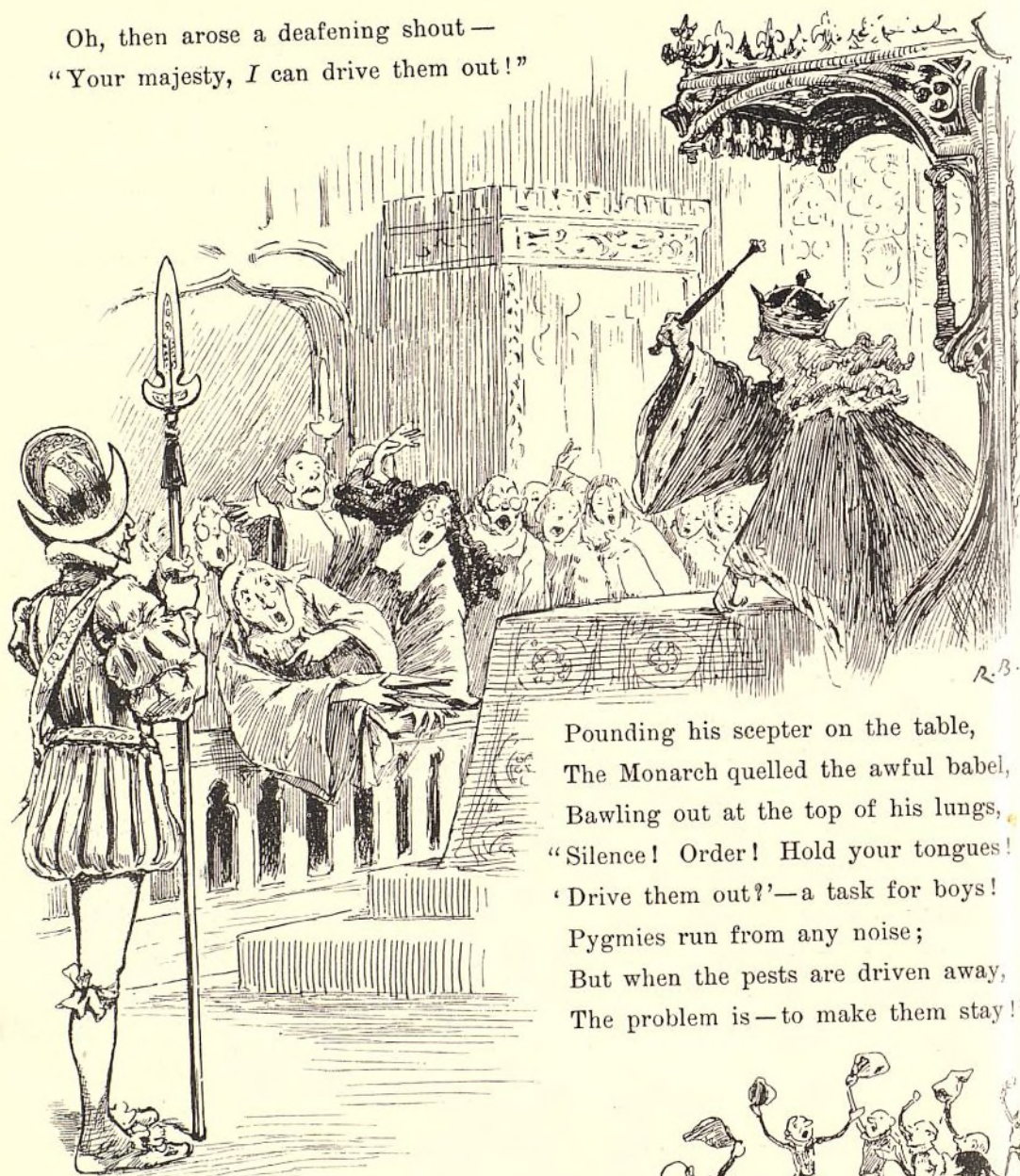
The King arose in the silent hall
And thus addressed the wisemen all:

“Our wisemen, ye are summoned here
To free our land from constant fear
Of pygmies and their thoughtless pranks.

We offer riches, royal thanks,
Our daughter's hand, to that wise one
Whose skill suggests what must be done
To banish pygmies and their play
Over the hills and far away!”

The King no sooner finished speaking,
Than, all around, derisive squeaking
Showed the pygmies would kindly try
To keep the council from being dry.

Oh, then arose a deafening shout —
 “Your majesty, *I* can drive them out!”



Pounding his scepter on the table,
 The Monarch quelled the awful babel,
 Bawling out at the top of his lungs,
 “Silence! Order! Hold your tongues!
 ‘Drive them out?’—a task for boys!
 Pygmies run from any noise;
 But when the pests are driven away,
 The problem is—to make them stay!”

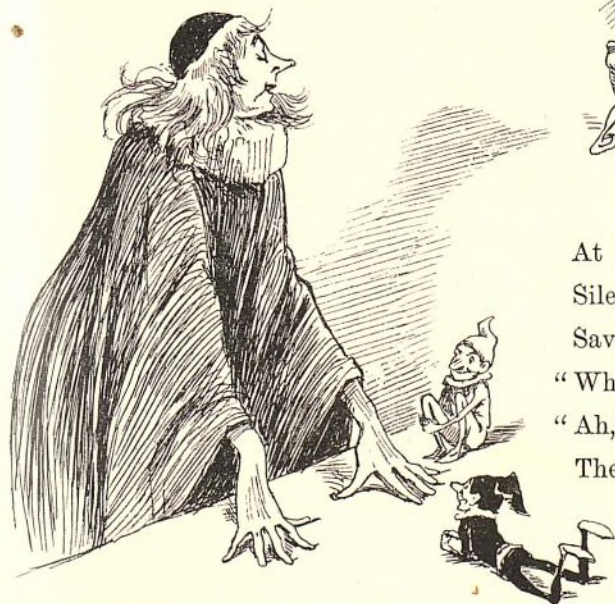
(The pygmies here renewed their jeers
 And gave three faint, sarcastic cheers.)





According to age the sages spoke
In senile wheeze or youthful croak,
Advising horseshoes, tolling bells,
Ancient charms, old witches' spells,
Hazel rods and boiling water,
Or, "seventh son of seventh daughter,"
Would surely keep the pygmies quiet
If His Majesty would but try it.

Pygmies clinging to roof and walls
Received these plans with sneering squalls:
Laughed at horseshoes, chuckled at bells,
Mocked the charms and mimicked the spells;
Crying, "Louder!"—"Slower!"—"Faster!"
Pelting them all with bits of plaster!



At last the youngest sage had spoken
Silence reigned for a time unbroken,
Save that a pygmy called aloud:
"Who ever saw such a stupid crowd!"
"Ah," said another, "they 'll feel sick;
They 'll be banished pretty quick!"

73.

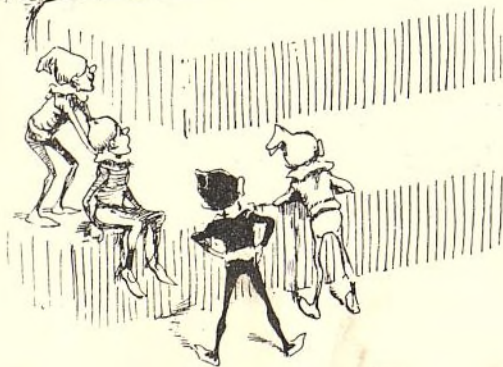
In richest robes with rubies blazing
 The Princess sat. The sages, gazing
 (Each one sure that he would win her),
 Forgot that it was time for dinner.

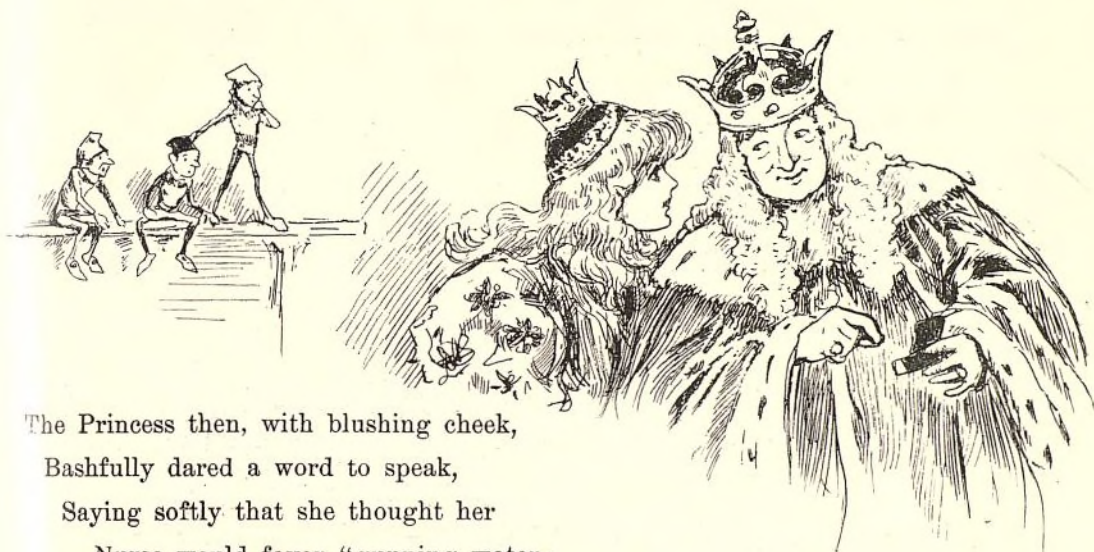


Not so the King. "These plans are old—
 Our royal dinner 's getting cold;
 Unless some new device we see,
 Quick as a wink you 'll banished be."

The pygmies cried with cruel joy:
 "You 'll be quite right, my royal boy!"

Despairing silence, like a pall,
 Settled on the wisemen all.

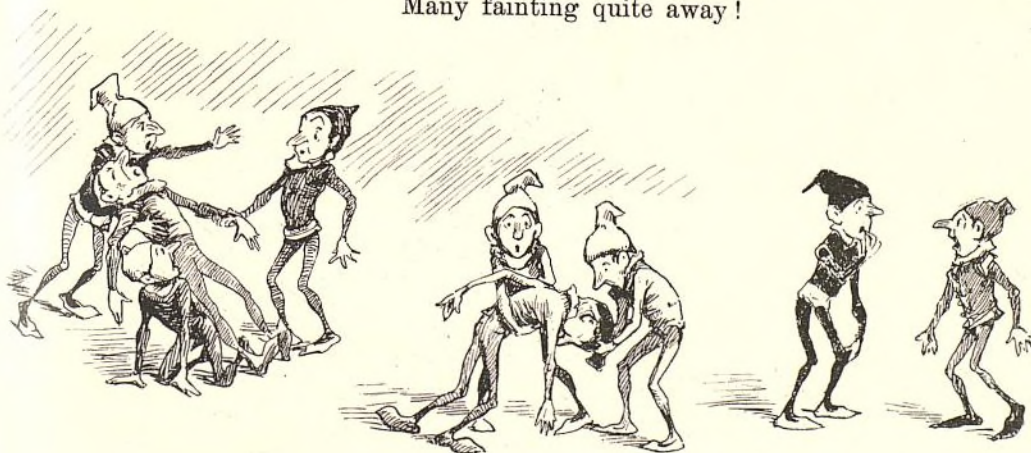




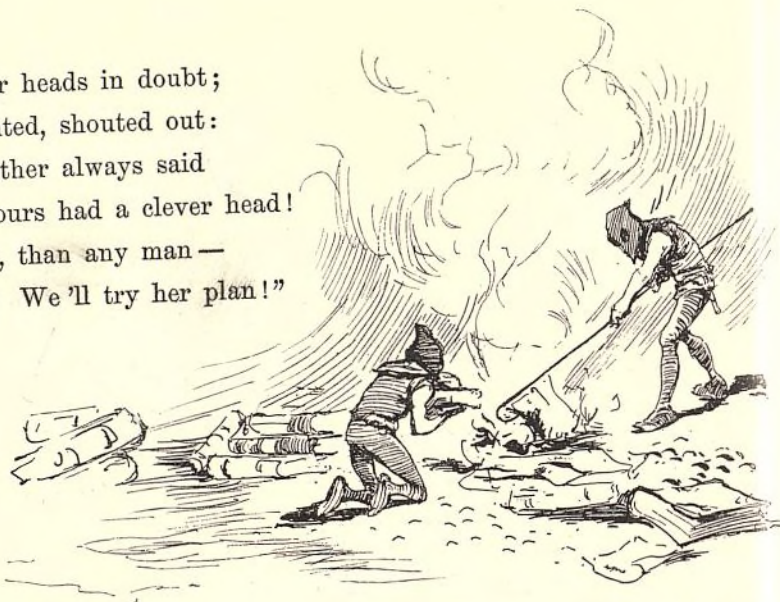
The Princess then, with blushing cheek,
 Bashfully dared a word to speak,
 Saying softly that she thought her
 Nurse would favor "running water ;
 For pygmies, fays, and elves, it seems,
 Can not cross the running streams.
 Perhaps a ditch, if deep and wide,
 Would guard the land on every side."

R.B.

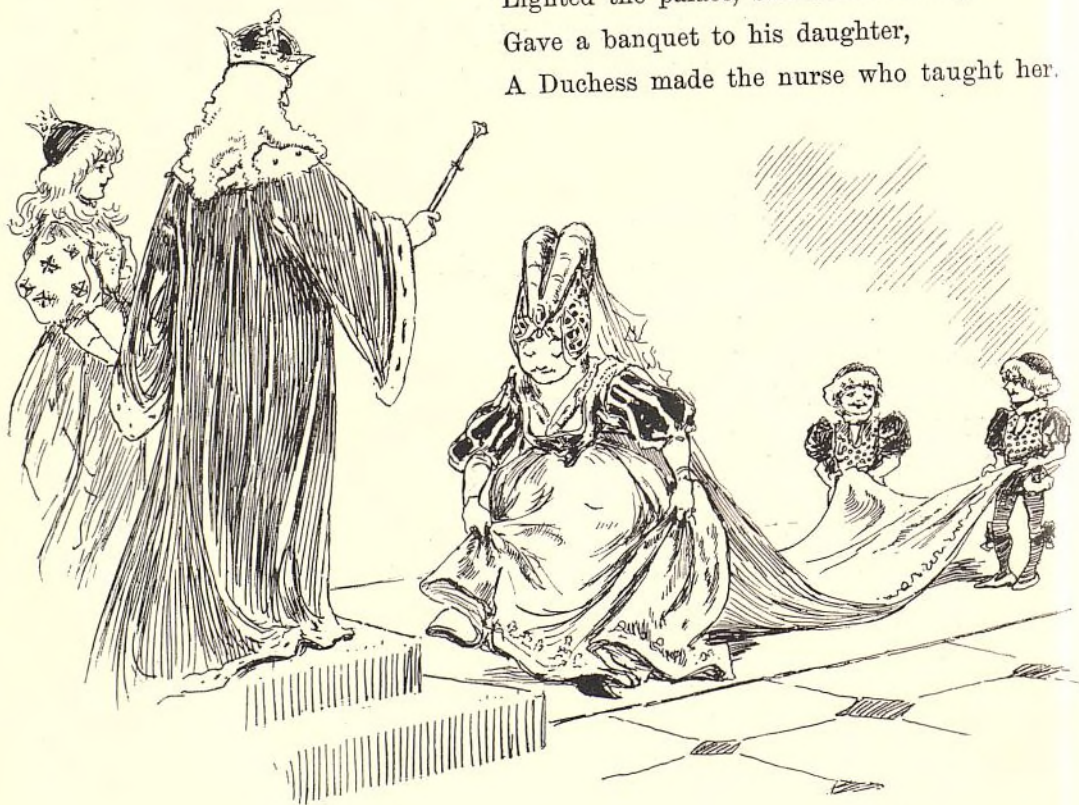
Here the pygmies showed dismay,
 Many fainting quite away !



Sages shook their heads in doubt;
 The King, delighted, shouted out:
 "Your sainted mother always said
 That nurse of yours had a clever head!
 She 's wiser, far, than any man —
 Council 's over! We 'll try her plan!"



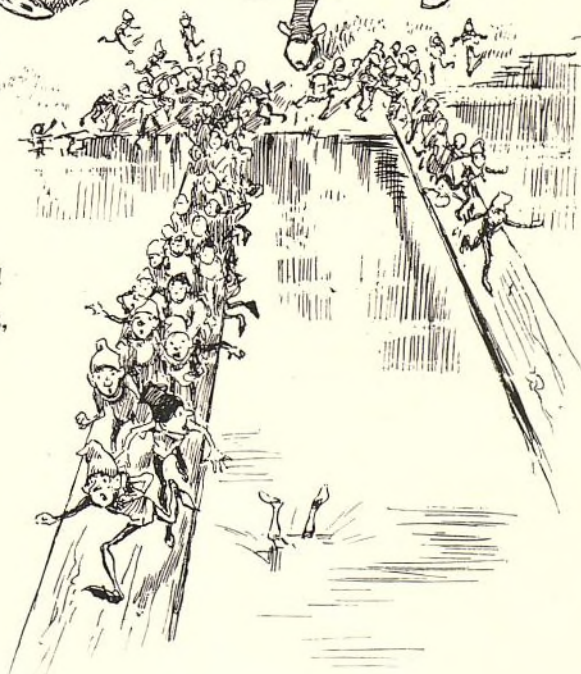
He banished the sages, burned their books,
 Lighted the palace, summoned cooks,
 Gave a banquet to his daughter,
 A Duchess made the nurse who taught her.



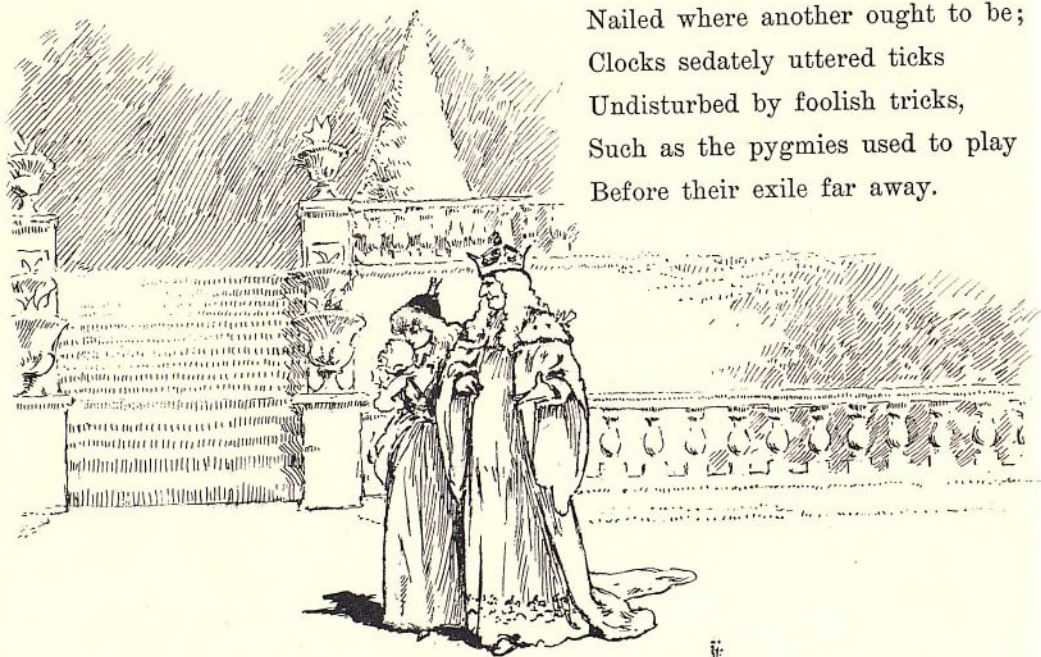


R.B.

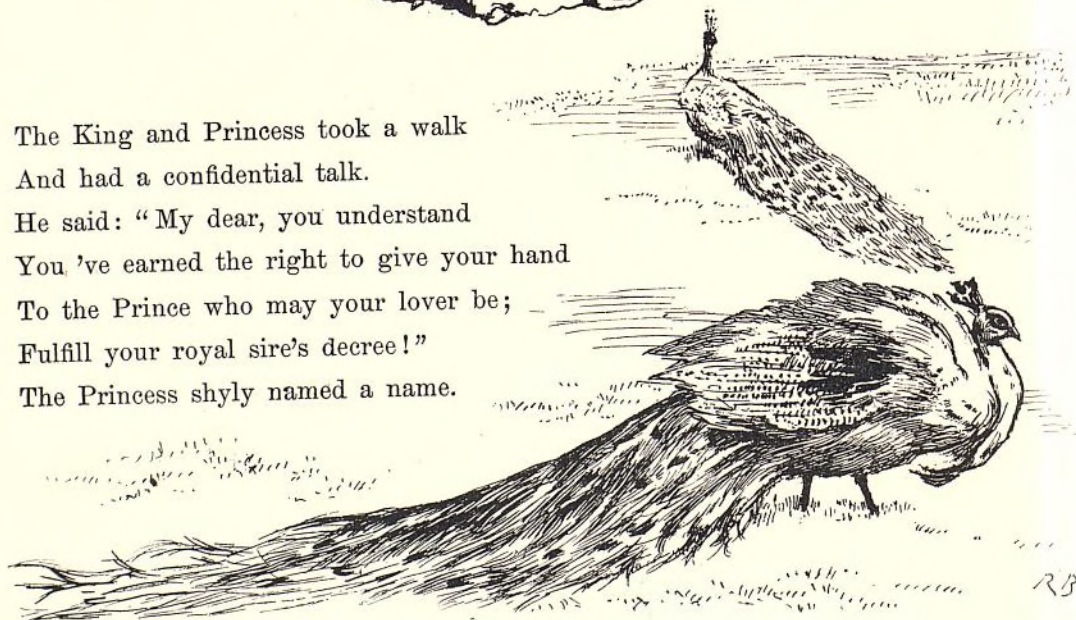
The ditch was dug, both deep and wide,
 Around the land on every side,
 In which a current flowing clear
 Came from a rapid river near.
 Then boards were laid across the ditch,
 Making bridges over which
 Pygmies could cross when driven away;
 These removed — why, there they 'd stay!
 Then old and young, with yell and shout,
 Beating pans, soon drove them out.
 Over the bridges the pygmies ran
 Squealing, as pigs and pygmies can;
 Over they went like frightened mice —
 Up went the bridges in a trice!
 In vain the pygmies raged and cried,
 They could not cross the flowing tide!



Within the living water's charm
 The realm remained secure from harm.
 Babies led unruffled lives;
 Bees enriched unruffled hives;
 Merchants, now, no sign could see
 Nailed where another ought to be;
 Clocks sedately uttered ticks
 Undisturbed by foolish tricks,
 Such as the pygmies used to play
 Before their exile far away.

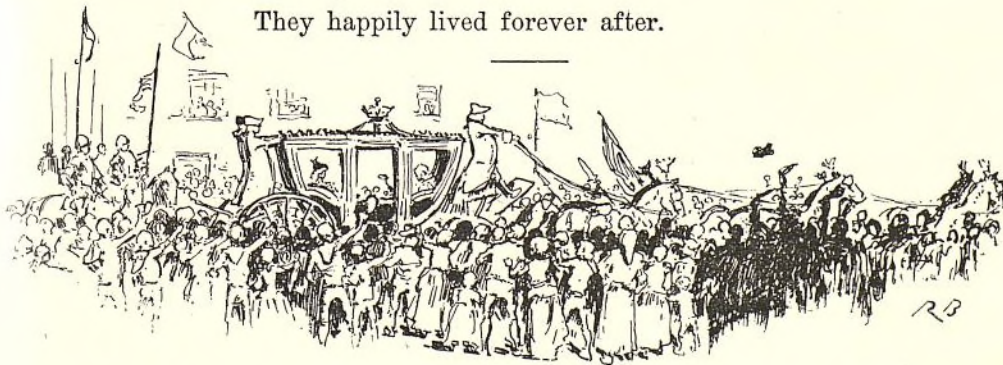


The King and Princess took a walk
 And had a confidential talk.
 He said: "My dear, you understand
 You've earned the right to give your hand
 To the Prince who may your lover be;
 Fulfill your royal sire's decree!"
 The Princess shyly named a name.





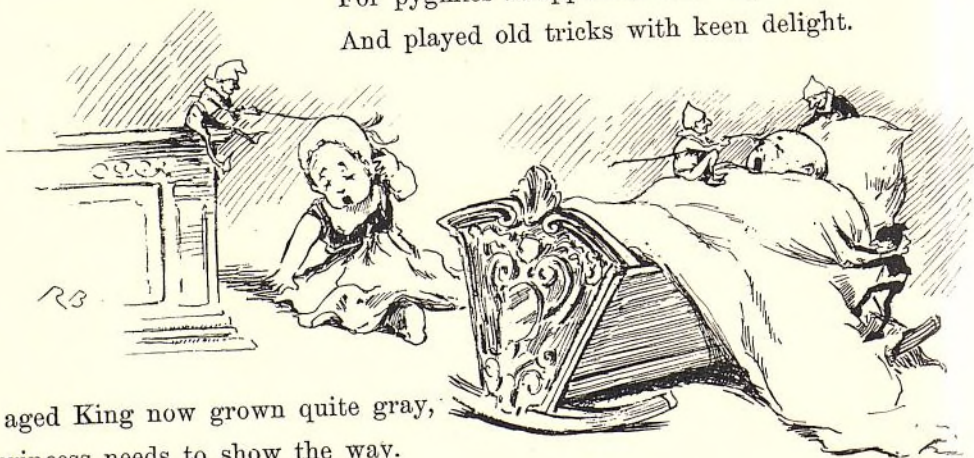
—A charming Prince to the palace came,
 Followed by nobles of high degree,
 In great procession, grand to see.
 A wedding took place, with joy and laugh-
 ter,—
 They happily lived forever after.



In restful peace for many years
 The people all forgot their fears.
 Pygmies' pranks were told as jokes
 By patriarchs to younger folks.

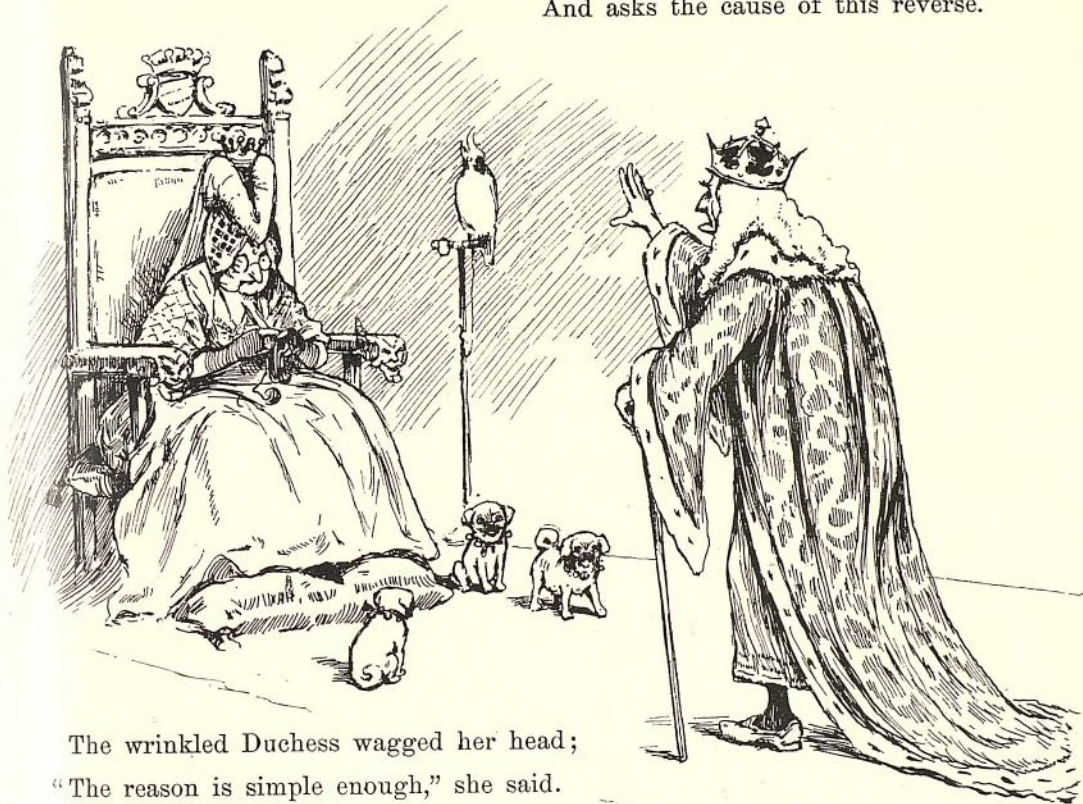


But, alas!—one day in the finest weather
 The babies' babies howled together!
 For pygmies re-appeared that night
 And played old tricks with keen delight.



The aged King now grown quite gray,
 No princess needs to show the way.

He seeks Her Grace (the former nurse)
And asks the cause of this reverse.

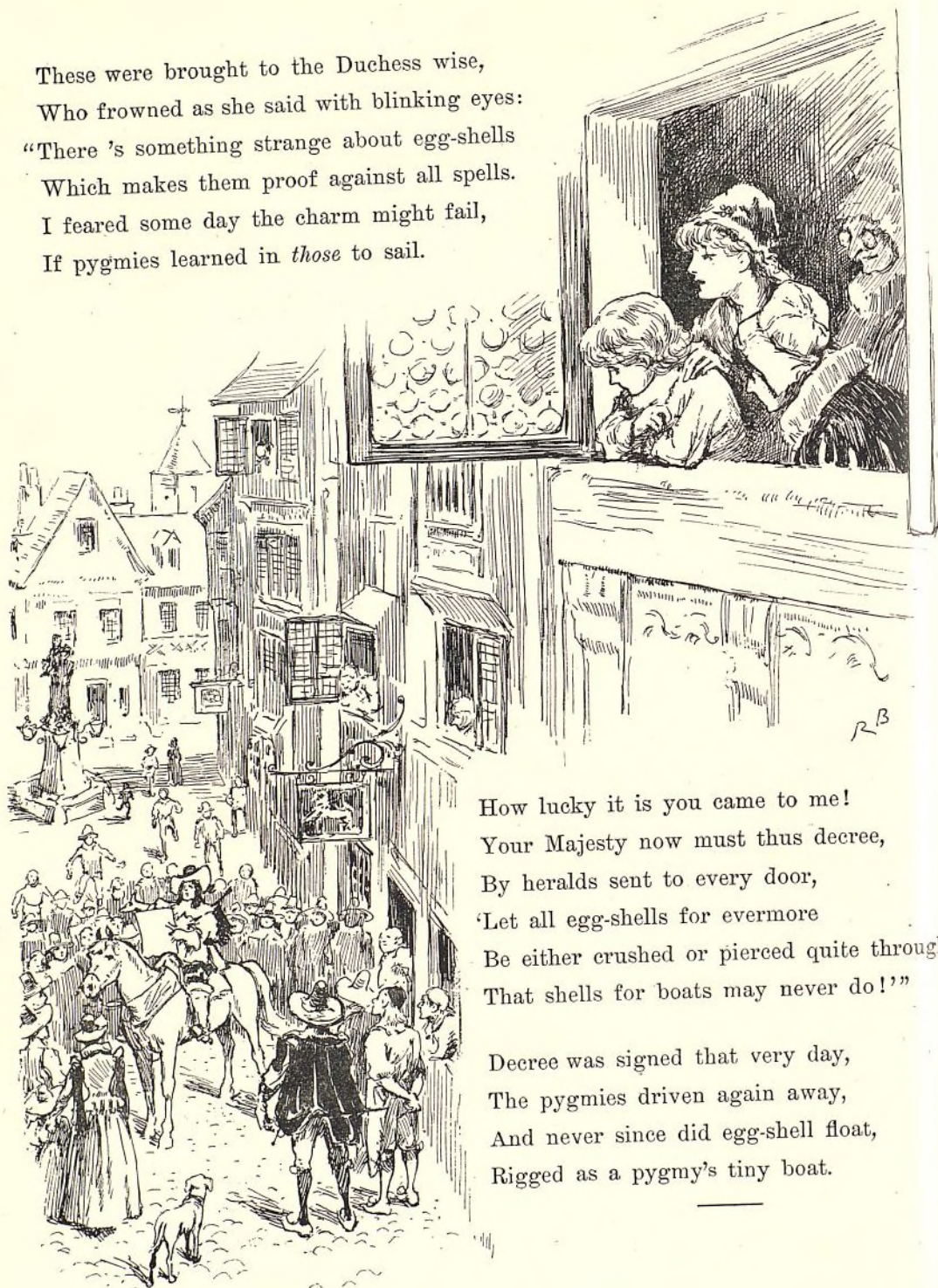


The wrinkled Duchess wagged her head;
"The reason is simple enough," she said.
"Go search along the ditch's side;
You 'll see how pygmies cross the tide!"

Pages run with twinkling legs
And find the empty shells of eggs,
Each equipped like a dainty boat,—
A fairy racing shell afloat!

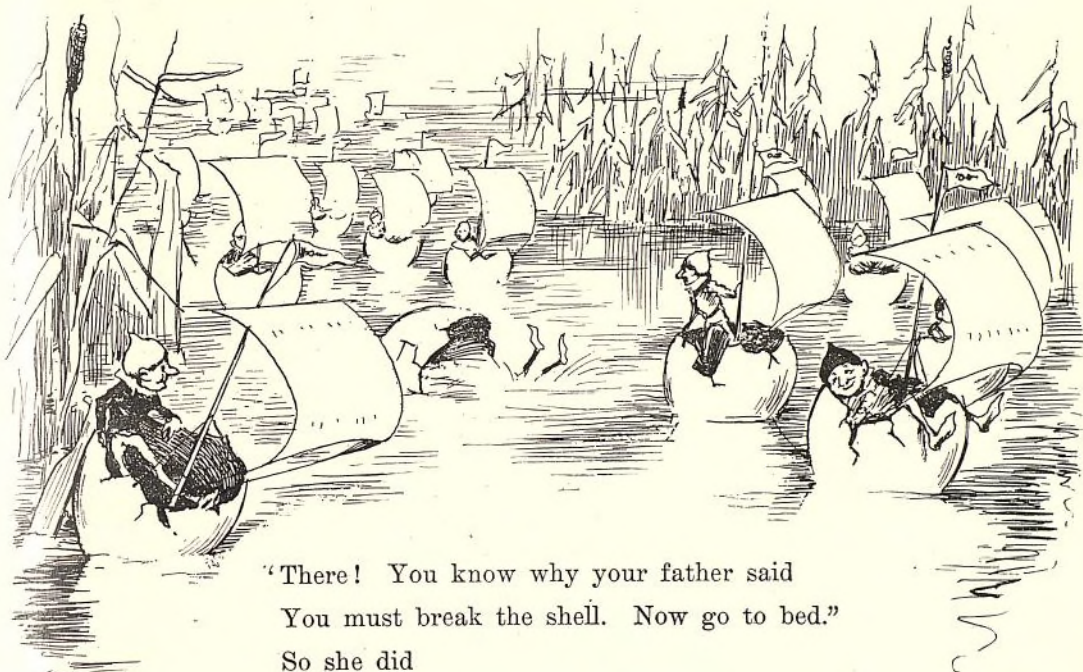


These were brought to the Duchess wise,
 Who frowned as she said with blinking eyes:
 "There 's something strange about egg-shells
 Which makes them proof against all spells.
 I feared some day the charm might fail,
 If pygmies learned in *those* to sail.

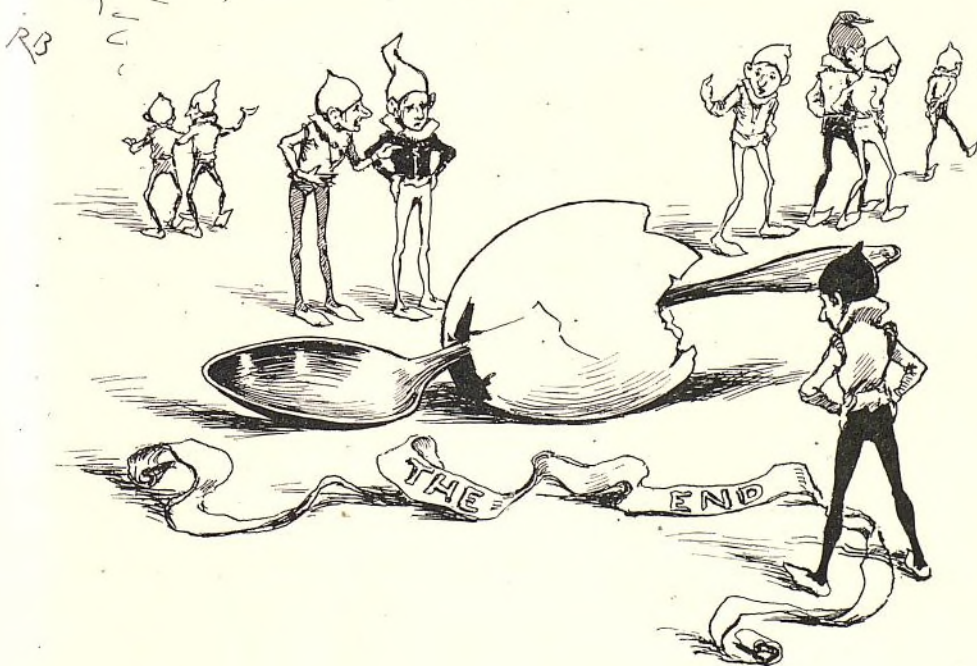


How lucky it is you came to me!
 Your Majesty now must thus decree,
 By heralds sent to every door,
 'Let all egg-shells for evermore
 Be either crushed or pierced quite through,
 That shells for boats may never do!'"

Decree was signed that very day,
 The pygmies driven again away,
 And never since did egg-shell float,
 Rigged as a pygmy's tiny boat.



"There! You know why your father said
 You must break the shell. Now go to bed."
 So she did
 As she was bid,
 And dreams of pygmies filled her head.



THE BELLS OF STE. ANNE.

BY MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD.

CHAPTER III.

"GERVAS" MAKES A MISTAKE.

WITHOUT consciously choosing either end of the road, Alvine ran on toward Ste. Anne. The rain slackened, but it was so dark she once came down the slope against a fence, and once fell over a wayside trough, the laundry-trough of some peacefully sleeping family. Her cautious voice sought Bruno with repeated calls. The road suggested rather than outlined its damp gray track to her strained sight, and when Alvine had blundered along and in zigzag lines across it until she panted, it seemed best to get under shelter again and wait until morning to find Bruno.

The stone ruin was left behind. And she preferred even waking some family to going back there.

The masses of unseen things around her might be houses or barns or foliage. Darkness makes prisoners of us without any walls. It stands us literally on our heads in the void, inverting our perceptions.

Alvine thought she was climbing a steeper grade of the way when she ran against one of those slat fences linked together by withes, so common on the Beaupré road. But as a fence was a clew she needed, she traced it along, hand over hand, until it yielded and gaped where there was evidently a gate. To insure herself against wandering out of the gate again, she closed it behind her. The stir of wind and pit-pat of ceasing rain did not cover the oozy sound of Alvine's foot in the sod. A snarling growl began very close to her, she could not tell in what direction. Afraid of being seized by a strange dog, she called out appeasing words and ran into something which crashed. But a strong mouth nipped her, and her cries were piteous for two or three minutes until a disturbed trampling answered; light broke through the windows of a house in front of her and the door opened.

Crowding their heads outside the door, with a candle between them, appeared a fat woman and lean, black-bearded man. Though so terrified, Alvine noticed it was the black-bearded man she had seen in the dog-wagon.

"Oh, monsieur," she cried, "it must be your dog that is biting me!"

"Gervas, let go thy hold!" shouted the man; and Alvine felt a welcome relaxing of the grip in which she was held.

The woman also made exclamation, and cried: "Whose lost child are you?"

"Go back to thy bed, Gervas," admonished the man, shaking his head and candle at the dog. "You see no difference between hog flesh and human, heh?"

Gervas, the mistaken Newfoundland, having acted with the best intentions, answered by a low growl. He felt injustice. Still, he was willing to make amends on his part, and wagged his tail at Alvine since she found favor with his family; then retreating under the high gallery which ran along the front of the house, and on which Alvine had upset one of a row of geranium-pots, he curled down again in the comfortable nest he had been abused for leaving.

"You see there the steps," said the man, showing Alvine an ascending flight at the end of the gallery. So she entered the house, and when the partly clothed pair had set right their geranium-pot, they also came in and closed the door.

She was a limp, muddy girl, and her braids hung raveled down her back, quite unlike the tidy pilgrim who had lunched by the roadside; but the man now recalled her.

"Why did you stay out in the storm, made-moiselle?" he inquired severely. "I could have brought you to the Mother Ursule as I came by."

"I ran into that old ruined house, monsieur, when it began to rain. I do not know the Beaupré road — I was born on the Chaudière."

"And where did he bite thee?" queried Mother Ursule, directly, turning her ghastly visitor toward the candle on the table.

"He bit my ankle, madame."

In a chair with straight back and legs, which was properly weighted to the floor by bars of wood forming its base, and in fact looked like a chair of another century, Alvine was placed while Mother Ursule stripped down the stocking to look at her ankle.

Gervas had seized half of it in his mouth, but as he held it less fiercely than he might have done, it was bleeding only in the sockets his teeth had left.

Mother Ursule flung up her hands. With outcry and waddle—for, like all middle-aged French women of her class, she put on fat with years and was as shapeless a mass as one of her feather-beds—she brought soothing grease and cotton rags, and after washing bound it carefully up.

Her husband retreated into a kind of sleeping-closet, where he sat on the side of his bed, his elbows resting on his knees.

"Mademoiselle, I beg of you to pardon Gervas," he said.

"Monsieur, the dog is not to blame; it is myself."

"Gervas is the best-mannered lad between here and the Saguenay. He must have been dreaming of pigs, mademoiselle—Mother Blanchet's pigs. They come down-hill and drop into our garden, and I never have to turn my head from the anvil when I see them. Gervas attends to that branch of the business. He is a good son."

"Sore pilgrimage will you make on this foot, my child," grunted Mother Ursule, who knew most wayfarers along that road to be pilgrims, "unless you stay with us and heal your hurt where you got it. Monsieur Pelletier may make his excuses for that hairy bébé, that dirt-spreading Gervas of his, but for myself, I will take an oven-stick and pound the beast in the morning. Not to know the difference of smell between pigs and pilgrims!"

"But so well he draws a wagon," Alvine put to the credit of Gervas.

"Is it not so?" exclaimed Pelletier. "I could load his wagon with all the hay I raise, and Gervas would trot off with it and never know it. But Mother Ursule has no love for that child. She sat down on his wagon once, and Gervas laid himself flat upon the ground."

"He hath reason to flatten himself on the ground before me," said Mother Ursule. "Great paws of him that mark my floors! How long have you been on your way, my child? And have they much wool in the Chaudière valley now?"

"I came not directly from the Chaudière valley, madame. It is from Quebec. My sister and I are in service there, for our father has made his choice."

"Ah, ah, ah," said Pelletier, with perfect comprehension.

"Ah, ah, ah," said Mother Ursule, also with perfect comprehension.

CHAPTER IV.

A BUTTERFLY BEFORE THE WIND.

ALVINE rested with her hands in her lap, while Mother Ursule finished the bandaging. Her eyes,

grown recently used to more stately interiors, yet enjoyed tracing the white pine room from clean rafters to broad floor-boards. The walls were pine also, with no object to break their monotony of dove-tailed planks except some mottoes done in bad French and worsted.

"Ama
Bonne Maman."
"Respecte
Amour
Reconnaissance."

A stairway went up at one side of this room, and in the middle of the floor stood an oilcloth-covered table on which the light had been placed. An iron stove, as large as a furnace, was built into the wall between this room and another.

"My mistress and her family have gone to New Brunswick for the summer," explained Alvine, coming back with her eyes to the good-humored face of Mother Ursule; "and she gave me leave to make the good pilgrimage while our house is partly closed. But my brother is first to be found. Have you seen a tall boy, sixteen years old, who looks like a lumberman, pass on this road?"

"What is your name, mademoiselle?" inquired Pelletier.

"Alvine Charland, I am called. My brother's name is Bruno-Morel Charland. Monsieur and madame, he is the finest young man you ever saw. He went directly away to a lumber camp. It was in the autumn. And then we had no word from him all winter, except that he was to come back when the drive was over. I saw him this very night, madame." Alvine fixed her excited eyes on the matron. "He stood under a tree in that old house, and then was gone entirely. Monsieur, my brother was caught in a break-up of logs in the Ottawa river."

"Si—so!" ejaculated Pelletier.

"Yes, monsieur; it is six weeks ago."

"He has not been there ever since?" inquired Mother Ursule, with gentle caution.

"No, no, no, no, no, madame!"

Alvine spread her hands abroad with a sweeping double gesture, as a French girl does when she has some surprising story to tell.

"He was caught in a break-up at the Chaudière falls, and he was under the water no one knows how long. They could not find him. But, monsieur and madame, my brother was pulled out of the river by raftsmen."

"Cha—a!"* exclaimed Pelletier, using a word which he believed to be expressive English.

"Yes, certainly. And they tended him and brought him down the Ottawa. He was hurt about his head by the logs, madame, and is not like he was, monsieur. For Bruno is strong and

* "Pshaw!"

feels no sickness. But inside, madame,"—Alvine struck her fingers on her forehead,—“it made a confusion that drives him like a butterfly before the wind. The raftsmen said he was able to help them with the raft down the Ottawa, but he laughed, he

“Who brought you the news?” inquired Mother Ursule, standing up and resting her knuckles on her sides.

“It was a man who hauled in the lumber camp with Bruno-Morel. The 1st of June, and of July



“HE WAS UNDER THE WATER NO ONE KNOWS HOW LONG,” SAID ALVINE.

danced, he sang, he knew not where he was going. After he left the raft he was heard of in the woods of Maine, above Lake Megantic, and he was heard of near Ste. Anne de Beaupré.”

“Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes,” murmured Pelletier with sympathy.

also, brought no Bruno. Whenever we got leave, I took my sister Marcelline to watch the steamboats unload at Quebec docks. We saw a man there many times. He sat and saw all the boats. He heard us talk, and asked us if we were the sisters of Bruno-Morel. I told him we waited for

our brother, and asked him if he had seen Bruno come ashore.

"Monsieur," said Alvine with a gesture of astonishment, "he was at the Chaudière falls when it happened, and he had seen the raftsmen after Bruno left them. Yes, madame; and he had read in the English papers, for he speaks English better than French, and my brother had been printed about. The man read to us one paper, saying a boy had been seen singing and playing on the Beupré road who resembled the boy that had his head hurt at the Chaudière falls. He read, also, that such a boy was in an engineer's camp above Lake Megantic; for the man carried the papers in his pocket, and had carried them two weeks. He loved my brother. So Marcelline and I got news of Bruno-Morel."

"What will you do with the boy when you find him?" inquired Pelletier. "If his brains be hurt he will scarce turn himself to work; or he might serve awhile at my forge holding horse-shoes."

"And the hammer, also," hinted Mother Ursule, "while my husband smokes at the door."

"Our curé will take him to an asylum to be helped," replied Alvine. "I told our curé about Bruno."

"Yes, yes, yes, that will be a good thing," assented Pelletier.

"Shall I now make you some tea before you go to bed?" suggested Mother Ursule.

"No, no, no, madame. I thank you; no, no." Their guest forbade such extreme hospitality with a beseeching gesture. "I had my supper by the way, as monsieur saw."

"You will then have cream?" urged the house-mother, tantalizing a youthful appetite by that dainty dearest to a French stomach.

"Oh! — la crème," murmured Alvine. "Madame is too kind. La crème, madame — it is too much trouble!"

"See you, now," said Mother Ursule. She straightway entered a side room, and the tinkle of spring water could be heard while the door remained open, — spring water, which among the hills is an eternal rain condensed to one channel — rain shot through with sunshine, and radiating perpetual promises against drought.

Back with Mother Ursule into the lighted room came an odor unpleasant to most nostrils not French-Canadian. She carried in her hand a pint bowl wreathed around with flower designs and filled with a thick yellow mass which brought the brightness of anticipation into Alvine's face when it was set before her. The whole inclosed atmosphere freighted itself with the sourness of that cream. It had reached a stage of acidity which cream could hardly reach unassisted by French

skill; but one more thing was needed to make it the rich morsel Alvine desired, and Mother Ursule set down that thing from a cupboard in the wall: a saucer of black molasses, thick, and tasting medicinally.

Into this Alvine dipped a pewter teaspoon, transferring as much molasses as she thought proper to the bowl of cream. Then she stirred the black and yellow mixture with exact care, and began to eat like an epicure.

"Is it good?" queried Mother Ursule, assuming indifference, and asking the question as if duty compelled her to it.

"Oh, madame! this is the best cream I have had since I left the Chaudière!"

"Ah — ah!" responded the housewife in a gratified note. "The maisons de pension* send here from Ste. Anne's for my cream. They could use many times the quantity. It takes much cream to fill all the people who come and go there. I know how it should be prepared. Mother Blanchet up the mountain, — they buy her cream, also, when they can get no more of me; but I assure you, my child, it is not fit to eat; it hath no more taste to it than a sickening cup of milk fresh! Mother Blanchet would buy, with both her pigs, my skill with cream."

"And thou hast also a sister?" Pelletier put in between Alvine and the treatment of cream.

"Yes, monsieur. I have ten sisters, monsieur."

"All in Quebec?"

"No, no, no, monsieur. Did I not tell it is Marcelline only who remains near me? Though she is nurse in a family of tradespeople in the lower town, and my family live on the heights, we take our children and meet on Dufferin Terrace when the weather is fine. Marcelline is hardly twelve years old. My little sister can get a better place when she has more age."

"Could she not come with you on this pilgrimage?" inquired Mother Ursule.

"Madame, she has gone to Lake Megantic with her family, because they have relatives there. That was a wonderful thing for the lumberman to tell us Bruno had been seen in the Maine woods above Lake Megantic, when Marcelline was going directly there and could inquire after him! But, madame, since I have seen him to-night in the Beupré road, Marcelline need not search for him there."

The girl laid down her spoon before the cream was finished.

"Madame, how wet he will be! The rain ran down his cheeks!"

"That all right, that all right!" exclaimed Pelletier in English. And, dropping into his own language, he explained, "You can not hurt these

* Boarding-houses.

strong, huge boys. They will sleep in wet grass and wake laughing."

When Alvine had finished her cream her hostess took the candle and signed toward the pine stairway. She was very tired and anxious to lay her throbbing ankle in horizontal rest. So, gladly putting her hand on the balustrade and saying, "Good-night, monsieur," in response to the polite leave-taking of her host, she limped upstairs, after the toiling figure of Mother Ursule, to a bare chamber where a feather-bed awaited guests.

CHAPTER V.

THE POET'S CHILD.

LAKE MEGANTIC, winding among hills and forests, half turning river, and then repenting itself and spreading out again into lake, has a rudely built little town called Agnes on one of its bays. Agnes had sprung with toadstool speed beside a new railroad, which was penetrating beyond into the Maine woods. This railroad promised so to unite American and British interests that its reaching the boundary-line was made an occasion of on that hot July day which followed the storm on the Beupré road.

Excursion rates were given from all points along the route, to the boundary-line, and picnics lured the inhabitants of one village to spend their day in another. Men in public life, and others whose names were celebrated, had been asked to go to the boundary-line and make brief speeches on the occasion.

The train poured out nearly all its load at Agnes; for there, at the Lake Megantic dock, waited a wheezy steamer ready to overfreight itself with as many souls as would trust themselves to it, and sail-boats and row-boats beside. So many more people desired to go out on the blue water than desired to look at an unfinished iron track that it seemed the train must carry its speech-makers and officials to spout only to each other at the boundary-line. But Agnes' villagers themselves thronged into it, loading it well for its concluding run of fifteen miles.

Marcelline Charland had been waiting for this train. Her mistress let her buy an excursion ticket to the boundary-line, and she was going there to inquire after her brother.

Marcelline had very dim ideas of a boundary-line. She expected to find a populous encampment of laborers, and perhaps the engineer of the road holding Bruno in his safe grasp until she could come and claim him. Marcelline's print gown was fitted to her by a belt and yoke. She had an old-fashioned air, as if she were a little girl

who had been boxed away twenty-five years and lately brought out again, untarnished but somewhat juiceless.

Before the train came, Marcelline had been down under a bank dipping her foot in clear brown water, the water of the Chaudière flowing over rocks. This, her native river, had its source in Lake Megantic; and, when Marcelline first learned the fact, she every day took the children she tended to look at her river's head. Delicious was the water to her naked foot as she paddled, thinking where those very drops were going. Her mind pursued them no farther than the limits of her old home. This discovery of the Chaudière's source was comfort to her while quite separated from Alvine.

There were many trout in the water; she would tell Alvine this. It was as lovely here as in its stoniest turns along the valley; and she would have this to tell Alvine. She was paid for coming to Lake Megantic, even if nothing could be heard about Bruno.

The train whistled while Marcelline probed limpid depth beside a rock. She huddled her stocking and shoe on a damp foot, and ran to find a seat in the second-class car. Her small face glowed with heat and exertion. She sat on the sunny side, two larger people squeezing her against the window. Several miles of the route slid past her before she took note of anything but her own discomfort. The second-class car had cushionless, wooden seats, and was nearly filled with noisy young men.

Marcelline looked through open doors and across the throbbing platform at those great people in the first-class car. Crimson upholstery softened to them the jolts of the train, and they sat in groups delightfully talking. The contractor of the new railroad, and all who were to make speeches, were in that car. One group, at least, was delightfully talking; Marcelline wished she could hear them; a father with flying light hair which smeared the top of his face or stood out from his temples, and his daughter, a girl about Alvine's age. She was trimly dressed, and her auburn curls were tucked up under a helmet-shaped lawn-tennis hat of white linen. The pair resembled each other, for her father's face was smooth, his features straight and delicate. Marcelline had often seen these two in Quebec. She knew they were the French poet Lavoie and his eldest child. She had watched them with serious attention, as an unthinking robin, waked in the night, may sometimes gaze at distant stars. Once her master remarked when she heard him, that the poet Lavoie had married into one of the oldest and richest families in Canada, and fortunate it was for him, for a man would starve to death on poetry. Monsieur Lavoie

and his daughter were devoted chums. She was his companion wherever he went, excepting at state dinners.

This girl so beloved seemed full of dimples and laughter, yet she had a droop of the head which gave her a bashful air. Marcelline watched her with unnamed sensations. She sat with her back to the engine, and all the sweet play of her face was pored over by Marcelline, who stretched forward impatiently if smoke poured down the roof of the car and veiled it.

"So many pine-trees, papa!" the girl exclaimed. "What a great old forest!"

"Yes. I love a great old forest, Aurèle."

"I also, papa."

"What heat those pine-trees could send forth if they once caught fire!"

"Ah, what fun to live in one of those cabins the whole summer, papa. Why are there so many cabins so large, and all standing empty?"

"They are the contractor's deserted shells, Aurèle. He built them along his line as he needed them, with store-rooms and kitchens; but, of course, he could not carry a single house with him. He must abandon it and build another farther on. See how much wood is cut and piled by the track ready for shipping."

"Papa, if the woods were mine, I should let people cut only enough to keep them warm, and to build ships with. Those are ships' knees, those crooked pieces; are they not? Perhaps some of those very timbers will float us far away together."

"Not with smoke for sails, I hope, my Aurèle," the poet answered, remarking with half-attentive eye a smoldering stump.

The woods grew denser, and oaks, like hoary old men, stood bearded with moss. In the midst of this wilderness their train halted. It had reached the barrier set up at the end of its iron track. Beyond, the smooth road-bed as far as eye could trace it awaited its timber and rails.

The locomotive stood holding its breath with a low hiss. Everybody poured out, some people strolling into the woods, where they could be seen breaking themselves spoil of various kinds, and others crowding around the speech-makers.

Near the new track stood an iron post which had been set by British and United States commissioners more than forty years before. On one side it bore the words, "Her Britannic Majesty," and on the other, "United States of America." This was the boundary-line.

Marcelline could see no army of laborers in their temporary village. A man on horseback, leading another horse by the bridle, was waiting for the contractor, who had five miles farther to ride to his camp.

The brass band, that had come upon a flat car decorated with evergreens, now stood up in the woods and made them ring with, "God Save the Queen" and "Hail, Columbia." An American consul, a member of the Canadian parliament, and the French poet, in turn, spoke of the development of this continent, each rejoicing from his own standpoint, for men love to feel the progress of the race flowing through their own veins. Cheers shook the air; some Americans who were present got on their side of the line and shouted. Presently the locomotive bell began to ring, and stragglers hastened back from the woods to take their places in the returning train.

Marcelline went timidly to the contractor, who mounted his horse and waited to lift his hat in adieu to a company he had brought so far into the wilderness.

"Monsieur," she whispered at his stirrup.

"What is it, my lass?" inquired the English contractor.

"If you please, monsieur, is my brother, Bruno-Morel Charland, in your camp? He came from the Chaudière valley, and he was hurt among the logs six weeks ago."

"Speak English, speak English, my lass; and look sharp if you're going on that train. I don't talk French."

"Monsieur," besought Marcelline, lifting her voice, as we all do when our language is not comprehended, as if noise would arouse a sleeping interpreter in our listener's ears, "is my brother, Bruno-Morel Charland, in your camp? I made this journey to find him, monsieur."

The man who had held the contractor's horse now spoke up. He talked rapidly in English to his employer, and in French to Marcelline. He told her there were five hundred men in the camp above, that he had been among them all summer, and no such person as she described was there.

Marcelline paid her thanks for this certainty, and solemnly climbed the height of the platform to the second-class car. She felt that she and her vital interests were very trivial and not worth the attention of minds concerned with the large matters of the world. Her inexperienced heart resented the cruel and stupid resistance of circumstances, as we all resent it before we learn the harmony of life.

CHAPTER VI.

A FOREST FIRE.

DURING ten miles of the backward run spontaneous camp-fires appeared to spring in all directions through the woods. The sight amused Aurèle.

"But see, papa!" she exclaimed. "One of those log houses is burning up. It makes a beacon. Who lighted so many fires?"

"Perhaps the sparks of our locomotive." The poet uneasily rose and went to the door. Aurèle followed and hung on his arm, while her smiling sight moved from flame to flame. Other inmates were watching the spectacle.

The train, lessening its speed, was soon obliged to creep cautiously between banks of rose-red embers or solid cords of roaring wood—the wood which had been cut and piled for commerce. The pine branches on the flat car ignited, driving the brass band into an inclosed carriage for shelter. Men with buckets dropped to ditches beside the track and dipped up water to throw on the train, creeping on the platforms again with scorched clothes and hands and faces blistered.

One who has never been in a forest fire can scarcely imagine its intense heat, the acrid blinding smoke, the suddenness with which trees flash from root to crown, and grass blazes far from any spark, as if the earth itself were burning, the furnace glow of piled logs, the heated air from baked ground.

Incredible sights showed through that nightmare of fire. Moss-inclosed stumps spurted flame many times their own height. Young ferns, scarce unrolled, sprang green and fresh from one side of a log, while the other side quivered in living coals.

The train stopped. It could creep in retreat no farther, for its track was burned, the rails warped into fantastic curves. Blackened and blistered paint ran down the car sides.

The doors and windows had all been closed to keep out smoke and sickening heat. Aurèle's father held her to him and fanned her with his hat. Every mouth in the carriage gasped for breath. The floor was so hot it burned their feet. The window glass could not be touched. They could all see the wooden sides of the inclosure warp.

When the doomed train had hung a minute in the midst of this furnace, some one opened a door and shouted that it was on fire. Into the blistering smoke-darkened air, and out upon a forest floor spread with embers and quivering with heat, the people all rushed. Women fainted and were dragged up and carried by their fathers or brothers. The escape-valve of the locomotive was left open by its flying engineer, but it uttered its steam wail briefly, being relieved by explosion.

When days had cooled the forest to blackness, a distorted boiler and some rows of iron wheels were found where the train came to a stop.

Aurèle, in her father's grasp, stepped down upon the burning ground.

The train conductor and his men tried to gather all the people for a retreat to the lake. But it was impossible to shout explanations and commands as a ship's captain may do when he abandons ship. Merely inhaling the hot air wilted men downward on fainting knees. Terror drove every step taken in that vast fiery furnace. Carrying, driving, and dragging each other, the crowd ran toward the lake. Sometimes they could see it, sometimes they were lost in a world of smoke, the scorched sod betraying their feet into nests of coals, and one suddenly seized another's garments to crush starting flame. They had to avoid dropping flakes from the trees and rosy columns toppling just ready to fall. Often a clear space toward which they fought flashed up and barred their way, shaking out banners of fire. Yet, by groups they reached the lake, and dashed in, or let themselves down gasping upon its pebbles. Even the grape-vines were turning to red-hot links and throwing off sparkles as if worked by a blacksmith's hammer. Megantic, in places, slopes gradually to its depths, so children and others unable to swim could run into it from hissing brands which blackened as they struck the water.

The town of Agnes was visible from this point, and though the villagers were fighting fire on their own account,—for the woods enveloped and nearly swept away their wooden buildings,—they saw the signal of their land-wrecked friends and relations who had taken to the water, and sent out all the boats they could muster.

It could not be learned that anybody perished in the woods, though some were fatally burned while escaping. But when one party rearranged itself and felt able to count its members, the poet La-voie and his daughter were missed.

Nobody missed Marcelline Charland. The children whom she tended and their mother, dazed by the common calamity and the sight of their temporary home in ashes, took refuge where they did not hear about the burned train.

Marcelline, crushed among escaping people, fell into the ditch among quenched brands. But the fall wet her clothes and was a benefit to her. Too hardy to be seriously bruised by the flying herd who left her behind without knowing it, she got up and ran through smoke, pressing her dress-skirt over mouth and nose. It was a dreadful thing to be stifling in the midst of fire, while her father sat calmly at his open door in the valley, and even Alvine knew nothing about it. Like a breath of air from high hills was the thought that Bruno or Alvine would run into this danger after her. She was of great account to them.

Had Marcelline been able to move through this wreck of nature without feeling all her pores start

sickening dew, or her shoes warp on scorched feet, or her smarting eyes close to save themselves, the roaring grand spectacle would have made up for all the commonplaces of her previous lifetime. For there was more for Marcelline to look at than the others had seen. Fire looks ashamed under high daylight. But this one daubed a lower sky of its own, a gray and stooping firmament up to which the woods glared. Solid ranks of pines magnified their height and stately straightness, as they stood glowing like coral, their tremulous breath ascending; stumps were fantastic gems, living color chasing through and through them.

Marcelline fell down again as she ran, and got up from embers with her clothing afire. The wetting in the railroad ditch still helped her. She slapped the places with blistered hands. But it seemed no use. She was catching all over like the woods had done.

Through the crackle of trees she heard screamed somewhere, "Oh, papa!" the screamer's breath gurgling in the heat. Marcelline, slapping her spurts of fire, could not look away for help. Whether Aurèle Lavoie came from the right or the left or the front, it was impossible to know. But Aurèle, from some direction, spread the skirt of her own flannel dress and wrapped it around Marcelline.

Her father seized both girls, and they flew with him. He raced them over embers and through burning shrubs. It was the trial by fire. They must either die, or run death's gauntlet with determined success. When they reached the lake border, Monsieur Lavoie flung Aurèle first and then Marcelline over drift-logs blazing there, before leaping into the water himself. He sat down with them waist-deep on the pebbles and dipped the lake with both hands over them and himself until the senses of all three were revived.

They were a grotesque group. Holes broke through their scorched garments. They panted audibly, and their faces, puffing and whitening in patches, glistened with a red shine under the trickling water.

Smoke lay over the surface of the lake thick as fog. Nothing was to be seen in front of them except gray ripples lapping. Behind, the roaring furnace still painted its awful picture, and they did not look at it. Those refugees to whom the boats were sent waited on a strip of beach distant from this; Aurèle's return after Marcelline Charland changed the direction of her father's retreat, because places which could be passed one minute became impassable after that minute's delay.

Marcelline bore Monsieur Lavoie's drenchings with silent fortitude, but Aurèle gasped,

"Oh, papa, you will drown me!"

"Are you yet afire?"

"No, I am now quite put out. Oh, papa, pardon me!"

"The child you ran after is safe with us, is she not?"

"Papa!" exclaimed Aurèle. "You have been dipping the lake over her; you should know she is safe — you, who brought her out of the fire. Your hair is frizzled up to your head. And mine!" — Aurèle parted her lips in dismay while she felt it — "oh, papa, my hair breaks off in handfuls!"

"Give me, then, a handful to kiss."

"Bah! — the singed smell is very disagreeable. We must be monsters. If we were to go down to the beach, mamma would not know us. She would say, 'Ernestine, conduct these people away. Raw beggars are bad enough, but cooked I can not endure them!'"

"Not at all, my Aurèle. A very precious morsel will you be to madame your mamma, when she learns how you cooked yourself. Helpless enough you were until you looked back and saw the child burning. Away then goes my moth into the fire again!"

"Papa," exclaimed Aurèle, patting her father with a sudden embrace, "you talk straight in front of you, as if you sat at your writing-desk with Aurèle at your knee. Why don't you look at me? You can not be thinking a poem now."

"I must crave your pardon for my present manners, beloved child," said the poet.

"You will yet make a nose at my burns, you so slight them," complained Aurèle, keeping her gaze on his face.

Her father smiled while replying.

"My eyelids seem melted together, and the coolness of the water has sealed them. How, then, can I give myself the pleasure of looking at my daughter's blisters?"

Aurèle began to cry aloud, the tears smarting her cheeks.

"Oh, papa, my papa, are they burned? — those lovely eyes that are so kind to me! Did I drag you into the fire again to put your eyes out!"

"No, no — no, no," the poet repudiated. "You did nothing of that kind. My eyes are not out. They are in. They are, indeed, far in. They make their retirement, mademoiselle. They present their compliments, and would, if you please, see nothing but visions for a while."

"Do they hurt, papa?"

"They do hurt, my Aurèle. But I think their state is that probationary state of young kittens. Perhaps this laving in water will relieve the swelling. If you cry, my sight will struggle to tear itself out from its cloister. I can not endure unhappiness of yours."

Aurèle quieted herself and washed the tears from her face.

"We were obliged to go back, papa," she reflected.

"Certainly. It was a mere duty. The result

"Do you hear that? You are to be called my child."

"Yes, mademoiselle," answered Marcelline, her weazened, small face dripping its silent tears upon the ripples. Aurèle asked anxiously:

"Do your burns, then, hurt so much?"

"I hurt most in my inside," explained the child, "for that monsieur and you should be burnt while you ran after me."

"That is not thy affair, my child," declared Aurèle. "Listen to me; I must give thee instruction. All the people in the world have their devoir to do. In this case it was plainly yours to let yourself be pulled out of the fire. You did so. That suffices. That is all!"

Aurèle snapped finger and thumb, immediately nursing the blisters she thus irritated. "What is your name?"

"I am called Marcelline Charland."

"We are Monsieur Lavoie and his daughter," said Aurèle.

"Yes, I know," responded Marcelline. "I have seen you many times."

"Are you also, then, from Quebec?"

"I am nurse in a family there, mademoiselle."

"But what a little creature she is for a nurse, papa! Our Ernestine is a giantess compared to her; and she needs to be, or the boys would make an end of her."

"Aurèle," said the poet, with an air of habitually consulting his child, "what shall we do now?"

"We must reach help. We must go where there are remedies for burns. The hurting is so painful. This water surely cures our faintness, but I think it smarts the burns."



"HER FATHER SEIZED BOTH GIRLS, AND THEY FLEW WITH HIM.
... IT WAS THE TRIAL BY FIRE."

is not our affair. Whatever the little girl's name is, she shall be called by us Aurèle's child."

Aurèle leaned toward Marcelline and inquired brightly:

"I have less fortitude than either of you," said Monsieur Lavoie. "I must have relief as soon as possible. We can not wade the lake border. Is there no log in sight which we could sit on and propel?"

"None uncharred, papa. A half-burned log might go to pieces under us even if its heat was directly quenched."

"Then, mademoiselle my daughter, what do you propose to do with us?"

"Poor papa; love you first, and beg those shut eyes to see Aurèle in their visions. We can do nothing but call for help. We must make unceasing fog-horns of ourselves. We can not pass through these woods again though we sat here until they blackened to cold ebony."

Aurèle lifted up her voice and shouted across the water. Her father, in his turn, did the same, and Marcelline piped afterward.

They kept it up until the grayness around them turned to blackness; but a blackness pushed far off upon the lake by flames behind. They were able to leave the water and sit upon pebbles, for the fires nearest them were dying out. The evening was chill, and Monsieur Lavoie took Aurèle on his arm and made Marcelline walk beside him back and forth on the strip of sand. They hobbled. The voices of all three in long, anxious cadences, stretched over the lake:

"Au secours! au secours! Vit', vit', vit', au secours, au secours, vit', vit'!"

(*To be continued.*)

MY UNCLE PETER

BY EMMA A. OPPER.

My old Uncle Peter's a famous relater
Of marvelous stories; but my Uncle Peter
Is a vigorous foe and a rigorous hater
Of wile and of guile; he despises a cheater;
He's frank and sincere on a very large
scale,
And this is his manner of telling a tale:

"Oh, once in the chivalric days of old,
In the wonderful long ago,
There dwelt a Giant full bad and bold
(But this is not fact, you know) —
In whose darksome dungeon a maiden fair,
Whom atrociously he had stole;
She languished and wept (to be candid,
there
Was no such a girl, nor hole).

"But, lo! on a rapturous morn there rode
A valorous Knight that way;
His snowy palfrey he brave bestrode
(Don't credit this fiction, pray),
And straight he sprang from the noble steed;
His sword it gleamed in the sun,
And the dragon that guarded the gate (a deed
Which he could by no means have done)

"He felled at a blow, and with mighty force
He battered the dungeon wall,
And he seized the sorrowing maid! (of course
It never transpired at all) —
And he slew the Giant, the dauntless youth,
And the beauteous maid he wed
(But you must n't imagine a grain of truth
In a single word that I've said)."

Oh, my old Uncle Peter's a famous relater!
But I wish, goodness me! that my old Uncle Peter
Could be rather more of a prevaricator —
His stories would be more absorbing, and neater;
I wish his integrity did n't prevail
In so stern a degree — when he's telling a tale.

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THE DISTANCES IN SPACE.

BY D. C. ROBERTSON.



HERE is a well-known saying that truth is stranger than fiction. The correctness of this proverb can not well be gainsaid. The most careless observation of the wonders of nature as seen in this world of ours, the most hasty reading of the history of men, should be enough to place the matter beyond all doubt or question. The world itself, its oceans and rivers, its mountains and forests, its plains and deserts, its wonderful human and animal life — these facts are more marvelous than anything the fancy of man ever has conceived or ever will conceive. But when we leave this earth, and, turning our eyes to the heavens, learn something, however trifling, of the glories which are there displayed, then are we most impressed with the feeling that, compared with truth, fiction, however strange, is poor, dull, and uninteresting. If the pages of natural history, in every line, tell of wonders far surpassing any set forth in the most dazzling romance, what shall be said of the annals of astronomy?

Any one gazing at the sky on a clear, moonless night, will see what will seem to him a large number of little points of light, so tiny that many of them could be held in the palm of the hand; each apparently fast fixed in its place, and all seemingly within a very little distance, say, within gun-shot, or a few minutes' walk. What he does see are huge, fiery globes, so vast that compared with them our great earth is but a plaything; rushing along at a speed to which that of the express train, or even of the cannon ball, is as nothing; at distances so vast that the mind of man cannot at all conceive them. Instead of small size, absolute rest, and trifling distance, he contemplates stupendous size,

fearfully rapid motion, and distance inconceivable. Among all these wonders of size, speed, and distance, I shall confine my attention to the last, and shall say a few words about the distances of the heavenly bodies.

I will take it for granted that my young readers know something about the solar system; that they know, for instance, the names of its chief bodies, their size, positions, motions, etc. I will therefore merely remind them that the moon is distant from us about 240,000 miles; while of the other bodies of the system, the smallest distances are about as follows: Venus, 26,000,000; Mars, 48,000,000; Mercury, 56,000,000; the sun, 91,000,000; the asteroids, 110,000,000; Jupiter, 384,000,000; Saturn, 780,000,000; Uranus, 1,660,000,000; and Neptune, 2,650,000,000 miles.

The distances here approximately expressed in millions of miles, no doubt seem great enough; yet the mere statement of them can give no true idea of their real magnitude. Indeed, no human intellect can in any way form a just conception of them. Still, something better can be done than merely to talk about so many miles, whether in thousands or in millions. The distances must be not merely stated, but illustrated. They will then be made not perfectly, nor even nearly clear, but somewhat clearer than any bare statement of figures can make them.

Doubtless our world is enormous. Compared with the largest of its creatures, and even with the space within which the greater part of such creatures move about, its size is indeed past comprehending. But so wonderful are the means of travel now at our disposal, that almost any part of the earth, even the most distant, can be reached in a very short time. In less than a day the modern traveler can be carried hundreds of miles. In a week, he can go from the Atlantic to the Pacific,

or from America to Europe. A little more than a month will take him to the ends of the earth. Thus, Mr. Kennan, who is now writing for "The Century" a series of articles on Siberia, reached the frontier of that distant land in about six weeks after he left New York, notwithstanding that he made several stoppages and traveled several hundred miles by wagon. Thus it will easily be seen that no single journey upon our earth, however long, can occupy more than a small part of the average human life. The time required for a few journeys more or less to China, Australia, or the Cape of Good Hope, would hardly be noticed in comparison with an ordinary lifetime.

Let us now contrast these distances with some few of the distances in space, choosing as our mode of comparison and illustration the time it would take to travel each given distance at a fixed rate of speed. We will suppose certain railways to be built: one round the world in a perfect circle, others to various points in the solar system. And we will further suppose that the trains on these railways could be kept going at the rate of sixty miles an hour for any required length of time; that their passengers could do without food or could be supplied with an abundance of it; that the bodies of such passengers could be made capable of enduring the various changes of air, temperature, and other climatic conditions, to which they would be exposed.

And on our world this kind of travel would be comparatively easy, and would take next to no time. In twenty-four hours the passenger could travel 1440 miles, or considerably farther than from New York to Chicago. In forty-eight hours he could travel as far as from Boston to Liverpool; and in less than seventeen days he could go round the world. But, as regards the journeys in space, a difficulty in most cases insuperable would stand in the way. In order to visit any but a very few of the nearest bodies in space, the travelers on our celestial railways would need to have their lives very greatly prolonged. Were they to set out for any distant part of the system, they all would die before they had fairly begun their journey. A voyage to the moon, to Venus, or to Mars would, under the above conditions, be possible; to any other body in the system it would be impossible.

The journey to the moon would be comparatively short. Our companion is distant about 240,000 miles; or, in round numbers, its distance contains ten times as many miles as are contained in the earth's circumference.

Traveling at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and never stopping, it would take between 166 and 167 days to reach the journey's end. Compared with other heavenly distances, this is a mere nothing;

but compared with the distances actually traversed by the average man, it is very great indeed. Few ever travel at sixty miles an hour, and then only for short periods, and at considerable intervals. Many, probably the majority, of those who live to a good old age cover less than 240,000 miles during their whole lives. A great traveler might do it in, say, fifteen years. For even a conductor or engineer of an express train, it would require several years.

Let us now take a trip to the planet Venus, our next nearest neighbor. This will be a much more formidable undertaking. We have seen that a succession of the longest journeys over this earth would form but short and passing episodes in a lifetime. We have seen that, on one of our imaginary railways, the traveler could circle the world in less than three weeks. We have seen, not only that a journey to the moon is quite possible to the passengers by our celestial railway, but that equal and even greater distances are often traveled on earth. But a trip to Venus would be a very different matter. Venus, as already stated, is about 26,000,000 miles away; or, at sixty miles an hour, without stopping, she is distant a journey not of three weeks, or six months, but of some *fifty years*. On the imaginary railway, such a journey would be possible, for a great many persons live longer than fifty years. But in real life no one ever has traveled, and no one ever will travel, anything like so far. No human being ever has traveled 5,000,000 miles; and it is safe to say that no one ever will. To complete this measure of journeying would require an average of 100,000 miles a year for fifty years. Some few, perhaps, in all their lives, may have traveled 1,000,000 miles, but these are probably very rare exceptions. So we see that no one ever has lived who has traveled more than a small part of the distance to Venus. Yet, compared with other bodies in the system, this star may be said to be almost a next-door neighbor.

Much the same statement may be made of the trip to Mars, which would take over ninety years. To a few of the supposed passengers the trip would be possible, for some persons pass their ninetieth year. But on this earth the greatest travelers would probably have to stop at about one forty-eighth of the distance.

Henceforth, however, the circumstances are entirely changed. Even under the impossible conditions above assumed, the smallest of the remaining distances is too great to be traversed within the term of one human life, even were it to reach the extreme limit of one hundred years. Mercury and the sun are comparatively quite near us, yet to go to Mercury would take more than 100 years, or rather more than the time that has elapsed since

the beginning of the French Revolution; while the journey to the sun would last about 175 years, or as long a time as has gone by since the reign of Queen Anne.

But after this the distances increase at a much greater rate. Those already mentioned are trifles to them. Omitting the asteroids, we will at once proceed to Jupiter. To get there would take over 730 years. Were such a journey just ended, it would have begun about the time of Thomas à Becket, and would have been in progress more than 340 years when Columbus first set sail for the new world.

But this journey would be mere child's-play, compared with a voyage to Saturn. The traveler to the ringed planet would be no less than 1475 years on his way. Supposing his journey just over, he would have begun it at a time when the Roman Empire still ruled the world, and 450 years before the time of Alfred.

All the preceding journeys, vast though they are, could yet have been taken within a time less than the Christian era. The one we shall have to take next brings us back to an age far more remote. Uranus is three thousand years distant. Three thousand years ago, King David's life had not begun, and Greece had yet to make for herself a name in history, or even in fable.

We come at last to Neptune, the outermost of the planets. This planet is distant more than five thousand years. Could we imagine Abraham as living from his birth until now, and that with the planet Neptune as his destination he had traveled continuously at sixty miles an hour all that time, he would still be a long way from his goal.

One more illustration and we will leave the solar system. Neptune's path about the sun measures about 16,200,000,000 miles. If bodies as large as the world were placed side by side, like beads on a necklace, so as to fill the entire path, these great beads would number over 2,000,000; *i. e.*, there would be about three times as many of them as there are words in the Bible.

But, compared with even that portion of space which the naked eye can survey, the solar system is something like a small corner lot to a large city. As Mr. Proctor truly observed, "tremendous as are the dimensions of the solar system, the widest sweep of the planetary orbits sinks into insignificance compared with the distance which separates us from even the nearest of the fixed stars." We have seen that an express train, going at the rate of sixty miles an hour, would take five thousand years to get to the planet Neptune. But to reach Alpha Centauri, the nearest of the fixed stars,—a distance of some 20,000,000,000,000 miles,—the same train would take, not thousands nor hundreds

of thousands, but millions of years; in round numbers, 35,000,000. No one, of course, can form the least idea of what such a time really is. No one can conceive what is really meant by 1,000,000 years. Few realize the great length of time expressed by the term 1,000,000 days. Think of the days that have passed since the founding of the "eternal city" of Rome; yet 1,000,000 days ago, Rome was a city of the future. One million days ago, Xerxes, Miltiades, and Leonidas were yet unborn; the beginning of the Christian era was farther in the future than the Crusades are in the past. What, then, shall we say of 35,000,000 years?

To take another example: Suppose one were to travel every day as far as from here to the sun; that is to say, a distance which an express train would cover in about 175 years. Then while the journey to Neptune would take about a month, it would require six hundred years to reach the star called Alpha Centauri.

But awful as is the distance of this star, it is as nothing compared with that of other heavenly bodies. Sirius, one of the nearest of the fixed stars, is at least four times as far away; while many, perhaps most, of the stars visible to the naked eye are quite four times as far away as Sirius. And when we come to some of the stars which only the telescope reveals, we find that whereas light, traveling at the rate of 10,000,000 miles a minute, comes to us from Alpha Centauri in considerably less than four years, it can not reach us from the telescopic stars in less than thousands, and hundreds of thousands, of years.

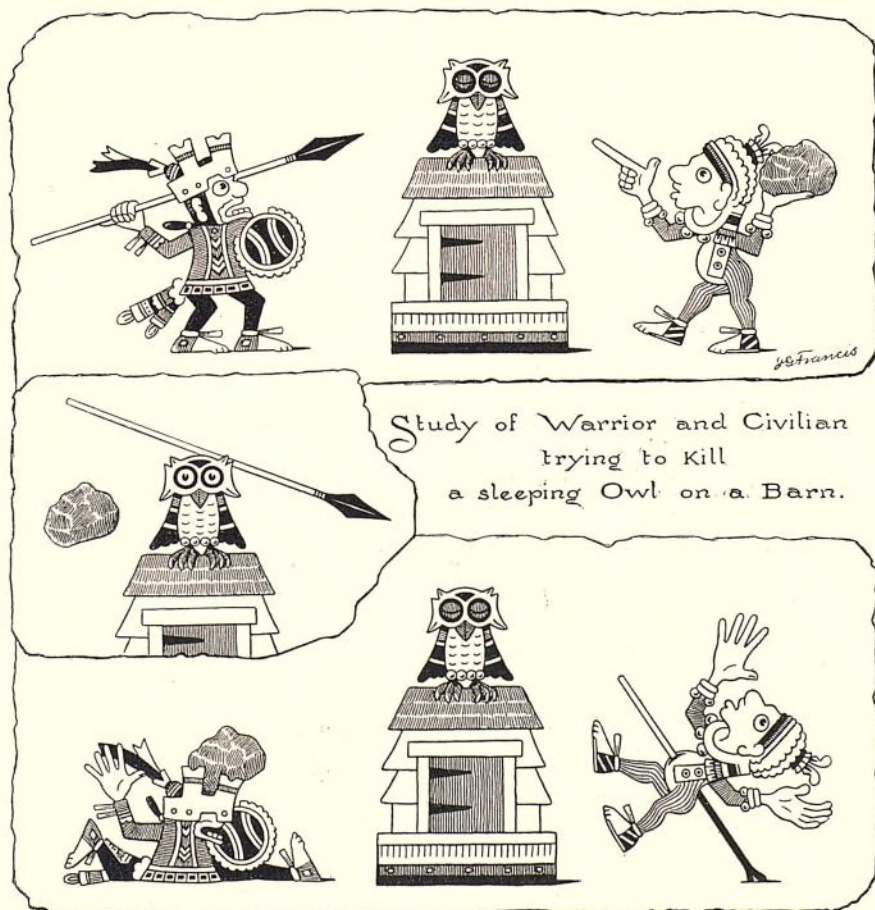
Another illustration may be taken from the motion of the heavenly bodies. Look, for instance, at the bright star Sirius. Year after year it appears the same; of the same size, the same brightness, the same distance. And so, no doubt, it has appeared for centuries past, and will continue to appear for centuries to come. And yet it is asserted that Sirius and the earth are shooting apart—at times over twenty miles a second. Let us stop a moment and see what this would mean. In one minute, Sirius recedes as far as from New York to Winnipeg; in sixteen minutes it travels a distance equal to the earth's circumference; and in less than three hours a space is covered equal to that between us and the moon. Yet, to double its present distance, it would have to go on thus receding for over 100,000 years; and to become invisible to the naked eye, that speed of separation would have to continue over 1,000,000 years.

These few general statements have been written with a hope of exciting the interest of young readers, and urging upon them the advantage of acquiring some knowledge, however slight, of astronomy—one of the noblest and most wonderful of

the sciences. To most of them, the acquisition of astronomical knowledge either deep or exact, will be impossible. But even the slight information which may be gained by the general reader, can

not but be a source of much pleasure and of no less profit. If properly studied and appreciated, Astronomy elevates the intellect as greatly as it interests the imagination.

Aztec Fragments.





The Popular Poplar Tree.

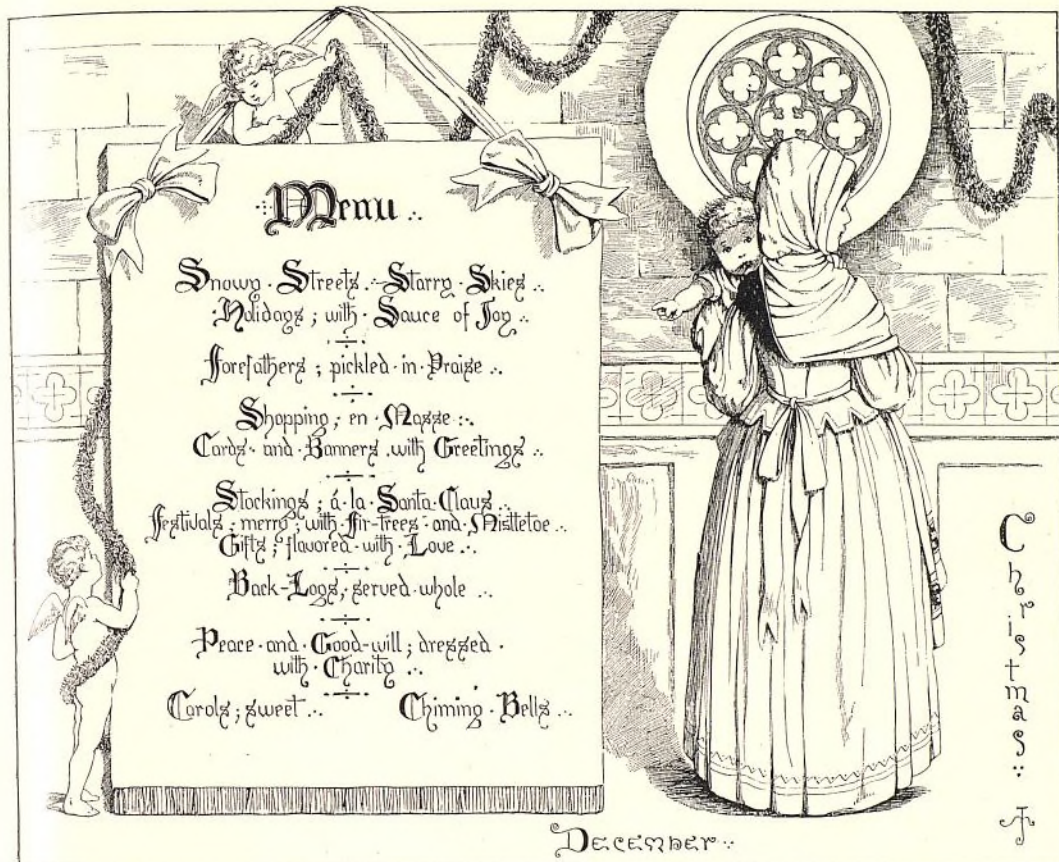
A Song for Margaret and Harold.

BY BLANCHE WILLIS HOWARD.

WHEN the great wind sets things whirling
And rattles the window-panes,
And blows the dust in giants
And dragons tossing their manes ;
When the willows have waves like water,
And children are shouting with glee ;
When the pines are alive and the larches, —
Then hurrah for you and me,
In the tip o' the top o' the top o' the tip of
the popular poplar tree !

Don't talk about Jack and the Beanstalk —
He did not climb half so high !
And Alice in all her travels
Was never so near the sky !
Only the swallow, a-skimming
The storm-cloud over the lea,
Knows how it feels to be flying —
When the gusts come strong and free —
In the tip o' the top o' the top o' the tip of
the popular poplar tree !

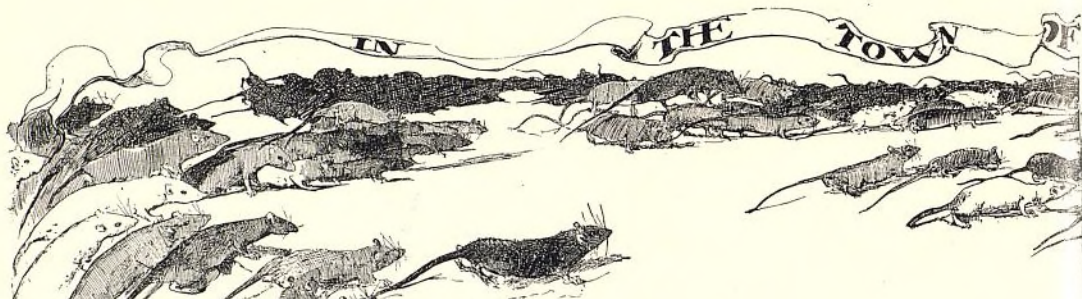
K. Pyle.



NAUGHTY CLAUDE.

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

WHEN little Claude was naughty once,
 At luncheon-time, and said
 He 'd not say "Thank you" to Mamma,
 She made him go to bed,
 And cover up and stay two hours ; —
 So when the clock struck two,
 Then Claude said "Thank you, Mr. Clock,
 I'm much obliged to you !"



BY HARRIET LEWIS BRADLEY.

ONE October day, in the last October that ever was, I stood in the lower, right-hand corner-room of a wonderful old German house; and the baker's wife—this same lower, right-hand corner-room being now used as a bake-shop—brought out the family photograph-album, and opened it upon the counter. Among the pictures there was one showing a young man in a fanciful dress, with a plume in his hat and a fife raised to his lips.

"That is my husband's cousin, Wilhelm," said

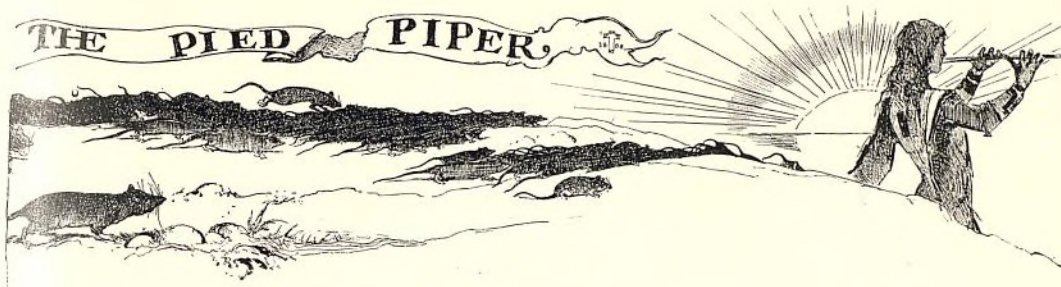
the baker's wife. "He was the Piper on the six hundredth Anniversary. The first day, he wore a black mantle, and went through the town piping; and all the little children dressed in gray, to represent rats and mice, danced after him, down to the river. And the second day," continued the baker's wife, "my husband's cousin Wilhelm wore a many-colored dress; and then the little children followed him out of the town over to the Koppen mountain. It was exactly as it happened in Hamelin six hundred years ago."

"And do you think it really happened, then?" I asked.

"They say it happened," answered the baker's wife wisely. "Of course there is no one to ask."

In the bake-shop were boxes of bonbons for sale, each box holding six sugar mice and a diminutive tin fife; and when, later, I wandered through the streets of Hamelin, I noticed that every shop-win-





dow contained rats and mice and merry-looking pipers, made in porcelain, paper, bread, or chocolate.

The narrow by-way, on one corner of which stands the wonderful old house, is called the "Drumless Street"; for (so the baker's wife told me) since that day of misfortune, six hundred years ago, when the children danced down this by-way to the music of their loved piper, neither the sound of drum nor fife nor any other instrument is allowed within its limits.

The old tradition of the Pied Piper has become widely famous through two well-known poems, one by an English, the other by a German poet.

How much of it is true one can not exactly say,

and, as the baker's wife remarked, there is no one to ask. But certain it is, that something curious must have happened once in "Hamelin town," for every traveler who strays to-day through the Drumless Street, and looks up at the old house on the corner, can read this inscription:

ANNO 1284.

On the day of St. John and St. Paul, on the 26 of June, 130 children born in Hamelin were led away by a piper dressed in divirs colors, and lost on the Koppen.

Upon an old house in the market-place, called the Wedding-house, from being used formerly for wedding festivities, are these words:

After the birth of Christ, in 1284, 130 children born in Hamelin were led away by a piper and lost on the Koppen.



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THE RAT-CATCHER'S HOUSE, HAMELIN.

Thus run the inscriptions, printed in old-fashioned German, above the second-story windows of these two curious houses.

Every school-child, except the exceptional one, knows the story of the "Pied Piper," and that

"Hamelin town 's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city."

For the exceptional one, who has yet to read these familiar lines, here is the story told in prose. It is a story of too many rats and mice. The pastor could not preach his sermon. The teacher could not hear his classes. The old dames could not enjoy even a comfortable gossip at their spinning-

wheels without being unpleasantly interrupted. There were rats who had a habit of rambling through the church during the service; there were mice who daily danced across the school-room floor; there were rats and mice who met together every evening, and held noisy festivities in the walls, and under the floor, and over the ceiling of the spinning-room. At this time of great need, when the Bürgermeister was worn thin with perplexity, a tall and handsome stranger appeared in Hamelin. No one knew whence he came, but the little children loved him at once, because of the sweet music he used to play to them upon his fife, and the older people were never tired of hear-

ing the songs he was always ready to sing. This stranger came to the Bürgermeister and promised that for a certain sum of money he would free the town of its plague, to which condition the Bürgermeister gave a joyful assent. When the next full moon shone upon Hamelin, the piper went through the streets playing a wonderful melody, and forth from every corner came all the old rats and young rats and middle-aged rats, and pretty gray mice, and the piper led them to their end in the River Weser. One rat alone remained in the town, a sad old creature, who, being deaf and blind and stiff with years, could not follow the piper's music. There was great rejoicing among the people as this deliverance became known. The preacher was able to preach his Sunday sermon, the school-children to repeat their week-day multiplication-tables, and the old dames to finish their evening gossip without a single interruption. Such a peaceful state of affairs had long been unknown in "Hamelin town." The City Council, however, having debated during several sittings the possibility of paying the piper a less sum than they had promised, finally decided not to pay him anything, and the piper, in his indignation, resolved to bring as much dismay among the people as he had already brought delight. So, on a bright, pleasant morning, when all the fathers and mothers were safely locked in the church (it being the custom to lock the church doors that no belated worshiper should disturb the devotions of those assembled in proper season), the Pied Piper went from house to house playing softly, and the little children ran out to meet him, crying, "Here is our dear piper again." And they followed him, dancing through the streets and out of the town to the Koppen mountain.

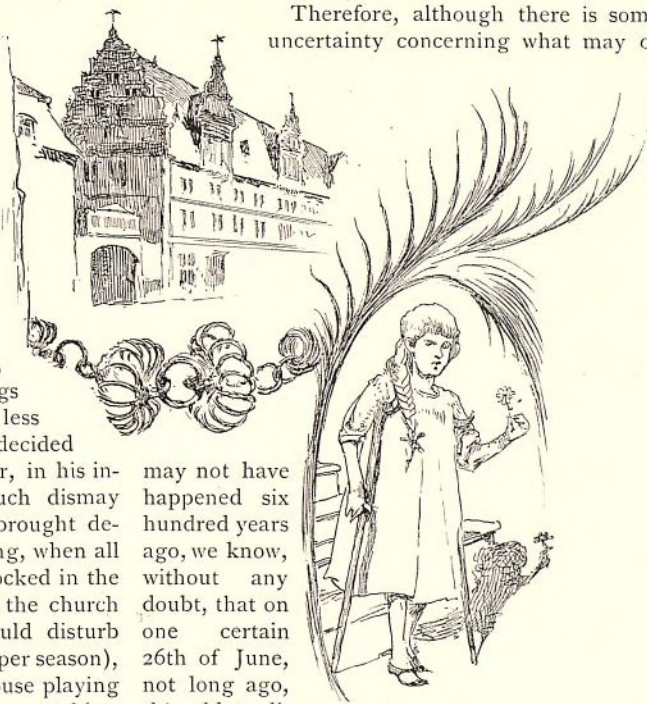
Of all that merry crowd, the only child who came back was a poor lame girl, left behind be-

cause she was unable by reason of her infirmity to keep up with the others.

—As I lingered in "Hamelin town," on this October afternoon in the last October that ever was, I met a bare-headed little girl with a band of flowers fastened sash-fashion over her shoulder, and from this wreath hung six heart-shaped cakes. I asked whether she knew the story of the Pied Piper.

"Ach, ja!" said the little girl, smiling. "I was a mouse. I was the smallest mouse. To-day I am six years old!"

Therefore, although there is some uncertainty concerning what may cr



may not have happened six hundred years ago, we know, without any doubt, that on one certain 26th of June, not long ago, this old tradition became a living thing — for did not the baker's wife say that her husband's cousin Wilhelm was the Pied Piper, and has not the birthday-child also told us that she herself, as the smallest among the mice, danced after him down to the river on that very day?



LITTLE SAINT ELIZABETH.

(Concluded.)

BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

NEARLY all the day she sat — poor little girl! — by her window, looking out at the passers-by in the snowy street. But she scarcely saw the people at all. Her thoughts were far away, in the little village where she had always spent her Christmas before. Her Aunt Clotilde had allowed her at such times to do so much! There was not a house to which she did not carry some gift — no child who was forgotten. And the church on Christmas morning had been so beautiful with flowers from the hot-houses of the château. It was for the church indeed that the conservatories were chiefly kept up. Mademoiselle de Rochemont would scarcely have permitted herself such luxuries.

But there would be no flowers this year. The château was closed; there were no longer gardeners at work; the church would be bare and cold; the people would have no gifts; there would be no pleasure in the little peasants' faces.

Little Saint Elizabeth wrung her slight hands together in her lap.

"Oh," she cried, "what can I do? And then there are the poor here — so many. And I do nothing."

It was not alone the poor she had left in her village who were a grief to her. As she drove through the streets she now and then saw haggard faces; and when she had questioned a servant who one day came to her to ask alms for a poor child at the door, she had been told that in parts of this great, bright city which she had not seen, there was cruel want and suffering, as in all great cities.

"And it is so cold now," she thought, "with the snow on the ground."

The lamps in the street were just beginning to be lighted when her Uncle Bertrand returned. It appeared that he had brought back with him the gentleman with the kind face. They were to dine together, and Uncle Bertrand desired that Mademoiselle Elizabeth should join them. Evidently the journey out of town had been delayed for a day at least. There came also another message — Monsieur de Rochemont wished Mademoiselle to send to him by her maid a certain box of antique ornaments which had been given to her by her Aunt Clotilde. Elizabeth had known less of the

value of these jewels than of their beauty. She knew they were beautiful, and that they had belonged to Aunt Clotilde in the gay days of her triumphs as a beauty, and a brilliant young woman, but it seemed that they were also very curious, and Monsieur de Rochemont wished his friend to see them. When Elizabeth went downstairs she found the gentlemen examining them together.

"They must be put somewhere for safe keeping," Uncle Bertrand was saying. "It should have been done before. I will attend to it."

The gentleman with the kind eyes looked at Elizabeth with an interested expression as she came into the room. Her slender little figure in its black velvet dress, her delicate little face with its large, soft, sad eyes, the gentle gravity of her manner, made Elizabeth seem quite unlike other children.

He did not seem to find her simply amusing, as her Uncle Bertrand did. She was always conscious that behind Uncle Bertrand's most serious expression there was lurking a faint smile as he watched her — but this visitor looked at her in a different way. He was a doctor she discovered. Dr. Norris her uncle called him. And Elizabeth wondered if his profession had not perhaps made him quick of sight and mind.

She felt that it must be so when she heard him talk at dinner. She found that he did a great deal of work among the very poor; that he had a hospital where he received children who were ill, — or who had perhaps met with accidents and could not be taken care of in their wretched homes. He spoke frequently of terrible quarters where there was the greatest poverty and suffering. And he spoke of these things with so much eloquence and sympathy that even Uncle Bertrand began to listen with interest.

"Come," said the doctor, "you are a rich, idle fellow, de Rochemont, and we want rich, idle fellows to come and look into all this and do something for us. You must let me take you with me some day."

"It would pain me too much, my good Norris," said Uncle Bertrand, with a slight shudder. "I should not enjoy my dinner after it."

"Then go without your dinner," said Dr. Norris.

"These people do. You have too many dinners. Give up one."

Uncle Bertrand shrugged his shoulders and smiled.

"It is Elizabeth who fasts," he said. "Myself, I prefer to dine. And yet some day I may take a fancy to visit these people with you."

Elizabeth could scarcely have been said to dine that evening. She could not eat. She sat with her large sad eyes fixed upon Dr. Norris's face as he talked. Every word he uttered sank deep into her heart. The want and suffering of which he spoke were more terrible than anything she had ever heard. It had been nothing like this in the village—Oh, no, no! As she thought of it, there was a look in her dark eyes that almost startled Dr. Norris several times when he glanced at her. But as he did not know the particulars of her life with her aunt and the strange training she had had, he could not possibly have guessed what was going on in her mind, and how much effect his stories were having. The beautiful little face touched him very much, and the pretty French accent with which the child spoke seemed very musical to him and added a great charm to the gentle, serious answers she made to the remarks he addressed to her. He could not help seeing that something had made this little Mademoiselle Elizabeth a singular and pathetic little creature, and he continually wondered what it was.

"Do you think she is a happy child?" he asked Monsieur de Rochemont when they were once more alone together.

"Happy," said Uncle Bertrand with his light smile. "She has been taught, my friend, that to be happy upon earth is a mere frivolity. I think I have told you that she,—this little one,—desires to give all her fortune to the poor. Having heard you this evening, she will wish to bestow it upon your pensioners."

When, having retired from the room with a grave and stately little obeisance to her uncle and his guest, Elizabeth had gone upstairs, it had not been with any intention of going to bed. She sent her maid away and sat thinking for a long time.

But just as she laid her head upon her pillow an idea came. The ornaments given to her by her Aunt Clotilde—somebody would buy them. They were her own—it would be right to sell them. To what better use could they be put? Was it not what Aunt Clotilde would have desired? Had she not told her stories of the good and charitable who had sold the clothes from their bodies that the miserable might be helped? Yes, it was right. These things must be done. All else was vain and useless and of the world.

But it would require courage—great courage. To go out alone, to find a place where the people would buy the jewels,—perhaps there might be some who would not want them. And then when they were sold, to find those poor and unhappy quarters of which her uncle's guest had spoken, and to give to those who needed,—all by herself. Ah! what courage it would require! And then, Uncle Bertrand! Some day he would ask about the ornaments and discover all, and his anger might be terrible. No one had ever been angry with her. How could she bear it. She thought of Saint Elizabeth and the cruel Landgrave. It could not ever be so bad as that; but, whatever the result might be, it must be borne.

So at last she slept; and there was upon her gentle little face so sweetly sad a look that when her maid came to waken her in the morning she stood by the bedside for some moments looking down upon her pityingly.

The day seemed very long and sorrowful to the poor child. It was full of anxious thoughts and plannings. She was so innocent and inexperienced—so ignorant of all practical things. She had decided that it would be best to wait until evening before going out, and then to take the jewels and try to sell them to some jeweler.

She did not understand the difficulties that would lie in her way, but she felt very timid.

Her maid had asked permission to go out for the evening, and Monsieur de Rochemont was to dine out, so she found it possible to leave the house without attracting attention.

As soon as the streets were lighted she took the case of ornaments, and, going downstairs very quietly, let herself out. The servants were dining, and she was seen by none of them.

When she found herself in the snowy street she felt strangely bewildered. She had never been out unattended before, and she knew nothing of the great busy city. When she turned into the more crowded thoroughfares, she saw several times that passers-by glanced at her curiously. Her timid look, her foreign air, and richly-furred dress, and the fact that she was a child and alone at such an hour, could not fail to attract attention; but, though she felt confused and troubled, she went bravely on. It was some time before she found a jeweler's shop, and when she entered it the men behind the counter looked at her in amazement. But she went to the one nearest to her and set the case of jewels on the counter before him.

"I wish," she said in her soft, low voice, and with the pretty accent, "I wish that you should buy these."

The man stared at her and at the ornaments, and then at her again.

"I beg pardon, miss," he said.

Elizabeth repeated her request.

"I will speak to Mr. Moetyler," he said, after a moment of hesitation.

He went to the other end of the shop to an elderly man who sat behind a desk. After he had spoken a few words, the elderly man looked up as if surprised — then he glanced at Elizabeth — then after speaking a few more words he came forward.

"You wish to sell these?" he said, looking at the case of jewels with a puzzled expression.

"Yes," Elizabeth answered.

He bent over the case and took up one ornament after the other and examined them closely. After he had done this he looked at the little girl's innocent trustful face, seeming more puzzled than before.

"Are they your own?" he inquired.

"Yes, they are mine," she replied timidly.

"Do you know how much they are worth?"

"I know that they are worth much money," said Elizabeth. "I have heard it said so."

"Do your friends know that you are going to sell them?"

"No," Elizabeth said, a faint color rising in her delicate face. "But it is right that I should do it."

The man again spent a few moments in examining them, and, having done so, spoke hesitatingly.

"I am afraid we must not buy them," he said.

"It would be impossible, unless your friends first gave their permission."

"Impossible?" said Elizabeth, and tears rose in her eyes, making them look softer and more wistful than ever.

"We could not do it," said the jeweler. "It is out of the question — under the circumstances."

"Do you think —" faltered the disappointed child, "Do you think that nobody will buy them?"

"I am afraid not," was the reply. "No respectable firm who would pay their real value. If you'll take my advice, miss, you will take them home and consult your friends."

He spoke kindly, but Elizabeth was overwhelmed with disappointment. She did not know enough of the world to understand that a richly-dressed little girl who offered valuable jewels for sale at night must be a strange and unusual sight.

When she found herself on the street again, her long lashes were heavy with tears.

"If no one will buy them," she said, "what shall I do?"

She walked a long way — so long that she was very tired — and offered them at several places; but, as she chanced to enter only respectable shops, the same thing happened each time. She was

looked at curiously and questioned, but no one would buy.

"They are mine," she would say. "It is right that I should sell them." But every one stared and seemed puzzled, and in the end refused.

At last, after much wandering, she found herself in a poorer quarter of the city; the streets were narrower and dirtier, and the people began to look squalid and wretchedly dressed; there were smaller shops and dingier houses. She saw unkempt men and women and uncared-for little children. The poverty of the poor she had seen in her own village seemed comfort and luxury by contrast. She had never dreamed of anything like this. Now and then she felt faint with pain and horror. But she went on.

"They have no vineyards," she said to herself. "No trees and flowers. It is all dreadful! There is nothing. They need help more than the others. To let them suffer so and not to give them charity would be a great crime."

She was so full of grief and excitement that she had ceased to notice how every one looked at her; she saw only the wretchedness and dirt and misery. She did not know, poor child, that she was surrounded by danger — that she was in the midst not only of misery, but of dishonesty and crime. She had even forgotten her timidity; that it was growing late, and that she was far from home and would not know how to return; she did not realize that she had walked so far, that she was almost exhausted with fatigue.

She had brought with her all the money she possessed. If she could not sell the jewels she could at least give something to some one in want. But she did not know to whom she must give first. When she had lived with her Aunt Clotilde it had been their habit to visit the peasants in their houses. Must she enter one of these houses — these dreadful places with the dark passages, from which she many times heard riotous voices and even cries.

"But those who do good must feel no fear," she thought. "It is only to have courage." At length something happened which caused her to pause before one of these places. She heard sounds of pitiful moans and sobbing from something crouched upon the broken steps. It seemed like a heap of rags, but as she drew near she saw by the light of the street lamp opposite that it was a woman with her head on her knees and a wretched child at each side of her. The children were shivering with cold and making low cries as if frightened.

Elizabeth stopped, and then ascended the steps.

"Why is it that you cry?" she asked gently.

"Tell me."

The woman did not answer at first, but when

Elizabeth spoke again she lifted her head, and as soon as she saw the slender figure in its velvet and furs, and the pale, refined little face, she gave a great start.

"Mercy on us," she said in a hoarse voice, which sounded almost terrified. "Who are yez, an' what bes ye doin' in a place the loike o' this?"

"I came," said Elizabeth, "to see those who are poor. I wish to help them. I have great sorrow for them. It is right that the rich should help those who want. Tell me why you cry, and why your little children sit in the cold."

Everybody to whom Elizabeth had spoken that night had shown surprise, but no one had stared as this woman did.

"It's no place for the loike o' yez," she said, "an' it black noight, an' men and women not knowin' what they do — wid Pat Harrigan insoide as bad as the worst of them, an' it's turned me an' the children out he has, to shlake in the snow — not for the furst toime, ayther. Shure, 't is starvin' we are — starvin', an' no other." She dropped her wretched head on her knees and began to moan again, and the children joined her.

"Don't let yer daddy hear yez," she said to them. "Whisht now! — it's come out an' bate yez he will."

Elizabeth began to feel tremulous and faint.

"Is it that they have hunger?" she asked.

"Nayther bite or sup have they had this day nor yesterday," was the answer. "The good saints have pity on us."

"Yes," said Elizabeth, "the good saints have always pity. I will go and buy them food — poor little ones."

She had seen a shop only a few yards away — she remembered passing it. Before the woman could speak again she was gone.

"Yes," she said, "I was sent to them, — it is the answer to my prayer, — it was not in vain that I asked so long."

When she entered the shop the few people who were in it stopped what they were doing to stare at her as others had done — but she scarcely saw that it was so.

"Give to me a basket," she said to the owner of the place. "Put in it some bread and wine — some of the things which are ready to eat. It is for a poor woman and her little ones who starve."

There was in the shop among others a red-faced woman with a cunning look in her eyes. She sidled out of the place and was waiting for Elizabeth when she came out.

"I'm starvin', too, little lady," she said.

"There's many of us that way, an' it's not often them with money care about it. Give me something, too," in a wheedling voice.

Elizabeth looked up at the woman — her pure ignorant eyes full of pity.

"I have great sorrows for you," she said. "Perhaps the poor woman will share her food with you —"

"It's money I need," said the woman.

"I have none left," answered Elizabeth. "I will come again."

"It's now I need it," the woman persisted. Then she looked covetously at Elizabeth's velvet cloak, lined and trimmed with fur. "That's a pretty cloak you've on," she said. "You've many another, I dare say."

Suddenly she gave the cloak a pull, but the fastening did not give way as she had expected.

"Is it because you are cold that you want it?" said Elizabeth in her gentle, innocent way. "I will give it to you. Take it."

Had not all the charitable ones in the legends given their garments to the poor? Why should she not give her cloak?

In an instant it was unclasped and snatched away, and the woman was gone. She did not even stay long enough to give thanks for the gift; and something in her haste and roughness made Elizabeth wonder, and gave her a moment of tremor.

She made her way back to the place where the other woman and her children had been sitting; the cold wind made her shiver and the basket was very heavy for her slender arm. Her strength seemed to be giving way.

As she turned the corner, a great fierce gust of wind swept round it and caught her breath and made her stagger. She thought she was going to fall — indeed she would have fallen, but that one of two tall men who were passing put out his arm and caught her. He was a well-dressed man in a heavy overcoat; he had gloves on. Elizabeth spoke in a faint tone.

"I thank you," she began, when the second man uttered a wild exclamation and sprang forward.

"Elizabeth!" he said. "Elizabeth!"

Elizabeth looked up and herself uttered a cry. It was her Uncle Bertrand who stood before her, and his companion, who had saved her from falling, was Dr. Norris.

For a moment it seemed as if they were almost struck dumb with horror. And then her Uncle Bertrand seized her by the arm in such agitation that he scarcely seemed himself at all — the light, satirical, jesting Uncle Bertrand she had known.

"What does it mean?" he cried. "What are you doing here, in this horrible place, alone? Do you know where it is you have come? What have you in the basket? Explain — explain."

The moment of trial had come, and it seemed even more terrible than the poor child had imag-

ined. The long strain and exertion had been too much for her delicate body; she felt that she could bear no more, the cold seemed to have struck to her very heart. She looked up at Monsieur de Rochemont's pale excited face, and trembled from head to foot. A strange thought flashed into her mind. Elizabeth of Thuringia, — the cruel Landgrave! Perhaps *she* would be helped, too, since she was trying to do good. Surely, surely it must be so!

"Speak!" repeated Monsieur de Rochemont. "Why is this? The basket, what have you in it?"

"Roses," said Elizabeth. "Roses." And then her strength deserted her, she fell upon her knees in the snow, the basket slipped from her arm, and the first thing which fell from it was — No, not roses. There had been no miracle wrought. Not roses; but the case of jewels which she had laid on the top of the other things, that it might be more easily carried.

"Roses!" cried Uncle Bertrand. "Is it that the child is mad? They are the jewels of my sister Clotilde."

Elizabeth clasped her hands and leaned toward Dr. Norris, the tears streaming from her uplifted eyes.

"Ah! Monsieur," she sobbed. "You will understand. It was for the poor; they suffer so much. If we do not help them — I did not mean to speak falsely — I thought that the good —" But her sobs filled her throat and she could not finish. Dr. Norris stooped and caught her up in his strong arms as if she had been a baby.

"Quick!" he said imperatively. "We must return to the carriage, de Rochemont. This may be a serious matter."

Elizabeth clung to him with trembling hands.

"But the poor woman who starves," she cried; "the little children. They sit upon the step quite near. The food was for them. I pray you to give it to them."

"Yes, they shall have it," said the Doctor. "Take the basket, de Rochemont — only a few doors below." And it appeared that there was something in his voice which seemed to render obedience necessary, for Monsieur de Rochemont actually did as he was told.

For a moment Dr. Norris put Elizabeth on her feet again, but it was only while he removed his overcoat and wrapped it about her slight, shivering body.

"You are chilled through, poor child," he said. "And you are not strong enough to walk just now. You must let me carry you."

It was true that a sudden faintness had come upon her, and she could not restrain the shudders which shook her. She had not recovered from them when she was placed in the carriage which

the two gentlemen had thought it wiser to leave in one of the more respectable streets when they went into the worse ones together.

"What might not have occurred if we had not arrived at that instant!" said Uncle Bertrand, when he got into the carriage.

"As it is, who knows what illness —"

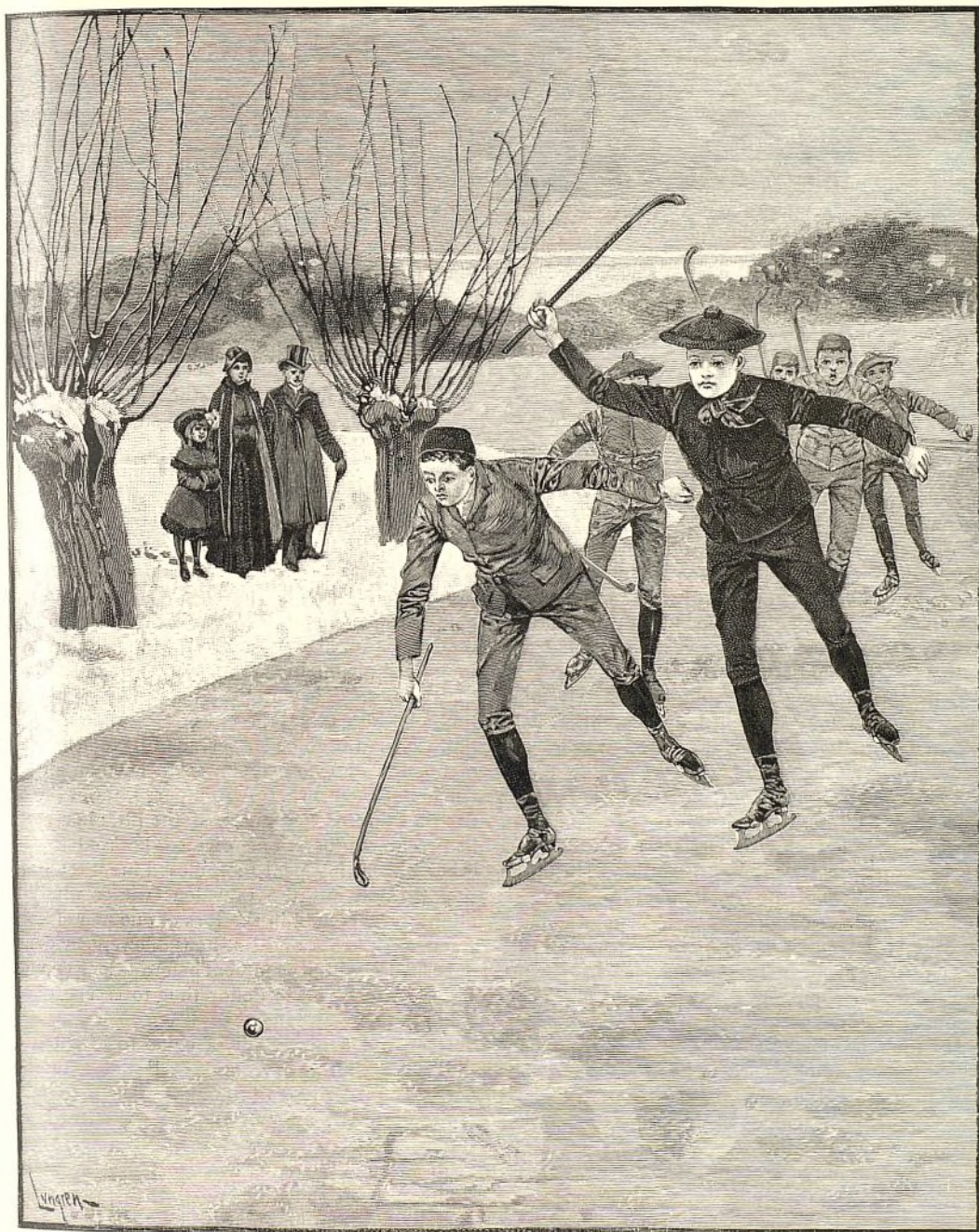
"It will be better to say as little as possible now," interrupted Dr. Norris.

"It was for the poor," said Elizabeth, trembling. "I thought I *must* go. I did not mean to do wrong. It was for the poor."

And while her Uncle Bertrand regarded her with a strangely agitated look, and Dr. Norris held her hand between his strong and warm ones, the tears rolled down her pure, pale little face.

She did not know until some time after what danger she had been in; that the part of the city into which she had wandered was one of the lowest and worst, and was, in some quarters, the home of many wicked people. As her Uncle Bertrand had said, it was impossible to say what terrible thing might have happened if they had not met her so soon. It was Dr. Norris who explained it all to her as gently and kindly as was possible. She had always been fragile, and she had caught a severe cold which caused her an illness of some weeks. It was Dr. Norris who took care of her, and it was not long before her timidity was forgotten in her tender and trusting affection for him. She learned to watch for his coming, and to feel that she was no longer lonely. It was through his care that her uncle permitted her to send to the Curé a sum of money large enough to do all that was necessary; it was through him that the poor woman and her children were clothed and fed and protected. When she was well enough, he had promised that she should help him among his own poor. And through him — though she lost none of her sweet sympathy for those who suffered — she learned to live a more natural and childlike life, and to find that there were in the world innocent, natural pleasures which should be enjoyed. In time she even ceased to be afraid of her Uncle Bertrand and to be quite happy in the great beautiful house. And as for Uncle Bertrand himself, he became very fond of her, and sometimes even helped her to dispense her charities. He had a light, gay nature, but he was kind at heart, and always disliked to see or think of suffering. Now and then he would give more lavishly than wisely. And then he would say, with his habitual graceful shrug of the shoulders: "Yes, it appears I am not discreet. Finally, I think I must leave my charities to you, my good Doctor Norris — to you and Little Saint Elizabeth."

THE END.



SHINNEY ON THE ICE.

THE GOLDEN CASQUE.

BY LUCY G. PAINE.



NE rarely enters a gallery of modern paintings in Europe without seeing one or more views of Scheveningen upon the walls. Also in our own exhibitions, of late years, charming bits of the picturesque town are often seen.

It has become a favorite resort for artists of every country; for this village, though but two miles from the Hague, the most beautiful city of Holland, seems set away back in the forenoon of history. Its people, though mixing with those around them, never mingle, and seem like foreigners in the midst of their own countrymen. They rarely marry out of their beloved village, and retain, with their primitive dress and ways, a gentleness of manner and purity of life almost unique.

A person entering Scheveningen at about noon, on a bright January day not long ago, might have believed himself to be looking through a magnifying-glass at a picture by Gerard Dow.

The same women and children whom Dow painted two hundred years ago seemed threading the street, basket or dish in hand; or they could be seen through the polished windows sitting in the deep shadow of the rooms, bent over some bit of handiwork; or scouring their copper utensils at little side-entrances; or perhaps leaning over the half-door of the house, talking with a neighbor, the head and shoulders relieved with fine effect against the dark background of the interior.

On their heads were the same close white caps which the old Dutch painters have made familiar, and they wore the same bodices and the same short petticoats, ballooned by some mysterious structures underneath.

Scattered up and down the street were the fishermen, fathers, sons and brothers, standing in knots and talking, as they encountered one another while going from their dinners to their different occupations.

The bricks of the cottage yards had been recently scoured. By many doors stood frames of tent-like form, holding flannels and clothing hung

out to dry; not the general wash, but little dabs of casual washes, frequently interpolated throughout the week, by those who labor on small means.

Before the quaintest of the many-colored little houses of this quaint town stood, in every position of heel and toe, fourteen wooden shoes, looking at first glance more like a flock of ducks nestling against one another, than the shoes which are always put off on entering the house by every inhabitant of Scheveningen.

There was a world of character in these shoes. They were of all sizes; some were so large that one of them might almost be used for a baby's bath, and they dwindled down to wee shoes which seemed to seek shelter under the protection of those more grown up. But just beside the door stood two apart, resting with their toes on the ground, and their heels daintily posed against the house. There was an individuality about these which bespoke their owner. They might have been bought from the same lot as the others, but they showed selection; or had become so pervaded by the character of the one who wore them, as to have an air and fashion of their own. Also a poesy, for as the pedestrian approached nearer to the little house with its two green doors, one divided horizontally, the other with a tiny pent-roof, closed in on the north side to shut out the prevalent winter wind, he might have beheld in the toes of one pair of shoes a few fresh roses and hot-house flowers, evidently deposited there but a moment before—long enough, however, to give the donor time to escape observation.

It offered a pretty bit of color to brighten up the white winter day, and indicated a delicate devotion on the part of some affectionate friend.

Presently the door of the cottage opened, and three stalwart men, a father and two sons, came forth in their stout brown stockings, every one stepping from the threshold into his own shoes, as if by intuition he knew his own from the others thus huddled promiscuously together.

As they turned to leave, the eyes of the elder son were attracted by the flowers, and he called back into the doorway, "Oh, Truitje, here are more roses in your shoes!" and in an instant a girl of

fifteen, erect in carriage and with carnation cheeks, came running to the door. Her old-time costume set off her beauty admirably, and her feet were slipped into the pattens, consisting of a sole with toe-piece, which the women wear about their work when indoors.

She stooped, and lifting the flowers caressingly, put them to her face, and inhaled their perfume. Then, with a warm flush on her cheek, she stood looking wonderingly up and down the street, and even up into the air, as if to discover whence they had appeared. It was not the second or third time that the coquettish little wooden shoes had been thus glorified. This was January. The bathing season at the watering-place outside the village had closed unusually early, and every two weeks since, the flowers had sprung in Truitje's shoes, planted there as by some invisible hand. It was a delicious mystery. Truitje had sacrificed many a dinner to solve it, but the flowers must have been in the secret, for they never came when she was on guard, notwithstanding she was so pretty a spy.

That Truitje Meeris was the pride of Scheveningen was beyond dispute. That all the Scheveningen girls acknowledged it, was proof. It was also proof that Truitje deserved the distinction, for it showed her to be high-minded as well as comely.

She was indeed full of a sweet charity which illumined her countenance and sent a warmth into the lives of all who came in contact with her.

Truitje took the nosegay into the house and showed it, with bright eyes, to her mother (who always sympathized with her children in their pleasures), and they commented, as they had many times before, upon the enigmatic sender.

We must leave the sweet roses to tell their secret later, while we go back a whole year, to a day as white and beautiful as this, and follow Truitje as she sets out on an errand for her mother, to the tiny shop which stands at the point where the long street curves, and takes itself out of view of the cottage.

You might fancy her mind would be considering how much flour, and potatoes, and groceries of different sorts her mother had told her to buy. You would never suppose that she was thinking of a golden coronet or anything of that sort,—our dear, little, simple-hearted Truitje. Yet something akin to this was really agitating her thoughts as she walked along in her stout stockings and strong wooden shoes.

The girls of Scheveningen have an absorbing ambition, made rightful by the sympathy and encouragement which their parents accord them in it. Indeed, in all Holland it is the same. It is to have, as early as possible after leaving childhood

behind them, a golden casque to wear beneath their lace or muslin caps. It serves to distinguish a family when its daughters can don this head-gear at an early age. It is purchased at great sacrifice by peasants who are not well-to-do, for it costs a hundred dollars of our money, and often more. This is a great sum for a poor peasant to lay by, when the daily wants of his family are hard to meet. Sometimes these head-dresses come to them from some childless widow or a spinster aunt, or in descent from generation to generation, but a woman or girl who wears a casque carries her title of distinction and consequence with her.

Naturally, then, parents having so pretty a daughter as Truitje, and one so sweet and tender withal, felt that she, above every girl, deserved a casque. It was a grief to see her on fête-days, among the maidens, without the gleam of the casque shining through her cap, or the pretty ornaments which keep it in place projecting in front of her ears. They had promised Truitje that a certain proportion of the fish she took to market should be hers, and that the proceeds should be laid by toward the purchase of the casque. Her brothers occasionally made extra money, after their return from the herring-fishery, and this they contributed to the store. The dear mother put by many a gulden in secret, denying herself a need, to swell the amount, and Truitje herself added to the sum by taking the summer visitors at the hotels to drive in her dog-cart.

Several times it had seemed as if Truitje were on the very eve of possession, when perhaps a fisherman of the village would be lost, and his family left destitute, and she would draw upon her store for the widow and helpless orphans; or old Mother Steen would be attacked with rheumatism and need flannels and remedies, and again Truitje would come to the front; or little Betje Kals would be taken down with the fever and her poor grandmother have no comforts for her, and the fund would be lessened once more.

And now as she walked toward the shoppie, a new anxiety oppressed her. Her two dogs which she drove before the cart that carried her and the fish to market at the Hague, two miles distant, were ailing. This had never happened before, and it was suggested that they had been tampered with by some envious person, as they were acknowledged to be the fleetest dogs in Scheveningen. They were large, rough-coated animals, driven without reins and guided by the touch of a stick and by the voice. Sometimes they outran the swiftest horses. There had been no way of taking her fish to town that day, and on the morrow, the great market-day, she had hoped to make up the sum for the casque. While pondering over it, and deciding what to do, she reached the shoppie,

a tiny box about eight feet square, filled with all sorts of trifles to meet the unexpected wants of a community which makes the bulk of its purchases at the Hague, bringing them back in the dog-carts in which the women and girls take their fish to market. For some time Truitje twisted upon her wooden shoe, waiting for some one to take her order. She finally stepped down into a cheery room, a foot below the level of the shop floor, the windows of which were filled with beautiful flowers, and called, "Vrouw Werff! Vrouw Werff!"

Then there came running from an inner room the mistress of the shop, with hands red from scrubbing, and with many apologies for her tardiness.

"Dear Vrouw Werff, I hope you are well," said Truitje; for it is always a proper thing to pass the compliments before making a purchase in Scheveningen. They then gossiped a little in a harmless way, and Truitje explained that her purchases were so numerous because she had not been able to drive her dogs to town. "But I shall go tomorrow," she said as she bade Vrouw Werff goodbye. "Gertje and I will carry the fish to my cousin Dirk's boat, which goes by early in the morning."

When Truitje next morning, with Gertje's aid, had boarded Dirk's tidy boat, she ran down into the cabin and found his wife Katrina and the two little boys, all of whom gave her a joyous welcome; for there was no home which she entered that was not brighter for her presence. They were very merry during the short distance which yet was so long in time, for Dirk pulled his own boat along the canal by a rope attached to a leathern belt passed about his waist.

On her arrival at the market, Truitje, aided by Dirk, removed her fish to the place which she always occupied. She was well known, and had a regular set of customers. A favorite in the market as in her village, her quickness to note if a fish were not what a customer would like, and her fairness in every particular, made the people feel safe in dealing with her.

When about half the fish were sold, she discovered that Katrina's knitting was crowded into her little knitting-basket with her own. "The darling little Hans must have done that," said she to herself, "he is such a mischief. But what a pity! Katrina was finishing off the thumb, and will need it to set up the other. She told me that she must finish both to-day, for the little Diedrich had lost his mittens overboard and his fingers and thumbs were freezing. I must take it back, if I lose all my fish; dear Katrina will be so disappointed. I will ask Vrouw Korn to look after my baskets while I am away." So Truitje, thinking always of the interests of others before her own, and conscientious in what many disregard as trifles, weighed not for a moment

the attainment of her casque against the completion of Diedrich's mittens, and ran to the boat with the knitting.

On her return she found Vrouw Korn bartering with a crowd gathered around her own fish, and every one of Truitje's had disappeared. "How delightful!" said she. "Some one must have come and taken the lot." And while waiting for her money till Vrouw Korn should dispose of her customers, she began to feed the storks, which, supported by the city, are allowed to wander through the market and pick up the refuse.

When she returned to her post, Vrouw Korn was finishing with her last customer. "Why, Truitje," said she, "you have sold all your fish, have n't you?"

"Yes, dear Vrouw Korn, with your help I have, and I thank you truly."

"My help?" said the astonished vrouw. "Why, I have been so muddled and put about by the crowd of people around me that it is a wonder I kept my senses. I have n't sold one!"

"Then what can have become of them?" said Truitje, in dismay. So she went about eagerly asking one and another if they knew what had become of her fish. Finally, a woman near her stand awoke to the recollection that she had seen several storks a long time about the spot, but concluded they were eating some stale fish that had been left for them. "You know you always sell them from your wagon, Truitje, and how could I think they were yours?"

It was a great blow. The small gains at the fisherman's cottage with the green doors were seriously affected by an amount which would seem a trifle to most persons. The thought of the casque, too, brought home to Truitje a sense of personal loss and of deep disappointment; but she put it away at once. "I shall make up the loss to the dear father and mother out of my store," said she as she took up her baskets to set out for the family purchases. I can better wait than they can wait," and this reflection comforted her. There was one beautiful trait in her character — she knew how to keep a smiling face, and knew also how to hope and wait. So she made up her mind at once to save her mother from the disappointment, and this gave her so beautiful an expression that those who met her as she flitted from shop to shop wondered what could give the brightness which lighted up her face.

On reaching home, she told her mother of the loss and of her resolution to replace the money from her hoard. "The casque will come in time," said she.

"And if the casque does not come, Truitje, a patient spirit will, and that is a better ornament,"

said the loving mother, pressing her daughter to her heart.

The winter days went swiftly by, spring came also and departed, and the bright summer made all gay in Scheveningen. All the way to the Hague the trees trailed their green branches over the beautiful drive-way. The forest was full of life again, with carriages and riders and pedes-

red sails, with yellow sails, with white sails went dipping down into the troughs of waves and lifting on their crests, making the gray North Sea look as if it were in carnival. One could not believe, in the midst of all this holiday aspect, that in a straight-away course lay the icy Arctic Sea, and that if one kept on he might find himself impaled upon the North Pole.



"SHE STOOD LOOKING WONDERINGLY UP AND DOWN THE STREET."

trians. As you turned your eyes to the right in leaving the Hague for the village, wonderful vistas cool and shadowy led away to grottoes and dim recesses. Kiosks and bowers and romantic bits of woodland scenery made "pictures in the eyes" of the beholder. Lakelets, and canals, and winding roadways, and rustic bridges made one dream of fairy-land.

The great hotel was open, and flags flying from the cupola told that the fluttering life within had begun again. All the lesser hotels and cottages had their blinds thrown back, and the muslin curtains and pots of flowers gave a gala-day look to the fashionable summer-resort. The beach was crowded with promenaders, and boats with

Scarcely a European nation but was represented there,—many Danes and Russians of distinction, Germans, French, English, Dutch, and some from the Mediterranean, who enjoyed contrasting the seas of the north and south. For there are times when this gray sea puts on wonderful coloring, and scintillates with prismatic hues, like some marine aurora. So there were comings and goings and "to-ings and fro-ings," and pleasure held the reins, or the helm, as the case might be.

In the little fishing village, with its few thousands of dwellers, life was sunnier than before, but quieter. Most of the fathers and brothers had departed early in the season for the neighborhood of the Scottish coast to pursue the herring-fisher-

ies, and the women and children were left almost alone. At the opening and closing of the schools the cries of children at play might be heard through the streets, but ordinarily only the chatting of the gossips disturbed the quiet. Many of the women might be seen on the sands, their dresses trussed up, carrying fish in baskets, and gathering shells and mussels; and the dog-carts were in great demand by foreigners from the other village who delighted in the novelty of driving in them, because of the phenomenal swiftness of the dogs.

The fleetest in the village were Truitje's. There might be some question of this on the part of others who owned dogs; but no one who was disinterested was ever heard to doubt it.

Sunday is the great holiday in Holland, as in all continental countries. Then the forest and the avenue between the Hague and Scheveningen are alive with the noble and the peasant alike. Every festivity is at its height on that day. The morning is devoted to church-going, but the afternoon to recreation.

It was on one of the brightest of these Sunday afternoons that Truitje drove up to the entrance of the great hotel in her dog-cart. It was spotless. So were the dogs; their rough coats were so clean that they threw off the sunbeams in sparkles of light. So was Truitje, with her odd but fascinating costume. Over the seat of the cart was thrown a light robe of soft gray cloth, having around it a trimming of the iridescent heads and necks of the eider-ducks, which her brothers had shot from time to time in their northern journeys.

Two boys of about eleven and thirteen came running down the steps and climbed into the cart. It was a little crowded on the one seat. Truitje preferred only one passenger generally, but neither of these inseparable brothers could enjoy a pleasure without the other, so she had consented to take both. Besides, it increased the price, and Truitje was not to weigh a preference against that argument.

When they were seated she touched the dogs with the light, wand-like rod she carried, and off they went at a good pace. When she wished it increased she talked to the dogs in an undertone, as if there were a secret language between them, and indeed there was, a language of a good understanding and reciprocal regard.

The afternoon passed happily. There was not one of the occupants of the gay equipages on the drive who had not a smile of approval for the cart and its pretty guardian.

The little party of three threaded the forest as well, and the boys treated themselves to the good things which were sold, and loaded Truitje with

them also, notwithstanding her many protests. "Our papa told us to," was their repeated answer, and Truitje was pleased to think how Gertje and the four-year-old would feast on her return. The boys made several efforts to drive the dogs by touching them as they saw Truitje do, but they knew their mistress, and would never stir except for her well-known signal.

The afternoon was beginning to wane, and a few carriages had left the forest, when Truitje found herself near the Forest House, belonging to the king, and filled with curiosities from the East, many of them gifts of emperors and great men with whom the Hollanders had mercantile intercourse in the days when they ruled the seas.

She drove very rapidly by it, but slackened her speed before emerging on the avenue leading to Scheveningen. As she turned into this, she heard a carriage behind her approaching very rapidly. Suddenly her dogs began to increase their speed, and she saw out of the corner of her eye the heads of a pair of horses, which seemed to be gaining on her. She touched her dogs, and talking to them in low, persuasive tones, they sped faster and faster along. Then she heard a voice rebuking the coachman and asking him if he intended to be outstripped by a pair of fisherman's dogs? Then she felt a new spur was given to the horses, for they gained upon her. Again she used her wand to guide her dogs, for she felt herself being crowded to the side of the road. "Give her room! give her room!" called the occupant of the carriage to the coachman. Then Truitje urged her dogs along, encouraging them by little ejaculations of tenderness, and by the time she reached the hotel she thought the race well over. Her passengers jumped to the ground, and were about to pay her, when she saw on glancing back that there was to be another spurt. So gayly calling out to the boys, "To-morrow!" she renewed the contest.

It was close, for the coachman was evidently on his mettle. There was but a half-mile to go. The broad avenue was lined with holiday-makers, and carriages drew up to one side to see the sport go on. Truitje sat erect in her wagon, her little hooded cloak hanging down her back, the ribbons which generally fastened it fluttering in the wind. Her snowy waist beneath her bodice was decorated with a beautiful nosegay bought for her in the forest by one of the little boys, and worn to please him. Her eyes sparkling, her rosy lips half open as she smiled and prattled to the dogs, she looked, as she moved her rod from one to the other, like a fairy with her enchanted wand. The dogs flew. Their feet seemed hardly to touch the earth, and the men took off their hats, and the women waved

their kerchiefs,—it was an exciting moment! All looked to see it end when Truitje entered the fishing village,—but no! On went the dogs, on went the horses, till Truitje drew up to the cottage with the pent roof over the door, jumped to the ground like a fay, and the dogs soberly took themselves and the cart around the cottage to the house where both were kept.

At this moment the carriage was still making its way at speed, and Truitje, her cheeks glowing with excitement, watched its approach. It stopped, and judge how tumultuously beat her heart, when she found that the one sitting within it, with a beautiful girl about her age beside him, was her king! Her impulses were, like her character, true. Seizing the nosegay from her bodice, she knelt upon the step of the carriage, and holding it up to him, said, in her artless way, "Dear King, I did not dream it was you; forgive my rudeness."

The King bent forward, and taking the flowers, said, "Thank you, dear child! You have done rightly, and I am better pleased that you should win than I, though I am a little ashamed of my boasted pair of horses. I know I can not be the first whom you have vanquished, and now I wish to know what above all other things you would like for yourself, because I must crown the victor, you know."

"How strange!" said Truitje, in her innocent way; "the very thing I wish for most is a golden casque. And, dear King, I have the price in my box—all but sixty gulden; would that be too much for you to give?"

"No, child," said the King, smiling.

"Then I will be very glad, and so will they all, for they so wish me to have a casque."

"What is your name, my child?" said the King.

"Truitje Meeris, dear King," said Truitje.

"And this is your home?"

"It is, dear King."

"Very well. Good-bye, Truitje; I will keep your flowers as a souvenir of our race, and you must wear the casque I shall send, for the same reason."

"But, dear King, it is too much; it costs four hundred gulden!"

"No matter; mine will be different, it will cost another sum."

So the Princess said, "Good-bye, Truitje," and when Truitje had kissed the King's hand, he drove away.

The cottage of Vrouw Meeris was besieged that afternoon. All Scheveningen was alive with the news. Truitje had to tell her story many times before she went to bed, to please all the people. The strangers at the other village heard it. The

father of the little boys, proud that his children should have a part in it, sent her twice the fare next morning. The journals at the Hague told it in a very pretty way, and Vrouw Werff, who kept the shoppie, and subscribed for the Hague journal, read it out to all the customers who called next day. "I always said," added she, to each reading, "that those dogs were the fleetest in Scheveningen,—and I say so now!"

The next Saturday afternoon, as the Meeris family were sitting about their supper-table covered with snowy linen, a quaint tea-pot steaming beside the good vrouw, a messenger came with a package from the court goldsmith, containing a golden casque beautifully engraved, and having the temple ornaments unusually fine, each one representing a little rose, such as Truitje had given the King. Just along the part which goes above the neck was this legend, "Truitje Meeris, from her King, July 30, 18—." It was a supreme moment in Truitje's life. It must have taken many times the sum she had laid by to purchase this. It fitted her perfectly. In fact, as these casques are made, of thinly laminated plates of gold, they adjust themselves to any head. It would have seemed a pity to us to see Truitje's hair disappear under a cap, and this again under the gold casque, because we admire beautiful hair; but in the eyes of the Scheveningen folk she became transformed into something exceptionally fine. Next morning when she went to church, her mother watched her with pride as she sat among the other maidens; and when in the afternoon she drove some stranger in the dog-cart to the forest, there were whisperings and noddings, and knowing looks thrown at her, and all seemed pleased at her good fortune because she wore it so innocently. She had only one more thing to wish, and that was to have her father and brothers return and know her great happiness.

From that day, every two weeks found a nosegay in her wooden shoes, but she never thought it could be the King who had it put there. One day, going into the shoppie, she noticed a new flower in Vrouw Werff's window. She had never seen the flower but once, and that was in her bouquet of the day before.

"Dear Vrouw Werff," said she, "I had a flower like that with those in my shoe yesterday. Can you tell me what it is?"

At this the vrouw became very much agitated, and said in her confusion that it grew only in the royal green-houses.

"Then *how*, dear Vrouw Werff, did you happen to be the only other one to have it?" said Truitje, in her unaffected way.

"Why, you see — Why, you see —"



THE RACE—"ON WENT THE DOGS, ON WENT THE HORSES."

"No, dear Vrouw Werff, I do not see," said Truitje laughingly.

"Well, Truitje, I can not tell you."

"Then, I suppose," said Truitje, "I never shall

see"; and with a "Good-morning, dear Vrouw Werff," she was off and away.

The truth is, it was the Princess who had sent the flowers to Vrouw Werff, at the suggestion of

the King, giving orders to the gardener to keep them constantly renewed, and the Vrouw promised for this to see that Truitje should every two weeks find a bunch of flowers secretly placed in her shoe. And so she does to this very day; for I saw those wooden shoes one soft mild January day, as

I walked down the street of Scheveningen, and the gentle wind murmured this story in my ear, and the waves of the gray North Sea, as they sounded on the shore, kept saying, in tones I could not misunderstand, "It is true— It is true—— It is true!"

THE ROUTINE OF THE REPUBLIC.

BY EDMUND ALTON.

CHAPTER III.

THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT.

PERHAPS no other feature of the Government has provoked such general criticism, or been so widely misrepresented and misunderstood, as has the office of President of the United States. Its creation was the subject of singular comments among those who framed the Constitution; it was violently denounced when that instrument was put before the people for their approval; it has been the target for savage and persistent assault from that time to the present. And in regard to no other feature of the Government, it may be added, have the dismal forebodings of skeptics been so strangely disappointed by the results of experience and practice.

In theory, it may be true that, as the making and enforcement of laws is the great function of government, the power that executes the laws should be in perfect harmony with the power that makes them and be directly under its control — the executive being thus simply the arm of the legislature, acting promptly and implicitly in obedience to its supreme will. This idea, though to-day observed in the workings of other governments, was not accepted by our forefathers. In lodging the executive power in the hands of one person, the Constitution aimed to secure energy and precision in the execution of the laws; but in establishing the Presidency as an independent branch of the Government, removed as far as possible from the meddlesome influence of Congress, and endowing it with important special powers, it suggested to many timid folk a vision of royalty in its most frightful shape. Nor were these thoughts quieted by events that followed in the history of the Government. Indeed, our third President has given it as his opinion that Washington himself believed

the Republic would end in something like a monarchy, and that in adopting his stately levees and other pompous ceremonies he sought, in a measure, to prepare the people gradually for the change that seemed possible, in order that it might come with less shock to the public mind. This remarkable statement we need not take without proof. Whatever may have been Washington's secret fears, certain it is that his devotion to the Republic shielded it from such a fate; and had some of his successors in office, or their advisers, been nearly as wise and as true to the spirit of the Constitution, they would have avoided acts which served to strengthen, rather than subdue, the popular distrust.

That the actual power of the President exceeds that of some of the crowned dignitaries of earth is universally conceded. The Constitution did not intend that he should be a mere figurehead, or "ornamental cupola," to the Government. It not only confided to him the execution of the laws, but it armed him with a power over the making of laws which he might deem improper. By this, we mean the provision that every measure passed by Congress shall be presented to him for his approval and signature, and that, if disapproved by him, he may return it with his objections, in which case it shall not become law unless again passed by the vote of two-thirds (instead of a majority, as in the first instance) of each House of Congress. Whether this power was given to him solely as a weapon to defend his own office or the integrity of the Constitution itself from attack by Congress, or whether the Constitution designed that he should in this way have a voice in the making of all laws, of whatever nature, is one of the questions still unsettled. The weight of opinion and the practice at the beginning of the Government seem to sustain the former view; the strict language of the Constitution is in favor

of the latter. The frequent exercise of the power in recent years, in marked contrast with its rare use by earlier Presidents, has aroused harsh feeling on the part of Congress and some very sober thinking on the part of philosophers; it is plain, however, that the present Executive has no doubt upon the subject. The power is certainly monarchical in its nature, and at first sight appears out of place in a Republic where the will of the people, as expressed by their representatives, should be the law. But here comes in the deliberate device of the Constitution. The executive branch of the Government was purposely so shaped as to act as a check against rash behavior by the legislative branch. The President is not the arm of Congress; he does not owe his office to that body, nor is he directly responsible to it for his actions. He is elected, as is Congress, by the people; and, like Congress, he is answerable to the people. Unlike a member of Congress, he is chosen not by the people of a particular State or district, but by the people of all the States.* He is, therefore, as an individual, the only representative of all the people, and if, in their Constitution, they saw fit to give to him, as their great national representative, this great influence over national legislation,—an influence equal to the votes of one-sixth of all the members of Congress,—there is nothing in it contrary to the principles of republican government. They hold him responsible for its exercise; they have it within their power to remove him in case of its abuse; they may take it entirely away from him should they so desire. As a matter of fact, there have been attempts in Congress to frame and submit to the people an amendment to the Constitution that shall deprive him of it; but such an amendment the people—or those who have noted how often the exercise of this power has prevented unwise legislation, or at least caused Congress to stop in its haste and reflect—are hardly ready to adopt. On the other hand, some people favor an amend-

ment to the Constitution increasing the power so that the President may single out and veto objectionable parts in a measure (as separate items in an appropriation bill) instead of being compelled to approve or disapprove every measure as a whole; but an increase of power, in that direction, might lead to evils compared to which the evil sought to be corrected would be trivial. With the veto power as it stands, however, even were the President inclined to be despotic, he can not balk the will of the people as declared by their representatives in Congress, if a sufficient number of those representatives insist on having that will enforced. †

Another prerogative given to the President is the power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States. This power is absolute (except in cases of impeachment and cases embraced within the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution), and can be interfered with neither by Congress nor by the courts. It may be exercised at any time after the commission of an offense—whether before trial, during trial, or after conviction of the person accused; and the President may make a pardon either conditional or unconditional, partial or complete. He may set aside the sentence, lessen or modify the punishment, or grant leniency or full pardon on condition that the person accepting it shall do certain things. A full pardon restores the person to liberty and to all the rights and privileges of citizenship enjoyed by him before commission of the offense. By “offenses against the United States” is to be understood violations of Federal law; offenses against State law, such as murder, concern the peace and dignity of the State wherein committed, and over such cases the President’s authority does not extend. The exception as to cases of impeachment is to prevent the President from using his “prerogative of mercy” to screen from punishment guilty officers of the Government with whom he himself may have conspired. ‡ The Fourteenth Amendment, formally declared ratified by

* This statement should be explained. While, in effect, the President is chosen by the people of the Union, he is chosen by them in an indirect and roundabout way—the people voting for electors who in turn vote for President. A direct election by the people would be in strict accordance with the theory of popular government; under the present system, it is possible for a President to be chosen by the votes of a majority of the electors, but against the wishes of a majority of the people. In the election of 1876, for example, Hayes was made President by an electoral vote of 185, as against 184 counted for Tilden; whereas, the “popular” vote—or vote of the people—cast for Hayes electors was 4,033,950, as against 4,284,885 cast for Tilden electors—a difference of more than a quarter of a million in favor of Tilden.

† A qualification may be remarked. The President might, at the close of a session of Congress, apply what is styled a “pocket veto,” and thus temporarily impede that body. For the Constitution allows him ten days before action upon any measure presented to him for approval; and if, during those ten days and before action by him, Congress should adjourn, the measure would be defeated. Hence,

the President could “pocket” or hold back any or all bills presented to him within ten days of the end of a session, and prevent their becoming laws—at any rate, until Congress should reconvene and pass them again as entirely new measures. It is an open question whether the President can even approve a bill after the adjournment of Congress; still, it has been attempted. Other nice points have arisen in regard to his power within the “ten-day” limit.

‡ The power of impeachment is given to Congress, and reaches over the President, Vice-President, the Federal judges, and all other civil officers of the United States, guilty of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors. Members of Congress, not being civil officers of the Government, are, in the opinion of the Senate, exempt from impeachment. Judgment in cases of impeachment can not extend further than to removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States; an officer convicted of an impeachable offense being still liable to the ordinary trial and punishment prescribed by law, as in the case of a private citizen.

proclamation dated July 28, 1868, disqualifies from holding legislative or official station under the United States, or from holding office under any State, all persons concerned in rebellion or insurrection against the Government of the United States; and this disability can be removed only by a two-thirds vote of Congress. The Amendment, therefore, restricts the pardoning power of the President to that extent in cases of treason. During and after the War of the Rebellion, and upon the suggestion of Congress, national clemency was offered to political offenders by various Executive proclamations of amnesty; but those issued by the President prior to the adoption of the Amendment were lawful under his Constitutional pardoning-power and did not need to be sustained by authority conferred upon him by Congress.

A third power given to the President is the qualified authority to make treaties. A treaty being law, as much so as is a statute of Congress, the granting of this legislative function to the President may seem another freak of the Constitution. The explanation is simple. The making of treaties often involves most delicate and cautious negotiations with foreign governments, and the President is better able to conduct them with secrecy and dispatch than a body of men, like Congress, in which the power might be vested. Here again, however, the authority of the President is restrained. After his negotiations are at an end, and the provisions of a proposed treaty drawn up in writing, he must submit the draft of the agreement to the Senate for its deliberative advice and consent, and without the approval of two-thirds of that body the treaty can not be made. The rejection by the Senate of international agreements submitted by the President is of quite common occurrence; yet some representatives of foreign powers, not familiar with our Constitution, have expressed surprise on hearing that the action of our President, in reducing the result of patient negotiations to the form of an agreement, has been brushed aside as worthless by another branch of the Government.

A fourth power of the President is that to convene the Houses of Congress, or either of them, on extraordinary occasions; and to adjourn them, in case of disagreement between them over the question of adjournment, to such time as he may think proper. This power, too, is beyond positive abuse. Congress does not sit in continuous session; it meets at a stated time each year, on the first Monday in December, and, when it has finished whatever work it may care to transact, it adjourns to re-assemble on its annual convening-day. If, during its recess, an emergency should arise calling for legislative action, Congress would be powerless to re-convene itself, and it is important

that there should be some officer to take notice of the public necessity and call the law-makers together before their regular time. But Congress has it within its own power to sit every day in the year, and it can not be forced to adjourn so long as it desires to continue in session; and history furnishes us with an illustration where Congress has prolonged its session day after day in order to keep watch over a refractory President and be ready to interfere should he attempt to do mischief—as he would have been very apt to do with Congress out of the way.

A fifth power reposed in the President is his war-power. This is in the strict line of executive duties. He is the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States and of the Militia of the States when called into the Federal service. In time of war, this authority to direct all military operations is of enormous consequence. Yet there must be some head of affairs, and one man is better than four hundred when promptness and decision of action are required. Congress, realizing this fact, has, at particular times, given to the President even additional authority. Such, for instance, was the authority temporarily given to him by Congress during our troubles with France, toward the close of the last century, to seize or expel from our country any alien citizen of France or any other alien whom he might think dangerous to our peace. Such, again, is the general authority given to him by Congress, which still continues, to defend the rights of American citizenship abroad, by using any means, not amounting to acts of war, that he may think necessary and proper to obtain the release of any citizen unjustly deprived of his liberty by a foreign government. Such was the authority given to him by Congress, in 1887, to retaliate against the British North American dominions in case of any further interference with our fishermen, by closing our ports to vessels of that country and cutting off certain commercial communication with it. Such was the authority conferred upon him by Congress to issue to private armed-vessels of the United States commissions or letters of marque and general reprisal against the vessels or other property of an enemy, as against the British Government and its subjects in the War of 1812. And such was the authority delegated to him by Congress to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* during the late Civil War. Under discretionary or vindictive powers like these or others that might be cited it would be possible for a President to commit the most despotic acts. Even the Emancipation Proclamation, which gave freedom to the slaves, must be classed as an arbitrary deed. In its effects, it was one of the grandest acts in history; and yet it was

issued, and was so declared, as an act of "military necessity," under the authority of the President as Commander-in-Chief — he could scarcely have based it on any other ground. Tremendous as may be the war-power of the President, or the discretionary power temporarily delegated to him by Congress during time of danger, Congress may readily restrain its exercise. It may revoke all retaliatory or similar authority given to him for temporary use, and the power reposed in him by the Constitution may be made to dwindle to a mere memory or fiction. For, with Congress rests the exclusive right to raise armies and navies and to control the public funds; and without appropriations of money for supplies, or other legislative action by Congress, it would be impossible for the President to make use of any military forces, or, indeed, for any army or navy to exist. As Commander-in-Chief, he would thus be left with nothing to command.

A sixth power, which belongs to the President in his executive capacity, is that of appointing ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States whose appointments are not otherwise provided for in the Constitution and which may be established by law.* As the President depends for the actual execution of the laws upon the officers and employés under him, those subordinates should be persons in whose ability and loyalty he can safely confide for the performance of the duties assigned to them either by statute or by his orders; and in case of dishonest or worthless subordinates he should have it within his power to secure in their stead, honest and competent men. But the Constitution does not give him unrestricted power to appoint, nor is it clear that he has absolute power to remove at his own pleasure. In the appointment of certain chief officers he must obtain the advice and consent of the Senate; and while Congress may allow the President, or heads of Departments, or the courts, to appoint inferior officers without consulting the Senate, and while Congress has actually given that permission, still that permission may be revoked and every appointment be made to undergo the criticism of the Senate. Were Congress to adopt this plan, the President could merely appoint temporarily under his power to fill vacancies happening during the recess of the Senate. As to how far Congress may interfere, if at all, with removals by the President, or how far the President may make removals, if at all, without the permis-

sion of Congress, the Constitution is silent; and the question is one of vital importance to the purity of the Government and the dignified administration of the laws. For years, appointments and removals have been made on partisan grounds, under what is known as the "spoils" system; until an election for President has come to be dreaded by many decent people as merely a contest to see who shall capture the thousands of offices — a disgraceful scramble for "place," rather than the calm and impressive selection of a Chief Magistrate to administer the Government for the good of the country, in accordance with some high rule of principle. A person who holds a public office holds a position of public trust and honor, and a person who enters the public service and faithfully performs the duties of his office is entitled to the confidence and esteem of the people whom he serves. Fidelity and merit should be the test of fitness, as well in public as in private positions of trust; and an effort to regulate appointments and removals on this basis has resulted in the establishment by Congress of a board of three men, known as the Civil Service Commission, whose duties and work we will notice later on. At present, its operations extend only to minor offices; the power of the President over the great bulk of lucrative offices remains unimpaired, and the vicious idea of "spoils" has not yet been banished from practical politics.

The provision of the Constitution, directing that the President shall receive ambassadors and other public ministers, clearly indicates him as the "organ of communication" with foreign governments, and as such he stands at the head of the Republic, equal in rank with monarchs or other chief magistrates of the world, whether at the head of Republics, Kingdoms, or Empires.

It can hardly be claimed that the powers of the President, thus briefly reviewed, are not sufficiently controlled by the Constitution, which assumes, of course, that the other branches of the Government and the people will do their duty. However wise or unwise may have been the plan by which the President is made to act as a check upon, or as a part of, the legislative power of the Government, by conferring upon him the power to veto legislation, it must be remembered that this power, like the power to make treaties, to appoint subordinates, and to do other important acts, is under Constitutional restraint; and Congress, as the repository of the supreme power of the Republic, may override vetoes and treaties, and establish laws by which

* With the simple appointment of Federal judges, the power of the President over them ceases; for, when appointed, they at once form part of the Judicial Department of the Government, holding their offices during good behavior under the protection of the Constitution, and are removable only by Congress by impeachment, or by being legislated out of office (in case of tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court), by the abolition of their courts.

the exercise of other powers may be kept within proper bounds. In his purely executive capacity the President is not formidable. He is required to take care that the laws be faithfully executed; and he is bound by oath to honestly execute his office, and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. He is given power to resist, to a certain degree, by his veto, the making of objectionable laws, and he may urge by recommendation the repeal of such as he may not deem good; but such as the laws are, whether objectionable or not, he must see that they are unerringly carried out. Some of these laws confer upon him a certain discretion, giving him authority, rather than directing him, to do certain things or to act in a certain manner, as occasion may occur; but beyond these discretionary matters the laws are absolute commands. Under his oath, and as an honest officer, he must do one of two things—he must execute them without a murmur, or he must resign.* The same remark applies to every agent of administration under him. To allow the Executive Department to set up its own will in opposition to the express command of the Legislature, would subvert every principle of free government and lead to the iron despotism of autocracy or to the terrors of anarchy and chaos.

In its official intercourse with the President each House of Congress treats him with a deference or courtesy due to him as one of the three independent branches of the Government. For this reason, whenever either House of Congress calls upon him for information, the call is put in the form of a request, coupled with the discretionary words, "if not incompatible with the public interests." In this it differs noticeably from a call upon a head of department or subordinate officer. The latter is not a request; it is a positive direction—the emphatic order of a superior to an inferior. The various assistants who hold office under the President are not his servants or his henchmen, to obey him implicitly, and him alone. Their offices were created

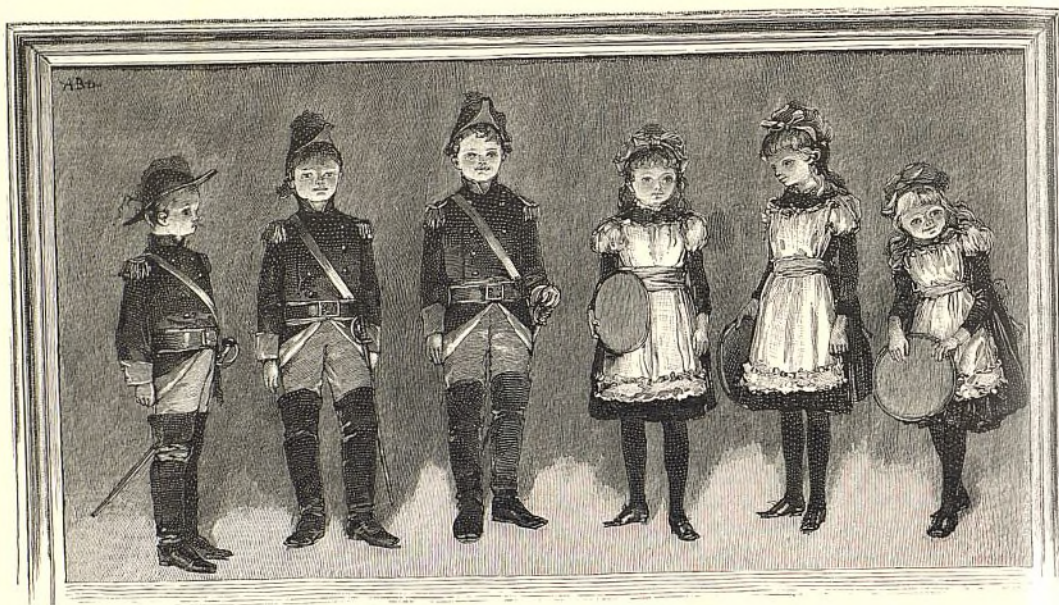
by Congress as aids to the Executive; their duties are, or may be, prescribed by Congress; and they must obey the commands of Congress, so far as those commands are law, regardless of any orders to the contrary issued by the President. They are the servants of the people—being bound, like the President himself, by oath†—and it is the duty of the representatives of the people in Congress to see that they do not neglect their trusts. If they fail to perform a plain ministerial duty charged upon them by law, the courts, as the third independent branch of the Government, may order them to perform it. If they deliberately ignore or violate the law, they do so at their peril. Over the conduct of all civil officers of the Government, the President included, Congress is required to exercise a watch; and in case of any defiance or transgression of the law, it is its duty to call the offending officer before its bar, under the process of impeachment, and remove him from his trust, with odium and disgrace, in the name of the people of the United States.

And so, after all, the President, while directly responsible to the people for the wise exercise of his discretionary powers or prerogatives, is not above the law. There may be ways in which he can abuse his power; but the Constitution has provided ample means by which such abuse may be corrected and punished. One President has been impeached and narrowly escaped conviction; others have been vigorously rebuked by formal resolutions of censure; and if, in the many spirited tilts between the Executive and Congress, we find the President at times improperly in the ascendant, or usurping unconstitutional powers, we may fairly charge it to the personal incapacity or cowardice of the House or Senate. So long as Congress shall do its duty, the Government is safe from harm through the powers of the Executive; and so long as the people shall do their duty in the choice of able and patriotic representatives, Congress may be reasonably depended upon to do its own.

* A law of Congress provides: "The only evidence of a refusal to accept, or of the resignation of the office of President or Vice President, shall be an instrument in writing, declaring the same, and subscribed by the person refusing to accept, or resigning, as the case may be, and delivered into the office of the Secretary of State."

† This is under the Sixth Article of the Constitution. The law of Congress requires that every person elected or appointed to any office of honor or trust, either in the civil, military, or naval service, except the President, shall, before entering upon the duties of such office, and before being entitled to any part of the salary, or other

emoluments thereof, take and subscribe an oath of allegiance. This oath is in two forms. By the "iron-clad" oath the officer swears that he has never borne arms against the United States, etc., in addition to swearing that he will support and defend the Constitution, and bear true allegiance to the same, and well and faithfully discharge the duties of his office. The "modified" oath omits all reference to past loyalty, in order to adapt it to cases of participants in the late rebellion. Further and special oaths are provided for certain officers, the language of which varies with the duties of the office. The form of oath required of the President is prescribed by the Constitution.



Waiting for Santa Claus

(A Dialogue to Introduce the Christmas-tree.)

BY EUDORA S. BUMSTEAD.

CHARACTERS.

SANTA CLAUS. A man with long white hair and beard, coat and cap of fur.

1ST BOY.	} Dressed in fancy uniforms, with plumed hats, sashes, and swords.	1ST GIRL.	} Dressed as waiting-maids, in dark frocks and stockings, white aprons and caps; carrying trays.
2D BOY.		2D GIRL.	
3D BOY.		3D GIRL.	

The third boy and the third girl should be the smallest of the company, and the boy should be trained to speak in a very deliberate and emphatic manner, with an air of great importance.

SCENE.—A small stage, with a Christmas-tree curtained off, L. Stage curtain rises, discovering the six children grouped in a semicircle, fronting audience. Third boy at right, and third girl at left of the others.

1ST BOY.	This day has lasted 'most a week, I honestly believe.	3D BOY.	I 'spect by now the tree is full — Every tiny shoot.
1ST GIRL.	I think so too. But now, at last, It's really Christmas Eve.		I wish that Santa Claus were here, — We'd — pick — the fruit.
2D BOY.	And we are here to guard the tree Till good Kriss Kringle comes.	3D GIRL.	What does make him stay so long? It must be getting late.
2D GIRL.	And we are here to wait on him, And pass the sugar-plums.		Come, let's sing our Planting Song While we have to wait.

(ALL SING. Air: "Johnny Comes Marching Home.")

We've planted a beautiful Christmas-tree,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
Its branches are strong as strong can be,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
But won't they bend with the fruitage fair
That good St. Nicholas makes them bear,
And we'll all be so glad that we planted the
Christmas-tree.

Our fathers and mothers are here to-night,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
They've come to see the wonderful sight,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
We hope St. Nicholas won't forget.
Some fruit for them on the tree we've set;
And we'll all be so glad that we planted the
Christmas-tree!

There's lovely fruit in summer and fall,
But the Christmas crop is the best of all;
And we'll all be so glad that we planted the
Christmas-tree!

1ST GIRL. There's the tree we planted,
Curtained out of sight.

1ST BOY. Let us take a peep and see
If everything is right.

(All tip-toe L. and peep cautiously behind the curtain.)

2D GIRL. It's rather dark, but, seems to me,
There's nothing to be seen.

3D BOY. Nothing on the Christmas-tree?
What — can it — mean!

3D GIRL. Where are the nuts and candies?
2D BOY. I can't see a crumb!

1ST GIRL.
Where's Mr. Santa Claus?

1ST BOY.
Don't believe he'll come!

2D GIRL.
What if he were frozen in,
Away up there?

3D BOY.
Or what if he were eaten
By a great — big — bear!

3D GIRL.
Or what if all his helpers
Were gone upon a strike!

3D BOY.
I tell you that's a prospect
That I — don't — like!

1ST BOY.
Come, let's go and find him.
Don't you think we might?

1ST GIRL.
It's cold and dark outside, boys;
Don't you know it's night?

2D BOY.
I tell you, we are soldiers,
Whom nothing ever scares.

3D BOY.
Wish we were with Santa Claus —
We'd — kill — the bears!



We'll serve St. Nicholas all we can,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
And he shall be our nursery-man,
Hurrah! Hurrah!

2D GIRL. I wonder if his sleigh is caught
With snow-drifts all about?

3D BOY. I wish that we could find him;
We'd — dig — him out!

3D GIRL. Perhaps he has some reindeers
That are not the fleetest sort.

1ST BOY. I wish we were behind 'em:
We 'd have good sport.

3D BOY. I tell you, we are soldiers
Whom nothing ever scares;
If we could find our Santa Claus,
We 'd — kill — the bears!

3D GIRL. I 'm 'fraid you boys are braggarts.
But did you ever know
What happened at a Christmas-tree
A long time ago?

3D BOY. Oh, no! Let 's have the story!

1ST GIRL. We 'll all be very still.

1ST BOY. Tell us all about it, now.

3D GIRL. Well, then, I will.

Once there were three little boys.
They quarreled and they fought
Over all the pretty presents
That Santa Claus had brought.
And they never gave the smallest bit
Of anything they had
To any poorer little boy,
To try to make him glad.

At last they set a Christmas-tree,
For their three selves alone.
They meant that every speck of fruit
Should be their very own.
And when they lit the candles
They saw that great big tree
Was just as full of Christmas fruit
As ever it could be.

But just when they were ready
To gather all those things,
They heard the glass a-breaking
And a sudden rush of wings;
And right in through the window
Flew — what do you suppose?
You 'd never guess in all the world —
'T was three black crows! —
Big, black crows!

They perched around the Christmas-tree
And there was no more joy —
With such a solemn, blaming look
They looked at every boy.

And those three boys just looked at them,
And did n't dare to stir,
Till all at once they flapped their wings —
Buzz! — Whizz! — Whir!
And right in sight of all those boys
They changed — as quick as scat!
In place of every solemn crow
Was a big black cat!
A fierce black cat!

They sat around the Christmas-tree
And there was no more joy;
With such a "scareful," hungry look
They gazed at every boy.
Those boys just shook and trembled,
And feared that they would fall,
For they knew they 'd all be eaten
If the cats were not so small.
Then, all at once, so sly and still,
It happened unawares,
Those dreadful cats had changed their
shapes
To three black bears!
Big BLACK BEARS!

(All look horrified. Noise behind the curtain near
Christmas-tree.)

ALL THE BOYS. What 's that?
ALL THE GIRLS. Shoo! Scat!

(During next speeches all retreat slowly backward to
farthest corner.)

1ST GIRL. What can be in there?
3D BOY. Oh, dear! I 'm most afraid
It might be a bear!

2D GIRL. Look! — look! There 's something
moving!
I see some fur! It 's gray!
1ST BOY. I 'll watch this corner;
He sha'n't get away!

2D BOY. Just let him come out boldly,
And fight us, if he dare!
3D BOY (faintly, pressing close to the wall).
Don't be frightened, any one;
We 'll — kill — the bear!

(Enter Santa Claus, L. Children gaze in astonish-
ment till he speaks, then surround and cling to him.)

SANTA CLAUS.

Ho! Hulloo! my little folks!
Looking out for bears?
'T is only one of Santa's jokes,
To catch you unawares.



Your love for what is true
and right;
Your tender heart and
smile so bright;
Your own dear self, with
us to-night;
Santa Claus, dear Santa
Claus.

We 'll think about you all
the year,
Santa Claus, dear Santa
Claus;
And often wish that you
were here,
Santa Claus, dear Santa
Claus.
We 'll try our best to be
like you,
In all our duties, kind and
true;
As glad to share with
others, too,
Santa Claus, dear Santa
Claus.

But now you 've turned
the joke on me;
You 've caught me, I 'll
be bound!
Well, you shall help me
strip the tree,
And pass the fruit around.

3D BOY.

But first we 'll sing a little
song,
And every word is true;

(Takes Santa Claus's hand
and lays his cheek against it.)

Dear Mr. Santa Claus,
We 'll — sing — for you.

(All sing. Air: "Maryland,
my Maryland.")

We love you more than
we can sing,
Santa Claus, dear Santa
Claus;
And not alone for what
you bring,
Santa Claus, dear Santa
Claus.

VOL. XVI. — 15.



SANTA CLAUS.

Now may joy and love and cheer
Brighten all you see!
One good look, my children dear,
Here 's your Christmas-tree!

(Instrumental music. Santa Claus withdraws the curtain from before the tree. Allow sufficient time for all to enjoy the sight of the ornamented tree, and then let the six children distribute the gifts as Santa Claus takes them from the tree.)





HOUSEKEEPING SONGS. No. IX.

WORDS BY MARY J. JACQUES.

THE ROLLING PIN.

MUSIC BY T. C. H.

Con moto.
mf

I. Ro - ley - po - ley, roll - ing pin, Dredge your board and then be - gin,

Cresc.

Round your crust and roll it thin, Ro - ley - po - ley, roll - ing pin!

Cresc.

II.
Roley-poley, rolling pin,
Pumpkin pie-crust in a tin,
Edged with many an out and in,
Roley-poley, rolling pin!

III.

Roley-poley, rolling pin,
Tarts and cookies minikin,
Turnovers your tooth to win,
Roley-poley, rolling pin!

IV.

Roley-poley, rolling pin,
Dumplings with a dimpled chin,
Crinkled crullers crisp within,
Roley-poley, rolling pin!



By John H. Jewett.

FOR LITTLE FOLK.

I. THE HOME OF THE BUNNYS.

THE home of the Bunny family was once a sunny hillside, overrun with wild-rose bushes and berry-vines, with a little grove of white birches, pines, and other trees, on the north side, to shelter it from the cold winds of winter.

The place had no name of its own until the Bunnys and their neighbors found it out, and came there to live.

After that, it became much like any other thickly settled neighborhood, where all the families had children and all the children ran wild, and so they called it "Runwild Terrace."

This was a long time ago, when all the wild creatures talked with each other, and behaved very much as people do nowadays, and were for

the most part kind and friendly to each other.

Their wisest and best teachers used to tell them, as ours tell us now, that they all belonged to one great family, and should live in peace like good brothers and sisters.

I am afraid, however, they sometimes forgot the relationship, just

as we do when we are proud or greedy or ill-natured, and were sorry for it afterward.

The Bunnys of Runwild Terrace were very much like all the rest—plain, sensible, and well-bred folks.

The father and mother tried to set a good example by being quiet and neighborly, and because they were always kind to the poor and sick, they were called "Deacon Bunny" and "Mother Bunny" by their friends and neighbors.

The Bunny children were named Bunnyboy, who was the eldest, Brownny, his brother, and their sisters, Pinkeyes and Cuddledown; and their parents were anxious that the children should grow up to be healthy, honest, truthful, and good-natured.

They were a happy family, fond of each other, and of their cousin Jack, who lived with them.

One of Cousin Jack's legs was shorter than the other, and he had to use a pair of crutches to help him walk or hop about, but he was very nimble on his "wooden legs," as he called them, and could beat most of the bunnies in a race on level ground.

He had been lame so long, and almost every one was so kind to him because he was a cripple, that he had got used to limping



FATHER BUNNY.

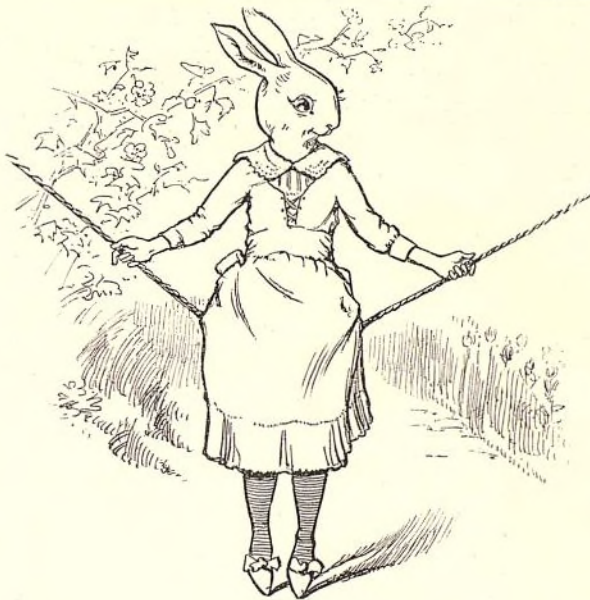


MOTHER BUNNY.

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BUNNYBOY.



PINKEVES.



CUDDLEDOWN.



them
but the neigh-

about, and did not mind being called "Lame Jack," by some of the thoughtless neighbors.

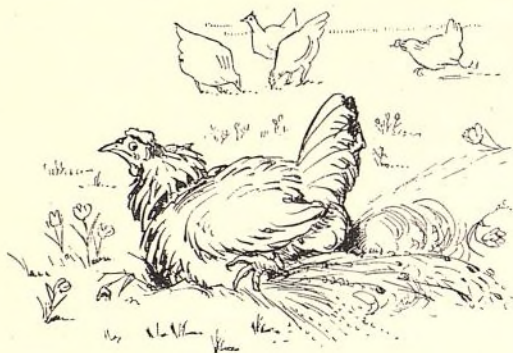
The Bunny family, however, always called him "Cousin Jack," which was a great deal better and kinder, because no one really likes to be reminded of a misfortune, or to wear a nickname like a label on a bottle of medicine.

Cousin Jack was a jolly, good-natured fellow, and the bunnies all liked him because he was so friendly and cheerful, and willing to make the best of everything that happened to go wrong.

These hens seemed to think there was no place like a freshly made flower bed to scratch holes to roll in; and when no one was looking they would walk right out of a large open corn-field, where there was more loose earth than they could

possibly use, and begin to tear that flower garden to pieces.

One old yellow hen, that was lazy and clumsy about everything else, would work herself tired,



every time she could get in there, trying to bury herself in the soft loam of the garden.

Brownny's father, Deacon Bunny, told Brownny he might scare the hens away as often as they came, but must not hurt them with clubs or stones, because they belonged to their good neighbor Coon.

Brownny thought it was strange that a good neighbor should keep such a mischievous hen as Old Yellow; but the Deacon said that people who kept hens in a crowded neighborhood, and let them run at large, usually cared more about fresh eggs and other things to eat than for flowers, and as a rule, such people did not lie awake at night thinking about the trouble their hens gave other folks.

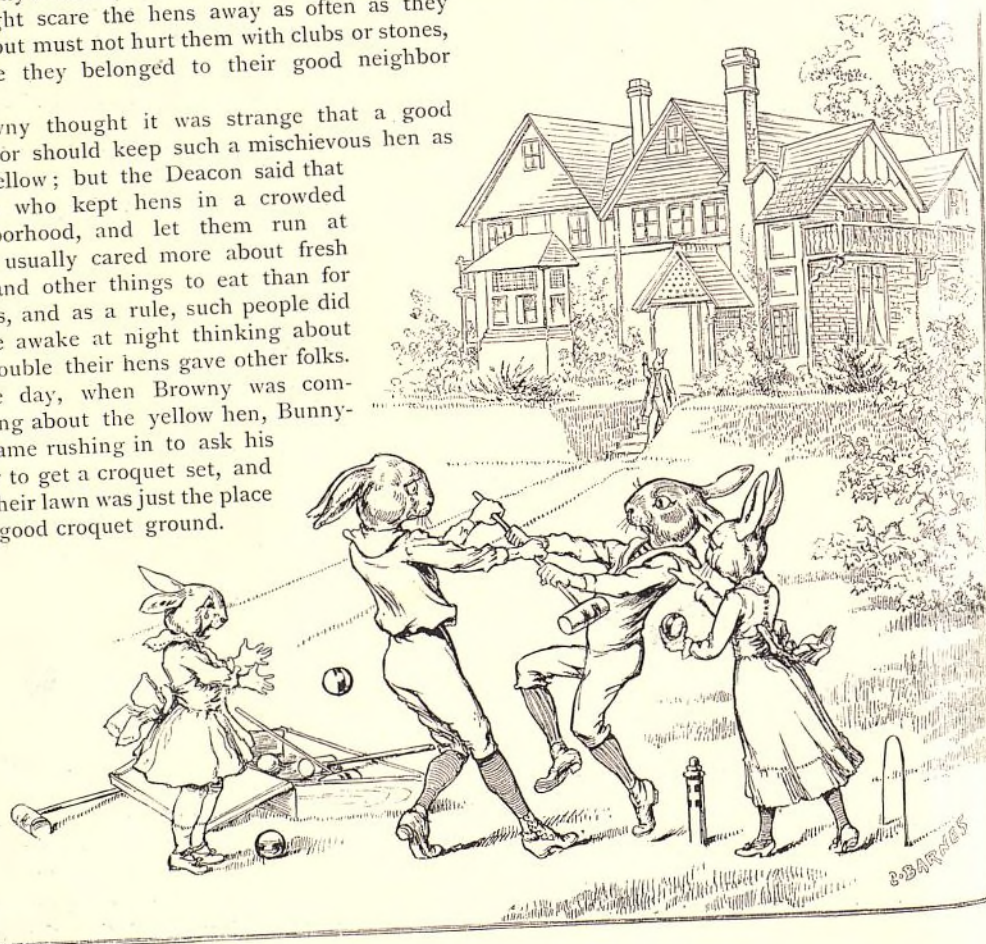
One day, when Brownny was complaining about the yellow hen, Bunnyboy came rushing in to ask his father to get a croquet set, and said their lawn was just the place for a good croquet ground.

The Deacon said at once that he thought it would be a good place, and if the neighbors' children would all turn out and enjoy the game with them, the plan Bunnyboy suggested might help to rid them of the daily hen-convention on the lawn, and save the flower beds. The next day he brought the croquet set.

When the bunnies opened their new croquet box, they found four mallets and four balls, and nine arches and two stakes, all painted and striped with red, white, blue and yellow, to match each other.

The first thing they did was to begin quarreling lustily about who should have the first choice, for each of the players chanced to prefer the blue ball and mallet.

When the Deacon heard the loud talking on the lawn, he came out, shut up the box and said the croquet exercises would not begin until they could behave themselves, and settle the question of the first choice like well-bred children, without any more wrangling.



Bunnyboy happened to remember that he was the oldest, and said the best way was to give the youngest the first choice and so on. The Deacon said that was all right, and that they were all old



enough to learn how much happier it makes every one feel to be yielding and generous, even in little things, than to be selfish and try to get your own way in everything.

So they all agreed, and each bunny took a mallet and began a game, and they had rare fun knocking the balls about, trying to drive them through the arches without pushing them through, which was not fair play.

By and by Chivy Woodchuck and his brother Chub heard the clatter, and came over to see the fun, and wanted to play with them.

Then came the question, who should play, and who should not, for all six could not play with but four mallets. Of course the visitors should have first place, and two of the Bunnys must give up their mallets and balls.

Bunnyboy tried to settle it by asking Pinkeyes and Cuddledown to go into the kitchen and tease the cook for some ginger cakes, while the others played a game. They liked this plan, and so the boys each had a mallet and the game went on nicely, until Chivy Woodchuck knocked the red ball into the muddy gutter and the other side

refused to go and get it. Then another dispute began.

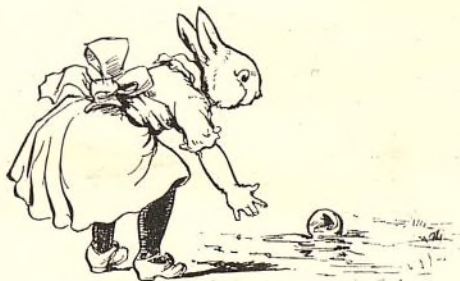
Bunnyboy thought Chivy ought to get the ball, and Chivy said Bunnyboy ought to get it himself; and so, instead of keeping good natured, they stood sulking and scolding until the other children came back.

When Cuddledown heard the talking, she went and picked up the muddy ball, wiped it on her dress, and brought it back to the lawn, just as the Deacon came out to see what the new quarrel was about.

Bunnyboy and Chivy were so ashamed of having made such a fuss about doing a little thing that the youngest bunny could do in a minute without being asked, that they begged each other's pardon, and went on with the game.

Deacon Bunny told Cuddledown that she was a good child to get the ball and stop the dispute, and that she had begun early to be a little peace-maker; but the next time she had a muddy ball to clean she should wipe it on the grass instead of her dress, because it was easier for the rain to wash the grass than for busy mothers to keep their children clean and tidy.

All the summer they had jolly times with the croquet, but the old yellow hen did not like



having so many little folk around, and had to hunt up a new place to scratch holes to roll herself in.

But Brownie had both a flower and a vegetable garden next year, and the old yellow hen never troubled him any more.

(To be continued.)



JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR to you, my friends! And it *will* be a Happy New Year if we all can keep our resolve to make and keep good resolutions. But the trouble is, good resolutions are like nine-pins. They too often are set up in impressive moments only to be knocked down when the fun begins.

Now, by way of precaution, let us slowly repeat together these lines:

Suppose we think little about number one;
Suppose we all help some one else to have fun;
Suppose we ne'er speak of the faults of a friend;
Suppose we are ready our own to amend;
Suppose we laugh with, and not at, other folk,
And never hurt any one "just for the joke";
Suppose we hide trouble, and show only cheer—
How sure we shall be of a Happy New Year!

A WEIGHTY MATTER.

OUR friend A. R. Wells tells me he has had a bad dream, and it all came from reading a life of Sir Isaac Newton after eating a hearty supper of cream and baked apples. How can people do such things! Hear him:

I dreamt the whole thing out as I was sleeping;
May I confide in you?
I spend my days in wailing and in weeping
For fear my dream come true.
I thought that with no kindly word of warning,
No hint of coming trouble,
Some cause mysterious one awful morning
Made gravitation double.
The branches snapped from all the trees around me,
A fierce, terrific sound.
I fain would run away. Alas! I found me
Fast fixed upon the ground.
The birds fell down like feathered stones from
heaven;

The sky was all bereft.
Ten houses were before; behind me, seven;
And not a house was left.
It rained, and every little drop down rushing
Cut like a leaden ball.
The air grew denser; pressing, strangling, crushing.
I tottered to my fall,
And then awoke from out my fearful sleeping.
And now, what shall we do?
I spend my days in wailing and in weeping.
Might not my dream come true?

THAT SPINNING EGG.

SEVERAL bright boys and girls have sent me good answers to J. L.'s question about the egg, which was put to you in September last. But I hardly think it is worth while to tell you, my hundred thousand other hearers, what Harry L. D., A. E. Orr, George S., Mary D. F., and the rest say. You all may think the matter out for yourselves, you know.

MONEY FINDINGS.

NEW YORK.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: You ask us if we can add some words to the dear Little School-ma'am's list of interesting derivations of popular words, so I have found a few for you.

Money is from the temple of Juno Moneta, in which money was first coined by the ancients.

Pecuniary is from pecus, a flock; flocks and herds of animals being originally equivalent to money or things constituting wealth.

Cash, in commerce, signifies ready money, or actual coin paid on the instant, and it comes from the French word *caisse*, a coffer or chest in which money is kept.

Groat was a name given to silver pieces equal to four pennies in value, coined by Edward III. The word (groat) is a corruption of *grosses*, or great pieces, in contradistinction to the small coin or pennies.

Dollar has a curious derivation. The first step back makes it *thaler*, then "*thal*," a valley; but *thal* originally meant a deal or division; so the gold or silver was dealt or divided into pieces worth a *thaler*, the German form, or *dollar*, the American.

Of course our word *cent* is from *centum*, a hundred, for the cent is a hundredth part of a dollar.

But I must close this very monetary letter.

Your admiring reader,

LAURA G. I.—

PET HUMMING-BIRDS IN WINTER.

I HAVE just heard a pretty newspaper story of a young lady of New York who delights in pet humming-birds. They build their nests, the story says, in the lace curtains, and have raised little families in the parlor. There are plants for them to fly about in, and every day the florist sends a basket of flowers, from which the pretty pets may extract the honey. They are like little rainbows flying about the room, and they light on the head of their dainty mistress with perfect freedom.

This reminds me of a true account that has been sent to my pulpit by a young girl who surely has a gentle heart. You shall have the story in her own words. She calls it

MY BIRD DOT.

His name was "*Dot*," and he was the tiniest mite, not larger than a good-sized bumble-bee. I found him one morning last summer after a



severe windstorm, lying helpless, with one of his gauzy wings injured in such a way that he could not use it for flying. He was not at all frightened when I approached and picked him up, but looked appealingly at me out of his very small, black eyes. I could not but admire the elegance of his dress, showing green and gold with a glowing patch of red on his breast, while his feathers were perfumed with the scent of many flowers.

Naturally, so small a bird did not require a mansion to live in. Indeed, "Dot" tried to tell me, in the way birds have of talking, that a cozy abode would meet with his approval. I found that a paste-board box would answer the purpose, and when I had strewn the bottom with sweet-smelling leaves, and put a twig across it, in the way of furniture, "Dot" was installed in his new home.

He would rest quietly on his perch, dreaming, as I imagined, of the days that were gone, of the blue sky, the sweet June breeze, until, recollection proving too strong, he would try to use his wings. Then, alas! instead of bearing him up as they were wont to do, they could give him no support, but left him to fall to the floor of his house, there to lie patiently waiting for some one to replace him in an upright position. Every morning "Dot" and I made a tour of the garden, his specks of feet resting confidently on my enormous finger. We visited every blossom in turn, and he took a little honey from each. Many a time I thought I had lost him, he went so deep down into the huge morning-glories. When the season of flowers was over, I made a mixture of sugar and water to take the place of his natural food. He

did not appear to distinguish any lack in the flavor of this make-believe honey; and when I let a drop of it form on the end of my finger, he was always ready to run out his long tongue (which looked like a thread of silver) and sip it off. He seemed to thrive on this artificial diet, and would no doubt be living now had I not one fatal day placed the dish containing it too near him. I left him musing in his quiet way over past delights, but returned to find his body floating on this sticky sea, with his dear little feathers in sad disarray.

Poor "Dot!" His trials were over, and I consoled myself by fancying that he was away in the humming-birds' heaven, happy in a garden of flowers, of which we have never seen the like.

So much for dear, bright, little Dot. Now, while we are on the subject of birds, you may hear this:

TRUE STORY OF A BROWN THRUSH.

"SUNSET HEIGHT," MADISON, N. J.
DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: I remember reading in ST. NICHOLAS, not long ago, of a robin stealing lace for its nest. Here is something which I think surpasses that story as an instance of bird-cleverness.

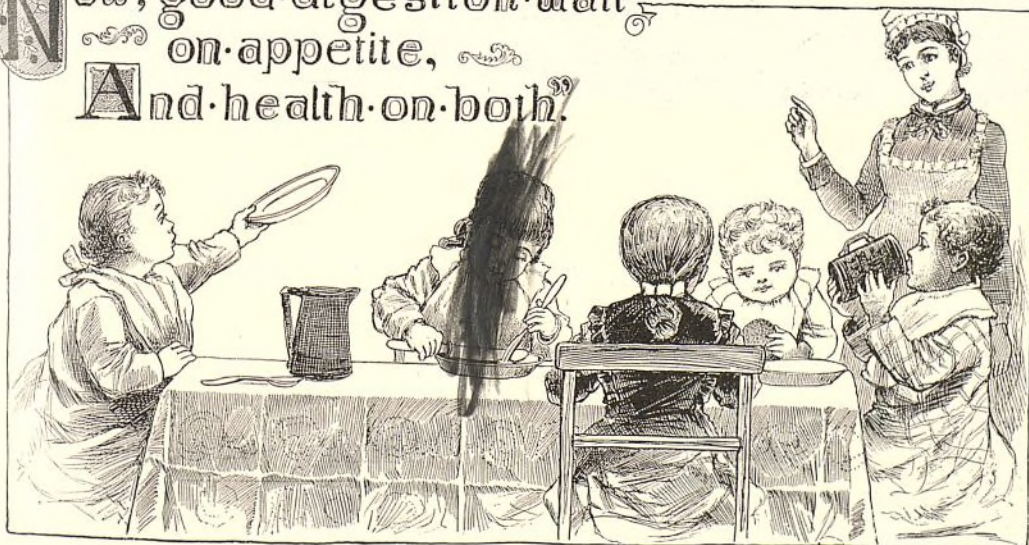
We were marking our tennis-court, and left the ball of cord, partly unwound, out on the grass.

The next morning I observed one of our maple-trees gracefully festooned with white cord, the whole ball being unwound and twined in and out among the branches, while only a very little helped to build the nest of a brown thrush. The birds could not break the cord, so they had carried the entire ball quite a distance, to their nest, just for the sake of about a yard.

They must have worked very hard, for the cord was wet, making it much heavier, and I think they displayed a great deal of patience and perseverance. Your wise, instructive sermons must have reached them, and been regarded with faithful attention.

With love to your excellent congregation, I am, yours, very sincerely,
JOSEPHINE MULFORD.

Now, good digestion wait
On appetite,
And health on both?



THE FIRST BREAKFAST OF THE NEW YEAR.

EDITORIAL NOTE.

WE reproduce on this page a copy of the fine portrait of Dr. J. G. Holland which, purely by accident, was described in the paper on Wood-Carving in our November number as having been carved in wood by Miss Allegra Eggleston "after a relief by Mr. St. Gaudens." The phrase quoted was an error, and one for which the author of that paper is in no way responsible. In a letter calling attention to the mistake, Dr. Edward Eggleston says: "The panel

of Dr. Holland is truly and originally my daughter's work from the drawing to the end. Her kind friend, Mr. St. Gaudens, never once touched the clay, I believe."

This letter was received too late for us to make the required correction in our December number, but we gladly make it now, adding our earnest expression of regret for the mistake, and our sincere apologies to the gifted young artist.



THE LETTER-BOX.

LONDON.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little boy eleven years old, and live in Utica, N. Y. We have been in Europe more than a year, but I have not been alone, for I have found my dear friend, the St. NICHOLAS, in all the cities we have visited—in Rome, Florence, Geneva, Paris, and the other principal cities we have been in. I meant to have written to you from Holland in July, but saw in the St. NICHOLAS that you did not receive letters until October, so I postponed it until now. I am very much interested in Holland, because, my papa says, our forefathers came from the north of Holland. We visited Hoorn, Alkmar, and Egmont, the locality from which our ancestors came. We saw the ruins of the old castle of Egmont, which used to rule over all the country about there, and which was burned by the Spaniards, in the fifteenth century. The

only thing now left is a chimney, on which the storks always build their nests. In a house near by, there is a picture of this castle, as it used to be. Holland is a very flat country, and they do not have fences, as we do, to divide one field from another, but have ditches with water in them; and when they put their cattle in a field, to prevent the horses and cows from jumping over the ditch, they load their forward feet with weights, and they jump into the ditch instead of over it, and do not try it again. These ditches are supplied with water by immense windmills, whose great arms are seen turning around nearly all the time, and in all parts of Holland. Some of them are very old, having dates on them of two hundred years ago. They are very useful, for they not only pump water, but grind grain and saw logs. Many of the peasants about Hoorn are rich. It is here that they make the Edam cheese. I attended one of their fairs

for the sale of it. The farmers brought the cheese into Hoorn, the day before the sale, in nicely carved and ornamented wagons. They do not have thills to prevent the wagon running on the horse, but they have a short tongue curled upward; the driver sits near this, and when the wagon would run against the horse, he keeps it back with his foot by pressing upon the horse's flank. At the sale, which took place in one of the public squares of Hoorn, each piled his cheeses in square piles, as cannon-balls are piled at the Navy Yard, and when the merchant made the farmer an offer, they began to slap hands with one another, both naming prices nearer and nearer alike until they agreed. At Scheveningen, once a poor fishing village, but now the most fashionable watering-place in Holland, with large beautiful hotels, like those at Manhattan Beach, there is fine bathing. They do not have bathing-houses here, as we do, but large wagons which they draw to the water's edge. The fisherwomen of Scheveningen are peculiar; they wear a very odd head-dress made of gold, silver, or copper. It covers the entire back and sides of the head, and in front of the ears a curled wire sticks out, upon which they hang earrings. Another peculiarity of their dress is the number of skirts they wear. It is said to be a mark of their prosperity; the richer they are the more skirts they wear. They are generally tall and straight, and when they move along with their noisy sabots, they look like the penny wooden dolls every child has in the Noah's Arks. They are kind-hearted but very poor, because the fishing, upon which they depend, is not good now.

Yours sincerely,

VEDDIE B.—

NEW YORK CITY.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Among the many curious things I brought with me from Europe last year, was something which has given my child-friends here not a little amusement. It was a pair of baby shoes. I bought them in that city in Holland with the unpronounceable name—Scheveningen.

Poor little Dutch babies! Instead of having their little toes tucked away in soft woolly shoes or in slippers made of fine leather, these little children begin to walk in wooden shoes. The pair I have is one of the smallest sizes, yet they measure *eight* inches from the heel to the toe!

We passed a house in Scheveningen, outside the door of which six or seven pairs of these shoes were peacefully reposing. They were of all sizes, from Grandpa's to Baby's; for in many places, you must know, the Dutch wear these shoes only out of doors, and drop them on entering the house. We wanted to buy several pairs, and did n't know where to go for them. So we stopped some little children, and by pointing to their shoes, made them understand that we wanted to know where they bought them.

They led us to—a grocery store! Here, on one side, were piled stacks upon stacks of wooden shoes. Some of them were very large.

The Dutchmen make them in their idle hours, by scooping out the middle of soft wood, and bringing the front up to a sharp ridge. Some of them are even carved and decorated.

One would think these shoes would not wear out as soon as ours, but they do, and much more quickly. A boy can kick his heels and toes out in less than no time. But then they cost very little.

A small pair can be bought for ten Dutch cents, or about six cents of our money, while a large pair costs from fifteen cents up. Think of buying a pair of shoes for fifteen cents!

After buying our shoes, or *klompen*, as the Dutch call them, we were obliged to carry them around with us, hanging from our arms by a string. The children of Scheveningen stopped to look at us, pointed to the shoes, and thought it a great joke.

On returning to the Hague, we got into a coupé with several Dutch women. We soon found out that they, too, were laughing at us. They were very much amused when we told them we were going to take the shoes to America with us.

I sometimes watched the boys and girls in Rotterdam, to see if their heavy, awkward-looking shoes never fell off, especially when they went up and down stairs; but I never once saw such a thing happen.

ELIZABETH JARRETT.

ANDOVER, MASS.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have read "Little Lord Fauntleroy" three times, and like it very much. I live near Boston, and went to see the play with my papa. I did not like it so well as the story. They left out the dinner party, and Little Lord Fauntleroy did n't sit on a cracker-barrel, and did n't ride on the pony, and there was n't any dog. Mr. Hobbs was all right.

I am ten years old and never saw a play before.

Yours, truly,

ROBERT MORRILL MCC—

TOKIO, JAPAN.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little girl living in Japan. I was born here, and though I have never been anywhere else, I think Japan is the most beautiful land on earth. I have read a great deal about other countries, but none seem so nice as my own country.

I want to tell you about a visit I made to the beautiful temples at Nikko. We were staying at Nikko for a month, and one morning some friends came and we went to the temples together.

First we went through a granite *torii*, or large gate; on the left is a graceful five-storied pagoda, with animals and birds painted and

carved in wood under the eaves. A little farther on we came to a little house, where we got our tickets. Then we went up a flight of stone steps, and through another large gate; and on each side was a hideous red and blue and green thing, which, we were told by our guide, was a lion. Passing through the gate, we saw on our right three buildings which were store-houses; the third is the house where Iyeyasu, an old Shogun (to whom the temples are dedicated), is said to have kept his white elephant. There is a carving on the house of it, but the joints of the hind legs turn the wrong way. On the left is a tree which Iyeyasu himself planted, and a little farther on is a little house where a policeman stays all the time; and still farther on is a beautiful water-cistern of granite, and over it is a roof supported by four pillars of the same.

We then went up another flight of stone stairs and came into another court. At the top of the steps are two stone lions in the act of leaping down. They were presented by Iyemitsu, another of the Shoguns, or Tycoons, as they are called in America. On the right stand a beautiful bell-tower, a bronze candelabrum presented by the King of Loochoo, and a bell given by the King of Korea, called the moth-eaten bell, because there is a hole at the top, just under the ring by which it is suspended. On the left stand a revolving bronze lantern from Korea, and a candelabrum from Holland, and a drum-tower,—no unworthy companion to the bell-tower opposite,—and a lantern made of stone. Then, ascending still another flight of steps, we came to the temple. Here we had to take off our shoes, as the temple is holy. I wish I could describe it to you, for it is so lovely. The first room we entered was covered with mats, the doors were all of the finest old black lacquer, and above are pictures of all the Tokugawa family, and beyond is a room in which there is a beautiful shrine. On the right of this room is a beautiful servants' corridor, which leads to their part of the house. I did not go there, for we were told there was nothing to see. We then went to Iyeyasu's room, which has four large doors with inlaid Chinese wood. His wife's room is very much like it. Even the outside is carved and lacquered in a beautiful manner, and as it is exposed so, it is a wonder it is not spoilt; but the eaves are very deep. We then went out of the temple and went on to the right.

We soon came to another little house where we were taken in, shown some of the hero's relics, one of which was a *kago*, or sort of basket-palanquin in which he had been to war; and in the top is a hole which we were told was made by a bullet, but as bullets were not in those days in Japan, we did not believe that story. Then there were ever so many other things,—suits of armor, suits of clothes, masks, swords, and helmets, and many more. We then went through another gate and up to a most beautiful place, where the tomb is. The way was all paved with stones and had a stone balustrade all the way up. There are two hundred steps up to the top of the hill. The tomb is of bronze, and in front of it is a low stone table bearing an immense bronze stork with a brass candle in its mouth, an incense-burner of bronze, and a vase with artificial lotus-flowers and leaves in brass. The entrance is through a beautiful gate which is all carved and is quite solid. Outside sit bronze "*Koma inn*" and "*Ama inn*," the queer things called lions, of which I told you. At the foot of the way leading to the tomb-stone is a house in which an old woman sits. If she is given money she will dance very gracefully.

The carvings are all done by Hidari Jingoro. Hidari means left-handed; Jingoro is a name.

I hope my letter is not too long. I want to tell you that I like your magazine very much. I find only one fault with it, and that is, there is not, and never will be, enough. I like "Sara Crewe" and "Little Lord Fauntleroy" best of all.

Good-bye, now. With much love, believe me,

Your sincere friend,

EDITH H.—

SAULT STE. MARIE, MICH.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: This is the first time I have written to you. I have taken you for two years, and have one year bound. I am twelve years old and my little brother is four. I like your stories very much, especially "Juan and Juanita," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," and "Drill." My little brother is delighted with the "Brownies."

I hope you will put this in, for it is the first I have written, and because I have never seen any from the "Soo." Would you like to hear something about the "Soo"? All right. The "Soo," three years ago, was but a village of two thousand; it is now a young city of ten thousand. About one year ago there were no railroads; now there are three. A company is building a great water-power canal, to cost one million dollars. It will have twenty-five thousand horsepower. The "Soo" Ship Canal is the finest and largest in the world. From fifty to one hundred vessels pass through it every day.

Your faithful reader,

ARTHUR R. W.—

"BEN AYR," BENNINGTON CENTRE, VERMONT.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little boy seven years old. My aunt has twice given me the ST. NICHOLAS for Christmas, and I am very fond of it.

We spend our summer up here, and live in Troy for the winter. Our barn was struck by lightning this summer, and we lost four kittens, and a little red setter puppy, named "Con." I felt very sorry; but Thomas, our coachman, saved our donkeys. They belonged to my mamma when she was a little girl. I have a little brother four and a half years old, and one donkey belongs to him, and one to me. Their names are "Jack" and "Jill."

I hope to see my letter in the "Letter-box." Good-bye.
Your little friend,
A. C. S.

LONDON, ENGLAND.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: This is the fourth year we have taken you. "We" means my only sister, Dora, aged ten and a half, and my brothers, Edgar, nine; Gerald, seven; Rupert, four and a half; Justin, two and a half; and Baby Neville, one and a half. At least, I think, you can hardly say that Justin and Neville "take you." I am twelve this month, and I enjoy you very much. "Little Lord Fauntleroy" is simply splendid, I think, and Dora and I went to a London theater and saw it acted; it was very nice.

There were two different plays: one was made up by a man called Seeborn, which was not at all nice, for it was not a bit like Mrs. Burnett's pretty story; for instance, in this play, Mrs. Errol dresses up as a nurse, and goes to the Castle to see her boy in disguise. Is n't it horrid? Besides, the man did n't ask Mrs. Burnett's permission to write it, and so Mrs. Burnett was very angry, and she wrote another play, a real, proper one, and with the help of Mrs. Kendal it was put on the stage at Terry's theater, where Dora and I saw it. Mrs. Burnett called it "The Real Little Lord Fauntleroy!" I like Mr. Birch's illustrations so much. "Sara Crewe" is a very pretty tale; I think she is so real and true.

My father was in America last spring, and I have an American friend called Edith H.

I am your loving and interested
MARGARET A. B.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: As I have never written to you, I thought I would write now. Let me tell you first about some young chickens. The rats ate all of them except one, and the cook took the little orphan and raised it in her pocket. After it was large enough it would fly on her shoulder and head. At night she would put it on a chair and it would roost there. Another hen hatched out some chickens, and before this little pullet had ever laid an egg, it would take these little chickens and scratch for them, call them, and cover them with its wings, just like an old hen. It now takes care of twenty little chicks hatched by four different hens.

I have a Maltese cat, with four dear little ones. One night I missed one of them, and we all looked in vain for it. My twin brother told us he saw the mother-cat taking them to the barn; so we gave up looking for them. The next morning we went to the barn and she found all four, and they had better beds in the barn than they had in the bath-room, where I had made a bed for them. One of them died, and we made it a nice coffin, and placed flowers on its grave.

My sister takes the St. NICHOLAS, and we all like it better than anything else to read.

I remain your little friend,
M. Z. M.

BRANCHVILLE, MD.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Nine miles north of Washington, on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, is my father's home. On his place my little brothers, sisters, and myself find beautiful Indian arrows by the hundred, and some hatchets made of white flint rock. They must have been lying where we found them over a century and a half, as history tells us that the aborigines ceded all the territory, in what is now the State of Maryland, to one of the Lords Baltimore about 1740, for the small sum of three hundred pounds. Soon after all the Indians disappeared, never to return. And now the little children of the sixth generation of pale-faces find many relics of the extinct red-faces.

Now I must tell you an extraordinary cat and snake story. Over in the mountains of Pennsylvania I have a friend who had two small Maltese kittens named in honor of rival candidates for the governorship of that State—Pattison and Beaver. Beaver, the kitten, died and was buried in the cemetery near the house. Each day Pattison would visit his grave, and there in his loneliness he formed the acquaintance of snakes. For a week or so he was observed each day climbing the picket fence back of the house, having in his mouth a black snake. He would put the snake on the ground and play with it until he was tired, then it would crawl away. The family were afraid the snakes would hurt the cat, so they let the dog kill them each day.

Ever since I was a subscriber of the St. NICHOLAS, I have been unable to read it, owing to weak eyes; but I have had every word read to me, and have listened with a great deal of interest, and enjoyed it very much.

I remain your friend and admirer,
H. W. M.

FORT SNELLING, MINN.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I do like your magazine so much. People have asked me often if I would not rather take some other book, but I always say the St. NICHOLAS suits me the best. I am a little army girl. I live at Fort Snelling. My father is the Colonel of the Third Infantry. Every night, when it does not rain, all the troops parade, and the band plays. We have taken the St. NICHOLAS for fourteen years. I have two older sisters, and they think that it is beautiful.

Yours forever,
FRANCES M.

GLOUCESTER, OHIO.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have taken you almost a year, and I think you are just lovely. My cousins gave you to me for a Christmas present.

I have never seen anything very wonderful to tell you about, but I have been down in a coal mine, seventy-five feet underground. It is laid out in rooms, and there is a long entry, leading into each room.

Horses work in there, drawing the coal from each room to the foot of the shaft, where it is drawn up by pulleys, weighed, dumped into a vat, and sorted. Then it is put in cars and sent away to different parts of the States. About two hundred men are employed in this mine. Hoping this will not be too long to print, I remain,
Your devoted reader,
MARY C.

NEW YORK.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little boy ten years old, and although I have had but three numbers of your magazine, I am so much interested in it that I wonder how I have gotten on so long without it. I am always ready with my money several days before it comes out. The most interesting stories to me are "Two Little Confederates" and "Little Ike Templin." I have just come home from the country, where I have had a jolly good time. Now I am glad that I have something jolly and good here, which you know is your St. NICHOLAS.

Looking forward to your next number,
Your little friend,
WILLIE P.

LANDOUR, N. W. P. INDIA.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: My grandmother has been sending you to us for three years. I have four brothers and a sister. We have a pretty sorrel pony, and my father has a bay horse. I live in India. In the summer it gets so hot in the plains that we have to come up to the hills. We come up in May and go down in October, generally. We live about 7700 feet above the sea-level. In June the rainy season begins and lasts three months. In the plains we live in Lodiana. In the summer out in the shade the thermometer rises to 112° or 115°, and on rare occasions up to 120°. By having thick walls and ventilating the house at night, and by large punkahs, or fans, pulled by men, we generally keep the temperature of the house below 100°.

When we first come up here, we start by getting into the train and go a certain distance; then we get into a four-wheeled vehicle. We change horses every five or six miles, then the last part of the journey we go in "dandies," a sort of sedan-chair, or on ponies. The valley below us and the lower hills are fine hunting regions. There are tigers, wild elephants, deer, leopards, panthers, and a great many other wild animals. There are bears and leopards in the higher hills also.

Your affectionate friend,
FREDERICK JANVIER N.

P. S.—I am an American although I was born here, and I have been to America.

PARIS, KENTUCKY.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have been in the mountains in Harlan County, Kentucky.

The women and girls work in the corn-field, planting and hoeing, same as the men and boys.

Nearly every family has a small mill on a branch. At night they fill up the hopper with corn, and the next morning they have a bushel of nice, sweet meal.

We have been taking you in the family since 1879. I like the story about West Point, and am glad the "Bilged Midshipman" was taken back into the Academy again.

Yours truly,
OLIVER EDWIN F.

SPENCER, IOWA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: If you are like us, you don't like to be praised to your face, so we won't tell you that you are the best magazine going, though we do think so. We think "Davy and the Goblin," "Juan and Juanita," and "The Tinkham Brothers' Tide-mill" are the best serial stories we have ever read.

We have two of the dearest little white rabbits that we got this

summer while we were east on a visit. They are so tame that we let them run all about the yard, and they never go away; but when they see anything that scares them, they always run in the house. We both have horses to ride, and a little carriage together, but we like to ride horse-back best. Mamma has just called us to supper, so I guess we will stop.

We have agreed to take the ST. NICHOLAS as long as we live. Good-bye.

Your diligent readers,

BESSIE AND ALICE.

RICHMOND, VA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: My mother has given me ST. NICHOLAS for a birthday gift. I like the "Two Little Confederates" so much. I know Mr. Tom Page. He lives here. I am only eight years old. I like the stories about birds and everything else.

Your little friend,

GASTON OTEY W.—

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: For a long time I have intended to write to you and tell you how much I love you, and how eagerly I look forward every month to your coming.

I live in one of the far Western States, and although I was born in Vermont, I came from there when I was so little that I can not remember much about it. I think I like the West better than I should the East, but doubtless it would seem strange to many of your Eastern readers to live—as I do—under the shade of a fig-tree twenty or thirty feet high.

Your loving reader,

L. GERTRUDE W.—

APPLETON, WIS.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I want to tell you about the house I built. It is two stories high, and I made it all myself. It has a shingled roof, and I can get up in the second story; and besides that I can get up on the roof. I have a little brother three years old; his name is Kenelm, and he plays in my house day after day. He gets up in the second story too.

I want to tell you about the robins. For a long time I did not see a robin, but all at once so many were on the woodbine I could not think what was the matter. Up on the roof of a little house where some of the vines grow I had put some nuts, and one day I went up to see whether they were ripe. When I got there I saw berry-seeds and skins. I thought at first the birds had been eating grapes, but I found that they had been eating the woodbine berries, and that was why the robins had come back.

I am eight years old. I like to have Mamma read to me from your magazine very much. I liked the story of the naughty little Knix.

MARGARET W.—

WE thank the young friends whose names here follow for pleasant letters received from them: May E. W., Eleanor Morrison, Grafton Knerr, L. N., Elinor Seymour R., Nina Louise Winn, Lilla Scobell, Kenneth S., M. L. H., Mary B. Jenkins, Nellie, Lulu Grimm, L. June Brewster, Hattie P., Sylvester Van Dyke, Bertha P., Edith D., Grace F. Eldredge, Emma L., Mattie F. Gorton, Josie W. Russell, Telza Hirsch, Maud Miller, H. R., Frankie, J. Butler, Edith S., G. F., Norman E. Weldon, F. A. Waring, Ida H., Lillie Shields, M. M. Buchanan, Ellen D. B., Edith Bingham, W. Bowen and E. W. Baldwin, Kate Guthrie, A. W., Alice T. W., Champe Eubank, Miriam B. P., Elsie Leach and Clarence Loweree, E. M. J., Gertie Beach, E. V. J.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE DECEMBER NUMBER.

INSERTIONS. Baltimore. 1. ca-B-in. 2. he-A-rs. 3. sa-L-ve. 4. al-T-ar. 5. pa-Int. 6. to-M-es. 7. al-O-es. 8. ca-R-ts. 9. cr-E-am.

DOUBLE ZIGZAG. From 1 to 10, St. Nicholas; from 11 to 20, Advent Days. Cross-words: 1. Scarabee. 2. Stranded. 3. Conserve. 4. Digitate. 5. Recreant. 6. Phonetic. 7. Ophidian. 8. Plantain. 9. Playdays. 10. Consorts.

ANAGRAMS. 1. Regimentals. 2. Bayonet. 3. Triangle. 4. Transubstantiation. 5. Disappointment. 6. Olive. 7. Breakfast. 8. Espousal. 9. Orchestra.

CONNECTED DIAMONDS. Penny-royal. 1. P. 2. Pea. 3. Penny. 4. Ant. 5. Y. H. 1. R. 2. Cot. 3. Royal. 4. Tap. 5. L.

SYNCOPIATIONS. Mistletoe. 1. ru-M-ble. 2. Emers-I-on. 3. Ori-S-on. 4. s-T-age. 5. f-L-ame. 6. ch-E-at. 7. mus-T-er. 8. c-O-urse. 9. wi-E-ld.

DOUBLE NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

In this enigma I would bring
A useful Christmas offering;
A proverb, new, within my rhyme,
"Fact before feeling," every time.

CHARADE. Fan-dan-go.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC. Primals, Christmas, finals, Good cheer. Centrals transposed, grain, poet. Cross-words: 1. CoG. 2. HoppO. 3. RinaldO. 4. Inflected. 5. SybaritiC. 6. Telegraph. 7. MistakE. 8. AnniE. 9. SiR.

TO OUR PUZZLERS: Answers, to be acknowledged in the magazine, must be received not later than the 15th of each month, and should be addressed to ST. NICHOLAS "Riddle-box," care of THE CENTURY CO., 33 East Seventeenth St., New York City.

ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES IN THE OCTOBER NUMBER were received, before October 15th, from Maud E. Palmer—Paul Reese—Russell Davis—M. J. S.—C. B. Denny—May L. Gerrish—I. F. Gerrish and E. A. Daniell—"Two Cousins"—"Mohawk Valley"—"Sam Anselmo Valley"—Mamma, Aunt Martha, and Sharley—D. L. O. and M. O. C.—A. H. R. and M. G. R.—Fred and Blanche—Annie H. R.—K. G. S.—Auntie, Mamma, and Jamie—Lehte—De Long—"My Wife and I"—Nellie L. Howes—Ida and Alice—F. L. Coit—"Blithedale."

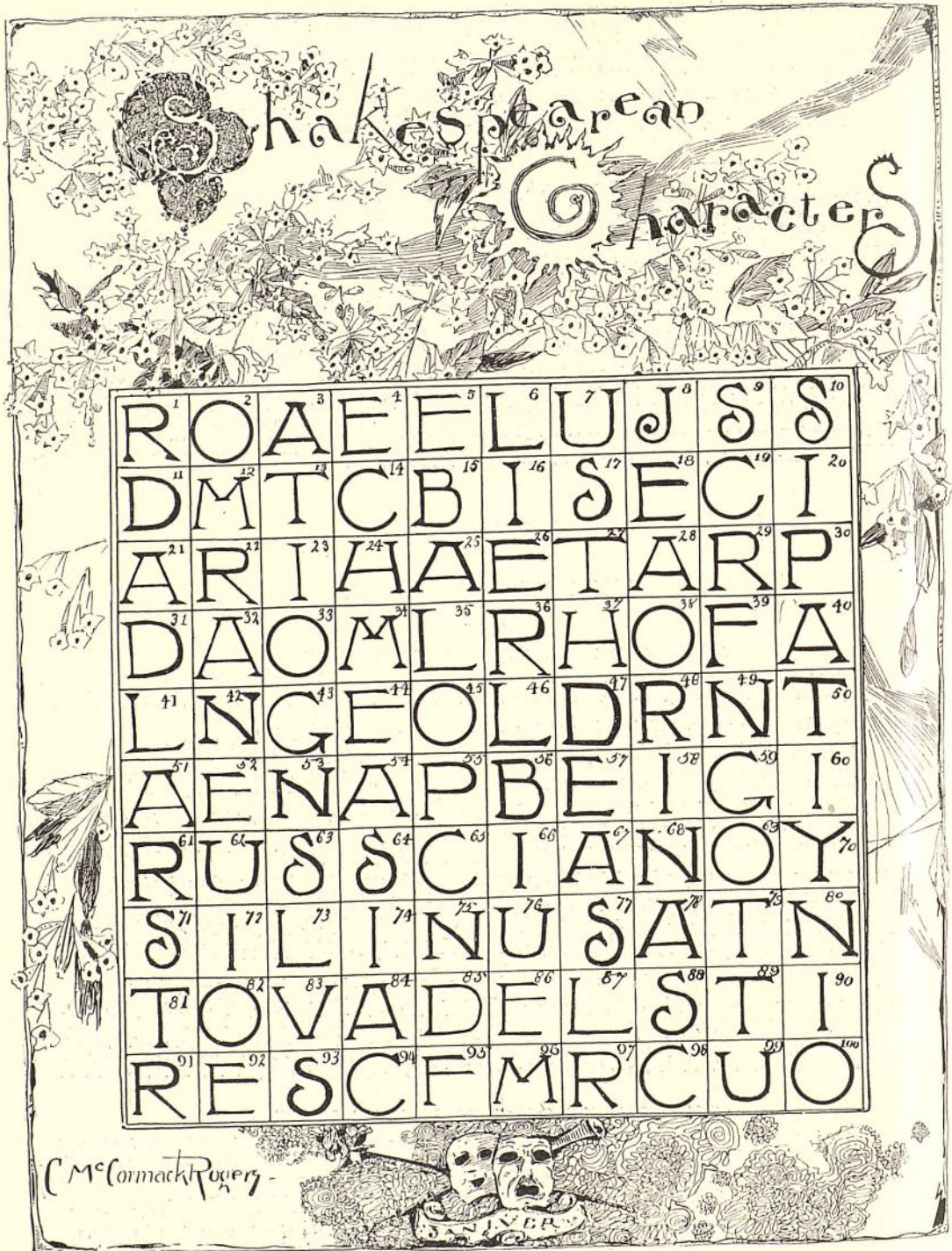
ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE OCTOBER NUMBER were received, before October 15th, from Katie V. Z., 2—E. T. H. and M. C., 1—"McKean," 2—"The Family," 2—A. C. Lyon, 4—A. Young, 1—G. R. Sutherland, 2—B. K. Hobbs, 1—H. Appleton, 1—W. A. Jurgens, 1—"Miss Ouri," 3—Will C. Potter, 2—E. W. Sheldon and B. S. Owen, 5—R. Packard, 1—"May and 79," 9—M. A. Root, 2—Clara O., 7—Jo and I, 8—M. Ewing, 1—Clara and Emma, 1—B. Cameron, 1—"Pandora," 1—No Name, New York, 5—"Grandma," 1—L. H. F. and "Mistie," 7—Willoughby, 9—Anna and Hattie, 3—Nell R., 3—A. P. Gilbert, 1—J. B. Harris, 3—Alice W. Tallant, 7—M. D., 1—Edith E. Allen, 9—Ward Brothers, 1—S. K. Hait, 1—Adrienne Forrester, 4—"Infantry," 8—Lillie, 5—Mary W. Stone, 8—Ida C. Thallon, 9—"Hypatia," 1—Walker Otis, 2—Joslyn Z. and Julian C. Smith, 5—Etta R., 2—Ebbetts, 1.

SHAKESPEAREAN CHARACTERS. PRIZE PUZZLE.

THE one hundred squares in the illustration on page 240 contain the names of a number of characters in Shakespeare's plays. They may be spelled out by what is known in chess as the "king's move." This, as all chess-players know, is one square at a time in any direction: thus, from the square numbered 68 a move can be made to 58, 59, 69, 79, 78, 77, 67, or 57. The same square is not to be used twice in any one name. In sending answers, indicate the squares by their numbers, thus: Romeo, 22-33-34-44-45.

Answers should be addressed to the ST. NICHOLAS "Riddle Box," care of The Century Co., 33 East Seventeenth St., New York City. In preparing answers, let the name and address of the solver be plainly written in the upper, right-hand corner of the first page, and also state the number of characters discovered. Let the names follow. No solutions will be returned to the senders. For the longest list received, a prize of five dollars will be given. If more than one person should discover all the names which may be found in the squares, the one who sends the neatest of these long lists shall receive the prize. The twenty senders of the twenty next best solutions shall each receive a crisp, new one-dollar bill.

The competition is open to all. Answers will be received until January 15, excepting those sent from abroad, which will be received until January 20.



For explanation of the above puzzle, together with the offer of prizes for its correct solution, see the preceding page — 239.

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