



CHATTERBOX.

FIRE DRILL.



"The machine jerked sideways, swung over, and collapsed."

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WANDERERS IN THE WAR.

By A. A. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 319.)

FOR a few minutes the travellers trudged slowly on in silence, busy with their own thoughts, and then suddenly a new sound was heard in the distance. It was a motor of some sort coming towards them at a great pace, and they could hear distinctly the roar and throb of the engine. Roger dragged Val back against the bushes, and a motor cycle tore past them in a blinding whirl of yellow dust.

In front the narrow road stretched on, straight as a die for about five hundred yards, so that they could see the machine for that distance, and they both realised that something was the matter—seriously the matter—either with it or with its rider.

The cycle staggered wildly, swerved from side to side, and plunged forward in jerks, while the man seemed to be hanging helplessly over the handle-bars.

'Just look at him. What a queer thing! I wonder what's up. He will be over in another moment.' And then the machine jerked sideways, swung over, and collapsed into the low bushes and bracken fern at the side of the road.

'He's fallen! Roger, quick, run, run!' Val loosed her hold on the boy's arm, and without a moment's hesitation he raced down the road with the great dog, Bob, at his heels. A terrible dread filled Roger's mind, for, supposing the man were badly hurt, what could he or Val do to help him? He might even be dead! The boy's heart was beating quickly with sick fear, as well as with breathlessness, when at last he reached the spot where the accident had taken place.

He pushed forward into the undergrowth, and then found to his relief that the rider had fallen clear of the machine, and was lying face downward in a mass of soft, springy bracken fern. There did not indeed seem to be any reason why he should be seriously hurt, but he was quite unconscious. Roger managed with some difficulty to move him into a more comfortable position, and then, pushing back the leather cap, he saw tightly closed eyes and cheeks that were ashy pale beneath the thick coating of dust. There was, however, no sign of injury to head or limbs, and the boy felt quite at a loss as he knelt there among the bushes, wondering what on earth ought to be done next.

He had managed to drag off the man's heavy gauntlet gloves, and was fumbling with the fastenings at the neck of his tunic, when Val appeared upon the scene, and then, without a moment's hesitation, she took the whole management of affairs into her own surprisingly capable little hands.

'He's not dead, Roger. Look, you can see now that he's breathing; but we must get some water. That stream where we had lunch is not far away. You run back—and here, take my hat. It will hold more than your cap—and be careful not to spill any.'

Roger obeyed, glad to have something to do in this new emergency which had so suddenly arisen, and when he returned a few minutes later with the water, he found that Val had raised the man's head, and was fanning him with a broad frond of bracken. She now soaked her handkerchief, and began gently to bathe his forehead and lips. Before many moments had passed, he opened his eyes, wrenched himself up on to one

elbow, and looked round with a face that was drawn and haggard with pain and anxiety.

'Where am I? What has happened?' he gasped, and, to Roger's delight and amazement, English was the language in which the words were spoken. 'Here, help me up. My motor bike! Is it there? I must get on. There's not a moment to be lost.'

With a tremendous effort he managed to raise himself from the ground, only to fall back again with a sharp exclamation, and as he moved the boy and girl saw that beneath one arm the leather coat was deeply stained with blood. This, then, was the cause of the accident. The man had been wounded, mortally perhaps, away there in the north, where the guns were thundering, and he had ridden on and on until he literally dropped from his machine with exhaustion. They stared at each other with wide, horror-struck eyes, and then turned once more to their patient, who had not lost consciousness again, but was breathing quickly, as if struggling to keep a hold on his senses, and to overcome a paroxysm of pain, which made him set his teeth and clench his hands tightly together.

'My flask. In my pocket, find it, please,' he faltered. 'Be quick!'

Roger bent over him, and after a minute's search a flat, leather-covered flask was discovered. The man drank the spirit, and its effect was almost magical. His eyes brightened, a trace of colour flushed into his cheeks, and he glanced round, as if noticing his surroundings for the first time.

'Who are you?' he asked, staring with no little bewilderment at the boyish figures who knelt beside him in their rough peasant garments. 'English? No, it's impossible, but—'

'Oh, we're English right enough,' Roger interrupted him eagerly. 'But tell us what's the matter, what we can do.'

'English! What are you doing here, then? A couple of children! It's madness, and I can't stay. I have to get on.'

Once more he tried to drag himself to his feet, once more he dropped back helplessly. 'It's no good,' he gasped. 'I can't manage it, and—but look here.' He turned his white desperate face suddenly towards Roger. 'Can you ride a motor cycle?'

'Yes—no—that is—I mean, I—'

'You can? Good. Now, listen to me. I'm a dispatch rider—you know what that is—and I'm carrying a message. It's important—I can't tell you how important for us—for England.'

'England! But I don't understand.'

'Yes; didn't you know Eng'land was in this business? And the message has to be taken on. I can't do it. You must.'

'I? But—'

'It has to be done somehow at all costs. You must take my machine and ride for all you're worth till you come to some soldiers, French or English, it doesn't matter. Ask for the Commanding Officer. Here is the dispatch.' He groped in an inner pocket of his tunic and pulled out a leather case. 'Take it, that's right. Now what about the machine? Is it smashed at all? Go and see.'

Roger took the packet, hardly realising what he was doing, and then went to where the motor cycle was lying among the fern. It was the same make as the machine on which he had learnt to ride at Monkton

Ashe, and as he raised it and examined it closely to make sure that no damage had been done, he realised that he remembered the instructions which had been given him. He could ride the motor cycle after a fashion—he felt sure of that; but his heart beat quickly at the thought of the tremendous responsibility that was being laid upon him.

He wheeled the bicycle out into the road, and leaned it against a tree: then he returned to his companions. 'But what will you do?' he asked. 'You and Val?'

The injured man shrugged his shoulders. 'I shall stay here,' he said. 'There's not much else I can do at present. The Germans got a shot at me about an hour ago, and it's been a pretty stiff job getting along ever since. When you've given the message, explain how you left me here. There will be a car about most likely, and it won't take long to come back and fetch us.'

'And Val?'

'Val? Oh, your brother, I suppose?' He glanced at the little boyish figure who was standing near by with one hand on Bob's shaggy neck, and a narrow ray of sunshine gleaming through the trees, and touching a fair, uncovered head.

'My sister; you will take care of her?'

'Your sister!' A sudden smile twitched the corners of the man's mouth. 'Well, I'm afraid I'm not much good as a protector just now, but she will be safe enough here, and you will be back before long. There can't be any Germans within twenty miles, unless it should be a few stray Uhlans.'

'Uhlans! What are they?'

'Oh, German cavalry—lancers, but we shall be all right, never fear. Now, hurry up. You have that packet safe? That's right. And the machine? Sure you know exactly what to do?'

Some quickly given directions followed, and then Roger wheeled the motor bicycle into the middle of the road and prepared to start. Val, with Bob at her side, watched him eagerly, and at the last moment he turned towards her with his most elder-brotherly air of authority.

'Now, Val, you must stay here till I come back. Promise me that. And you don't mind being left, do you? But anyway, it can't be helped. Good-bye; so long.'

And then he was gone, and Val was standing in the road, with Bob at her side, the roar of the engine still in her ears, and her eyes fixed on a whirling cloud of dust that was quickly disappearing in the distance.

(Continued on page 334.)

HOW SAMSON WENT TO THE WAR IN 1914.

THIS is the true history of our dear old Samson's experiences since the war against Germany began in August, 1914.

Samson was our horse. We had known him for five years. He was bright chestnut in colour, large and very strong and good-tempered. He lived in a comfortable stable, and William, our coachman, took great care of him, and groomed him till his coat shone like satin. Sometimes, when we were out driving, he would pretend to be afraid of motor bicycles and steam-rollers, and then he would tear away until he was breathless, or

came to a hill; but it was only fun on his part, because he felt so lively and happy. Better than anything else he liked to go to a Meet, and he would quiver all over with excitement, and follow the hounds as closely as the carriage would permit. Probably he wished that he could escape from the shafts altogether, and join the horses that were free to jump over the hedges and ditches and enjoy their race after poor Mr. Fox.

But Samson's work was to be in a very different direction. In August, 1914, England was startled by finding herself at war with Germany, and she was not quite ready for such a big undertaking, so Lord Kitchener had hastily to enrol enormous numbers of men to fight, and horses to carry the soldiers and to drag the field artillery. Late one evening an officer came to our house and told us that Samson was wanted by the military authorities. We were very sorry to lose him, and yet exceedingly proud that he was able to help England in her hour of need. We said good-bye, and he was led away, and that was the end of our pleasant drives. Samson was taken to another town, and as there were not enough stables for all the horses to be billeted in, he and many others were tethered in a long line down a meadow. This was a trying experience to our spoilt pet, who sadly missed the comforts of his warm stable as the winter came on. When it rained or snowed he would shiver and groan under his coarse army covering, and think of his clean straw and warm horse-clothes and the care that William used to take of him; the horses standing on either side were often ill-tempered and would lay back their ears and try to bite and kick him. He hated being led in a long procession with the others through the mud to water at the canvas troughs, nor did he like his oats served in little nose-bags instead of his former manger. When he wanted to lie down his companions objected, for they felt equally wretched and cross at their unwonted treatment. Moreover, they disliked the mules who were quartered near them, and detested their long ears, and tassel-like tails, and the strange noises they made instead of a good honest neigh.

One day Samson had a very sore throat and felt too ill to eat his food, and then he was taken to the nearest horse-hospital, a wonderful place which consisted of a number of large sheds, open on one side to the light and air, surrounding a central paddock. Over each shed was written the name of the complaint for which the horses inside were being treated. A whole regiment of trained men, under the directions of skilled veterinary surgeons, took care of the sick animals until they became convalescent, when they were turned out to grass in a sunny sheltered field until they were quite well again. Samson soon got better, and went back to his work. He was gradually taught to take his share in dragging a heavy gun-carriage with a team of horses, in all weathers and over all kinds of roads; he became accustomed to the rattle of the wheels and the clatter of the harness, and also to the fact that he had to carry a soldier on his back while he dragged the gun. Day by day he improved and grew stronger and tougher, and won praise from the drivers because he was so willing, and he tried so hard to obey orders.

At last he heard that the King was to review the regiment before they left for the Front. The sun shone brightly on the morning of the review, and the cavalry horses tossed their heads gaily as they pranced along. The men had polished the harness and equipments till

they glittered like silver and gold. When they came to a large common they drew up, and presently King George and his Staff arrived. The regiments carried out the manoeuvres so perfectly that the King warmly complimented them, for he felt more than satisfied at the gallant appearance of the Division.

Then came a series of very unpleasant experiences for the poor horses. They were taken to the railway station and put into large open horse-trucks, and tightly packed with their noses to the side of the truck. When the train started, the movement made them most uneasy, but soon they became accustomed to it. After some hours they drew up at a station, and the soldiers in charge of them quickly climbed up the sides of the truck and slipped their nose-bags on so that they might enjoy a good meal. At the end of a long journey they arrived at — Docks, and then embarked on the transport to carry them over to France.

Poor Samson! It was a truly dreadful sensation when the ship began to roll; he felt miserably sick and wretched, and was thankful to escape from the vessel when they were landed. Once more they journeyed onward by train, each hour bringing them nearer to the scene of warfare. By-and-by they heard the distant sounds of guns and bursting shells, and then they were taken out of the train, and their real military service began. All the horses were picketed in the open, and they were fairly comfortable during the mild weather but for the millions of flies, which worried them incessantly, until the Blue Cross Society sent out bundles of eye-fringes from London—with many other acceptable comforts for our four-legged friends.

Samson found that his duty was to drag the field guns into position far behind the trenches. When the guns were unlimbered the horses galloped off to the nearest shelter, to wait until they should be once more needed to move the cannon to another position. All around them shells and shrapnel burst and fell; the noise was terrific, and the air polluted with smoke. If a horse was wounded, it was taken away by the Army Veterinary Corps, and cared for in the Horses' Hospital.

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From this point we cannot follow Samson's career in detail; but we are glad that his own particular driver happens to be a man from our town who had known the horse in happier days before the terrible war began. This man regularly writes home to his family, and generally sends us a message to say that our good old horse is still 'doing his bit' for England as cheerfully and willingly as ever; and we hope that he may live to return to the green meadows and comfortable stables of our beloved country.

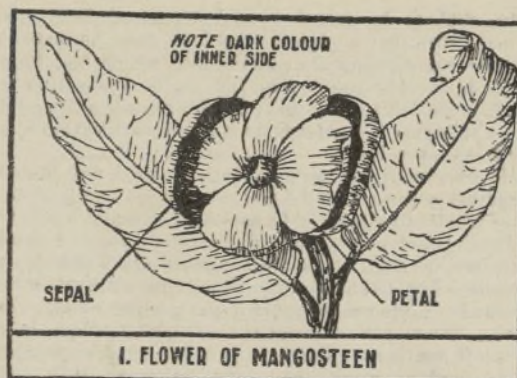
F. TUCKER.

FRUITS FROM ACROSS THE SEAS.

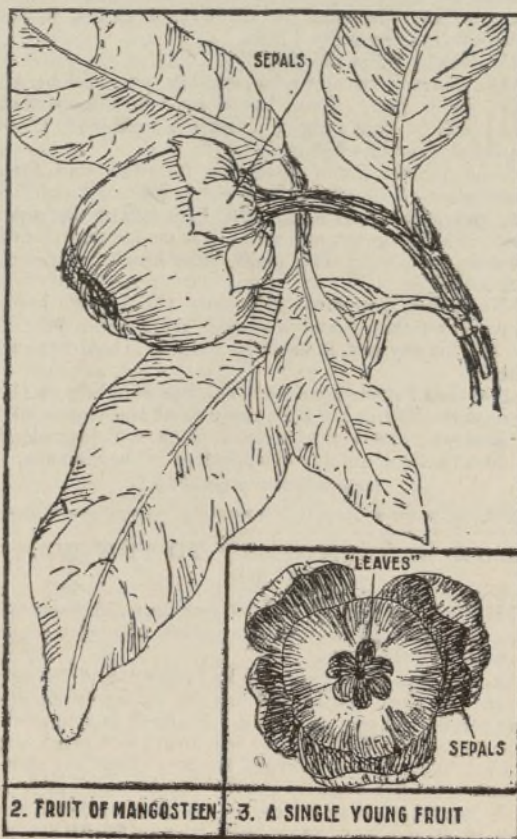
IV.—MANGOSTEEN AND MANGO.

NOW we come to the consideration of some overseas fruits which are not often seen here.

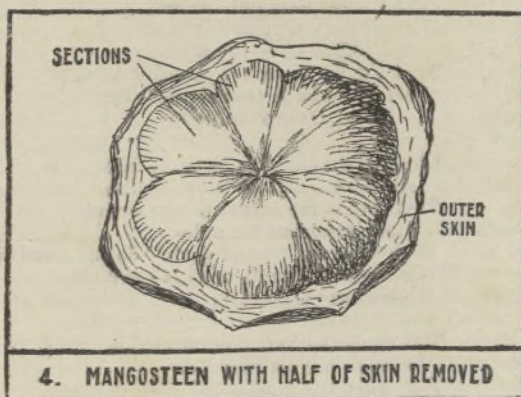
First of all there is the Mangosteen (*Garcinia mangostana*), a most delicious fruit, and in the tropics considered the most luscious. It belongs to the botanical order Clusiaceæ, which might almost be termed a tropical order, for all its members are of tropical origin. This particular member of the family was a native of Mada-



gascar. The trees are not very large; the leaves are smooth, and of a dark clear green. The edges are entire (with no notches), and the surfaces are well veined. They grow opposite each other. The flowers, which are rather fleshy, are of a pale pink colour with dashes or spots of red upon them. The bulgy calyx is green on the outside and deep red within—a rather curious feature. Fig. 1 shows a flower. The calyx lasts on when the fruit develops, and so it is still surrounded by the bulgy sepals, as can be seen in fig. 2,



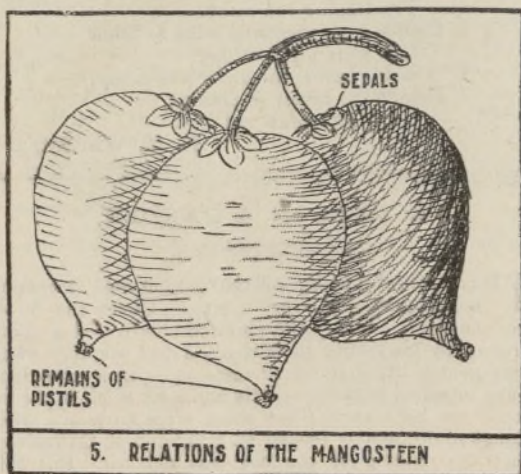
where I give you a sketch of a spray in fruit. It is a curious fruit in appearance; on the top it has a number of 'leaves,' which indicate the number of sections to be found inside the fruit, sections which are something like the sections of an orange (fig. 3). In fig. 4, I show



you a fruit from which half of the outer skin has been removed; you can now see it has seven sections.

A form of vinegar has been extracted from this fruit, and the rind has some medicinal properties. The fruit is of a sort of greenish yellow colour when young, with the star of deep red 'leaves' on the top. I have tasted this fruit more than once, and can testify that it is indeed delicious, even when it has been in cold storage for weeks; and, of course, it must be much finer in flavour when fresh-gathered.

The mangosteen is said to be the only fruit which was never tasted by Queen Victoria. You, see, in her



days the means of cold storage were nothing like so good as they are now, and this being a fruit which perished quickly, it could not then be got over here in good condition.

My sea-captain friend who has brought many interesting fruits to me at different times, including man-

gosteens, tells me that he knows our present King and Queen have tasted them, because when they were Prince and Princess of Wales, he once brought some home most carefully in cold storage and sent them to Marlborough House. He later received the thanks and appreciation of the Prince and Princess.

Many of the mangosteen's relations produce a yellow gum resin known as gamboge (a very useful colour in your paint-box, you will remember); the name comes from Cambodia, where the trade in the resin first flourished.

Another very delicious overseas fruit is the Mango.



(*Mangifera indica*). It is quite tropical, as are nearly all its relations. It belongs to the natural order Anacardiaceae, and is an evergreen tree rather like the oleander. It grows to a great height, nearly sixty feet, with wide-spreading branches of small white flowers, which are dotted or streaked with yellow. The majority of the flowers are not followed by fruits, for the simple reason that they are not perfect flowers—that is, the necessary portions, their pistils and stamens, are not always properly developed. Therefore there are only three or four fruits on a branch, though there may have been a great many flowers. This is very often

the case with fruits, but the proportion seems to be very marked in this fruit. These fruits have a curious sort of kidney shape unlike any other fruit (fig. 6). The outer skin is variously green, yellow to orange. This skin is rather tough, and when removed reveals a deep orange or even red pulp very full of juice. The fruit contains a strange 'stone' of considerable size, which is flat, and as much as two to three inches in length (fig. 6, A). The pulp clings to the stone, which is rough and furrowed, and this clinging habit causes it to be a very difficult fruit to eat 'gracefully.' My sea-captain friend used to say, in fun, that the best place to eat them was in *your bath!* I know I have often refused to accept one, because it was such an awkward thing to eat! The juice runs down your fingers and up your sleeves, and you seem to get it on your face in some strange way! But they are very delicious, some varieties being almost as delightful as peaches.

The Melon must not be left out of this series, though I do not think we need say much about it. Its proper name is *Cucumis Melo*, and it belongs to the same family as our vegetable marrow and the gourds. It grows in England only under glass; but in many warm countries it is quite as easy to produce as our marrows.

Another common tropical fruit is the Lichi, or Lee-chee (*Nephelium Litchi*), a native of China and the East Indian Islands. It is a fruit with many names, according to its place of growth. For instance, in China it is known commonly as 'Lumquat.' It is a small fruit with a thick, almost leathery, skin. I tasted it once, but did not care for it much; it was sweet, but somehow it seemed to me to have a flavour of nicotine about it! It is a great favourite where it grows, so perhaps it is nicer when fresh.

Then there is Persimmon, or Date Plum. It is a plum of a reddish yellow colour, and it contains, instead of a stone, a number of seeds. There is a variety which is a native of Japan, which is one of the most favourite fruits of the country. There are many varieties in China and Japan, some are eaten fresh, and others are dried like figs or made into sweets.

My captain friend has told me about a fruit called 'Avacado Pear,' usually known to sailors as 'Alligator's Pear.' This fruit does not sound very attractive, as it is tasteless! However, it is much esteemed when eaten with pepper, salt, and vinegar, which makes it into something very 'tasty'—so says my friend. The kernel when put into water quickly bursts its shell, and begins to grow. A quaint little tree soon forms, something like a cocoa-nut palm.

E. M. BARLOW.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

AS round the garden path I went,
An awful sound I heard,
What could it be—for it was not
An animal or bird?
When growling at me fierce and strong,
I saw the flower I'd known so long—
SNAPDRAGON!

'If all the flowers have come to life,
Whatever shall I do?'
I turned to walk away, and saw
A little face of blue.

'Ah, you won't growl, I need not fear!'
When suddenly a voice I hear—
'FORGET-ME-NOT!'

'It isn't half as nice,' I thought,
'As when they only grow.'
But suddenly a voice declared—
'I'd like to have you know,
That I'm, by Jove, the grandest here,
We'd better have *that* matter clear,'
'Twas DANDY LION!

Close by his side, his pleasant face
All beams, and nods, and smiles,
There stood the favourite of them all,
The pleasantest for miles,
With 'pleases,' 'thank you's,' 'do you mind's?'
With graceful bows, one always finds—
SWEET WILLIAM!

But catch the next you never can,
Though toil for half a day,
For when the flowers are alive,
This one has slipped away.
So 'sprint' until you puff and blow,
You'll never get him, don't you know—
THE SCARLET RUNNER!

A flush of rose in glinting sun,
I ran to see it near;
'You luscious things—I never knew
That you could be so dear.'
They used to be all snowy white,
But now they'd got their colour right—
THE PINKS!

The Dragon growled, Sweet William smiled,
The Runner ran away.
I rubbed my eyes, and tried to think
If it were night or day.
Alas! I knew, the grass was damp!
Behold the agony of cramp!
I'D DREAMED IT!

E. M. WHITAKER.

A YEAR IN A GARDEN.

IX.—SEPTEMBER.

THE natural history of the garden was becoming more interesting every month. Under the lid of the coal-shed one day the children discovered a shiny brown-red chrysalis; it moved its tail slightly when they gently lifted it on to some moss in a matchbox. They intended to make a little home for it till it should come out as a moth; but there were so many other things to do, and it looked so quiet and so fast asleep, that the making of the box was delayed. But this chrysalis belonged to the cabbage-moths, which sometimes have two broods in a summer, and then a second appearance of moths occurs in September. And so there came a night when the moth inside the brown case awoke, broke open the thin walls of his prison, and escaped. The disappointment was great, but it taught a lesson to the children, who never again left pupæ in uncovered boxes.

There were a number of plain-looking green caterpillars feeding on the broccoli-leaves in the kitchen garden, and there were some very small ones on the cabbage-leaves that were green and yellow and black. Some of both kinds were placed in two boxes with glass lids, and provided with plenty of fresh cabbage-leaves. They all commenced eating vigorously, and seemed quite happy. Then, a week later, came a dreadful surprise. The largest green and yellow one had been so quiet that the children hoped it was going to turn into a chrysalis, and as they had never seen this process before they looked at it every day. But one midday, when Billy came home from school, Babe ran to meet him with tears in her eyes. She could not speak; she could only drag him to the shed where the caterpillars lived. She pointed to the box where the biggest one was quietly stretched on a cabbage-leaf. Billy looked inside; Babe's eyes were so full of tears she could not even look, and she hid her face in her hands. Billy made the horrifying discovery that from the poor caterpillar were coming numerous tiny wriggling yellow grubs.

'What is the matter?' they asked each other in dismay. It was such a dreadful thing that they seized the box and ran with it to their next-door neighbour, who had often come to their assistance with advice. She shook her head as she looked into the box, but she also laughed a little.

'It is a pity for the caterpillar,' she said, 'because, of course, it can never turn into a butterfly now; these green and yellow and black caterpillars all become cabbage butterflies, the large kind. But you must not mind too much. These little things are the grubs of an ichneumon fly which laid its eggs in the body of the caterpillar before you found it in the garden. See, some of them have already spun yellow silk cocoons round themselves.' She told them that gardeners consider ichneumon flies as their very good friends in getting rid of so many caterpillars that eat up their cabbage-plants.

As Billy went back to school that afternoon he felt he had learnt a great deal. He was saddened, but at the same time intensely interested. However, he partly forgot the tragic incident when the next morning he received a small parcel. A friend had sent by post, in a little tin box, a pair of light-coloured woolly caterpillars, with long light-brown hairs and white spiracles; on a note inside was written: 'Two Buff Ermine moth caterpillars; feed on plantain leaves or mint.'

LITTLE PIERRE.

(Concluded from page 314.)

PIERRE, worn out, did not wake until late on the following morning. Far away in the forest he heard the cheerful sound of a hunting-horn. Médor pricked his ears.

'The grand folks at the castle are going out to hunt the wild boar,' remarked Pierre to the dog.

The sounds of the chase came gradually nearer. They grew louder and louder until Pierre could see between the trees the hunters galloping along. He saw the horn hung over the huntsman's shoulder, and the gun in his hand. He saw too, greatly to his astonishment, that there were ladies as well as gentlemen in the party.

Forgetting his troubles for the moment, like the child he was, he ran, accompanied by Médor, to get a nearer view of this gay scene.

Just as Pierre came to a clearing in the wood, he heard a sudden noise, and a cry of 'Help! help!'

A horse had taken fright, and was tearing madly along. On his back was a young girl, white with terror. She could not possibly hold on much longer, and must soon fall and hurt herself, or perhaps be killed outright.

'Stop him, Médor!' cried Pierre to the dog, who at once responded.

He flew at the horse's legs, while Pierre ran bravely to the tossing head. The animal paused for a moment in his mad career, then dashed off in a different direction. That momentary check, however, was just enough to enable the frightened girl to leap to the ground unhurt. But her rescuer, our gallant little Pierre, had been thrown violently against a tree, and now lay unconscious on the moss at its foot. Médor was whining piteously.

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When Pierre recovered his senses, he found himself lying in a deliciously soft bed, in a large and very beautiful room. Several persons whom he did not know were anxiously watching him.

'He has opened his eyes, Father,' said a sweet voice.

It was the voice of the young lady whom Pierre had saved from a dangerous fall.

A man, smiling at the child, came to the bedside.

'How do you feel now, my boy?' asked this gentleman.

'Well, I thank you,' replied Pierre, faintly. 'But where am I, sir?'

'In my house,' was the answer, 'and I am the Comte de Villiers. You have saved my daughter's life. Never, never can I repay you for such a service, but whatever I can do for you shall be done.'

'Oh, then, Monsieur le Comte,' said Pierre, clasping his hands in his great eagerness, 'if you will let me be your servant, and if—if you would—care for me just a little bit, I should be so happy!'

Then the boy (at the kind nobleman's request) told his sad story, which brought tears to the girl's eyes. Her father was very indignant when he heard of Pierre's ill-treatment.

'Poor child!' he said, when Pierre had ended his tale. 'But never mind now! Those evil days have gone, never to return. You and your good Médor shall live here always, and we will love you both. Have you not, as I said just now, saved my dear daughter from a terrible accident?'

And so Pierre found a home. The comte, a widower with only one child, adopted the boy as his son. He gave him an excellent education, and the once unhappy little farm-lad became a distinguished doctor, who devoted himself to the service of the poor. To those who asked him why he chose to work so hard when, thanks to the generosity of the wealthy comte, he might live at ease, the doctor always replied, 'I have suffered, I have been helped. Therefore it is only right and fair that I should do what I can to relieve the sufferings of others.'

As for Médor, he was as good (in his doggy way) as his master. Like nearly all the good people in fairy tales, he lived long and happily, loved and respected by all who knew him.

E. DYKE.



"Pierre ran bravely to the tossing head."