

OUR
YOUNG FOLKS.

AN

Illustrated **M**agazine

FOR
BOYS AND GIRLS.

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BOSTON
GICKNER & FIELDS

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1866.

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OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

An Illustrated Magazine

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

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THE DISOBEDIENT CROW.



HE old mother crow sat in a cedar-tree, cawing in the sunshine. This is the song she sang:

—
“O, I’m happy and gay, for my children, you see,
Are under the boughs of this cedar-tree.”

Flocks of neighbor crows were flying about above her head, and at length one of them, a gay young bachelor, came and perched on the cedar-tree, and told her about a fine cavalry horse off which he had dined that day, and said, if she would go with him, he would show her the swamp where it lay. But “No,” says Mother Crow, “my children are close by, and should I fly to Manassas with you, some harm might come to them.”

“But, madam, it is a great shame for a lady of your beauty to sit here alone, from morning till night.”

But still she sang,—

“Not alone, Mr. Crow, for my children, you see,
Are under the boughs of this cedar-tree.”

“Ah, dear madam, have you heard of the great crow concert there is to be in the forest to-night? I was thinking, as I flew over here, that I never had heard so fine a contralto voice as yours. You will surely join in the concert?”

“Many thanks, honored sir,—they have freedom to roam
Who haven’t got dear little children at home,”

replied Mrs. Crow.

Mr. Crow made a low bow, and, laying his hand on his heart, said: “I can but admire your motherly care; but, dear Mrs. Crow, would it not be for your children’s advantage to bring them out into society a little more?”

“My children are much too young to leave their mother’s nest,

And I’m sure they’re as happy as happy can be
Under the boughs of this cedar-tree.”

Now it chanced that Mrs. Crow’s little family had listened to every word of this conversation, and all but one, the eldest daughter, were much pleased with their kind mother’s part in it; but this one, whose name was Corvette, said: “Do you not see that every word Mr. Crow says is true? We are kept here like prisoners, or only allowed to go a few yards from this old nest. For my part, I have a great notion to go to that concert to-night.”

“O sister, I’m sure mother would never consent,” said all the young crows at once.

“I know that well enough,” said Corvette, “for she is not willing we should do anything but scratch about and help get our own living. But we could steal away, and she would never know it.”

“I will not,”—“Nor I,”—“Nor I,” they all exclaim.

“Then I shall go alone,” said naughty Corvette.

“O sister, you can’t fly a rod at a time; and some wild beast would certainly catch you, and eat you up.”

“I can walk if I can’t fly. Do you not see how vulgar our manners are? and how can they ever be different unless we go into polite society? For my part, I am determined to see the world a little.”

So saying, the foolish young crow jumped out of the nest, and ran a little way, when who should she see but Mr. Crow, the gay young bachelor, sitting on a stump near by,—for there is always a tempter ready for those who wish to do wrong.

“Caw, caw! Good morning, Miss,” said he.

“Caw! Good morning,” said she courtesying.

“If I might be so bold,” said he, “where are you walking this fine day?”

“O good sir, I live under the cedar-tree yonder, and I have left the nest to seek my fortune.”

“Bravo!” said Mr. Crow, “you have done well.”

“But my sisters said some beast would devour me, because I am small and weak.”

“Caw haw!” laughed Mr. Crow; “they take after their mother. But you—you have great courage.”

Foolish Corvette was much pleased with this compliment, and strutted along with her head erect.

“Besides,” continued Mr. Crow, “if you will accept *me* for a companion, I will protect you from all enemies. There are

not many who care to try their prowess with me,” cocking his head on one side, and raising his tail-feathers.

So they went on through the woods together, Mr. Crow walking slowly to favor poor Corvette, and sometimes teaching her to use her feeble wings. Thus they continued all day, without meeting anything worse than flocks of their own kind, or a few rabbits and chipmunks.

It was now near nightfall, and Corvette began to be weary, and almost to repent leaving the nest, when they heard a footstep in the wood, and a sharp report, which Mr. Crow knew well enough to be the crack of a rifle, but which Corvette had never heard before. She was very much frightened, and ran to her companion for protection; but he was much too gay a bird to risk his fine feathers in fighting for any one but himself, so away he flew to the top of a tall pine, and left little Corvette to her fate. Then two young men in hunter’s dress came along, and one of them aimed his gun at Corvette; but the other said, “It’s a young one,—let’s take it alive.”

Ah! what would not Corvette have given then to be safe back with her sisters under her dear mother’s wing!

One of the young hunters took out a sharp knife, saying, “We must clip her wings,”—and off came the glossy black feathers which she had expected would some day carry her through the air, almost up to the blue sky. Then they shouldered their rifles, and walked briskly through the woods, while she cast a forlorn look back to the pine-tree where the false Mr. Crow was sitting.

The young men walked on for about an hour, when Corvette saw lights shining from the windows of a house, and she was very glad to find that her captors were going to this house; for now she thought she might have a chance to rest, and she was very weary with her day’s journey. As they opened the great front-door, a little girl came bounding along the hall, and one of the young hunters caught her and lifted her up very high, and then set her gently on her feet again, which made her laugh merrily, while the other hunter exclaimed, “Halloo, sis! see what I have brought you!”—at the same time kneeling on one knee, and holding the little crow in his hands.

“O brother John, is it a little mice?” said the child.

“Try again,” said he, laughing.

“It’s a chicken, then,” said she.

“Did you ever see such a black chicken?” said he. “No, it’s a little young crow, and you shall have a cage for it, and feed it every day yourself.”

“And will it sing like a canary?” asked the child.

“Not exactly; but it will talk after its own fashion. Don’t you want to take it, Birdie?”

Birdie held up her white apron with her little dimpled hands. The crow was placed in it, and she ran into the parlor, exclaiming, “O mamma, look! see! And I am to have a cage for it, and it is to be all my own.”

The lady whom Birdie called mamma patted her curly head, and smiled, saying, “Ha! a little contraband; you must make it a bed in the kitchen to-night, and to-morrow the boys will get you a nice cage.”

By “the boys,” the lady meant the two tall hunters. They were in the kitchen, cleaning their guns, when Birdie ran out with her new pet. A right down, pleasant “Ole Virginny” kitchen it was, with a great fire roaring in the fireplace, the game and hunting equipments lying on the broad hearth, and a tall negro woman busily cooking something in an iron kettle which hung over the flames. Corvette at first thought this woman must be a very large crow, she was so black and shiny.

“Well, Blossom, what’s it got now?” she said to Birdie. “O Lors! did I ever! What’s dis here! I declare if ’t aint a young crow, sure ’nuff. What’s Blossom going to do with the little black feller?”

“He must have his supper, and be put to bed. Mamma says so,” said Birdie.



So Corvette was fed with crumbs, and put in a basket on a nice soft piece of flannel, and it was only a few minutes before she was fast asleep. The next morning, when the first sunbeams fell across the kitchen floor, she awoke. At first she did not know where she was; but the sight of Dinah, the black woman, singing at her work, brought it all back, and she buried her head under the bedclothes, and felt very miserable indeed. She thought of her mother, and the nest under the cedar-tree, and her own naughty behavior; and then she resolved to escape,—to try to find her way home. But the sides of her basket were high and steep, and she would climb up a few steps only to fall back again. She might easily have flown over the top, but, alas! her wings had been clipped. Old Dinah heard the scratching, and said: “What dat? Who dar? O it’s you, you little black imp!”—looking into the basket with her two great round eyes, which frightened poor Corvette, so that she hid her head under the blanket and lay quite still. Then Dinah went about her work, singing and talking to herself, as she almost always did; and it was not very long before Birdie’s little dancing feet were heard on the kitchen floor. Dinah exclaimed, “Hi, hi! what started my Blossom out so early this morning?”

“Has the little crow got up?” asked Birdie eagerly.

“No, honey; but I heard a great scratching a minute ago. I reck’n he’s awake.”

Corvette was very glad to hear the child’s voice. She was so kind and sweet, that she had not been afraid of her from the first minute she saw her, and when Birdie’s bright blue eyes peeped into the basket, she did not hide away under the blanket, as she had from old Dinah. The little girl took her out, and gave her a nice breakfast, and by and by John and Dick, the two brothers, came in, bringing a beautiful cage. It was quite new, and had a perch in the middle, and a small glass jar for water on one side. They put Corvette in, and carried the cage to a room she had not seen before. It had two windows, beside one of which they hung the cage. The other was filled with flowers. There were great red cactuses, oleanders, roses, and strange, fragrant lilies. Above it hung another cage containing two canary-birds; and on a marble slab between the two windows stood a glass globe, where a family of goldfishes lived. Birdie’s mamma was sitting there sewing; and Birdie flitted about, talking now to her mother, and now to her pets, till her mother looked at

her watch and said, "Now Birdie must study her lesson; it is nine o'clock."

She was learning her alphabet, and always repeated it aloud. What was her surprise one morning to hear a voice repeating A, B, after her! She looked all about the room, thinking it must be a trick of one of her brothers, but they were nowhere to be seen. "C," said Birdie, and the voice repeated, "C." Then Mrs. Lee smiled and said, "It is the crow,—watch her, dear." How delighted Birdie was to see her sitting on her perch, her head on one side, looking just like Parson Rook in little Cock Robin, and saying her alphabet as sober as a judge! This was the first attempt Corvete had ever made at speaking English. She had always talked the crow language before, which, of course, we poor human beings do not understand.

One would think Corvete ought to have been very happy here, with such kind treatment, and such a dear little mistress, and for a time she was, excepting that she felt homesick occasionally, and longed to see her mother once more. But after she had been here about a year, her naturally discontented disposition began to show itself. This is what she said to herself:—

"Those canary-birds needn't feel so vain of their yellow feathers; and they are as proud of their little young ones as if they were the only ones ever hatched. Little ugly, naked things, with their great wide mouths! I could eat them all at one meal. And Mr. Canary sits there, singing so fine. I guess somebody else can sing! Caw, caw! And those goldfishes! They do nothing but swim round and round from morning till night, till I should think they would hardly know their heads from their tails,—and no great matter either. I saw the old cat eying them the other day. If she should get her paw in among them there would be a pretty kettle of fish. I wish she would. Caw, caw!"

"Why, what is the matter with the crow this morning?" said Mrs. Lee; "she screams so loud, and see how her back is ruffled."

"Poor little crow," said Birdie, "I'm afraid she is sick."

But Corvete was not sick in body. Her mind was filled with envy, discontent, and other wicked feelings, of which you will see the consequence.

It happened one fine day that the door of her cage was left open, and, the windows being also open, she thought to herself, "I will just fly out and alight on that catalpa-tree, and make Birdie think I am lost." She did so; and as she sat on a swaying branch, watching the swallows and bumblebees and other free things, all her natural love of liberty returned, and she said to herself, "I will never go inside the bars of that cage again. I am old enough and strong enough to take care of myself now, and, my wings having grown a little, I shall soon be able to fly higher than the chimneys of the house. Mr. and Mrs. Canary, you are welcome to your gilded cage; and you, silly fishes, may you have a good time bobbing about, the rest of your lives! I bid you all a very good morning." Then she clapped her wings and flew away. The bright sun, the fresh air, the waving trees exhilarated her, and for a time she felt very happy. But there was one thing she had not taken into the account. Although quite old and strong enough to take care of herself, she knew not how to do it, because she had always had all her wants supplied. She grew hungry, but what did wild crows live on, she wondered? She roamed about all day, and found nothing but a few persimmons, which drew her mouth all awry, so that she was not able to say "Caw!" for more than an hour. When night came, "Where do wild crows sleep?" she wondered. She perched on a rock; but the night wind felt cold, the dew settled on her feathers, and a great owl, that lived in a hollow tree near by, kept screaming "Tu-whit! tu-who!" which frightened her sadly, for she could not think what it was. As soon as the east began to be yellow the owl grew quiet, but Corvete was glad to get out of that neighborhood. For many days she wandered through the woods, wishing herself back in her pretty cage, but unable to find her way there, when she saw through the trees the chimneys of a house. She gladly left the woods and flew towards it, alighting in a gentleman's garden. It was a beautiful place, having a fountain, and marble urns filled with flowers, and arbors covered with grape and woodbine. An elderly gentleman was walking slowly along the paths, humming to himself, but taking no notice of the crow. Corvete was hungry and impatient to be fed, and she said, "Caw, caw!"

"Bless us! what have we here?" exclaimed the gentleman, stopping suddenly. "Here, Matthew," addressing the gardener, "bring out my air-gun."

If the crow had known anything about air-guns she would have taken to her wings at once; but she never heard of one before, so she sat quite still, and Matthew came bringing the gun, and a little boy with a pointer followed in the rear.

"O father, shoot him and give him to Carlo," said the boy.

The dog ran under the tree, and, putting his nose up in the air, barked loudly.

"That's right; tree him, Carlo! Now, Willie, see me shoot him flying," said the gentleman.

But Corvete sat eying the dog coolly, and did not offer to fly.

"I reckon, sir, he's a tame crow," said Matthew. "I never saw the like of that in a wild one."

"A, B, C," began the crow, at which they all laughed, and the gentleman laid down his gun and quieted Carlo. Then Willie ran to the house and returned with some cold boiled potato, which the crow ate ravenously from the gentleman's

hand.

"His wings have been clipped; see, sir," said Matthew, taking the crow from the tree. "I shouldn't wonder if somebody set great store by him."

After they had fed and looked at her enough, they put her in a summer-house, tying her to the grape-vine by one leg, and the gentleman said he would try to find her owner.

Corvette could easily have bitten the string from her leg, but she knew she should starve to death if left to herself; so she stayed quietly in the summer-house, and was getting quite contented, when one day she was awakened from her afternoon nap by a sharp pain in her back. She looked up and found herself in the claws of a large yellow cat, who was seated on top of the arbor. Her feathers were flying, and the blood trickling over them, when Matthew and Willie, hearing her screams, came running to the arbor, drove away the cat, and carried the crow into the house. They put her in a rough, dark box in the kitchen, and here she had ample time for reflection. This is the conclusion she came to: "I am a very naughty crow. If I had stayed at home and obeyed my mother, I should have escaped all the misfortunes which have befallen me; or if I had stayed with dear Birdie, I might still have been happy, but I ran away, and see what has come to me! I wished the cat would catch the goldfishes. I am justly punished by being caught myself. I envied the canaries that never did me any harm, and wanted to eat their young ones. O, I am a very naughty crow!" So she slunk into a corner of her pen and gave herself up to grief.

That same day Willie came running into the kitchen, saying, "They have come for the crow, Bridget," and, seizing Corvette, ran back up stairs with her. Corvette wondered what new misfortune was in store for her; but great was her joy to see John and Dick standing in the hall. She flew from one to the other, and finally perched on John's shoulder, overcome with delight.

They bade the elderly gentleman and Willie good morning, and, getting into a buggy, drove away, carrying Corvette wrapped in a handkerchief. How happy she was when she saw the familiar house and garden once more! and there in the doorway stood Birdie, with her sunny curls, waiting for them. She ran down the path, and put up her little white apron for the crow, as she had the night she first came. "Kiss me first," said brother John. She put up her rosy lips to his face, and then he took her and the crow both in his arms, and carried them to the room, full of sunshine. The flowers, the canaries, the goldfishes were all there, and there too sat Mrs. Lee in her sewing-chair. Corvette was glad to see even Dinah's black face grinning in the hall, although she never was fond of Dinah. They put the little crow in her cage, which still hung in its old place above the flowers, and she fluttered her wings, and hopped about on the perch, saying, "Caw, caw!" which was her song of thanksgiving.

And here she continued to live, a good and happy crow. You might have left the door of her cage open a week, and she would not have gone farther than the garden. She loved the canaries and goldfishes too, and in process of time had a family of her own; but she loved Birdie better than anything else.

Perhaps you would like to hear what became of Mr. Crow, the gay bachelor? He flitted about from ball to concert, making a great deal of mischief in honest families, till at last he was shot dead while robbing a cornfield.

The mother crow heard, by some telegraph peculiar to the birds of the air, what had become of Corvette, and sometimes flies that way and speaks to her when she is in the garden, telling her to be good and obedient, and love her mistress. Her family are settled about her, and she has a new brood in the old nest every year, so that she continues to sing,

"O, I'm happy and gay, for my children, you see,
Are under the boughs of this cedar-tree."

Ruth Chesterfield.



A PAIR OF SHOES.

BESSIE came running home from school, quite out of breath, and, without waiting to take off cloak or hood, climbed up on a chair and took down her little brick-colored bank from the top of the clock.

"You don't suppose I shall get much more money between now and to-morrow night, do you, mother?"

"Not much," answered her mother.

"Well, the girls at school have been counting theirs, and asking how much *I* have; and Dora said she had a dollar and a half, and she didn't believe anybody else had so much! Don't you think I *must* have?"

"Very likely; but what are you going to do with it?"

"Dora's going to spend *hers* just as she pleases," said Bessie, trying to look in at the chimney of her bank, and almost afraid that its contents wouldn't stand Dora's test. "Ugh! how dark it is in there! how gloomy the little three-cent pieces must feel! But then they have plenty of company," she continued, shaking it till every penny stood on its head, and every dime capered to its own hornpipe. "Don't you hear the tune, mother? It's Money Musk," she added.

"I guess you'll make them sing another song before long," said Grandpa.

"Sing a Song o' Sixpence?" asked the little rogue, poking her fingers down the chimney in a vain attempt to catch at something, and constantly balked by an old cent, that kept himself in the way, as much as to say, "Take me out first; I'm the oldest inhabitant";—while a quarter of a dollar in the neighborhood seemed to growl, "I'm sure I don't know what *I've* done to be imprisoned in a dungeon; I only rolled into a basket of shavings, where you found me, to avoid being broken into five-cent pieces, as some one threatened."

Almost every piece had a history of its own; each copper was a bright and shining witness of renounced sticks of candy; every half-dime represented a victory over so many half-pints of peanuts; some had been earned by running errands for the household, some by keeping at the head of a class and rising betimes, while each three-cent bit proved beyond a doubt that silence is silver, since they were so many rewards for not whispering at school; and numerous pennies, having carried the day over tardiness, clearly demonstrated that time is money.

"Stop thief!" cried Tom, rushing in.

Bessie instantly made a flank movement, and led her forces into intrenchment behind her apron, and thence into the rifle-pit of her pocket.

"Come," said he, "let's see how much you've got."

"You'll snatch," was the very unmilitary reply.

"See if I do."

"O, that'll be too late."

"Tom doesn't steal," said Grandpa.

"No, but he teases."

"Well, I sha'n't lend you my jackknife."

"I don't want it."

"How are you going to get at your money?"

"Through the chimney, of course."

"Don't you expect to get all sooty?" asked Tom.

Bessie looked at her fingers suspiciously, and, after some further skirmishing, went over with her specie to the enemy.

"Now," said Tom the Conqueror, "this is the way to do it; you pry it open so—"

"Bessie's been prying into it already," said Grandpa.

"There! your bank's broken!" shouted Tom, as one side peeled open, and the money came tumbling pell-mell, like boys out of school.

"Broken, Tom? O dear! how shall I keep my money after Christmas?"

"I'll take care of it for you."

"But, Tom, can't it be fixed?"

"*Never!*" answered he composedly. "Who'd trust a broken bank?"

"I would."

"Then you can use it after Christmas just as it is. But let's count it now. Five and five are ten, and five are fifteen, and five are twenty—"

"I don't see how you make that out, Tom."

"I should think it was plain enough; five times four are twenty, ar'n't they?"

"Let me see; five times one are five, five times two—"

"There, if you're going to say the whole multiplication-table, we shall get done by Christmas! Come, I'll—"

"O yes, yes! Go on, go on!" cried Bessie, in a panic, expecting from his frown that he was about to resign, and well

aware that she should suffer without his aid.

"I was only going to say that you might ask Grandpa," added he, slyly. "Now then, we had twenty, didn't we?"

"Yes," granted Bessie, grudgingly.

"Then, three and three are six, and three are nine, and three—"

"I wish you'd say it slower, Tom; I can't keep up with you."

"No matter. I don't mind," quoth he, rattling on till a sum total of one dollar and twenty-five cents was reached.

"Is that all?"

"All! Gracious, I should think I was a made man if it were mine," said Tom, thrusting his hands into his empty pockets.

"But Dora has a dollar and a half."

"Dora is a little miser."

"What's that?"

"One who hoards money," repeated Tom, verbatim from the day's defining lesson.

"Then I'm one, too."

"O," said Tom, rather cornered, and thinking it worth his while to conciliate a person of Bessie's means, perhaps, "why—no—not exactly,—you're a banker!" as his eye happened, luckily, upon the little red bank.

"I should think you were counting a fortune," said their mother. "Come, tea is ready."

"She's such a fussy little thing," said Tom, "she would never have made any headway at all without me."

"Well, come now; I want you and Bessie to carry a basket of Christmas things down to the char-woman after tea,—so don't delay."

"What shall I put into your stocking, Bessie?" asked Uncle Theodore at the tea-table. "A crying-baby?"

"A crying-baby!" repeated Bessie, with dignity.

"She does all her own crying," said Tom.

"Then perhaps she would like 'Noah's Ark.' "

"O, I had *that* when I was a little girl once."

"So of course you don't want it *now*."

"Yes," volunteered Tom, "she scattered the pieces far and wide among her playmates; the birds went first—"

"Because they had wings? I suppose they were all carrier-doves, weren't they?"

"And then the quadrupeds followed, and by and by Shem, Ham, and Japhet went too."

"To call the cattle home, perhaps," suggested Uncle Theodore, "but wouldn't you like to own a whole village,—a Nuremberg village?"

"O, I remember," continued Tom, "father bought her one of those, and she set the trees out in the front yard to grow, and it rained in the night, and took the paint all off, and she thought the green leaves had *dropped* off, as they do in autumn."

"There, Tom, you know that you said it was only fair to give them a chance to grow."

After tea was over, Tom brought his sled up to the door, and, Bessie and the basket being placed upon it, they started briskly away over the frozen snow.

"Now," said he, "don't you wish it was *to-morrow* night?"

"Yes, and mother had just hung up our stockings. When I was little, I used to lie awake as long as ever I could, so as to hear Santa Claus come down chimney."

"So did I, but I never could keep my eyes open till after nine; I thought all the sleigh-bells in town belonged to Santa Claus. Don't you think they sound prettier Christmas night?"

"A great deal; they seem to be all on tip-toe, just as if they couldn't keep still if they were to die. There's a little creature inside them, I guess, who makes a great noise wherever he goes."

"Look at that tree, Bessie, over there where the moon's rising."

"Isn't it beautiful?" said she; "I should think it was lighted up by a thousand little moons, instead of wax-tapers."

"It's Jack Frost's Christmas-tree," said Tom.

"Don't you remember that old German, who lived at the bottom of our garden, Tom?"

"Yes; what about him?"

"Ever so many years ago he called me to come in, and said he would give me a Christmas-box. I didn't dare to go, and I didn't dare not to, for I thought a Christmas-box was something like a boxed ear; but he gave me such a dear little nest, with a golden goose sitting in it, that I was ashamed; and he said it was the one that laid golden eggs, only I mustn't keep her too warm, or she would vanish. Well, do you think, I went into the kitchen, to show it to Nancy, and dropped it into a pail of water, and she pulled it out, and sat it down on the hearth to dry; and when I went to get it, there was nothing but a lump of white wax in the bottom of the nest."

"Real witchcraft, wasn't it?"

"It was real too-bad."

By this time they had reached the place to which they were bound, and trudged in with their basket.

"Dear me," said the delighted woman, unpacking it, "your mother is a lady and a scholar, my dears. See here, Lizzie, see here!" she cried to a child crouched by the fire, who was trying to choke down her sobs; "just look what they've brought you for Christmas day: mince pies and red apples, and a great Christmas cake in the shape of a heart like the lady's own, and hand-shaped doughnuts like the generous hand of the giver," added she, in doubtful compliment. "Come, ain't it worth drying your eyes for? And see, here are a pair of chickens to roast. Come now, don't be crying before the good children; think of the wish-bone,—there'll be two of 'em."

In Tom's eyes it was disgraceful for *any* mortal to cry, at any time,—a crying sin, in fact; but to Bessie it was simply mysterious how one could shed a tear so near the happy Christmas-tide, which was fraught with such pleasant memories and gay hopes to her little heart: *she* never cried—unless under some great provocation, like the vanishing of her golden goose—for a fortnight previous to Christmas. "What is the matter with her?" she asked, edging over towards the child, in order to change her tune by the aid of a sugar fiddle which Uncle Theodore had given her when he came home to tea, but which she had put into her pocket instead of her mouth.

"The truth is," said the mother, "the Sunday-school children are invited to sing at the festival Christmas afternoon; they go in free, you know, and see all the fine things, and hear the band. But Lizzie's shoes are out to the ground, you see; I was in hopes they'd hold out a spell longer, for my rent fell due yesterday, and to-day I've had to buy coals; so she must put up with it, and stay at home, though she has as sweet a voice as any lark, if *I* do say it."

Bessie's fingers were fumbling with her own boot-lacings. "See if she can wear mine," said she.

"No, miss, no *indeed*; I'd never take the shoes off the feet of your mother's daughter; besides, Lizzie's foot is a size bigger than yours."

"How much do shoes cost?"

"O, shoes are high. I suppose I couldn't get 'em under two dollars."

"Two dollars," repeated Bessie, slowly; "I wish I had them."

"O thank you, thank you! You are a good child; you belong to your own mother, that's sure."

And so they went away, and the little girl with the lark's voice still sobbed in the chimney-corner,—the chimney that had no connection with visions of Santa Claus, the little girl who had hardly a stocking to put on, much less to hang up.

"You little goose," said Tom, "how were you going home barefoot?"

"Why, on the sled, to be sure."

"I guess you'd have caught it."

"Caught cold?"

"Yes, and something else."

"O, you needn't say anything; I've heard mother tell how she put you on a pair of new shoes one day, and you went out to play and came home barefoot."

"Yes, I know; I gave 'em to a little lame chap."

"Tom, have you got any money?"

"Not a red cent."

"Why *don't* you keep a bank, Tom?"

"'T wouldn't be any good; I couldn't ever keep anything in it."

"Why not? That's what it's made for."

"Well, you see, I had one two or three years ago, and I put in every cent for a fortnight; and I can tell you, it was just as hard work as ever *I* want to do making up my mind to drop a piece into that bank instead of spending it."

"Well, and what then?"

"Why, you see, Ben Grosvenor had a little brig, the handiest little craft ever you saw, all rigged and manned; and he offered to sell it for little or nothing, because he wanted to raise money for a base-ball; and so, thinking I had about that sum in my bank, home I went, and took it out to the barn so nobody should meddle, and split it open with the hammer, when out pitched every cent, and rolled down a crack in the floor."

"How dreadful! And didn't you ever find it?"

"Never; and what's worse, Ben couldn't wait, and sold the brig for a song."

Bessie went to bed revolving in her mind ways and means for swelling her bank stock; she dreamed half the night of falling stars, which became silver dollars upon touching the earth; of going to spend her money, and finding that it was counterfeit; of carrying Lizzie Cinderella's slippers, which fitted to a T; and thus dreaming the night away, the sun stole a march upon her, and when she sprang out of bed and drew the curtain, there he was prinking himself in the hundred icicles that fringed the eaves of an opposite house, and touching the trees into bouquets of gems, and coaxing a prism out of every frost-bound rain-drop, till it were strange if all the world was not a Valley of Diamonds; and looking out at it, her naked feet began to tingle, forcibly reminding her of other naked feet, while she heartily wished her own a size larger, that Lizzie might step into her shoes and go to the festival.

She was usually a chatty little soul, as gay as a bird,—always fond of little mischievous pleasantries; so this 24th of December, when she came to breakfast, very sober, very silent, and not at all with the manner of that nobleman who, some one says, always came down to breakfast as if a piece of good fortune had happened to him over night, Tom instantly charged her with having forgotten what day it was, while Uncle Theodore generously offered a penny for her thoughts.

"Take it," Tom advised; "every cent counts."

"A cent!" repeated Bessie, disdainfully, "when I want seventy-five."

"Whoa!" cried Tom; "where are you going to stop?"

"At the end of my purse," said Uncle Theodore.

"O, I know," said Tom, "she wants to get ahead of Dora."

"So she won't take a head of Liberty."

"But I wouldn't fret, Bessie; may be Santa Claus will put it into your stocking."

"I don't want it in my stocking; it'll be too late."

"What for?" asked her brother.

"O, you just said you knew!"

"Well, then," said her uncle, "perhaps you would rather have it *now* than something else to-morrow?"

"Yes, O yes!"

"Than seventy-five fairy stories?"

"Ye—s—O yes!"

"I thought you were going to say the 'Seventy-five Receipt-Book,' " put in Tom.

"I believe your mother has a receipt for whips."

"But she doesn't have any use for it."

"I'm not so sure of *that*. But, Bessie, shall it be seventy-five cents, or Magic Views?"

"*Oh!*—the money!" sufficiently showing how magical was the mere possibility.

"Better seventy-five cents than Jacob's Ladder?" persisted her uncle, without regard to her situation, already becoming perilous enough to need a ladder of some sort, tossed as she was on both horns of a dilemma; her hurried "Yes, yes!" seemed afraid of being tripped up by a denial,—*"the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak."* "Come, now for the test question," he went on,—*"seventy-five cents or a paint-box?"*

Dear, dear! here was a stumbling-block indeed; what should she do with it? Push it out of sight, or make it a stepping-stone? She had longed so for a paint-box, its possession would be such Arabian Days' Entertainment to her! she had seen one in a shop-window but yesterday, she had handled one at school, and she felt as if the brush itself made heaven on earth possible. She could not help remembering the odorous wood of which the boxes were made, the brilliant mosaic of their contents, and each particular cake, with its tiny, embossed frontispiece of shell and flower and winged insect; nor what enchantment was evoked by their labels of Carmine, Vermilion, or Umber; nor what a magician was represented by the manufacturer's name engraved on the cover. Push it out of sight! She might as well try to forget the blue sky or Christmas Eve. "O Uncle Theodore!" she cried, "please don't ask me any more; the paint-box would be so nice, but—"

"Come," said Tom, "don't be all day."

"I should like to think about it till after dinner."

"Very well, then we'll adjourn."

The forenoon was spent in a long struggle between the two. Now she was on the point of surrendering to the shoes, when the paint-box seized her from an ambush; now the paint-box carried all before it, till the shoes suddenly stepped forward and routed the enemy; now she pictured herself working miracles with the one, while the want of the other worked grief for Lizzie; she actually walked down street and loitered before a shop-window, in order to know if the temptation was as great as imagination had painted it. She knew what a charm there had always hung about a pair of new shoes, even to herself;—their bright polish, in which she could almost see her face; their very squeak, which made music in her ears;—and she tried to put herself in Lizzie's place, and understand how bitter were the tears she shed. Altogether, it was a trying day for her, such as she had never known before; but she recollected having read somewhere, that for every temptation there is a way out, a plain and straight way, which a little child can follow; and when the dinner-bell rang, and Uncle Theodore's voice resounded cheerily in the hall, and Tom came tumbling in with cheeks like gilliflower apples, and a little cold current and a frosty smell crept in with them, then Bessie had followed the clew out of the labyrinth of temptation and arrived at *terra firma*.

"Well," began Tom, "made up your mind yet?"

"Yes," said Bessie.

"Which is it?"

"The money, if you please."

And Uncle Theodore counted out three bright silver quarters, for it was in the days when quarters were bright and

silver. So after dinner Bessie, with the two dollars, and Tom, with his curiosity, went down town together to spend them.

How lively it was down there! how many passers to and fro! what a jostling of parcels and poultry! what crowds of men chaffering for turkeys around market-wagons! what heads of dolls, to be guessed at beneath brown-paper wrappings! what fairy-land behind every window-pane! what a delightful hubbub, and what beaming faces everywhere! They paused before a confectioner's.

"Going in here, aren't you?" asked Tom.

"O dear, Tom, isn't that sugar castle splendid? How much do you suppose it is?"

"I'll step in and see—"

"No, don't";—but he was already gone.

"It's a castle in the air," said he, returning; "you don't want to pay two dollars for it, do you?"

"Of course not. But see here, Tom, wouldn't that basket be nice for mother? Hers is almost worn out."

"Dollar and a half," said he, looking at the mark; "why don't you take it?"

"O, I mustn't. There," she added, as they passed another store, "I broke Uncle Theodore's penknife the other day. I wish I could afford to buy him that one."

"I believe you don't mean to buy anything."

"I'm going in here," said she, opening the door of a shoe-store.

"What under the sun—"

"Shoes for Lizzie."

"O, I thought *something* was in the wind."

And the shoes being bought and paid for, they set off merrily for Lizzie's shanty, a good mile, with the wind in their faces. They were never so light-hearted in all their lives. Here they met a little fellow crying over his spilt cranberries, and they stopped and helped him pick them up off the clean white snow; here another child dragging an over-load on his sled bespoke their charity, and they took the burden off his hands; occasions for little kindnesses seemed to dance like fire-flies in their path. However, when they reached Lizzie's home, they found the door ajar, for Lizzie had just gone to draw water, and her mother had not come home from her work; so they made a loop in one end of the string that was tied about the shoes, and Tom scrawled on the paper, in his plain but awkward hand, "For Lizzie, from Santa Claus," and they hung them on a nail in the chimney-corner, and ran away, as if they had been doing something naughty.



What a beautiful Christmas Eve it was! Did ever such moonlight crown the earth since Christmas first began to shine across the centuries? The great bells, as if they had caught the hint away up there in their glistening towers, went beating out melodious gladness from their own hard bosoms, to echo through the frosty night. Bessie sat before the blazing wood-fire, watching the flames winging up the broad chimney, and wondering where they went, and why they

preferred the wide, lonesome night to her cosey nursery; while the live coals fell into order like the pieces of a kaleidoscope, and pictured delightful Christmas scenes, till the little sorceress sighted the spires of Dream-land, and cast anchor in bed.

"I say, Bessie!" shouted Tom, at the bottom of the stairs, when it seemed as if she had slept perhaps half an hour. "I say! Wish you a merry Christmas! Aren't you ever going to get up, and see what's in your stocking? There isn't a *thing* in mine," he added, as she made a hasty toilette.

"O Tom, what for?"

"'Cause I took 'em all out!"

So they went into the nursery and took account of stock. Tom exulted in a miniature printing-press, and "Robinson Crusoe," and a sugar clown, who was on the point of making his exit down that young gentleman's throat, amidst great applause.

"I guess there isn't anything in mine but fruit and candy," said Bessie, making one mouthful of a sugar shoe.

"Mother couldn't get it in without tearing your stocking."

"Couldn't get what in?"

"*That*, there on the mantel-piece."

"What, the lamp? *O—h! I see!*" It was a tiny music-box, that played only two tunes, "Money Musk" and "The Echo."

Will ever Bessie be so happy again, even when she wears dresses that "drag on the ground," and a waterfall?

And Lizzie stepped into Santa Claus's shoes and went to the festival, and some musical people who listened to her singing interested themselves in her behalf, and procured her a musical education; and after many years, when Bessie had grown up, and Tom,—who of course, having been *born* a man, needed nothing but a moustache to emphasize his dignity,—she appeared as a public singer, and they and all the world besides went to hear her, and everybody called her the Skylark. But, between us, I think the shoes were at the bottom of it.

Mary N. Prescott.



A SUMMER IN LESLIE GOLDTHWAITE'S LIFE.

III.

THE road left the flat farming country now, and turned northward, up the beautiful river valley. There was plenty to enjoy outside; and it was growing more and more lovely with almost every mile. They left the great towns gradually behind; each succeeding one seemed more simply rural. Young girls were gathered on the platforms at the little stations where they stopped sometimes; it was the grand excitement of the place,—the coming of the train,—and to these village lasses was what the piazzas or the springs are to gay dwellers at Saratoga.

By dinner time they steamed up to the stately back staircase of the "Pemigewasset." In the little parlor where they smoothed their hair and rested a moment before going to the dining-hall, they met again the lady of the grass-grown bonnet. She took this off, making herself comfortable, in her primitive fashion, for dinner; and then Leslie noticed how little it was from any poverty of nature that the fair and abundant hair, at least, had not been made use of to take down the severe primness of her outward style. It did take it down, in spite of all, the moment the gray straw was removed. The great round coil behind was all real, and *solid*, though it was wound about with no thought save of security, and fastened with a buffalo-horn comb. Hair was a matter of course; the thing was, to keep it out of the way; that was what the fashion of this head expressed, and nothing more. Where it was tucked over the small ears,—and native refinement or the other thing shows very plainly in the ears,—it lay full, and shaped into a soft curve. She was only plain, not ugly, after all; and they are very different things,—there being a beauty of plainness in men and women, as there is in a rich fabric, sometimes.

Elinor Hadden stood by a window with her back to the others, while Leslie was noticing these things. She did not complain at first; one doesn't like to allow, at once, that the toothache, or a mischance like this that had happened to her, is an established fact,—one is in for it the moment one does that. But she had got a cinder in her eye; and though she had winked, and stared, and rolled her eyelid under, and tried all the approved and instinctive means, it seemed persistent; and she was forced at last, just as her party was going in to dinner, to acknowledge that this traveller's misery had befallen her, and to make up her mind to the pain and wretchedness and ugliness of it for hours, if not even for days. Her face was quite disfigured already; the afflicted eye was bloodshot, and the whole cheek was red with tears and rubbing; she could only follow blindly along, her handkerchief up, and, half groping into the seat offered her, begin comfortlessly to help herself to some soup with her left hand. There was leaning across to inquire and pity; there were half a dozen things suggested, to which she could only reply, forlornly and impatiently, "I've tried it." None of them could eat much, or with any satisfaction; this atom in the wrong place set everything wrong all at once with four people who, till now, had been so cheery.

The spinster lady was seated at some little distance down, on the opposite side. She began to send quick, interested glances over at them; to make little, half starts toward them, as if she would speak; and at last, leaving her own dinner unfinished, she suddenly pushed back her chair, got up, and came round. She touched Elinor Hadden on the shoulder, without the least ado of ceremony. "Come out here with me," she said. "I can set you right in half a minute";—and, confident of being followed, moved off briskly out of the long hall.

Elinor gave a one-sided, questioning glance at her sisters, before she complied, reminding Leslie comically of the poor, one-eyed man in the cars; and presently, with a little hesitation, Mrs. Linceford and Jeannie compromised the matter by rising themselves and accompanying Elinor from the room. Leslie, of course, went also.

The lady had her gray bonnet on when they got back to the little parlor; there is no time to lose in mere waiting for anything at a railway dining-place; and she had her bag—a veritable, old-fashioned, home-made carpet thing—open on a chair before her, and in her hand a long, knit purse with steel beads and rings. Out of this she took a twisted bit of paper, and from the paper a minute something which she popped between her lips as she replaced the other things. Then she just beckoned, hastily, to Elinor.

"It's only an eyestone; did you ever have one in? Well, you needn't be afraid of it; I've had 'em in hundreds of times. You wouldn't know 't was there, and it'll just ease all the worry; and by and by it'll drop out of itself, cinder and all. They're terribly teasing things, cinders; and somebody's always sure to get one. I always keep three eyestones in my purse. You needn't mind my not having it back; I've got a little glass bottle full at home, and it's wonderful the sight of comfort they've been to folks."

Elinor shrunk; Mrs. Linceford showed a little high-bred demur about accepting the offered aid of their unknown travelling-companion; but the good woman comprehended nothing of this, and went on insisting.

"You'd better let me put it in right off; it's only just to drop it under the eyelid, and it'll work round till it finds the speck. But you can take it and put it in yourself, when you've made up your mind, if you'd rather." With which she darted her head quickly from side to side, looking about the room, and, spying a scrap of paper on a table, had the eyestone twisted in it in an instant, and pressed it into Elinor's hand. "You'll be glad enough of it, yet," said she, and

then took up her bag, and moved quickly off among the other passengers descending to the train.

"What a funny woman, to be always carrying eyestones about, and putting them in people's eyes!" said Jeannie.

"It was quite kind of her, I'm sure," said Mrs. Linceford, with a mingling in her tone of acknowledgment and of polite tolerance for a great liberty. When elegant people break their necks or their limbs, common ones may approach and assist; as, when a house takes fire, persons get in who never did before; and perhaps a suffering eye may come into the catalogue of misfortunes sufficient to equalize differences for the time being. But it *is* queer for a woman to make free to go without her own dinner to offer help to a stranger in pain. Not many people, in any sense of the word, go about provided with eyestones against the chance cinders that may worry others. Something in this touched Leslie Goldthwaite with a curious sense of a beauty in living that was not external.

If it had not been for Elinor's mishap and inability to enjoy, it would have been pure delight from the very beginning, this afternoon's ride. They had their seats upon the "mountain side," where the view of the thronging hills was like an ever-moving panorama; as, winding their way farther and farther up into the heart of the wild and beautiful region, the horizon seemed continually to fill with always vaster shapes, that lifted themselves, or emerged, over and from behind each other, like mustering clans of giants, bestirred and curious, because of the invasion among their fastnesses of this sprite of steam.

"Where you can come down, I can go up," it seemed to fizz, in its strong, exulting whisper, to the river; passing it away, yet never getting by; tracking, step by step, the great stream backward toward its small beginnings.

"See, there are real blue peaks!" cried Leslie, joyously, pointing away to the north and east, where the outlines lay faint and lovely in the far distance.

"O, I wish I could see! I'm losing it all!" said Elinor, plaintively and blindfold.

"Why don't you try the eyestone?" said Jeannie.

But Elinor shrunk, even yet, from deliberately putting that great thing in her eye, agonized already by the presence of a mote.

There came a touch on her shoulder, as before. The good woman of the gray bonnet had come forward from her seat farther down the car.

"I'm going to stop presently," she said, "at East Haverhill; and I *should* feel more satisfied in my mind if you'd just let me see you easy before I go. Besides, if you don't do something quick, the cinder will get so bedded in, and make such an inflammation, that a dozen eyestones wouldn't draw it out."

At this terror, poor Elinor yielded, in a negative sort of way. She ceased to make resistance when her unknown friend, taking the little twist of paper from the hand still fast closed over it with the half-conscious grasp of pain, dexterously unrolled it, and produced the wonderful chalky morsel.

"Now, 'let's see, says the blind man'"; and she drew down hand and handkerchief with determined yet gentle touch. "Wet it in your own mouth";—and the eyestone was between Elinor's lips before she could refuse or be aware. Then one thumb and finger was held to take it again, while the other made a sudden pinch at the lower eyelid, and, drawing it at the outer corner before it could so much as quiver away again, the little white stone was slid safely under.

"Now 'wink as much as you please,' as the man said that took an awful looking daguerrotype of me once. Good by. Here's where I get out. And there they all are to meet me." And then, the cars stopping, she made her way, with her carpet-bag and parasol and a great newspaper bundle, gathered up hurriedly from goodness knows where, along the passage, and out upon the platform.

"Why, it's the strangest thing! I don't feel it in the least! Do you suppose it ever *will* come out again, Augusta?" cried Elinor, in a tone greatly altered from any in which she had spoken for two hours.

"Of course it will," cried "Gray-bonnet" from beneath the window. "Don't be under the least mite of concern about anything but looking out for it when it does, to keep it against next time."

Leslie saw the plain, kindly woman surrounded in a minute by half a dozen young eager welcomers and claimants, and a whole history came out in the unreserved exclamations of the few instants for which the train delayed.

"O, it's *such* a blessing you've come! I don't know as Emma Jane would have been married at all if you hadn't!"

"We warn't sure you'd get the letter."

"Or as Aunt 'Nisby would spare you."

"'Life wanted to come over on his crutches. He's just got his new ones, and he gets about first rate. But we wouldn't let him beat himself out for to-morrow."

"How is 'Life?"

"Hearty as would any way be consistent—with one-leggedness. He'd never 'a got back, we all know, if you hadn't gone after him." It was a young man's voice that spoke these last sentences, and it grew tender at the end.



"You're to trim the cake," began one of the young girls again, crowding up. "She says nobody else can. Nobody else *ever* can. And"—with a little more mystery—"there's the veil to fix. She says you're used to wedd'n's, and know about veils; and you was down to Lawrence at Lorany's. And she wants things in *real style*. She's dreadful *pudjicky*, Emma Jane is; she won't have anything without it's exactly right."

The plain face was full of beaming sympathy and readiness; the stiff-looking spinster-woman, with the "grass in the eaves of her bonnet,"—grass grown also over many an old hope in her own life, may be,—was here in the midst of young joy and busy interests, making them all her own; had come on purpose, looked for and hailed as the one without whom nothing could ever be done,—more tenderly yet, as one but for whom some brave life and brother love would have gone down. In the midst of it all she had had ear and answer, to the very last, for the stranger she had comforted on her way. What difference did it make whether she wore an old bonnet with green grass in it, or a round hat with a gay feather?—whether she were fifteen or forty-five, but for the good she had had time to do?—whether Lorany's wedding down at Lawrence had been really a stylish festival or no? There was a beauty here which verily shone out through all; and such a life should have no time to be tempted.

The engine panted, and the train sped on. She never met her fellow-traveller again, but these things Leslie Goldthwaite had learned from her,—these things she laid by silently in her heart. And the woman in the gray bonnet never knew the half that she had done.

After taking one through wildernesses of beauty, after whirling one past nooks where one could gladly linger whole summers, it is strange at what commonplace and graceless termini these railroads contrive to land one. Lovely Wells River, where the road makes its sharp angle, and runs back again until it strikes out eastward through the valley of the Ammonoosuc,—where the waters leap to each other, and the hills bend round in majestic greeting,—where our young party cried out, in an ignorance at once blessed and pathetic, "O, if Littleton should only be like this, or if we could stop here!"—yet where one cannot stop, because here there is no regular stage connection, and nothing else to be found, very probably, that travellers might want, save the out-door glory,—Wells River and Woodville were left behind, lying

in the evening stillness of June,—in the grand and beautiful disregard of things greater than the world is rushing by to seek,—and for an hour more they threaded through fair valley sweeps and reaches, past solitary hillside clearings, and detached farms, and the most primitive of mountain hamlets, where the limit and sparseness of neighborhood drew forth from a gentleman sitting behind them—come, doubtless, from some suburban home, where numberless household wants kept horse and wagon perpetually on the way for city or village—the suggestive query, “I wonder what they do here when they’re out of saleratus?” This brought them up, as against a dead wall of dreariness and disappointment, at the Littleton station. It had been managed as it always is; the train had turned most ingeniously into a corner whence there was scarcely an outlook upon anything of all the magnificence that must yet be lying close about them; and here was only a tolerably well-populated country town, filled up to just the point that excludes the picturesque and does not attain to the highly civilized. And into the heart of this they were to be borne, and to be shut up there this summer night, with the full moon flooding mountain and river, and the woods whispering up their peace to heaven.

It was bad enough, but worse came. The hotel coach was waiting, and they hastened to secure their seats, giving their checks to the driver, who disappeared with a handful of these and others, leaving his horses with the reins tied to the dash-board, and a boy ten years old upon the box.

There were heads out anxiously at either side, between concern for safety of body and of property. Mrs. Linceford looked uneasily toward the confused group upon the platform, from among whom luggage began to be drawn out in a fashion regardless of covers and corners. The large russet trunk with the black H,—the two linen-cased ones with “Hadden” in full,—the two square bonnet-boxes,—these, one by one, were dragged and whirled toward the vehicle and jerked upon the rack; but the “ark,” as they called Mrs. Linceford’s huge light French box, and the one precious receptacle that held all Leslie’s pretty outfit, where were these?

“Those are not all, driver! There is a high black French trunk, and a russet leather one.”

“Got all you give me checks for,—seb’m pieces”; and he pointed to two strange articles of luggage waiting their turn to be lifted up,—a long, old-fashioned gray hair trunk, with letters in brass nails upon the lid, and as antiquated a carpet-bag, strapped and padlocked across the mouth, suggestive in size and fashion of the United States mail.

“Never saw them before in my life! There’s some dreadful mistake! What *can* have become of ours?”

“Can’t say, ma’am, I’m sure. Don’t often happen. But them was your checks.”

Mrs. Linceford leaned back for an instant in a breathless despair. “I must get out and see.”

“If you please, ma’am. But ’t aint no use. The things is all cleared off.” Then, stooping to examine the trunk, and turning over the bag, “Queer, too. These things is chalked all right for Littleton. Must ha’ been a mistake with the checks, and somebody changed their minds on the way,—Plymouth, most likely,—and stopped with the wrong baggage. Wouldn’t worry, ma’am; it’s as bad for one as for t’ other, anyhow, and they’ll be along to-morrow, no kind o’ doubt. Strays allers turns up on this here road. No danger about that. I’ll see to havin’ these ’ere stowed away in the baggage-room.” And shouldering the bag, he seized the trunk by the handle and hauled it along over the rough embankment and up the steps, flaying one side as he went.

“But, dear me! what am I to do?” said Mrs. Linceford, piteously. “Everything in it that I want to-night,—my dressing-box and my wrappers and my air-cushion; they’ll be sure not to have any bolsters on the beds, and only one feather in each corner of the pillows!”

But this was only the first surprise of annoyance. She recollected herself on the instant, and leaned back again, saying nothing more. She had no idea of amusing her unknown stage-companions at any length with her fine-lady miseries. Only, just before they reached the hotel, she added low to Jeannie, out of the unbroken train of her own private lamentation, “And my rose-glycerine! After all this dust and heat! I feel parched to a mummy, and I shall be an object to behold!”

Leslie sat upon her right hand. She leaned closer, and said quickly, glad of the little power to comfort, “I have some rose-glycerine here in my bag.”

Mrs. Linceford looked round at her; her face was really bright. As if she had not lost her one trunk also! “You are a phoenix of a travelling-companion, you young thing!” the lady thought, and felt suddenly ashamed of her own unwonted discomfiture.

Half an hour afterward Leslie Goldthwaite flitted across the passage between the two rooms they had secured for their party, with a bottle in her hand and a pair of pillows over her arm. “Ours is a double-bedded room, too, Mrs. Linceford, and neither Elinor nor I care for more than one pillow. And here is the rose-glycerine.”

These essential comforts, and the instinct of good-breeding, brought the grace and the smile back fully to Mrs. Linceford’s face. More than that, she felt a gratefulness, and the contagion and emulation of cheerful patience under a common misfortune. She bent over and kissed Leslie as she took the bottle from her hand. “You’re a dear little sunbeam,” she said. “We’ll send an imperative message down the line, and have all our own traps again to-morrow.”

The collar that Elinor Hadden had lent Leslie was not very becoming; the sleeves had enormous wristbands, and were made for double sleeve-buttons, while her own were single; moreover, the brown silk net, which she had supposed thoroughly trustworthy, had given way all at once into a great hole under the waterfall, and the soft hair

would fret itself through and threaten to stray untidily. She had two such pretty nets in reserve in her missing trunk, and she did hate so to be in any way coming to pieces! Yet there was somehow a feeling that repaid it all, and even quieted the real anxiety as to the final "turning up" of their fugitive property,—not a mere self-complacence, hardly a self-complacence at all, but a half-surprised gladness, that had something thankful in it. If she might not be all leaves, perhaps, after all! If she really could, even in some slight thing, care most for the life and spirit underneath, to keep this sweet and pleasant, and the fruit of it a daily good, and not a bitterness,—if she could begin by holding herself undisturbed, though obliged to wear a collar that stood up behind and turned over in front with those lappet corners she had always thought so ugly,—yes, even though the waterfall should leak out and ripple over stubbornly,—though these things must go on for twenty-four hours at least, and these twenty-four hours be spent unwillingly in a dull country tavern, where the windows looked out from one side into a village street, and from the other into stable and clothes yards! There would be something for her to do,—to keep bright and help to keep the others bright. There was a hope in it; the life was more than raiment; it was better worth while than to have only got on the nice round collar and dainty cuffs that fitted and suited her, or even the little bead net that came over in a Marie Stuart point so prettily between the small crimped puffs of her hair.

A little matter, nothing to be self-applauding about,—only a straw; but—if it showed the possible way of the wind, the motive power that might be courted to set through her life, taking her out of the trade-currents of vanity? Might she have it in her, after all? Might she even be able to come, if need be, to the strength of mind for wearing an old gray straw bonnet, and bearing to be forty years old, and helping to adorn the young and beautiful for looks that never—just so—should be bent again on her?

Leslie Goldthwaite had read of martyr and hero sufferance all her life, as she had looked upon her poor, one-eyed fellow-traveller to-day; the pang of sympathy had always been,—“These things have been borne, are being borne, in the world; how much of the least of them could I endure,—I, looking for even the little things of life to be made smooth?” It depended, she began faintly and afar off to see, upon where the true life lay,—how far behind the mere outer covering vitality withdrew itself.

Author of "Faith Gartney's Girlhood."



THE NUTCRACKERS OF NUTCRACKER LODGE.

M^R. and M^S. Nutcracker were as respectable a pair of squirrels as ever wore gray brushes over their backs. They were animals of a settled and serious turn of mind, not disposed to run after vanities and novelties, but filling their station in life with prudence and sobriety. Nutcracker Lodge was a hole in a sturdy old chestnut overhanging a shady dell, and was held to be as respectably kept an establishment as there was in the whole forest. Even Miss Jenny Wren, the greatest gossip of the neighborhood, never found anything to criticise in its arrangements, and old Parson Too-whit, a venerable owl who inhabited a branch somewhat more exalted, as became his profession, was in the habit of saving himself much trouble in his parochial exhortations by telling his parishioners in short to "look at the Nutcrackers" if they wanted to see what it was to live a virtuous life. Everything had gone on prosperously with them, and they had reared many successive families of young Nutcrackers, who went forth to assume their places in the forest of life, and to reflect credit on their bringing-up,—so that naturally enough they began to have a very easy way of considering themselves models of wisdom.

But at last it came along, in the course of events, that they had a son named Featherhead, who was destined to bring them a great deal of anxiety. Nobody knows what the reason is, but the fact was, that Master Featherhead was as different from all the former children of this worthy couple as if he had been dropped out of the moon into their nest, instead of coming into it in the general way. Young Featherhead was a squirrel of good parts and a lively disposition, but he was sulky and contrary and unreasonable, and always finding matter of complaint in everything his respectable papa and mamma did. Instead of assisting in the cares of a family,—picking up nuts and learning other lessons proper to a young squirrel,—he seemed to settle himself from his earliest years into a sort of lofty contempt for the Nutcrackers, for Nutcracker Lodge, and for all the good old ways and institutions of the domestic hole, which he declared to be stupid and unreasonable, and entirely behind the times. To be sure, he was always on hand at meal-times, and played a very lively tooth on the nuts which his mother had collected, always selecting the very best for himself; but he seasoned his nibbling with so much grumbling and discontent, and so many severe remarks, as to give the impression that he considered himself a peculiarly ill-used squirrel in having to "eat their old grub," as he very unceremoniously called it.

Papa Nutcracker, on these occasions, was often fiercely indignant, and poor little Mamma Nutcracker would shed tears, and beg her darling to be a little more reasonable; but the young gentleman seemed always to consider himself as the injured party.

Now nobody could tell why or wherefore Master Featherhead looked upon himself as injured and aggrieved, since he was living in a good hole, with plenty to eat, and without the least care or labor of his own; but he seemed rather to value himself upon being gloomy and dissatisfied. While his parents and brothers and sisters were cheerfully racing up and down the branches, busy in their domestic toils, and laying up stores for the winter, Featherhead sat gloomily apart, declaring himself weary of existence, and feeling himself at liberty to quarrel with everybody and everything about him. Nobody understood him, he said;—he was a squirrel of a peculiar nature, and needed peculiar treatment, and nobody treated him in a way that did not grate on the finer nerves of his feelings. He had higher notions of existence than could be bounded by that old rotten hole in a hollow tree; he had thoughts that soared far above the miserable, petty details of every-day life, and he *could* not and *would* not bring down these soaring aspirations to the contemptible toil of laying up a few chestnuts or hickory-nuts for winter.

“Depend upon it, my dear,” said Mrs. Nutcracker solemnly, “that fellow must be a genius.”

“Fiddlestick on his genius!” said old Mr. Nutcracker, “what does he *do*?”

“O nothing, of course; that’s one of the first marks of genius. Geniuses, you know, never can come down to common life.”

“He eats enough for any two,” remarked old Nutcracker, “and he never helps gather nuts.”

“My dear, ask Parson Too-whit; he has conversed with him, and quite agrees with me that he says very uncommon things for a squirrel of his age; he has such fine feelings,—so much above those of the common crowd.”

“Fine feelings be hanged!” said old Nutcracker. “When a fellow eats all the nuts that his mother gives him, and then grumbles at her, I don’t believe much in his fine feelings. Why don’t he set himself about something? I’m going to tell my fine young gentleman, that, if he doesn’t behave himself, I’ll tumble him out of the nest, neck and crop, and see if hunger won’t do something towards bringing down his fine airs.”

But then Mrs. Nutcracker fell on her husband’s neck with both paws, and wept, and besought him so piteously to have patience with her darling, that old Nutcracker, who was himself a soft-hearted old squirrel, was prevailed upon to put up with the airs and graces of his young scapegrace a little longer; and secretly in his silly old heart he revolved the question whether possibly it might not be that a great genius was actually to come of his household.

The Nutcrackers belonged to the old established race of the Grays, but they were sociable, friendly people, and kept on the best of terms with all branches of the Nutcracker family. The Chipmunks of Chipmunk Hollow were a very lively, cheerful, sociable race, and on the very best of terms with the Nutcracker Grays. Young Tip Chipmunk, the oldest son, was in all respects a perfect contrast to Master Featherhead. He was always lively and cheerful, and so very alert in providing for the family, that old Mr. and Mrs. Chipmunk had very little care, but could sit sociably at the door of their hole and chat with neighbors, quite sure that Tip would bring everything out right for them, and have plenty laid up for winter.

Now Featherhead took it upon him, for some reason or other, to look down upon Tip Chipmunk, and on every occasion to disparage him in the social circle, as a very common kind of squirrel, with whom it would be best not to associate too freely.

“My dear,” said Mrs. Nutcracker one day, when he was expressing these ideas, “it seems to me that you are too hard on poor Tip; he is a most excellent son and brother, and I wish you would be civil to him.”

“O, I don’t doubt that Tip is *good* enough,” said Featherhead, carelessly; “but then he is so very common! he hasn’t an idea in his skull above his nuts and his hole. He is good-natured enough, to be sure,—these very ordinary people often are good-natured,—but he wants manner; he has really no manner at all; and as to the deeper feelings, Tip hasn’t the remotest idea of them. I mean always to be civil to Tip when he comes in my way, but I think the less we see of that sort of people the better; and I hope, mother, you won’t invite the Chipmunks at Christmas,—these family dinners are such a bore!”

“But, my dear, your father thinks a great deal of the Chipmunks; and it is an old family custom to have all the relatives here at Christmas.”

“And an awful bore it is! Why must people of refinement and elevation be forever tied down because of some distant relationship? Now there are our cousins the High-Flyers,—if we could get them, there would be some sense in it. Young Whisk rather promised me for Christmas; but it’s seldom now you can get a flying squirrel to show himself in our parts, and if we are intimate with the Chipmunks it isn’t to be expected.”

“Confound him for a puppy!” said old Nutcracker, when his wife repeated these sayings to him. “Featherhead is a fool. Common, forsooth! I wish good, industrious, painstaking sons like Tip Chipmunk *were* common. For my part, I find these uncommon people the most tiresome; they are not content with letting us carry the whole load, but they sit on it, and scold at us while we carry them.”

But old Mr. Nutcracker, like many other good old gentlemen squirrels, found that Christmas dinners and other

things were apt to go as his wife said, and his wife was apt to go as young Featherhead said; and so, when Christmas came, the Chipmunks were not invited, for the first time in many years. The Chipmunks, however, took all pleasantly, and accepted poor old Mrs. Nutcracker's awkward apologies with the best possible grace, and young Tip looked in on Christmas morning with the compliments of the season and a few beech-nuts, which he had secured as a great dainty. The fact was, that Tip's little striped fur coat was so filled up and overflowing with cheerful good-will to all, that he never could be made to understand that any of his relations could want to cut him; and therefore Featherhead looked down on him with contempt, and said he had no tact, and couldn't see when he was not wanted.

It was wonderful to see how, by means of persisting in remarks like these, young Featherhead at last got all his family to look up to him as something uncommon. Though he added nothing to the family, and required more to be done for him than all the others put together,—though he showed not the smallest real perseverance or ability in anything useful,—yet somehow all his brothers and sisters, and his poor foolish old mother, got into a way of regarding him as something wonderful, and delighting in his sharp sayings as if they had been the wisest things in the world.

But at last old papa declared that it was time for Featherhead to settle himself to some business in life, roundly declaring that he could not always have him as a hanger-on in the paternal hole.

"What are you going to do, my boy?" said Tip Chipmunk to him one day. "We are driving now a thriving trade in hickory-nuts, and if you would like to join us—"

"Thank you," said Featherhead; "but I confess I have no fancy for anything so slow as the hickory trade; I never was made to grub and delve in that way."

The fact was, that Featherhead had lately been forming alliances such as no reputable squirrel should even think of. He had more than once been seen going out evenings with the Rats of Rat Hollow,—a race whose reputation for honesty was more than doubtful. The fact was, further, that old Longtooth Rat, an old sharper and money-lender, had long had his eye on Featherhead as just about silly enough for their purposes,—engaging him in what he called a speculation, but which was neither more nor less than downright stealing.

Near by the chestnut-tree where Nutcracker Lodge was situated was a large barn filled with corn and grain, besides many bushels of hazel-nuts, chestnuts, and walnuts. Now old Longtooth proposed to young Featherhead that he should nibble a passage into this loft, and there establish himself in the commission business, passing the nuts and corn to him as he wanted them. Old Longtooth knew what he was about in the proposal, for he had heard talk of a brisk Scotch terrier that was about to be bought to keep the rats from the grain; but you may be sure he kept his knowledge to himself, so that Featherhead was none the wiser for it.

"The nonsense of fellows like Tip Chipmunk!" said Featherhead to his admiring brothers and sisters. "The perfectly stupid nonsense! There he goes, delving and poking, picking up a nut here and a grain there, when I step into property at once."

"But I hope, my son, you are careful to be honest in your dealings," said old Nutcracker, who was a very moral squirrel.

With that, young Featherhead threw his tail saucily over one shoulder, winked knowingly at his brothers, and said, "Certainly, sir! If honesty consists in getting what you can while it is going, I mean to be honest."

Very soon Featherhead appeared to his admiring companions in the height of prosperity. He had a splendid hole in the midst of a heap of chestnuts, and he literally seemed to be rolling in wealth; he never came home without showering lavish gifts on his mother and sisters; he wore his tail over his back with a buckish air, and patronized Tip Chipmunk with a gracious nod whenever he met him, and thought that the world was going well with him.



But one luckless day, as Featherhead was lolling in his hole, up came two boys with the friskiest, wiriest Scotch terrier you ever saw. His eyes blazed like torches, and poor Featherhead's heart died within him as he heard the boys say, "Now we'll see if we can't catch the rascal that eats our grain."

Featherhead tried to slink out at the hole he had gnawed to come in by, but found it stopped.

"O, you are there, are you, Mister?" said the boy. "Well, you don't get out; and now for a chase!"

And, sure enough, poor Featherhead ran distracted with terror up and down, through the bundles of hay, between barrels, and over casks; but with the barking terrier ever at his heels, and the boys running, shouting, and cheering his pursuer on. He was glad at last to escape through a crack, though he left half of his fine brush behind him,—for Master Wasp the terrier made a snap at it just as he was going, and cleaned all the hair off of it, so that it was bare as a rat's tail.

Poor Featherhead limped off, bruised and beaten and bedraggled, with the boys and dog still after him; and they would have caught him, after all, if Tip Chipmunk's hole had not stood hospitably open to receive him. Tip took him in, like a good-natured fellow as he was, and took the best of care of him; but the glory of Featherhead's tail had departed forever. He had sprained his left paw, and got a chronic rheumatism, and the fright and fatigue which he had gone through had broken up his constitution, so that he never again could be what he had been; but Tip gave him a situation as under-clerk in his establishment, and from that time he was a sadder and a wiser squirrel than he ever had been before.

Harriet Beecher Stowe.



LAST DAY.

NOT the last day that ever will be, but the last day of school. What you call "examination day," that the little people of Applethorpe called "last day." And a great day it was,—committee in school, fathers and mothers, evergreens, best clothes, "speaking pieces," and rewards of merit. O, there was a great deal to be done! so Jack and Gerty and Trip went over to where Parke and Huldah and Moses and Susan and Lina lived, to see about it. It was evening, and, though their house was nearly a mile away, Jack was as brave as a lion, and Gerty and Trip as fearless as cubs under his wing,—only cubs do not go under wings I believe.

Trip had private ends in view in accompanying her brother and sister. She was extremely interested in "last day," but she did not care to hear their tiresome talk about ways and means. Nobody ever listened to her, or if they did, it was only to laugh; but Lina and she could go away and play by themselves. She would have liked to carry both her dolls. I may as well tell you that her dolls were just rag-babies. Mary Maria, the elder, was a very well grown young woman, about as tall as your arm, and too heavy for Trip's arms; so Miss Mary Maria was forced to stay at home, although she had been arrayed for the visit in a cloak made of an old bonnet-lining, which garment Trip, who was of an aspiring as well as an ingenious mind, had dignified with the high-sounding appellation of "white-satin-saratoga-half-mantilla-belzerette"! The other was Charles Emilus, until Trip had a teacher whom she liked very much, and for whom she re-christened her son Emilus Alvah. Trip loved both her children alike, especially Emilus Alvah. He was much smaller than Mary Maria, being only about a third as tall as your arm, and he had trunkfuls of clothes. He had a little yellow plush great-coat, with a cape and velvet collar, and a blue silk cap with a visor—do you call it?—as nice a cap as ever you saw. Gerty made those. Gerty did all the extra tailoring, and Trip did the plain sewing. She made him little pink trousers, with embroidered white muslin ones over them, and little silk jackets, for party wear, and she hemstitched all his collars. He had school clothes, and meeting clothes, and rainy-day clothes; indeed, he had clothes on the slightest provocation. All his trousers were plaited at the waist, and stitched down as nicely as if he had been a real boy; and he had pins stuck into him wherever buttons ought to be, because the heads, you know, looked just like buttons. As Trip's dolls led a very active life, they naturally wore out often and had to be renewed. It was no great matter, for their legs and arms were only pieces of cloth rolled up and sewed, and then fastened to a body full of bran or cotton-wool, with a string tied tightly around where the waist and the throat ought to be, and eyes, nose, and mouth inked into the face by Jack or Gerty. Nevertheless, Trip was very fond of her young family, and undressed and put them to bed every night as regularly as she went to bed herself; therefore, when their faces grew hopelessly dirty, and their poor little bodies and limbs burst open beyond all possibility of repair, and she had to give them up and make new ones, she could not help celebrating their obsequies with a few secret tears. It does not seem to me that our young folks love their dolls half as much as these young folks did. But how long I am lingering over Trip's dolls! Pardon me! When people get into years they are apt to grow garrulous. Do you know what that means? Never mind.

So Trip took Emilus Alvah and a travelling-bag of his clothes over to Lina's, and they went into a little bedroom that opened out of the great kitchen where the others were, and enjoyed themselves and their play just as much as Trip expected, though she had one disappointment,—for in the midst of their play Lina jumped up, shut the door cautiously, opened the lid of a big old wooden chest, and beckoned Trip to look. Trip ran to her, and Lina dug down nearly to the bottom, and unearthed a clean crash towel, which, being unfolded, displayed a pile of beautiful bulky, flaky mince turn-overs, of the shape and about the size of the half-moon in the sky. Now if Trip *had* a weakness, it was for mince turn-overs. Besides being mince, they had so much crust, and these in particular were of such royal dimensions, that they quite turned her head. Not unnaturally she concluded that they were going to be set forth in her and Jack and Gerty's honor; but the minute-hand kept going, and the clock kept striking, and that one speedily dissolving view was the last she ever got of the mammoth turn-overs. However, she with the others had "refreshments" of baked apples and milk, which was a great deal better for them; though here again Trip was not in luck, for no sooner had she tasted her brimming bowl than she exclaimed in dismay, "O, it's new milk!"

"Yes; don't you like new milk?" asked Huldah's mother.

"Yes, ma'am," said Trip quickly, smothering her disrelish, and permitting her instinct of politeness to get the mastery over her instinct of truth; for she had a great dislike to new milk, or "No I haven't either," she said to her conscience. "It is *warm* milk, not new milk, that I don't like; so I didn't tell a lie." If you would not get into Trip's trouble, you must not speak out so quickly as Trip. Just say nothing as long as you can, and when you do speak, speak the truth.

As the result of their deliberations, the girls were all set to making roses out of pink tissue-paper, and the boys went down into the swamps and woods after evergreen, and the girls kept saying to Trip, "Don't touch this!" "Don't spoil that!" "Don't come here!"—so she betook herself cheerily to the swamps and the boys, and they cried, "Look out, Trip-hammer, you'll slump through!" when she immediately "slumped through"; and after she had scrambled upon thicker ice, and slipped down half a dozen times, somebody would call, "Trip-up, you'll fall if you don't mind." By and by a very sad thing happened; for Asel, high up on a tree after boughs, was too heavy for the branch he stood on, and

down it came, bringing him with it. He did not break his leg, but he might as well while he was about it, for it doubled under him and was sadly wrenched, so that he had to be carried home and keep his bed; and Trip cried very hard, for she was very fond of Asel, as she was indeed of nearly every one who took the least notice of her,—and if they took none it was all the same. But never went she into *that* swamp again as long as she lived.

And the old school-house was all festooned with ground-pine, and hung with hemlock and spruce, and gay with roses, and the children went to school in their best clothes for the "last day." Gerty and Trip had new muslin-delaine dresses, with little plaits on the waist, and little lace ruffles on the throat,—very fresh and pretty, though Trip's had had a narrow escape; for when she went to the dressmaker's for her dress, her aunt called and asked her to take home a milk-can almost as large as she was herself. It was empty and light, but rather unwieldy for Trip; so, to simplify matters, she just tucked her new dress into the milk-can and forgot all about it. And next morning, when the milk went in, it did not rattle quite as much as usual, because Trip's new dress was soft! But the dress was speedily taken out and well shaken, and Trip well scolded, which she did not mind at all; and when the dress was on, you never would have suspected it had passed the night in a milk-can, or taken a milk-bath in the morning. "And where's the harm?" said Jack; "people have watered silks. Why shouldn't they have milked al-a-pack-ahs?" Stupid Jack, who called all sorts of girls' cloth "Al-a-pack-ah," first misspelling the word and then mispronouncing it with great rapidity. Also Gerty and Trip had beautiful black-silk aprons, made expressly for "last day" out of their grandmother's cape, as good as new, and new polka boots, bought a fortnight before, which Trip had taken out of her drawer every day since and held up admiringly with one hand, while the other held a pair of nice little embroidered pantalets above them, thus feasting beforehand on the splendor that should be. When she was dressed, she asked Jack confidentially, did he think she looked as nice as Lina and Cicely and Meg and Olive would look, and Jack would like to see the fellow that could hoe their row with Trip and Gerty, sir! Whereat Trip laughed to the very bottom of her silly little heart, and trotted off to school well pleased.



I have not space to tell you how brilliantly successful this last day proved to be,—how the committee and the parents poured in and filled the rooms, and crowded the large scholars into the low seats, and the little scholars into no seats at all; how they read and spelled in loud shouts, and the louder they shouted the better everybody was pleased; what long "sums" they did on the blackboard, what heroic orations they uttered, what magnificent writing-books they showed, all gay with German text, and how the happy parents congratulated themselves and each other on having children so promising. But Trip had a special triumph which I must not fail to record. To be sure she was in high spirits all day,—as who could help being with a new delaine dress and polka boots? She answered every question which was asked her, read without any failure, and came off conqueror in a discussion with the head committee-man; for when a class was reciting from some child's book of philosophy, he tried to puzzle them by asking which would weigh the most, a pound of lead or a pound of feathers? Some said the lead, but Trip answered decidedly, "Both alike"; and then all the

company smiled, Trip was so little.

“And which would fall to the ground soonest, if you should let them drop?”

“Both alike,” said Trip again; and then they smiled again.

“O no,” said the committee-man; “the feathers would float about and be a long while getting down.”

“No they wouldn’t,” persisted Trip eagerly, “if they were tied up just as tight”;—and then everybody laughed outright, the committee-man hardest of all, and Trip was quite frightened at having “spoken right out in meeting.”

And after the committee were gone, and the master had made his farewell address and delivered his “rewards of merit,” he called up little Trip and put into her hand two cents, which he said Mr. Church, a strange gentleman who had been present, had desired him to give her. And you can imagine how Jack and Gerty and Trip gloried in it, and how all the children crowded around after school to look at the cents as they lay hot and coppery in her eager little fist.

Then there was great stir and jollity in gathering up their goods and chattels for the three months’ vacation. Trip’s treasures consisted of a lovely pasteboard horse which Eldred had given her,—Eldred and she were great friends. It had an extraordinarily long tail, and a hardly less wonderful head, and it stood on nothing in a very spirited manner. There was a busk which Nathan had made for her,—Nathan and she were intimate also. You don’t know what a busk is? Well, sometimes it is whalebone and sometimes it isn’t, and whatever it is, it is of no earthly use. This was one of the *isn’ts*, for it was made of white-wood polished, and with little figures pricked all over it. There was a ball, India-rubber, with a bright covering, which George gave her, for George and she were on the best of terms; and a medal which Benjamin gave her on this wise. He brought it to school one day and displayed it, black and bulging, with a bright pewter rim, a white log-cabin on one side and a head of Harrison on the other. It went from hand to hand till it got to Trip. “Whose is it?” asked Olive, just coming in. Trip told her, and she immediately rushed to Benjamin to beg him to give it to her. “It isn’t mine,” said Benjamin carelessly, sticking his jack-knife into the desk. Olive came back and reported, and just then the master came and school began; and little Trip pondered within herself what it could mean, and shrewdly guessed he meant to give it to her. So as soon as school was done she held it out to him with a beating heart, and he said, “‘T isn’t mine, it’s yours”; and Trip put it into her pocket and never told Olive. And now little Benny sleeps in the China Sea.

If you wish to know why they befriended Trip in so knightly a fashion, I can tell you, I think it was because she would have been in an evil case if she had not been befriended. It was because she was such a ridiculous little puss; because her adventurous and rebellious hair was always blowing about over her sunburnt little face; because she was always running into places where she had no business to be, and took snubbings so sweetly, never even knowing that she *was* snubbed; because she was perpetually tumbling down on her nose and making it bleed, and tumbling down on her forehead and bumping little black and yellow mounds all over it, and tumbling on the back of her head and being stunned, and pitching under the horses, and bruising her hands, and getting her wrists cut, and setting her clothes on fire,—in short, wherever there was anything going on, especially if it was mischief or danger, therein was Trip sure to poke her pug nose in a manner most trying to Gerty, who acted as surgeon-general, and never had any peace except when Trip was sick, and had to stay at home from school a day. So you see it was very fortunate that the big boys turned their gentle side to her; for if they had been as merciless as she was to herself, there is no knowing what would have become of her.

The children trooped home from school in military array,—that is, an awkward squad,—the girls chattering in lines six abreast, and the boys circling and circulating about them, and calling out now and then, “Trip, what’s in your hand?” “Who’s got any money to lend?” “Trip, aren’t you going to treat?” “Trip, give us an oyster supper, there’s a good girl.” But Trip was not good girl enough for that. She clutched close her two cents, displayed them to her admiring parents, and then put them into her little pitcher, and kept them there till she took them out, and then she lost them.

“Though lost to sight, to memory dear,”

said Jack, in doubtful consolation.

Gail Hamilton.

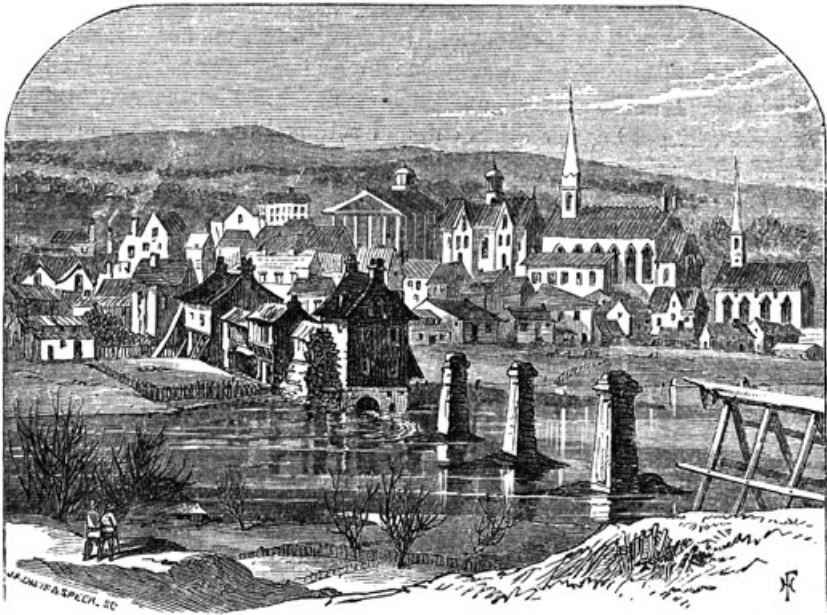


THE BATTLE-FIELD OF FREDERICKSBURG.

THE railroad bridge over the Rappahannock not having been rebuilt since the war, it was necessary to cross to Fredericksburg by another conveyance than the cars. A long line of coaches was in waiting for the train. I climbed the topmost seat of the foremost coach, which was soon leading the rumbling, dusty procession over the hills toward the city.

From a barren summit we obtained a view of Fredericksburg, pleasantly situated on the farther bank of the river. We crossed the brick-colored Rappahannock (not a lovely stream to look upon) by a pontoon bridge, and, ascending the opposite shore, rode through the half-ruined city.

Fredericksburg had not yet begun to recover from the effects of Burnside's shells. Scarcely a house in the burnt portions had been rebuilt. Many houses were entirely destroyed, and only the solitary chimney-stacks remained. Of others, you saw no vestige but broken brick walls, and foundations overgrown with Jamestown-weeds, sumachs, and thistles. Farther up from the river the town had been less badly used; but we passed even there many a dwelling with a broken chimney, and with great awkward holes in walls and roofs. Some were windowless and deserted; but others had been patched up and rendered inhabitable again. High over the city soar the church-spires, which, standing between two artillery fires on the day of the battle, received the ironical compliments of both. The zinc sheathing of one of these steeples is well riddled and ripped, and the tipsy vane leans at an angle of forty-five degrees from its original perpendicular.



Sitting next me on the stage-top was a vivacious young expressman, who was in the battle, and who volunteered to give me some account of it. No doubt his description was beautifully clear; but as he spoke only of "our army," without calling it by name, it was long before I could decide which army was meant. Sometimes it seemed to be one, then it was more likely the other; so that, before his account of its movements was ended, my mind was in a delightful state of confusion. A certain delicacy on my part, which was quite superfluous, had prevented me from asking him plainly at first on which side he was fighting. At last, by inference and indirectly, I got at the fact;—"our army" was the Rebel army.

"I am a son of Virginia!" he told me afterwards, his whole manner expressing a proud satisfaction. "I was opposed to secession at first, but afterwards I went into it with my whole heart and soul. Do you want to know what carried me in? State pride, sir! nothing else in the world. I'd give more for Virginia than for all the rest of the Union put together; and I was bound to go with my State."

This was spoken with emphasis, and a certain rapture, as a lover might speak of his mistress. I think I never before

realized so fully what "State pride" was. In New England and the West, you find very little of it. However deep it may lie in the hearts of the people, it is not their habit to rant about it. You never hear a Vermont or an Indianian exclaim, "I believe my State is worth all the rest of the Union!" with excited countenance, lip curved, and eye in fine frenzy rolling. Their patriotism is too large and inclusive to be stopped by narrow State boundaries. Besides, in communities where equality prevails there is little of that peculiar pride which the existence of caste creates. Accustomed to look down upon slaves and poor whites, the aristocratic classes soon learn to believe that they are the people, and that wisdom will die with them.

"I believe," said I, "there is but one State as proud as Virginia, and that is the fiery little State of South Carolina."

"I have less respect for South Carolina," said he, "than for any other State in the Union. South Carolina troops were the worst troops in the Confederate army. It was South Carolina's self-conceit and bluster that caused the war."

(So, State pride in another State than Virginia was only "self-conceit.")

"Yes," said I, "South Carolina began the war; but Virginia carried it on."

"Virginia," he replied, with another gleam, his eyes shining with the fine frenzy again, "Virginia made the gallantest fight that ever was; and I am prouder of her to-day than I ever was in my life!"

"But you are glad she is back in the Union again?"

"To tell the truth, I am. I think more of the Union, too, than I ever did before. It was a square, stand-up fight; we got beaten, and I suppose it is all for the best."

"What astonishes me," said I, "after all the Southern people's violent talk about the last ditch,—about carrying on an endless guerilla warfare after their armies were broken up, and fighting in swamps and mountains till the last man was exterminated,—what astonishes me is, that they take so sensible a view of their situation, and accept it so frankly; and that you, a Rebel, and I, a Yankee, are sitting on this stage talking over the bloody business so good-naturedly!"

"Well, it is astonishing, when you think of it! Southern men and Northern men ride together in the trains, and stop at the same hotels, as if we were all one people,—as indeed we are: one nation now," he added, "as we never were before, and never could have been without the war."

I got down at the hotel, washed and brushed away the dust of travel, and went out to the dining-room. There the first thing that met my eye was a pair of large wooden fans, covered with damask cloth, which afforded an ample flap to each, suspended over the table, and set in motion by means of a rope dropped from a pulley by the door. At the end of the rope was a shining negro boy about ten years old, pulling as if it were the rope of a fire-bell, and the whole town were in flames. The fans swayed to and fro, a fine breeze blew all up and down the table, and not a fly was to be seen. I noticed before long, however, that the little darky's industry was of an intermittent sort; for at times he would cease pulling altogether, until the landlady passed that way, when he would seem to hear the cries of fire again, and once more fall to ringing his silent alarm-bell in the most violent manner.

After dinner I went out to view the town. As I stood looking at the empty walls of the gutted court-house, a sturdy old man approached. He stopped to answer my questions, and, pointing at the havoc made by shells, exclaimed, "You see the result of the vanity of Virginia!"

"Are you a Virginian?"

"I am; but that is no reason why I should be blind to the faults of my State. It was the vanity of Virginia, and nothing else, that caused all our trouble."

(Here was another name for "State pride.")

"You were not very much in favor of secession, I take it?"

"In favor of it!" he exclaimed, kindling. "Didn't they have me in jail here nine weeks because I would not vote for it? If I hadn't been an old man, they would have hung me. Ah, I told them how it would be, from the first; but they wouldn't believe me. Now they see! Look at this ruined city! Look at the farms and plantations laid waste! Look at the complete paralysis of business; the rich reduced to poverty; the men and boys with one arm, one leg, or one hand; the tens of thousands of graves; the broken families;—it is all the result of vanity! vanity!"

He showed me the road to the Heights, and we parted on the corner.

Fredericksburg stands upon a ridge on the right bank of the river. Behind the town is a plain, with a still more elevated ridge beyond. Along by the foot of this, just where it slopes off to the plain, runs a road with a wall of heavy quarried stones on each side. In this road the Rebels lay concealed when the first attempt was made to storm the Heights. The wall on the lower side, towards the town, was a perfect breastwork, of great strength, and in the very best position that could have been chosen. The earth from the fields is more or less banked up against it; and this, together with the weeds and bushes which grew there, served to conceal it from our men. The sudden cruel volley of flame and lead which poured over it into their very faces, scarce a dozen paces distant, as they charged, was the first intimation they received of any enemy below the crest. No troops could stand that near and deadly fire. They broke, and, leaving the ground strewn with the fallen, retreated to the ravine,—a deep ditch with a little stream flowing through it, in the midst of the plain.

"Just when they turned to run, that was the worst time for them!" said a young Rebel I met on the Heights. "Then

our men had nothing to fear; but they just rose right up and let 'em have it! Every charge your troops made afterwards, it was the same. The infantry in the road, and the artillery on these Heights, just mowed them down in swaths! You never saw anything look as that plain did after the battle. Saturday morning, before the fight, it was brown; Sunday it was all blue; Monday it was white, and Tuesday it was red."

I asked him to explain this seeming riddle.

"Don't you see? Before the fight, there was just the field. Next it was covered all over with your fellows in blue clothes. Saturday night the blue clothes were stripped off, and only their white under-clothes left. Monday night these were stripped off, and Tuesday they lay all in their naked skins."

"Who stripped the dead in that way?"

"It was mostly done by the North Carolinians. They are the triflin'est set of men!"

"What do you mean by *triflin'est*?"

"They ha'n't got no sense. They'll stoop to anything. They're more like savages than civilized men. They say '*we uns*' and '*you uns*,' and all such outlandish phrases. They've got a great long tone to their voice, like something wild."

"Were you in the battle?"

"Yes, I was in all of Saturday's fight. My regiment was stationed on the hill down on the right there. We could see everything. Your men piled up their dead for breastworks. It was an awful sight when the shells struck them, and exploded! The air, for a minute, would be just full of legs and arms and pieces of trunks. Down by the road there we dug out a wagon-load of muskets. They had been piled up by your fellows, and dirt thrown over them, for a breastwork. But the worst sight I saw was three days afterwards. I didn't mind the heaps of dead, nor nothing. But just a starving dog sitting by a corpse, which he wouldn't let anybody come near, and which he never left night nor day;—by George, that just made me cry! We finally had to shoot the dog to get at the man to bury him."

The young Rebel thought our army might have been easily destroyed after Saturday's battle,—at least that portion of it which occupied Fredericksburg. "We had guns on that point that could have cut your pontoon bridge in two; and then our artillery could have blown Burnside all to pieces, or have compelled his surrender."

"Why didn't you do it?"

"Because General Lee was too humane. He didn't want to kill so many men."

A foolish reason, but it was the best the young man could offer. The truth is, however, Burnside's army was in a position of extreme danger, after its failure to carry the Heights, and had not Lee been diligently expecting another attack, instead of a retreat, he might have subjected it to infinite discomfiture. It was to do us more injury, and not less, that he delayed to destroy the pontoon bridge and shell the town while our troops were in it.

The young man gloried in that great victory.

"But," said I, "what did you gain? It was all the worse for you that you succeeded then. That victory only prolonged the war, and involved greater loss. We do not look at those transient triumphs; we look at the grand result. The Confederacy was finally swept out, and we are perfectly satisfied."

"Well, so am I," he replied, looking me frankly in the face. "I tell you, if we had succeeded in establishing a separate government, this would have been the worst country, for a poor man, under the sun."

"How so?"

"There would have been no chance for white labor. Every rich man would have owned his nigger mason, his nigger carpenter, his nigger blacksmith; and the white mechanic, as well as the white farm-laborer, would have been crushed out."

"You think, then, the South will be better off without slavery?"

"Certainly I do. So does every white man that has to work for a living, if he isn't a fool."

"Then why did you fight for it?"

"We wasn't fighting for slavery; we was fighting for our independence. That's the way the most of us understood it; though we soon found out it was the rich man's war, and not the poor man's. We was fighting against our own interests, that's shore?"

On the brow of the hill, overlooking the town, is the Marye estate, one of the finest about Fredericksburg before the blast of battle struck it. The house was large and elegant, occupying a beautiful site, and surrounded by terraces and shady lawns. Now, if you would witness the results of artillery and infantry firing, visit that house. The pillars of the porch, built of brick, and covered with a cement of lime and white sand, were speckled with the marks of bullets. Shells and solid shot had made sad havoc with the walls and the wood-work inside. The windows were shattered, the partitions torn to pieces, and the doors perforated.

I found a gigantic negro at work at a carpenter's bench in one of the lower rooms. He seemed glad to receive company, and took me from the basement to the zinc-covered roof, showing me all the more remarkable shot-holes.

"De Rebel sharpshooters was in de house; dat's what made de Yankees shell it so."

"Where were the people who lived here?"

"Dey all lef' but me. I stopped to see de fight. I tell ye, I wouldn't stop to see anoder one! I thought I was go'n' to

have fine fun, and tell all about it. I *heerd* de fight, but I didn't *see* it!"

"Were you frightened?"

"Hoo!" flinging up his hands with a ludicrous expression. "Don't talk about skeered! I never was so skeered since I was bo'n! I stood hyer by dis sher winder; I 'spected to see de whole of it; I know I was green! I was look'n' to see de fir'n' down below dar, when a bullet come by me, *h!* quick as dat. 'Time fo' me to be away f'om hyer!' and I started; but I'd no sooner turned about, when de bullets begun to strike de house jes' like dat!" drumming with his fingers. "I went down stars, and out dis sher house, quicker 'n any man o' my size ever went out a house befo'e! Come, and I'll show you whar I was hid."

It was in the cellar of a little dairy-house, of which nothing was left but the walls.

"I got in thar wid anoder cullud man! I thought I was as skeered as anybody could be; but whew! he was twicet as skeered as I was. B-r-r-r-r! b-r-r-r-r! de fir'n' kep' up a reg'lar noise like dat, all day long. Every time a shell struck anywhar near, I knowed de next would kill me. 'Jim,' says I, 'now de next shot will be our own!' Dem's de on'y wu'ds I spoke; but he was so skeered he never spoke at all."

"Were you here at the fight the year after?"

"Dat was when Shedwick [Sedgwick] come. I thought if thar was go'n' to be any fight'n', I'd leave dat time, shore. I hitched up my oxen, think'n' I'd put out, but waited fo' de mo'nin' to see. Dat was Sunday mo'nin'. I hadn't slep' none, so I jest thought I'd put my head on my hand a minute till it grewed light. I hadn't mo'e 'n drapped asleep; I'd nodded oncet or twicet, so,"—illustrating,— "no longer 'n dat; when—c-r-r-r-r,—I looked up,—all de wu'ld was fir'n'! Shedwick's men dey run up de road, got behind de batteries on dis sher hill, captured every one; and I never knowed how dey done it so quick. Dat was enough fo' me. If dar's go'n' to be any mo'e fight'n', I go whar da' a'n't no wa'!"

"A big fellow like you tell about being skeered!" said the young Rebel.

"I knowed de bigger a man was, de bigger de mark fo' de balls. I weighs two hundred and fifty-two pounds."

"Where is your master?" I asked.

"I ha'n't got no master now; Mr. Marye was my master. He's over de mountain. I was sold at auction in Fredericksburg oncet, and he bought me fo' twelve hundred dolla's. Now he pays me wages,—thirty dolla's a month. I wo'ked in de mill while de wa' lasted. Men brought me co'n to grind. Some brought a gallon; some brought two qua'ts; it was a big load if anybody brought half a bushel. Dat's de way folks lived. Now he's got anoder man in de mill, and he pays me fo' tak'n' keer o' dis sher place and fitt'n' it up a little."

"Are you a carpenter?"

"Somethin' o' a carpenter; I kin do whatever I turns my hand to."

The young Rebel afterwards corroborated this statement. Although he did not like niggers generally, and wished they were all out of the country, he said Charles (for that was the giant's name) was an exception; and he gave him high praise for the fidelity and sagacity he had shown in saving his master's property from destruction.

The field below the stone wall belonged to this young man's mother. It was now a cornfield; a sturdy crop was growing where the dead had lain in heaps.

"Soon as Richmond fell, I came home; and 'Lijah and I went to work and put in that piece of corn. I didn't wait for Lee's surrender. Thousands did the same. We knew that, if Richmond fell, the war would be removed from Virginia, and we had no notion of going to fight in other States. The Confederate army melted away just like frost in the sun, so that only a small part of it remained to be surrendered."

He invited me to go through the cornfield and see where the dead were buried. Near the middle of the piece a strip some fifteen yards long and four wide had been left uncultivated. "There's a thousand of your men buried in this hole; that's the reason we didn't plant here." Some distance below the cornfield was the cellar of an ice-house, in which five hundred Union soldiers were buried. And yet these were but a portion of the slain; all the surrounding fields were scarred with graves.

Returning to Fredericksburg, I visited the plain northwest of the town, also memorable for much hard fighting on that red day of December. I found a pack of government wagons there, an encampment of teamsters, and a few Yankee soldiers, who told me they were tired of doing nothing, and "three times as fast for going home" as they were before the war closed.

In the midst of this plain, shaded by a pleasant grove, stands a brown brick mansion, said to have been built by George Washington for his mother's family. Not far off is a monument erected to Mary, the mother of Washington, whose mortal remains rest here. It is of marble, measuring some nine feet square and fifteen in height, unfinished, capped with a mat of weeds, and bearing no inscription but the names of visitors who should have blushed to desecrate the tomb of the venerated dead. The monument has in other ways been sadly misused; in the first place, by balls which nicked and chipped it during the battle; and afterwards by relic-hunters, who, in their rage for carrying away some fragment of it, have left scarce a corner of cornice or pilaster unbroken.

I had afterwards many walks about Fredericksburg, the most noteworthy of which was a morning visit to the Lacy House, where Burnside had his head-quarters. Crossing the Rappahannock on the pontoon bridge, I climbed the stone

steps leading from terrace to terrace, and reached the long-neglected grounds and the old-fashioned Virginia mansion. It was entirely deserted. The doors were wide open, or broken from their hinges, the windows smashed, the floors covered with rubbish, and the walls with the names of soldiers and regiments, or pictures cut from the illustrated newspapers.

The windows command a view of Fredericksburg and the battle-field; and there I stood, and saw in imagination the fight re-enacted,—the pontoniers at their work in the misty morning, the sharpshooters in rifle-pits and houses opposite driving them from it with their murderous fire, the shelling of the town, the troops crossing, the terrible roaring battle, the spouting flames, the smoke, the charging parties, and the horrible slaughter;—I saw and heard it all again, and fancied for a time that I was the commanding general, whose eyes beheld, and whose wrung heart felt, what he would gladly have given his own life to prevent or retrieve.

J. T. Trowbridge.





THE CAT-BIRD.

WHO does not love birds? Who does not grieve when they leave us in autumn, with the bright days of summer, and who does not welcome them back as dear friends when they return to us again from their winter wanderings in the sunnier South? Who has not enjoyed the familiar song of the Bluebird or the first whistle of our Robin, when in early March they come once more to tell us that winter has gone and spring is coming? Who has not learned to love the gentle little Chipping Sparrow, as he picks up the crumbs at our feet? Or who has failed to admire the bright-colored Baltimore Oriole, as he weaves his curiously-hanging nest over our heads, so safe from snakes or prowling cats? Certainly not any of our young folks who read the pages of their namesake, if they have ever been privileged to live under the open sky of the country in the bright days of spring and early summer.

Among the many feathered visitors who come back to us in spring, to make their home among us during the few months of summer, there is one bird—not beautiful, for he is dressed from head to tail in dark and sombre slate-color—not always seemingly amiable, for when he thinks you are imposing upon him he will scold you in a very earnest manner—who deserves to be a great favorite with all. He cannot fail to be one when you appreciate all his good qualities. He is a beautiful singer, a wonderful mimic, a confiding and trusting companion when you treat him well, becomes very fond of your company if you deserve it, watches over your fruit-trees, and kills the insects that would injure or destroy them or their fruit. If now and then he does help himself to a nice strawberry, or claims as his share your earliest cherry, be sure he has well earned them. Besides, he is never selfish or greedy. Ten to one he only takes them for his dear little children. Let us then bid him take them, and let us ever extend a warm and hearty welcome to the Cat-bird. Let us give our confiding, social little friend a welcome all the more cordial because he has the great misfortune of a bad name. Because he is called a Cat-bird he is not so popular as he should be. He is disliked by ignorant people, who do not appreciate his good qualities. He is too often persecuted by thoughtless boys and ungrateful men, who, unmindful of the good he is ever doing in the world, hate him for no good reason, are deaf to his varied song, and heed not his affectionate disposition or his many social virtues.

The Cat-bird is found, in certain seasons, all over North America, from Florida to Canada, and from the Atlantic coast to the Territories of Utah and Washington. He makes his first appearance in spring about the time the pear-trees are in blossom, which, near Boston, varies from the 5th to the 15th of May. He leaves us in the early autumn, towards the latter part of September.

From his first coming almost to his departure, he makes the air about us vocal with his quaint and charming melodies. These are made all the more attractive to us by being so amusingly interspersed with notes mimicked from the songs of other birds. Whether natural or copied, the song of the Cat-bird is always very varied, attractive, and beautiful.

The Cat-bird is never long in ascertaining where he is a welcome visitor, and there he at once makes himself perfectly at home. You may see him at all times, for he is ever in motion. As soon as he satisfies himself that you are his friend, he will approach you with a familiarity that is quite irresistible. He seems to wish to attract your attention by his great variety of positions, attitudes, and musical efforts. No musical young lady was ever more ambitious of entertaining an audience, however small and select, than our slate-colored songster. He will come down, in the excitement of his musical ardor, to the lowest bough, within a few feet of your head, and devote himself to your entertainment so long as you honor him with your attention.

A few years since a pair of Cat-birds ventured to make their home in our garden, where they secreted their nest in a corner hidden by vines and low bushes. They were at first shy and retiring. Later in the season, when they had become better acquainted with the children, they built a second nest nearer to the house, in a more open place, on the bough of an apple-tree. Having no time to lose, it was constructed, in haste, of the bleached leaves and stalks of weeds that had been pulled and left to dry in the sun. It was, of course, soon discovered, and the busy movements of the birds watched by the children with great delight, as the last finishing touches were given to the lining by the mother bird. It was about ten feet from the ground, and the little folks could only reach it by means of a ladder. When only the children visited it, the parent birds looked on with no complaints, but apparent complacency, at the children's admiration of their new home. Though rough and coarse on the outside, it was neatly and prettily lined with fine black roots. If any one else ventured too near, the birds would be nervous and restless, and show their uneasiness by their harsh cry of *P-ā-y, p-ā-y!* But soon this passed away. The gentle and loving interest of the children, especially of little Charlie, with his frequent contributions of food, seemed to be appreciated. The birds became very tame and familiar, permitting without complaint their frequent visits to their nest, even when their young were ready to fly.

The next season our Cat-birds, to the great gratification of the younger portion of the family, built their nest in a running rose-bush, under one of the chamber-windows. It was completed and the eggs nearly hatched before the family had moved to their summer quarters. The father-bird seemed to welcome our coming with his best melodies, and the mother showed her confidence by her constant presence on the nest, undisturbed by the opening of the window, or by curious but kind and loving faces within a few inches of her treasures. She soon ceased even to leave her nest when Lucy or Charlie, or even their little cousins, ventured to take a look at her.

The next season their nest was repaired, and again occupied with a brood of four young birds when the family returned. It was interesting to watch the old birds feeding the greedy little fellows, who were just out of their shells. Our gentle, loving little Charlie—two months later so mysteriously recalled to the bosom of Him who had given him—delighted to lean over the window-sill and watch the parent birds. Their familiarity and confidence in the little fellow were quite as remarkable as his patient interest in their movements. One day the parents were missing. What had happened to them we never knew; but they were gone several hours, and we feared they had been killed. The children were in great distress; and at last, when the hot sun had been pouring down on their unprotected little naked bodies, and it was feared the birds would die, permission was sought to feed them. A few worms were cut up and eagerly devoured by the hungry little fledglings, when, to the joy of all, the mother bird appeared. Such a rejoicing as there was on all sides! The children in the house and the children in the nest were equally delighted. The latter for a while kept up an earnest, eager clattering with their mother,



telling her—so Lucy insisted—the whole story of their distress, loneliness, and hunger, and of the kind and loving little hands that had fed them with so much care and such affectionate interest.

Our little feathered family soon removed to the garden, where they carried with them their remembrance of their friends in the house. They were tame and familiar; and wherever the earth was dug over, they would come around us with the fearlessness of little chickens, keeping about our feet, perching on the hoe-handle when dropped from our hand, and slipping quietly off when it was retaken.

But clouds gathered over the bright scene. The bright little spirit, whose gentleness and loving purity and goodness had won for him all hearts, in one short week passed from the enjoyments of earth to a heavenly home; and his sister, spared to us but still suffering from the same epidemic, came back again, the following spring, to find that our Cat-birds had for a third time reconstructed their nest, only to be destroyed by a neighbor's cat; and though the garden is filled with their descendants, none of them have equalled their parents in their confiding and trustful disposition. We have missed their welcome in May, when we have revisited our country home; for no spaniel ever manifested more joy to greet its master than our Cat-bird did on the last spring he was with us. He would fly back and forth, overhead, alight on the ground, just a few steps in front, wherever we moved, accompanying our steps, and evincing his apparent desire to greet us by his outpouring of song and antic movements.

The power of mimicry of the Cat-bird, though limited, is often very striking and entertaining. He is very far from being the equal of the Mocking-bird. The more difficult notes he cannot successfully copy, and ludicrously fails when he tries. But the whistle of the common Quail, the clucking of a hen calling her brood, the cries of young chickens for their mother's aid, the notes of the Pewee and the refrain of the Towhee, he will repeat with perfect exactness, so as even to deceive the birds themselves. We were once crossing a swampy thicket, when the sound of "Bob-white!" so like the cry of a quail caused a useless search for that bird, which ended in our espying its author in a Cat-bird snugly hid away, and apparently hugely enjoying the cheat. At another time we have known the Cat-bird call off a brood of young chickens, greatly to the annoyance of the old hen.

To its own family the Cat-bird is devoted and constant in its care and attentions. To each other they are affectionate, kind, and sympathizing in their troubles; and the male bird, with a brood of its own, has been known to bring up another brood, not its own, that had been taken from their mother's nest and placed near that of its kind friend.

We hope we have said enough of the good qualities of our favorite bird to teach our young folks to treat these loving, confiding creatures with kindness, and to cultivate their good-will. They deserve your good-will, and they will repay with their charming songs, and their equally charming and affectionate confidence, your kind treatment of them.

T. M. B.



AFLOAT IN THE FOREST:

OR, A VOYAGE AMONG THE TREE-TOPS.

CHAPTER LXVI.

ROAST ANT-EATER.

INSTEAD of returning to the tree, the Indian and Richard swam directly to the dead-wood, where they were quickly joined by the rest of the party. Although the dead-wood was as hard as any other wood, and to sleep upon it would be like sleeping on a plank, still it would give them the feeling of security; so, as if by general consent, though nothing was said, they stretched themselves along the trunk, and were soon fast asleep.

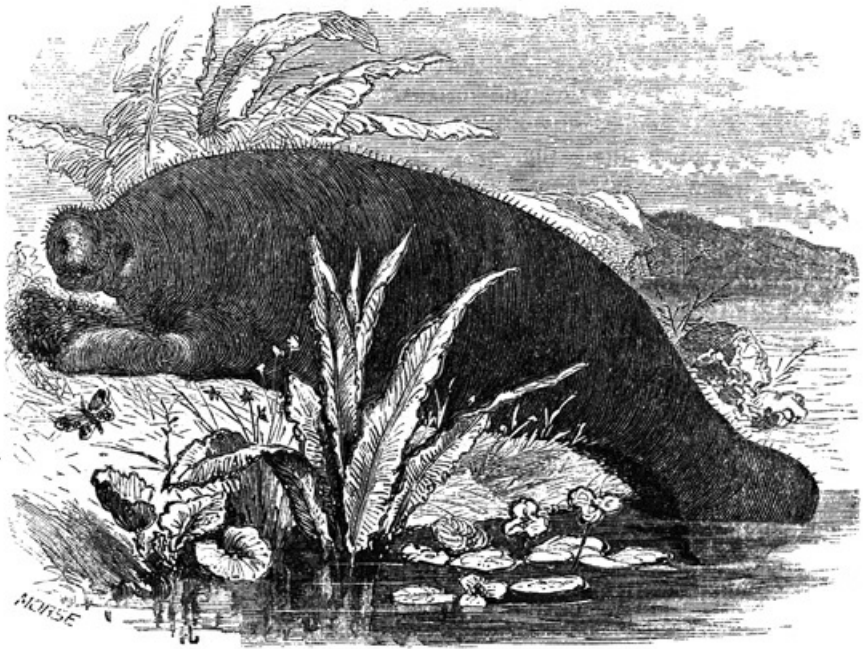
The old Indian, tough as the sipsos of his native forests, seemed as if he could live out the remainder of his life without another wink of sleep; and when the rest of his companions were buried in profound repose, he was engaged in an operation that required both energy and the most stoical patience. In a place where the bark was dry, he had picked out a small circular cavity, beside which he had placed some withered leaves and dead twigs collected from the tree that spread its branches above. Kneeling over this cavity, he thrust down into it a straight stick, that had been cut from some species of hard wood, and trimmed clear of knots or other inequalities, twirling it between the palms of his hands so as to produce a rapid motion, now one way, now the other. In about ten minutes a smoke appeared, and soon after sparks were seen among the loose dust that had collected from the friction. Presently the sparks, becoming thicker, united into a flame; and then, dropping the straight stick, he hastily covered the hole with the dry leaves and chips, and, blowing gently under them, was soon cheered by a blaze, over which a cook with even little skill might have prepared a tolerable dinner. This had been Munday's object; and as soon as he saw his fire fairly under way, without dressing or trussing the game,—not even taking the hide off,—he laid the tamandua across the fire, and left it to cook in its skin.

It was not the first time by scores that Munday had made that repast, known among Spanish Americans as "*carne con cuero*." He now proceeded to prevent the spreading of the flames. The dead-wood around was dry as tinder. Stripping off the cotton shirt that, through every vicissitude, still clung to his shoulders, he leant over the side of the floating log, and dipped it for several minutes under the water. When well soaked, he drew it up again, and taking it to the spot where the fire was crackling, he wrung the water out in a circle around the edge of his hearth. When the tamandua was done brown, he then awakened his companions, who were astonished to see the fire, with the bronzed body of the Indian, nude to the waist, squatting in front of it,—to hear the crackling of sticks, the loud sputtering of the roast, and the hissing of the water circle that surrounded the hearth. But the savor that filled the air was very agreeable. They accepted his invitation to partake of the repast, which was found greatly to resemble roast goose in taste; and in an inconceivably short time only the bones of the ant-eater, and these clean picked, could be seen upon the ceiba.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE JUAROUÁ.

POSTPONING till the next day the task of making a canoe out of their log, the party soon betook themselves to rest again; but they had been slumbering only about an hour when a low whimpering noise made by the monkey awoke Tipperary Tom, close to whose ear the animal had squatted down. Its master raised himself up, and, leaning upon his elbow, looked out over the Gapo. There was nothing but open water, whose smooth surface was shining like burnished gold under the beams of the setting sun. He turned toward the trees. He saw nothing there,—not so much as a bird moving among the branches. Raising his head a little higher, and peeping over the edge of the dead-wood, "It's there is it, the somethin' that's scyarin' ye?" he said to his pet. "An' shure enough there is a somethin' yandther. There's a 'purl' upon the wather, as if some crayther was below makin' a disturbance among the weeds. I wondther what it is!"



At length the creature whose motion he had observed, whatever it was, came near enough for him to obtain a full view of it; and though it was neither a snake nor a crocodile, still it was of sufficiently formidable and novel appearance to cause him a feeling of fear. In shape it resembled a seal; but in dimensions it was altogether different, being much larger than seals usually are. It was full ten feet from snout to tail, and of a proportionate thickness of body. It had the head of a bull or cow, with a broad muzzle, and thick, overhanging lip, but with very small eyes; and instead of ears, there were two round cavities upon the crown of its head. It had a large, flat tail, not standing up like the tail of a fish, but spread in a horizontal direction, like that of a bird. Its skin was smooth, and naked of hairs, with the exception of some straggling ones set thinly over it, and some tufts resembling bristles radiating around its mouth and nostrils. The skin itself was of a dull leaden hue, with some cream-colored spots under the throat and along the belly. It had also a pair of flippers, more than a foot in length, standing out from the shoulders, with a teat in front of each, and looking like little paddles, with which the huge creature was propelling itself through the water, just as a fish uses its fins or a man his arms.

The Irishman did not stay to note half of these characteristics, but hastily woke Munday, crying, "What is it? O what is it?"

The Indian, rousing himself, looked round for a moment dreamily, and then, as he caught sight of the strange object, replied, "Good fortune! it is the *juarouá*."

CHAPTER LXVIII.

A FISH-COW AT PASTURE.

THE Irishman was no wiser for Munday's answer, "The *juarouá*." "But what is it?" he again asked, curious to learn something of the creature. "Is it a fish or a quadruphed?"

"A *peixe-boi*,—a *peixe-boi*!" hurriedly answered the tapuyo. "That's how the whites call it. Now you know."

"But I don't, though, not a bit better than before. A pikes-boy! Troth, it don't look much like a pike at all, at all. If it's a fish av any kind, I should say it was a sale. O, luk there, Munday! Arrah, see now! If it's the owld pike's boy, yandther's the young wan too. See, it has tuk howlt av the tit, an' 's sucking away like a calf! An' luk! the old wan has got howlt av it with her flipper, an' 's kapin' it up to the breast! Save us! did hever I see such a thing!"

The sight was indeed one to astonish the Irishman, since it has from all time astonished the Amazonian Indians themselves, in spite of its frequency. They cannot understand so unusual a habit as that of a fish suckling its young; for they naturally think that the *peixe-boi* is a fish, instead of a cetacean, and they therefore continue to regard it with

curious feelings, as a creature not to be classified in the ordinary way.

"Hush!" whispered the Indian, with a sign to Tom to keep quiet. "Sit still! make no noise. There's a chance of our capturing the *juarouá*,—a good chance, now that I see the *juarouá-i* [little one] along with it. Don't wake the others yet. The *juarouá* can see like a vulture, and hear like an eagle, though it has such little eyes and ears. Hush!"

The peixe-boi had by this time got abreast of the dead-wood, and was swimming slowly past it. A little beyond there was a sort of bay, opening in among the trees, towards which it appeared to be directing its course, suckling the calf as it swam.

"Good," said Munday, softly. "I guess what it's going after up there. Don't you see something lying along the water?"

"Yes; but it's some sort av wather-grass."

"That's just it."

"An' what would it want wid the grass? Yez don't mane to till me it ates grass?"

"Eats nothing else, and this is just the sort it feeds on. Verry like that's its pasturing place. So much the better if it is, because it will stay there till morning, and give me a chance to kill it."

"But why can't yez kill it now?" said Tom.

"For want of a proper weapon. My knife is of no use. The *juarouá* is too cunning to let one come so near. If it come back in the morning, I will take care to be ready for it. From it we can get meat enough for a long voyage. See, it has begun to browse!"

Sure enough it had, just as the Indian said, commenced pasturing upon the long blades of grass that spread horizontally over the surface; and just as a cow gathers the meadow sward into her huge mouth, at intervals protruding her tongue to secure it, so did the great water-cow of the Amazon spread her broad lips and extend her rough tongue to take in the floating herbage of the Capó.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE PASHUBA SPEAR.

MUNDAY was now prepared to set out on a little exploring excursion, as he said; so, enjoining upon Tom, who was determined to awake the sleepers that they might share the sight of the feeding fish-cow, to keep them all strictly quiet until his return, he slipped softly into the water and swam noiselessly away.

The enforced silence was tedious enough to the party, who were all eager to talk about the strange spectacle they saw, and it would surely have been soon broken, had not the Indian returned with a new object for their curiosity. He had stolen off, taking with him only his knife. At his reappearance he had the knife still with him, and another weapon as well, which the knife had enabled him to procure. It was a staff of about twelve feet in length, straight as a rush, slightly tapering, and pointed at the end like a spear. In fact, it *was* a spear, which he had been manufacturing during his hour of absence out of a split stem of the *pashuba* palm. Not far off he had found one of these trees, a water-loving species,—the *Martea exorhuza*,—whose stems are supported upon slanting roots, that stand many feet above the surface of the soil. With the skill known only to an Amazonian Indian in the use of a knife-blade, he had split the *pashuba*, (hard as iron on the outside, but soft at the heart,) and out of one of the split pieces had he hastily fashioned his spear. Its point only needed to be submitted to fire, and then steel itself would not serve better for a spear-head. Fortunately the hearth was not yet cold. A few red cinders smouldered by the wet circle, and, thrusting his spear-point among them, the Indian waited for it to become hardened. When done to his satisfaction, he drew it out of the ashes, scraped it to a keen point with the blade of his knife, and then announced himself ready to attack the *juarouá*.

The amphibious animal was yet there, its head visible above the bed of grass upon which it was still grazing. Munday, while rejoiced at the circumstance, expressed himself also surprised at it. He had not been sanguine of finding it on his return with the spear, and, while fabricating the weapon, he had only been encouraged by the expectation that the peixe-boi, if gone away for the night, would return to its grazing ground in the morning. As it was now, it could not have afforded him a better opportunity for *striking* it. It was reclining near the surface, its head several inches above it, and directly under a large tree, whose lower limbs, extending horizontally, almost dropped into the water. If he could but get unperceived upon one of those limbs, it would be an easy matter to drive the spear into its body as far as his strength would enable him.

If any man could swim noiselessly through the water, climb silently into the tree, and steal without making sound along its limbs, that man was the Mundurucú. In less time than you could count a thousand, he had successfully accomplished this, and was crouching upon a limb right over the cow. In an instant his spear was seen to descend, as the spectators were expecting it to do; but to their astonishment, instead of striking the body of the peixe-boi, it pierced into the water several feet from the snout of the animal! What could it mean? Surely the skilled harpooner of fish-cattle could not have made such a stray stroke. Certainly he had not touched the cow! Had he speared anything?

"He's killed the calf!" cried Tipperary Tom. "Luk yanther! Don't yez see its carcass floatin' in the wather?"

Still the spectators could not understand it. Why should the calf have been killed, which would scarce give them a supper, and the cow spared, that would have provisioned the whole crew for a month? Why had the chance been thrown away? Was it thrown away? They only thought so, while expecting the peixe-boi to escape. But they were quickly undeceived. They had not reckoned upon the strong maternal instincts of that amphibious mother,—instincts that annihilate all sense of danger, and prompt a reckless rushing upon death in the companionship or for the protection of the beloved offspring. It was too late to protect the tiny creature, but the mother recked not of this. Danger deterred her not from approaching it again and again, each time receiving a fresh stab from that terrible stick, until, with a long-drawn sigh, she expired among the sedge.

These animals are extremely tenacious of life, and a single thrust from such a weapon as he wielded would only have put the peixe-boi to flight, never to be encountered again. The harpoon alone, with its barbed head and floats, can secure them for a second strike; and not being provided with this weapon, nor the means of making it, the old tapuyo knew that his only chance was to act as he had done. Experience had made him a believer in the affection of the animal, and the result proved that he had not mistaken its strength.

CHAPTER LXX.

CURING THE FISH-COW.

NOTHING was done for that night. All slept contentedly on the dead-wood, which next day became the scene of a series of curious operations. This did not differ very much from the spectacle that might be witnessed in the midst of the wide ocean, when whalemén have struck one of the great leviathans of the deep, and brought their ship alongside for the purpose of cutting it up.

In like manner as the whale is “flensed,” so was the fish-cow, Munday performing the operation with his knife, by first skinning the creature, and then separating the flesh into broad strips or steaks, which were afterwards made into *charqui*, by being hung up in the sun.

Previous to this, however, many “griskins”—as Tom called them—had been cut from the carcass, and, broiled over the fire kindled upon the log, had furnished both supper and breakfast to the party. No squeamishness was shown by any one. Hunger forbade it; and, indeed, whether with sharp appetites or not, there was no reason why they should not relish one of the most coveted articles of animal food to be obtained in Amazonia. The taste was that of pork; though there were parts of the flesh of a somewhat coarser grain, and inferior in flavor to the real dairy-fed pig.

The day was occupied in making it ready for curing, which would take several days’ exposure under the hot sun. Before night, however, they had it separated into thin slices, and suspended upon a sort of clothes-line, which, by means of poles and sipos, Munday had rigged upon the log. The lean parts alone were to be preserved, for the fat which lies between these, in thick layers of a greenish color and fishy flavor, is considered rather strong for the stomach—even of an Indian not over nice about such matters. When a peixe-boi has been harpooned in the usual manner, this is not thrown away, or wasted. Put into a proper boiling-pot, it yields a very good kind of oil,—ten or twelve gallons being obtained from an individual of the largest and fattest kind.

In the present instance, the fat was disregarded and flung back into the flood, while the bones, as they were laid bare, were served in a similar fashion. The skin, however, varying from an inch in thickness over the back, to half an inch under the abdomen, and which Munday had removed with considerable care, was stowed away in a hollow place upon the log. Why it was kept, none of the others could guess. Perhaps the Indian meant it as something to fall back upon in the event of the *charqui* giving out.

It was again night by the time the cow-skin was deposited in its place, and of course no journey could be attempted for that day. On the morrow they intended to commence the voyage which it was hoped would bring them to the other side of the lagoa, if not within sight of land. As they ate their second supper of *amphibious steaks*, they felt in better spirits than for many days. They were not troubled with hunger or thirst; they were not tortured by sitting astride the branches of a tree; and the knowledge that they had now a craft capable of carrying them—however slow might be the rate—inspired them with pleasant expectations. Their conversation was more cheerful than usual, and during the after-supper hour it turned chiefly on the attributes and habits of the strange animal which Munday had so cleverly dissected.

Most of the information about its habits was supplied by the Indian himself, who had learned them by personal experience; though many points in its natural history were given by the Patron, who drew his knowledge of it from books. Trevannion told them that a similar creature—though believed to be of a different species—was found in the sea; but generally near to some coast where there was fresh water flowing in by the estuary of a river. One kind in the Indian seas was known by the name of *dugong*, and another in the West Indies as the *manati* or *manatee*,—called by the French *lamantin*. The Spaniards also know it by the name of *vaca marina* (sea-cow), the identical name given by the Dutch of the Cape Colony to the hippopotamus,—of course a very different animal.

The manati is supposed to have been so named from its fins, or flippers, bearing some resemblance to the hands of

a human being,—in Spanish, *manos*,—entitling it to the appellation of the “handed” animal. But the learned Humboldt has shown that this derivation would be contrary to the idiom of the Spanish language, which would have made the word *manudo* or *manon*, and not *manati*. It is therefore more likely that this name is the one by which it was known to the aborigines of the southern coast of Cuba, where the creature was first seen by the discoverers of America. Certain it is that the sea species of the West Indies and the Guianian coast is much larger than that found in the Amazon and other South American rivers; the former being sometimes found full twenty feet in length, while the length of the fish-cow of South America rarely reaches ten.

Here Munday took up the thread of the discourse, and informed the circle of listeners that there were several species of *juarouá*—this was the name he gave it—in the waters of the Amazon. He knew of three kinds, that were distinct, not only in size, but in shape,—the difference being chiefly observable in the fashion of the fins and tail. There was also some difference in their color,—one species being much lighter in hue than the others, with a pale cream-colored belly; while the abdomen of the common kind is of a slaty lead, with some pinkish white spots scattered thinly over it.

A peculiar characteristic of the *peixe-boi* is discovered in its lungs,—no doubt having something to do with its amphibious existence. These, when taken out of the animal and inflated by blowing into them, swell up to the lightness and dimensions of an India-rubber swimming-belt; so that, as young Richard observed while so inflating them, they could spare at least one set of the *sapucaya*-shells, if once more compelled to take to the water.

Munday gave a very good account of the mode practised in capturing the *juarouá*, not only by the Indians of his own tribe, but by all others in the Amazon valley. The hunter of the *peixe-boi*—or fisher, as we should rather call him—provides himself with a *montaria* (a light canoe) and a harpoon. He rows to the spot where the creature may be expected to appear,—usually some solitary lagoon or quiet spot out of the current, where there is a species of grass forming its favorite food. At certain hours the animal comes thither to pasture. Sometimes only a single individual frequents the place, but oftener a pair, with their calves,—never more than two of the latter. At times there may be seen a small herd of old ones.

Their enemy, seated in his canoe, awaits their approach in silence; and then, after they have become forgetful of all save their enjoyment of the succulent grass, he paddles up to them. He makes his advances with the greatest caution; for the fish-cow, unlike its namesake of the farm-yard, is a shy and suspicious animal. The plunge of the paddle, or a rude ripple of the water against the sides of the *montaria*, would frighten it from its food, and send it off into the open water, where it could not be approached.

The occupant of the canoe is aware of this, and takes care not to make the slightest disturbance, till he has got within striking distance. He then rises gently into a half-crouching attitude, takes the measure of the distance between him and his victim, and throws his harpoon with unerring aim. A line attached to the shaft of the weapon secures the wounded animal from getting clear away. It may dive to the bottom, or rush madly along the surface, but can only go so far as that terrible tether will allow it, to be dragged back towards the *montaria*, where its struggles are usually terminated by two or three thrusts of a spear.

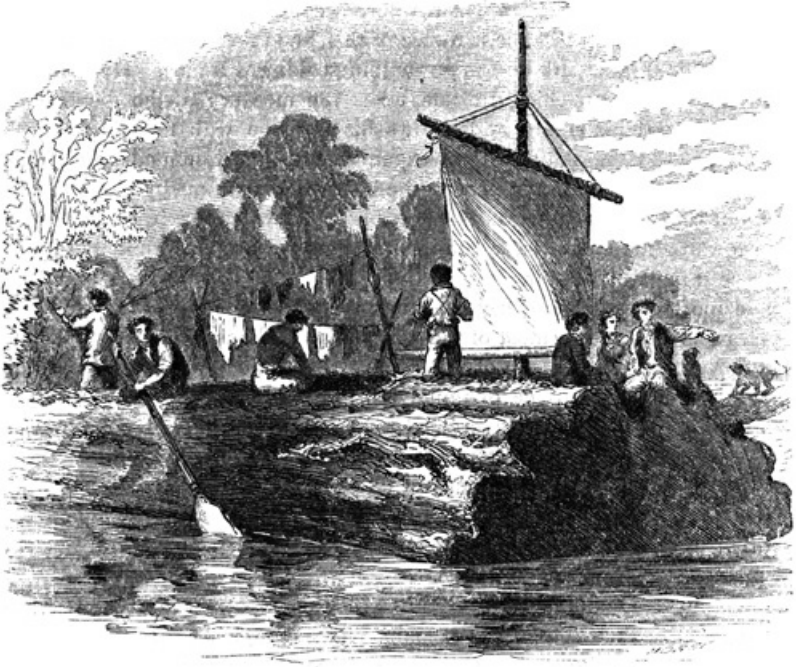
The sport, or, more properly speaking, the trade, of harpooning this river cetacean, is followed by most of the Amazonian Indians. There is not much of it done during the season of the floods. Then the animals, becoming dispersed over a large surface of inundated forest, are seen only on rare occasions; and a chase specially directed to discover them would not repay the trouble and loss of time. It is when the floods have fallen to their lowest, and the lagoas or permanent ponds of water have contracted to their ordinary limits, that the harpooning of the fish-cow becomes profitable. Then it is followed as a regular pursuit, and occupies the Indian for several weeks in the year.

Sometimes a lagoon is discovered in which many of these creatures have congregated,—their retreat to the main river having been cut off by the falling of the floods. On such occasions the tribe making the discovery reaps a plentiful harvest, and butchering becomes the order of the day.

The *malocca*, or village, is for the time deserted; all hands—men, women, children, and curs—moving off to the lagoon, and making their encampment upon its edge. They bring with them boiling-pots, for trying out the oil, and jars to contain it, and carry it to the port of commerce; for, being of a superior quality, it tempts the Portuguese trader to make long voyages up many remote tributaries where it is obtained.

During these grand fisheries there is much feasting and rejoicing. The “jerked” flesh of the animal, its skin, and, above all, its valuable oil, are exchanged for knives, pigments, trinkets, and, worse still, for *cashaca* (rum). The last is too freely indulged in; and the fishing rarely comes to a close without weapons being used in a manner to bring wounds, and often death.

As the old *Mundurucú* had been present at many a hunt of the fish-cow he was able to give a graphic account of the scenes he had witnessed, to which his companions on the log listened with the greatest attention. So interested were they, that it was not till near midnight that they thought of retiring to rest.



By daybreak they were astir upon their new craft; and after breakfast they set about moving it away from its moorings. This was not so easily accomplished. The log was a log in every respect; and though once a splendid silk-cotton tree, covered with gossamer pods, and standing in airy majesty over the surrounding forest, it now lay as heavy as lead among the weeds and water-lilies, as if unwilling to be stirred from the spot into which it had drifted.

You may wonder how they were able to move it at all; supposing, as you must, that they were unprovided with either oars or sails. But they were not so badly off as that. The whole of the preceding day had not been spent in curing the fish-cow. Munday's knife had done other service during the afternoon hours, and a pair of paddles had been the result. Though of a rude kind, they were perfect enough for the purpose required of them; while at the same time they gave evidence of great ingenuity on the part of the contriver. They had handles of wood, with blades of *bone*, made from the fish-cow's shoulder-blades, which Munday had carefully retained with the skin, while allowing the offal to sink. In his own tribe, and elsewhere on the Amazon, he had seen these bones employed—and had himself employed them—as a substitute for the spade. Many a cacao patch and field of mandioca had Munday cleared with the shoulder-blade of a fish-cow; and upon odd occasions he had used one for a paddle. It needed only to shaft them; and this had been done by splicing a pole to each with the tough sipos.

Provided with these paddles, then,—one of them wielded by himself, the other by the sturdy Mozambique,—the log was compelled to make way through the water. The progress was necessarily slow, on account of the tangle of long stalks and broad leaves of the lilies. But it promised to improve, when they should get beyond these into the open part of the lagoon. Out there, moreover, they could see that there was a ripple upon the water; which proved that a breeze had sprung up, not perceptible inside the sheltering selvage of the trees, blowing in the right direction,—that is, from the trees, and towards the lagoon.

You may suppose that the wind could not be of much use to them with such a craft,—not only without a rudder, but unprovided with sails. So thought they all except the old tapuyo. But the Indian had not been navigating the Gapo for more than forty years of his life, without learning how to construct a sail; and, if nothing else had turned up, he could have made a tolerable substitute for one out of many kinds of broad, tough leaves,—especially those of the *miriti* palm.

He had not revealed his plans to any one of the party. Men of his race rarely declare their intentions until the moment of carrying them into execution. There is a feeling of proud superiority that hinders such condescension. Besides, he had not yet recovered from the sting of humiliation that succeeded the failure of his swimming enterprise;

and he was determined not to commit himself again, either by too soon declaring his designs, or too confidently predicting their successful execution.

It was not, therefore, till a stout pole had been set up in a hollow dug out by his knife in the larger end of the log, two cross pieces firmly lashed to it by sipos, and the skin of the fish-cow spread out against these like a huge thick blanket of caoutchouc, and attached to them by the same cordage of creepers,—it was not till then that his companions became fully acquainted with his object in having cut poles, scooped the hollow, and retained the skin of the cow, as he had done to their previous bewilderment.

It was all clear now; and they could not restrain themselves from giving a simultaneous cheer, as they saw the dull dead-wood, under the impulsion of the skin sail, commence a more rapid movement, until it seemed to “walk the water like a thing of life.”

CHAPTER LXXII.

BE CALMED.

ONCE out on the open lagoon, and fairly under sail, in what direction should they steer their new craft? They wanted to reach the other side of the lagoon, which the Indian believed to extend in the right direction for finding *terra firma*. They had skirted the edge upon which they were for several miles, without finding either the sign of land or an opening by which they might penetrate through the forest, and it was but natural that they should wish to make trial on the other side, in the hope of meeting with better fortune.

Mozey, who prided himself on being the best sailor aboard, was intrusted with the management of the sail, while Trevannion himself acted as pilot. The Indian busied himself in looking after the curing of the charqui, which, by the help of such a hot sun as was shining down upon them, would soon be safely beyond the chance of decay. The young people, seated together near the thick end of the log—which Mozey had facetiously christened the quarter-deck of the craft—occupied themselves as they best might.

The cloud that had shadowed them for days was quite dispelled. With such a raft, there was every expectation of getting out of the Gapo. It might not be in a day, or even in a week. But time was of little consequence, so long as there was a prospect of ultimate release from the labyrinth of flooded forests. The charqui, if economized, would feed all hands for a fortnight, at least; and unless they should again get stranded among the tree-tops, they could scarcely be all that time before reaching dry land.

Their progress was sadly slow. Their craft has been described as “walking the water like a thing of life.” But this is rather a poetical exaggeration. Its motion was that of a true dead-wood, heavily weighted with the water that for weeks had been saturating its sides. It barely yielded to the sail; and had they been forced to depend upon the paddles, it would have been a hopeless affair. A mile an hour was the most they were able to make; and this only when the breeze was at its freshest. At other times, when it unfortunately lulled, the log lay upon the water with no more motion than they caused as they stepped over it.

Towards noon their progress became slower; and when at length the meridian hour arrived the ceiba stood still. The sail had lost the power of propelling it on. The breeze had died away, and there was now a dead calm. The shoulder-blades of the peixe-boi were now resorted to, but neither these, nor the best pair of oars that ever pulled a man-o'-war's boat, could have propelled that tree-trunk through the water faster than half a knot to the hour, and the improvised paddles were soon laid aside.

There was one comfort in the delay. The hour of dinner had now arrived, and the crew were not unprepared for the midday meal; for in their hurry at setting out, and the solicitude arising from their uncertainty about their craft, they had breakfasted scantily. Their dinner was to consist of but one dish, a cross between fish and flesh,—a cross between fresh and dried,—for the peixe-boi was still but half converted into charqui.

The Indian had carefully guarded the fire, the kindling of which had cost him so much trouble and ingenuity. A few sparks still smouldered where they had been nursed; and, with some decayed pieces of the ceiba itself, a big blaze was once more established. Over this the choicest tit-bits were suspended until their browned surface proclaimed them “done to a turn.” Their keen appetites furnished both sauce and seasoning; and when the meal was over, all were ready to declare that they had never dined more sumptuously in their lives. Hunger is the best appetizer; scarcity comes next.

They sat after dinner conversing upon different themes, and doing the best they could to while away the time,—the only thing that at all discommoded them being the beams of the sun, which fell upon their crowns like sparks of fire showered from a burning sky. Tom's idea was that the heat of the sun could be endured with greater ease in the water than upon the log; and, to satisfy himself, he once more girdled on the cincture of shells, and slipped over the side. His example was followed by the Patron himself, his son and nephew.

Little Rosa did not need to retreat overboard in this ignominious manner. She was in the shade, under a tiny *toldo* of broad leaves of a *Pothos* plant, which, growing parasitically upon one of the trees, had been plucked the day before, and spread between two buttresses of the dead-wood. Her cousin had constructed this miniature arbor, and proud did

he appear to see his little sylph reclining under its shade.

The tapuyo, accustomed to an Amazonian sun, did not require to keep cool by submerging himself; and as for the negro, he would scarce have been discommoded by an atmosphere indicated by the highest figure on the thermometer. These two men, though born on opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean, were alike types of a tropical existence, and equally disregarded the fervor of a tropic sun.

Suddenly the four, who had fallen a little astern, were seen making towards the log; and by the terror depicted on their countenances, as well as their quick, irregular strokes, it was evident something in the water had caused them serious alarm. What could it all mean? It was of no use to ask the swimmers themselves. They were as ignorant of what was alarming them as their companions upon the log; they only knew that something was biting them about the legs and feet; but what it was they had not the slightest idea. It might be an insect,—it might be a water-snake, or other amphibious reptile; but whatever it was, they could tell that its teeth were sharp as needles, and scored their flesh like fish-hooks.

It was not till they had gained footing upon the log, and their legs were seen covered with lacerations, and streaming with fresh blood, that they ascertained the sort of enemy that had been attacking them. Had the water been clear, they might have discovered it long before; but discolored as it was, they could not see beneath the surface far enough to make out the character of their secret assailants. But the tapuyo well understood the signs, and, as soon as his eye rested upon them, his perplexity disappeared; and, with an exclamation that rather betokened relief, he pronounced the simple phrase, “Only *piranhas*!”

Mayne Reid.





ROUND THE EVENING LAMP.

A TREASURY OF CHARADES, PUZZLES, PROBLEMS AND FUNNY THINGS.

CHARADES.

No. 4.

My *second* helped them to prepare
The fury of my *first*;
They railed, they raved, they beat the air,
They boasted, and they cursed:
And when my *first*, with brow of ire
And heart of slaughter, came,
Led on by famine and by fire,
My *second* fanned the flame.

My *first* has ended his career,
And lies supine and bound;
We welcome in the better year,
With peace and plenty crowned:
But ere we cease with steel to hedge
The authors of my *first*,
We want my *whole*, the lasting pledge
That they have done their worst.

EPES S.

No. 5.

My *first* is the name of a hero great,—
A patriot true and bold,
Who united his own with his country's fate,
And flourished in days of old.

My *second* in everything is seen,
In ocean, in earth, and in heaven.
In deed you will find it twice I ween,
For twice I am sure 'tis given.

My *third* is intention, or drift, or space.
If you doubt this exposition,
Refer to Worcester, and find the place;
I have quoted his definition.

My *whole*, whatever its size may be,
May change it to smaller or greater;
It can paint anything on land or sea,
From Iceland to the Equator.

Another thing is worthy of note,
To assist in guessing the riddle:
I am nearly all neck, with a metal throat,—
And my whole thrice contains my middle.

E. H., JR.

No. 6.

O, while my *first* is rushing by,
My *second* must beware;
For she's the treasure of my eye,
The darling of my care;
And there's no mortal joy I know
Like that her wiles impart:
Tell me, what name shall I bestow
On one so near my heart?

O, let her tread with me my *whole*,
And enter not my *first*;
Her eyes shall be the brimming bowl
To quench my spirit's thirst.
I crave not wealth, nor fame, nor power,
While she is by my side:
All joy seems centred in that hour,—
My *whole* than earth more wide!

EPES S.

ENIGMAS.

No. 4.

FOR STUDENTS OF ANCIENT HISTORY.

I am composed of 68 letters.

My 41, 64, 58, 10, 15, 31, 50, was Bacchus's instructor.

My 57, 22, 64, 22, was an Egyptian deity.

My 6, 42, 5, 30, 15, 44, presided over gardens.

My 5, 10, 58, 6, 42, 5, 11, 15, 18, was one of the Muses.

My 45, 66, 5, 67, 58, 48, 50, and 21, 4, 5, 66, 41, founded a celebrated city.

My 9, 20, 58, 51, 12, caused the Trojan War.

My 17, 31, 5, 28, 68, 30, 21, was grandfather of Romulus.

My 1, 6, 28, 51, 58, 35, presided over the fine arts.

My 6, 43, 28, 4, 12, 57, 54, 61, 1, 39, 50, were the Yankees of antiquity.

My 54, 1, 46, 5, 67, 22, carried letters into Greece.

My 9, 18, 45, 28, 13, 28, 49, 67, 22, is styled the father of history.

My 37, 18, 57, 58, 1, 22, was the ancient name of Greece.

My 38, 39, 1, 54, 55, 31, 41, was the last of the Titans.

My 14, 21, 40, 35, 22, was the name of the first vessel.

My 50, 30, 58, 28, 25, was one of the seven wise men.

My 45, 48, 47, 57, 40, 28, preserved corn from blight.

My 66, 53, 20, 24, 26, 50, presided over fountains.

My 54, 58, 18, 42, 6, 52, 27, 45, 44, was a celebrated queen of Egypt.

My 36, 53, 38, 3, 28, 17, 50, were sea-gods.

My 41, 23, 9, 4, 15, 66, was one of the Gorgons.

My 43, 44, 21, 6, 61, 51, 41, were winged monsters.

My 6, 18, 62, 44, 65, 51, 50, were household gods.

My 24, 59, 54, 57, 32, 64, 14, 16, 11, 50, was a distinguished Grecian orator and general.

My 16, 61, 63, 35, founded Carthage.

My 14, 23, 10, was the goddess of revenge.

My 5, 24, 53, 50, was the god of war.

My 47, 53, 48, 2, 67, 50, was a noble Roman.

My 6, 48, 34, 64, 54, 1, 60, 61, 63, 10, 50, was used by the Romans to express treachery.

My 18, 54, 9, 57, 16, 39, 1, was the mother of Sphinx.

My whole is an extract of old English poetry well worth remembering in the nineteenth century.

MARY B. EVERETT.

No. 5.

I am composed of 22 letters.

My 1, 6, 4, is one of the months.

My 5, 20, 10, 13, is the dearest spot on earth.

My 7, 20, 19, is the present.

My 16, 15, 20, 14, is not a boy.

My 20, 6, 12, 13, is a garden tool.

My 8, 2, 3, is a boy's nickname.

My 8, 13, 19, may be seen before the sun rises.

My 9, 1, 15, 14, 13, is often very sweet.

My 21, 20, 11, 8, is a way.

My 7, 11, 18, is an article of apparel.

My 22, 13, 21, 4, 13, 14, is part of a nut.

My whole is a well-known proverb.

DORA.

No. 6.

I am composed of 26 letters.

My 24, 2, 15, 7, 8, 13, is a fruit.

My 12, 11, 25, 18, is a part of our body.

My 22, 19, 14, 15, 21, is a musical instrument.

My 26, 1, 4, 23, 11, 7, is a kind of fish.

My 18, 4, 5, is a yard and a quarter.

My 2, 11, 20, 13, is a common flower.

My 23, 3, 10, 17, is an insect.

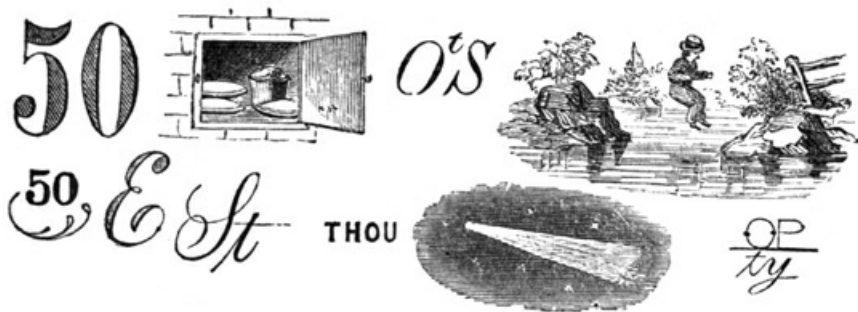
My 16, 6, 23, is a boy's nickname.

My 9, 16, 15, 8, 18, is a vehicle.

My whole is an old proverb.

META.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 8.



W. G. H.

PUZZLES.

No. 4.

I am a word of five letters only; but if you take a lesson from bell-ringers and play the changes upon me, my combinations are infinite. My original word as it stands, spelt with three consonants and two vowels, signifies a weapon formerly in great repute, and still of much use with savage nations. Transpose me, and I give you some fruit of a wholesome and delicious nature, chiefly imported from Guernsey and Jersey. Cut off one letter, and I give you a seed; transpose me, and I cut your corn; again, and I peel your fruit. Alter the letter, and I present a large form of the monkey tribe to you, which, if you transpose again, you will convert into a very largely used leguminous food. Alter the letter again, and you will have the organs of a sense; transpose, and you level me to the ground again, and you mark me with scars. Alter my letters again, and I grate for you, when, if you behead me, I become a poisonous reptile. Alter the letters again, and I go upon "Change"; transpose me, and I speak to a "medium." Alter me three times more, and I become successively the material for a dress, the blood for a plant, and what you must be. Finally, use my whole five letters once more, and, if you are accustomed to the very useful grammatical exercise they show you, I think you ought to be able to make out all my meanings.

No. 5.

My first is a plant, my second's a plant, my whole is a plant.

PAUL.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 9.



C. H. W.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 10.



TRANSPPOSITIONS.

1. Did you ever know *men eat beaver*?

G. BURR.

We were sitting in the parlor last evening, when I proposed a *gameni* for *Korys ofgunlou*. My brother said a *hard ec* would be better. "No," said my sister, "try *rats yo*, or a *brues*." "I think," said our mother, "you had best send *that anonigll*."

- 2.

S. B.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 11.



WILLY WISP.

ANSWERS.

CHARADES.

2. Pen-knife.
3. Hope-less.

ENIGMA.

3. Is Saul also among the Prophets? (1 Sam. x. 12.)

PUZZLES.

2. A clock.
3. Mouth.

ILLUSTRATED REBUSES.

5. My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. [(Mice on *if's*) (inn) er (scent) (ice) thee (C on cent) thou (knot).]
6. Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes. [(Tea) a (key) us T(he) (foxes) t(he) (*little* foxes) t (hats) p (oil) t(he) (vines) 4 (hour) (vines) (hay) ve (tender) (grapes).]
7. Carrying coal to Newcastle. [(Car) Y(eye) ng (coal) (tea) (one) W (castle).]



OUR LETTER BOX.

Josiah T. "The Prince of Whales" will not do.

W. Arthur D. Rebus sketches are well enough in pencil. But your subjects do not quite come up to the standard. And—let us whisper it in your ear—you must look sharply to your spelling, which is faulty, both in your letter and your puzzles.

J. L. S. sends an enigma which is not quite worth printing, but the subject presents a curious inversion, and we preserve it. It is the name of a baker's shop in Siskiyou County, Cal.,—*Yreka Bakery*.

C. W. P. The name is not *Thorwaldsen* but *Thorwaldsen*.

R. S. C.—a correspondent in whom we have entire confidence—has sent (to quote from his letter) "a worded thought, which I cannot help thinking is something of a literary curiosity. It was written a few days since by my little daughter, only ten years old, and it is, I feel quite sure, wholly the emanation of her mind. In transcribing it I have adhered strictly to her own manuscript." As we agree with Mr. C. in thinking that this is something remarkable for so young a child, we reproduce it entire.

A SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS.

An artist sat in his studio late one summer night. The full moon shone brightly through the open window, flooding with a silver light the unfinished pictures which were grouped about, and lingering with a loving brightness on the face of the artist, who was reclining listlessly upon a couch in the centre of his studio. His dreamy dark eyes were fixed with a sorrowful gaze upon the bright stars. At length he spoke aloud. "I have wandered far in many lands. I have searched in vain in the beauties of sunny Spain, in the cloudless skies of Italy, in every portion of God's beautiful earth, for the gem of happiness,—true peace of mind. I have sometimes when gazing upon the beauties of foreign countries felt an inspiration of the heart, and I have taken up my pencil in very desperation and created most beautiful pictures. Men wondered and admired, and for a time I thought I had found the object of my search. But again the old passionate yearning would steal over me, and I would despise my pictures which but a moment before I had thought so beautiful. And now I am again in the land of my birth; but I have not found that for which I sought." The artist paused, till at length he heard a sweet and solemn voice within him say these words: "My son, arise and follow me for a little while." The artist sat perfectly still; but now a glorious thought came over him, and he was soon deeply absorbed in a picture which he had hastily sketched. The picture grew under his hand, until at length it stood perfect, glorious,—an image of the Crucified on Mount Calvary. With reverential love and holy awe the artist knelt before the creation of his own pencil, while he listened with delight to the voice which he had heard before; but now it said, "Son, thou hast done well: receive thy reward." A sweet smile passed over the beautiful face of the young artist; sounds of sweet music floated over him, and he fell back upon his couch in a deep and dreamless sleep; and in that sleep the soul of the artist passed before its God.

Mary B. E. No, thank you.

Frank G. N. suggests for an inversion the line, “Madam, I’m Adam.”

James C. P. writes us:—

“I offer you a sentence which does not indeed read backward and forward the same, but reads forward in English and backward in Latin,—making sense, it seems to me, both ways; granting that it is hardly classical Latin.

Anger? ’tis safe never. Bar it! Use love!

Evoles ut ira breve nefas sit; regna!

Which being freely translated, may mean,

Rise up, in order that your anger may be but a brief madness; control it!”

Recluse. Before we can publish your cipher and your offer of reward for reading it, we must have some better guaranty of your good faith and responsibility than a fictitious signature.

Tudor. You must learn the rules of composition—how to use capitals and all marks of punctuation, etc.—before what you write can be printed anywhere.

Emma M. D. Your little note is very pleasant to us, and we thank you for it; but we must put the little puzzle aside.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

Obvious printer errors including punctuation have been silently corrected.

Inconsistencies and variations in spelling have been retained, with the following exception:

“Siskiyon” changed to “Siskiyou” on p. 192.

[The end of *Our Young Folks, Volume 2, Number 3*, edited by J. T. Trowbridge, Gail Hamilton and Lucy Larcom.]