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OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

AN
ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE

FOR
BOYS AND GIRLS.

EDITED BY
J. T. TROWBRIDGE, GAIL HAMILTON, AND LUCY LARCOM.

VOL. III.



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An Illustrated Magazine

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

VOL. III.

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DRAWN BY JOHN TENNIEL.]

[See *Sir Aylmer's Last Fight*, page [613](#).

CAST AWAY IN THE COLD. AN OLD MAN'S STORY OF A YOUNG MAN'S ADVENTURES.

III.



his time Captain Hardy was not to be caught napping, as on the previous day. Indeed, he was out looking for his young friends even before the time. "If they don't come soon," said he to himself, "I'll go after them";—and they did not come soon, at least the Captain thought they were a long time in coming, and he started off, if not after them, at least to look after them. When he had reached the brow of the hill from which both the Captain's and Mr. Earnest's houses could be seen, the old man discovered the children coming down one of the winding paths which led through Mr. Earnest's grounds. It was some moments before they saw the Captain, and when they did see him there was much wondering what had happened to bring him up so far on the hill.

"Why, what's the matter with him?" exclaimed William. "Look, he's flinging up his hat!"—and the little party set off upon a rapid run. Meanwhile the Captain stood on the brow of the hill, whirling round his tarpaulin hat with the long blue ribbons flying wildly in the wind. When the children came nearer, they heard their friend calling loudly to them, "Come, my hearties, you are slow to-day. Be lively, or we'll lose the chance."

"What chance?" asked William, when they had come up with him.

"The wind, the wind,—why, don't you see there's a spankin' breeze? I was afraid we'd lose our sail, so I came to hurry you up."

"Hurrah! hurrah!" shouted both the boys together, "that's jolly";—and without further ado the Captain hurried his little friends along with him down

through the woods to the water.

The old man had been down there before, and had everything in readiness. The little yacht was lying beside the little wharf. "Look sharp now, and be lively," exclaimed the Captain as he helped them one by one aboard; and then he got in himself and shoved the yacht off from the landing, and with the assistance of a singular-looking boy, whom the Captain called "Main Brace," he spread the sails, and the lively craft was soon skimming over the waters, carrying as lively a party as ever set out on an afternoon frolic. "Jolly" was the only word which seemed at all to express the children's pleasure, and if the boys said "it was jolly" once, they must have said it fifty times at least; while little Alice exhibited her excitement by jumping from one side of the boat to the other, stopping now and then to lean over the side and watch the little waves gurgling past them, sometimes dipping her delicate hands into the water, and screaming with delight when the spray flew over her.

The party were seated (when seated at all) in what is called the "stern sheets," that is, on the seat in the open space behind the cabin heretofore described,—the good-natured and kindly Captain in the midst of them, firmly holding the helm or tiller of his boat, and guiding it with steady hand wherever he wished it to go, cracking a pleasant joke now and then, and enjoying in all the fulness of his big, warm heart the joyous delight of his young guests. And he was in no hurry to stop the sport, for he ran on clear across the harbor, and then said he would "'bout ship," and put back again.

"What's 'bout ship?" inquired William.

"That's going about on the other tack," replied the Captain.

"What's going about on the other tack?" asked William, as wise as he was before.

"I'll show you," said the Captain. "Now see here: first I give the proper order, as if somebody else was giving it to me, and I was the man at the wheel, 'Hard-a-lee,' do you observe;—now look, I put the helm down as far as I can jam it there;—look now, how that turns the boat and brings her up into the wind,—you see the sails begin to shiver,—the wind is blowing right in your faces now;—now we have turned nearly round; the boat, you see, has come up on an even keel,—level, you know;—now look out sharp for your heads there, for the boom is going to jibe over to the other side;—there, don't you see we've turned round,—that house over there that was almost ahead of us is now behind us. There goes the boom, bang! There fills the sail, see it bulging out,—the jib you see shakes a little yet,—but there she goes now filled out like the other; and now you see I've got the helm back where I had it before, in the middle, 'steady,' you know, and there goes the Alice off on the starboard tack, and an easy bowline back towards the Mariner's Rest again. Wasn't that nicely done?"

“Splendid! splendid!” cried William; “I wish I could do it.”

“I’ll teach you,—it’s easy learned,” answered the Captain; “but look out there, or you’ll go overboard; get up to windward, and trim the boat; you see we are leaning over to the other side now.”

And thus the Captain kept on “tacking” across the harbor, going to and fro, for more than an hour, enjoying every minute of it just as much as the children did. When at length, however, the children began to quiet down a little, the sharp edge of novelty being worn off, the Captain ran into shoal water, and brought his boat’s head once more up into the wind; but this time, instead of letting her head pay off to starboard, he steered her right into the wind’s eye, with the sails shivering all the time, until the boat stopped, when he cried out to Main Brace to “let go the anchor,” which Main Brace did promptly, with an “Ay, ay, sir!” and then he clewed up the sails, and spread a white and red striped and red-fringed awning over the place where they were seated, and said he was now going on with the story. “Isn’t this a tip-top place,” said he, “for story-telling?” And the children all said it was “tip-top,” and “jolly,” and “grand,” and made many little speeches about it, which to put down here would make this account so long that everybody would get tired before getting to the end of it.

“Now I call this a much better place than the ‘Crow’s Nest,’ ” went on the Captain; “for don’t you see, when we knocked off yesterday I was standing in the middle of the sea, on a great ice-raft. To be sure we are not exactly in the middle of the sea here, nor on an ice-raft either, but we are on salt water, and that’s where I like to be. The air is better for the wits, and the tongue too, for that matter, than on the land there, which is a good enough place to be when there is no wind; but I like to be on the water, and have plenty of sea-room, when the wind blows, especially when it blows a gale,—for on land, at such times, I’m always afraid that the trees will blow over on me, or the house blow down on my head, or some dreadful accident will happen, whereas on the sea one has no fears at all; and besides, at sea one is always at home,—come rain or shine, he’s always his house with him, and never has to go groping about for shelter.”

“Only you mustn’t be in the fore-castle,” put in cunning William, who remembered the Captain’s fright when he first found himself at sea in the Blackbird.

“Never mind that, lad,” replied the Captain, “I was only a boy then, and hadn’t come to years of discretion. I’ve made better friends with the sea since that day. But let us go on, or we’ll never get through with this story, any more than the Flying Dutchman will get into port, though he keeps on beating up and down forever; and as for to-day, why, we’ll leave off just where we began, like thieves in a tread-mill, if we don’t get started pretty soon.

“Well, you see, as I was saying, you left me standing on an ice-raft in the middle of the Arctic Sea, cast away in a cold and forbidding place, and all alone. My shipmates were all either drowned or killed outright by the falling ice, so far at least as I knew to the contrary. The prospect ahead was not a pleasing one, for of course, as I think I have said before, the first thought which crossed my mind was, that I should starve or freeze to death very soon. Of course I was greatly astonished by what had happened, and indeed it was hard for me to believe my senses, so suddenly had this great disaster come upon me. I stood staring into the mist, and listening to the terrible sounds which came out of it, as one petrified; yet after a little time I recovered myself sufficiently to realize my situation. The instinct of life is strong in every living thing, and after I had stood in the presence of this frightful chaos for I have not the least idea how long, I began to think what I should do to save myself.

“The waves which had been raised after awhile began steadily to subside, and as the sea became more calm I found that I could approach nearer to where the wreck had happened by jumping over some of the cracks which had been made in the ice, and walking across piece after piece of it. These pieces were all in motion, rolling on the swell of the sea, and the farther I went, of course the greater the motion became. I had to proceed cautiously, and when I jumped from one fragment of ice to another, I was obliged to look carefully what I was about, for if I missed my footing I should fall into the sea, and be either drowned or ground up by the moving ice.

“Had the iceberg all gone to pieces at once, the sea would soon have become quiet; but it was evident from the noises which reached me that a considerable part of the berg was still holding together, and was wallowing in the sea in consequence of its equilibrium being disturbed by the explosion, and still keeping the sea agitated. I could indeed vaguely see this remaining fragment, swaying to right and left, and I could also perceive that, with every roll, fresh masses were breaking off with loud reports, like the heavy crash of artillery. I could, however, discover nothing of the ship or either of the boats. I was able to detect, even at a considerable distance, some fragments of ice floating and rolling about, when the fog would clear up a little, and as I peered into the gloom I thought at one time that I saw the figure of a man standing upon one of them. It was but a moment, for the fog closed upon the object, whatever it may have been, and it vanished as a spectral figure.

“My eyes were strained to catch a further glimpse of this object, but nothing more was to be seen of it. But from this my attention was soon attracted by a dark mass which had drifted upon the edge of the broken ice, not far to the right of the place where I had been standing when the boat left me. I soon made this out to be some part of the wreck of the ship. In a few moments I could make out that it was a piece of a mast; then I could plainly distinguish

the foretop. Each succeeding wave was forcing it higher and higher out of the water, and I discovered, after a few moments, that other timbers were attached to it, and that beside these were sails and ropes, making of the whole a considerable mass. After observing it attentively still further, I thought that I perceived a man moving among the tangled collection of timbers and ropes and sails, endeavoring to extricate himself. Whatever it might be, it was some distance above the sea,—so high, indeed, that the waves no longer washed it fairly,—only the spray.

“It soon became clear to me that my suspicions that this was a man were correct; and being more convinced that one of my shipmates at least was yet alive, I rushed forward, without any thought as to the consequences, to rescue him or perish in the attempt. It was clear that he could not liberate himself.

“You will remember that I was now standing on a fragment of ice which had been broken off from the solid ice-field by the waves. It was one of a number of similar fragments, all lying more or less close together, between me and the place where I had been standing when the waves began to subside and the ice ceased to break up. Between where I now stood and the wreck, the ice was in the same broken condition as behind me, only, being nearer the open water, the pieces were rolling more, so that there was much greater danger in springing from piece to piece. Without, however, pausing to reflect upon this circumstance, I rushed forward as fast as I could go, jumping with ease over every obstacle in my way, until I was, in a very few moments, on the piece of ice that held up the end of the tangled wreck. I had evidently arrived in the very nick of time, for the wreck was, instead of coming farther up, now beginning to sink back into the sea.



“What I had taken for a man proved to be one, or, as I soon found out, a boy,—the cabin-boy of the ship, a light, pale-faced lad, and only fourteen years old. The boy was evidently fast in some way among the rigging, and had been trying to free himself. As I came close, however, I observed that he was entirely quiet, and had sunk out of view. Quick as thought I mounted up into the wreck, and then I saw the boy with a rope tangled round his leg and lying quite insensible. Underneath him another man was lying, much mutilated and evidently quite dead. As I was mounting up, a wave washed in under the wreck, but I escaped with only a little spray flying over me, which, however, did not wet me much. It was but the work of a moment to whip out my knife, which I carried like every other sailor, and cut the rope which bound the boy down, and which he had tried in vain to loosen. After this I had no further difficulty, and, seizing the boy around the waist with one arm (he was very light even for his years), I clambered out of the wreck to the ice without getting much more water upon me, and, hurrying off, did not stop until I had jumped with my burden across several cracks, and ran across several pieces of ice, making a place of present safety on the unbroken or fast ice. Here I laid down my insensible burden, all dripping with the cold water, and in a state of great anxiety I bent over the boy. At first I thought that he was dead, but it was soon clear that this was not the case, for he was breathing, although slowly, yet

freely. Out from his wet hair a little blood was oozing, and upon examining the spot I found that there was a bad bruise there, and that the skin was broken, though there was not a serious cut. This was clearly the cause of his present unconsciousness, as his breathing seemed conclusively to show that he had managed to keep his head above water, and had not been brought to his present state by drowning. It occurred to me that the blow had simply stunned him, and that it had come almost at the moment I arrived to rescue him. I could not perceive that the skull was fractured, and I felt convinced that, if the boy could be warmed and allowed to lie at rest, he would after a while come to. To this conclusion I arrived while leaning over the poor fellow, examining his heart, while he lay on the chilly ice, never once thinking where I was, and all the while calling frantically to him; but I might as well have called to a stone. When I rose up fully impressed with the necessity of securing for the lad rest and warmth, and fully realized, for the first time, my powerless situation, (that I was even apparently unable to save myself, still less the boy,) my heart seemed to give way entirely, and I sank down once more beside him. A prayer to Heaven for succor, which I had no thought could ever come to me, rose to my lips, and at that very moment a ray of hope dawned upon me. The great fog was breaking away, the bright sun was scattering the mists, and land was bursting through it near at hand. Light, fleecy clouds were rolling up above the sea, and, as they floated off before a gentle wind, a blaze of sunshine burst through an opening in them and fell upon myself and the boy whose life I had, at least for the present, saved.

“I could now look out over the sea for a considerable distance. Although there was still much confusion there, yet the ice was steadily quieting down, and the waves caused by it were subsiding rapidly. But a change not less marked had taken place in the space between where I stood and the open water. The wreck from which I had rescued the boy had settled back into the sea, and the fragments of ice were separating and floating off. Had I delayed but a few minutes longer, I should never have reached the fast ice, but should have drifted off upon the dark waters, as the man had done whom I saw standing in the fog that I have told you of before.

“As the fog cleared up more and more, the land which first appeared stood out boldly, and the sea was visible over a range of many miles. It was dotted all over with fragments of ice and numerous icebergs, many of which reached up into the disappearing mists, looking like white mountains in miniature, with clouds drifting across their summits. The land did not appear to be more than a mile distant from me, and it was evident that I stood upon ice which was fast to it. Indeed, when I was first cast upon this ice I might have known, had I paused to reflect, that land could not be very distant from me, as the very name ‘fast ice’ indicates clearly of itself that land is near.

“With this lighting up of the air, various thoughts came into my mind. First, could I get to the land and save the boy as well as myself; secondly, could I aid anybody else; and thirdly, could I save anything of the wreck out of the sea. These last two reflections were quickly disposed of, for, although I could see many fragments of the wreck, none were within reach, and no other person was in sight,—ship and boats and men were all gone down before the crushing avalanche, and nothing was left but myself and a senseless boy.

“I must here pause to tell you that, although we were in the Arctic regions, and on the ice, the weather was not cold, the time being the middle of the summer. Of course the dense fog made the air a little damp and chilly, but, as I have said, not cold. My shipmates before the wreck happened never dressed in anything warmer than the usual woollen clothing, and seldom wore coats. For some reason, I do not exactly remember why, I had, upon going on deck from breakfast that fatal morning, in addition to my ordinary coat, put on a heavy pilot-cloth overcoat, which had been furnished me by the master of the ship,—the price of it to be deducted from my wages. And it was most fortunate that I had put this coat on, for it now served a good purpose in wrapping up the boy.

“Seeing that there was now nothing to be gained by longer delay on the ice, I picked the boy up in my arms and started for the land. It may strike you as somewhat strange that I should have gone about it so calmly, or indeed that I did not fall down in despair, and at once give up the hope of saving myself when there was so little, or rather no apparent prospect of it before me. But for this there were some very natural reasons; for, in the first place, the thought of saving the boy’s life kept my mind from dwelling too much upon my own misfortunes; and the hope of finding the land which had come in sight out of the fog inhabited, stimulated my courage, and inspired exertion.

“Although the boy was not heavy, yet I found that in the distance I had to carry him I grew much fatigued; but the necessity for haste made me strong, and to save the boy’s life seemed now much more desirable than to save my own, inasmuch as if the boy died, and I survived him, and could in any way manage to live on, I should be in truth in a worse condition than if dead, as it appeared to me,—being all alone.

“As I approached the land very near, I became much alarmed by discovering that a considerable space of water, partly filled with fragments of ice, intervened between me and the shore; but after holding to the right for a little distance I came at length to a spot where the ice was firmly in contact with the land, and, after climbing over some very rough masses which had been squeezed up along the shore, I found myself at length on the green hillside already spoken of; and here upon the grass, in the blazing sun, I laid down the yet insensible boy.

“What was I now to do? The boy was yet in very much the same condition

that he was when I set out with him for the shore. Meanwhile more than half an hour must have elapsed, during which time the boy was wrapped in his wet clothes, which to a man in the full possession of his senses would have been prostrating enough. It seemed to me that he was sinking under the double influence of the blow which he had received, and the wet clothes which were on his body. I had, however, the gratification of knowing that I was on firm land, and away from the cold ice. The grass was warm, and the air, as I have said, was scarcely chilly. Under these improved circumstances it was clearly better to expose the boy's body wholly to the air than to allow him to remain in his wet clothing. The first thing, therefore, which I did was to divest myself of my own clothing in order that I might give my warm under clothing to the boy. This left for myself only my pantaloons and my coat. After buttoning the coat tightly round me, I removed the boy's wet clothing and rubbed his body with such parts of the tail of my overcoat, as his clothes had not wetted while carrying him, and this done I drew on to him my shirt and drawers, and then, pulling up the grass, I heaped that about him, and over this threw my damp overcoat, the grass, however, preventing it from touching him. All this occupied but a few minutes, for I worked with the energy of despair. I then set to rubbing and pounding his feet and hands, which were very cold, to get some circulation back into them.

"I had now done all that it was possible for me to do for the present towards the restoration of my poor companion, who still remained in precisely the same insensible condition as before, and I now determined to look about me and ascertain if there were any evidences to be discovered of human beings living near at hand. The scene around me was dreary enough to strike terror even into a stouter heart than mine; and when I had fully viewed it, I had to confess to myself that it did not seem probable that any living thing, not to mention human beings, could possibly be there. The first thing I did was to shout and halloo again and again, at the very top of my voice; but no answer reached me except the echo of my own voice in a deep and dark gorge close by. This echo startled me and made me afraid, though I never could tell why. My loud calling had failed to produce any impression upon the boy whatever, and I now felt sure that he was going to die. Without exactly knowing what I did, or what I was doing it for, I now ran to the right over the green grass, and then over rough stones up to a considerable elevation, and commenced hallooing again, when, much to my astonishment, I heard a great fluttering and loud sounds right below and within thirty feet of me. I sprang back as if some terrible enemy had attacked me, but I recovered myself in an instant, when I discovered that the fluttering came from a number of birds which rose from among the rocks. The birds were brown and quite large, and I knew at once that they were eider-ducks, for I had seen them frequently before, while in the

ship, and the sailors had told me their name. Without having any distinct motive in doing so, I now went down to where the birds had risen, when still others rose before me, in great numbers. The rapidity of their flight, and the loud noise which they made, startled others still farther away, and thus flock after flock kept on rising from among the rocks, screaming, and flapping their wings in a very loud manner. Several hundreds, perhaps thousands of them, must have thus got upon their wings and commenced sailing over head.

“You must know that the eider duck, in order to protect its eggs from the air when it goes off to get for food the little fish that it catches in the sea, plucks from its breast the fine feathers called down, in which it buries its eggs very carefully. In each of the nests I found there was a good handful of this down, and the thought at once occurred to me to gather a quantity of it, and cover the boy with it. I went to work immediately, and collected a great armful of it, and, hastening to where the boy was, I deposited it, and then hurried back for more. In a very short time I had accumulated a great pile of it, and, spreading a thick layer of it out close beside the boy, I drew him over upon it, and then covered him with it completely, and spread my overcoat as I had done before.

“The value of putting this discovery to prompt use was soon manifested. The boy, from being cold almost as a corpse, began to show some symptoms of returning warmth, his breathing seemed to be more rapid and free, and his eyelids began to move a little, though they did not fully open for some time; but it was then only for an instant, and I was not certain whether he recognized me or not. I called to him loudly by name, I rubbed his forehead, I pounded his hands, but he gave no further recognition; yet he was getting more and more warm, and in this circumstance I rested my hope.

“Having accomplished this much, and feeling pretty sure that the boy would recover in the end, my mind now very naturally fell back upon the contemplation of my own unhappy condition. I moved a few steps from the boy, and sat down upon a rock overlooking the sea. There was nothing there to inspire me with courage, when this question came uppermost in my mind: ‘Suppose the boy does recover from his present stupor, how are we going to live?’ Could anybody indeed be in a more sorry state? Let me enumerate:—

“1st. I had been shipwrecked,—a fortune usually considered bad enough under any circumstances.

“2d. I had lost all of my companions except a feeble boy whom I had rescued from death, and who was now helpless on my hands.

“3d. I was cast away on a desert land, I knew not where, but very far towards the North Pole, as was clear enough from the immense quantities of ice which whitened the sea before me.

“4th. I was chilly, and had no fire nor means of making any. Nor had I

sufficient clothing to cover me.

“5th. I was hungry, and had no food nor means of obtaining any.

“6th. I was thirsty, and had nothing to drink, nor could I discover anything.

“7th. I was without house or hut to shelter me.

“8th. I was without weapons to defend myself against the attacks of wild beasts, if any there should be to molest me.

“To counteract these positive evils I had four things, namely:—

“1st. Life.

“2d. The clothes on my back.

“3d. A jack-knife.

“4th. The mercy of Providence.

“And this was all!

“What chance was there for me?

“Little enough, one would think. And, in truth, there did not seem to be any at all. When I thought of all this, I buried my face in my hands, and moaned aloud, and the big tears began to gather in my eyes.”

“O wasn’t it awful!” exclaimed William.

“I don’t see what you *could* do, Captain Hardy,” exclaimed Fred.

“The poor boy,” exclaimed Alice,—“I hope he didn’t die. Did he, Captain Hardy?”—and the child began to imitate the example set by John Hardy when he sat upon the rock and looked out upon the icy sea and speculated upon the chances of his ever seeing again the home from which he had so foolishly run away.

“Well, I’ll tell you about that some other time,” answered the Captain. “You may be sure I didn’t die, at any rate, whatever may have happened to the boy; but just now I can tell you no more, for look there at that cloud coming up as if out of the sea, appearing, for all the world, as if it meant to pipe a squall after us, by and by; and now, with your leave, we’ll slip home while the play’s good. So here goes. Up anchor.”

“Ay, ay, sir,” answered William, as he jumped forward very unnecessarily to help Main Brace, to whom the order to “up anchor” was given.

“Halloo!” cried the Captain. “Turned sailor already, eh?”

While Main Brace and William were getting in the anchor, the Captain was stowing away the awning, and then, the yacht being free, he spread the sails, and with his helm brought her to the wind; and there being now a lively breeze, the party were not long in crossing over to the Captain’s anchoring-ground, where he turned so as to stop her as he had done before, and then cried out, “Stand by to let go the anchor,” to which William answered, “Ay, ay, sir!” and when the boat had stopped, the Captain cried out again, “Let go,” and William answered, “Ay, ay!” again, and let it go. Then, as soon as the Captain had secured his yacht and stowed away the sails, the whole party hurried

ashore, and up the path to the Captain's cottage, for already great drops of rain were beginning to patter on the leaves, and the roaring wind was heard among the forest-trees, giving the first warning cry of a coming shower.

Isaac I. Hayes.



WHAT?

What was it that Charlie saw, to-day,
Down in the pool where the cattle lie?
A shoal of the spotted trout at play?
Or a sheeny dragon-fly?

The fly and the fish were there, indeed;
But as for the puzzle,—guess again!
It was neither a shell, nor flower, nor reed,
Nor the nest of a last year's wren.

Some willows droop to the brooklet's bed;—
Who knows but a bee had fallen down?
Or a spider, swung from his broken thread,
Was learning the way to drown?

You have not read me the riddle yet.
Not even the wing of a wounded bee,
Nor the web of a spider, torn and wet,
Did Charlie this morning see.

Now answer, you who have grown so wise,—
What could the wonderful sight have been,
But the dimpled face and great blue eyes
Of the rogue who was looking in?

Kate Putnam Osgood.



TORTOISE - SHELLS .



shell comb! Do you know what a shell comb costs, and what the turtles suffer, that you children and your mothers may adorn yourselves with them? If you knew the manner in which the shell is obtained from the poor creatures, may be you wouldn't care to encourage the cruelty by wearing the combs."

"Do you know, pa?"

"Yes, I've seen the operation."

"O do tell us about it! Make it into a *real* story though,—one for *true*, you

know!"

Now this was too bad. I had told these children the story of the "Yellow Cat," the "Adventures of the Blue Monkey," "Cinderella," scraps of the "Arabian Nights," and "Robinson Crusoe," until I was so weary of the repetitions that I had bought the children off, promising a handsome present to each if they would not ask me for any of the old things until the expiration of one week from the date of agreement; and here I had unthinkingly "got myself into a box."

"O yes! *do* tell us about the turtles from which they get combs. O do, pa! You know that isn't one of the old stories, and so we can ask you for it; besides, it is true, you know, and so it isn't a story, because you said you had seen it all. But *do* make it just *like* a story-book story. O, ever so nice!"

They had caught me, so I was forced to submit to my fate, and the three little ones ranged themselves about and upon me in the easy, promiscuous way children have when they take possession of a friend. If one was in danger of slipping from her perch, she would seize on my mustache, whiskers, collar, or any other point that offered good holding-ground, and, righting herself, seemed to regard me with the utmost surprise if I offered any remonstrance to such rough treatment. However, in due time we were all comfortably placed, and, with three red little mouths wide open, and six bright little eyes fixed on mine, I began.

"Well, you must know that many, many years ago,—ever so many years

before you were born,—so many, in fact, that you might think I was built about the time of the Pyramids, if you knew anything about them, I got it into my head that I wanted to go down to the country of the Aztecs. Don't know who or what the Aztecs were? Well, never mind, you will know one of these days, when you get along further in your studies." (The children were stationary at words of three syllables.) "Well, as I was saying when you interrupted me, I thought I should like to go to that strange country. 'Did mother go with me?' No, I didn't know your mother then, or I should have stayed at home; and I didn't walk there. No, I didn't go in cars, either. If you will only wait, I'll tell you how I got down to that wild country over the sea." (Why *will* children ask so many questions?)

"I sailed from New York in a brig, and had much the same experience as the star-fish, whose trials and tribulations I read you from a number of 'Our Young Folks,' and my cruise was also interrupted by a coral reef, and that was the cause of my short residence among the turtle-fishers of Chinchorro.

"We were wrecked, but by means of our small boats succeeded in reaching the little island inside the reef, where the fishers dwell about two months out of the year. Our brig, badly jammed among the jagged points of the coral rock, was soon banged into pieces by the angry waves.

"From the Indians we learned that we were about fifty miles north of our destination, which was Belize, the principal town in British Honduras, which, by the way, is not a part of Honduras, but a strip of land stolen from Yucatan. The Gulf Stream—not the big one, but a little fellow in the Caribbean Sea—had carried us north and to destruction. But you know very little about that, either.

"On the little island was one hut, built after the manner of the country. There are no great architects there now,—no handsomely laid-out parks, with elegant sidewalks and carriage-ways, nor any of the improvements of the smallest New-England towns. So the hut was made by setting up a lot of stout canes, planting them firmly in the ground, and filling the spaces between with soft clay, which soon hardens when exposed to the sun and air. Over this were placed cocoa-nut branches with the ends pointing downward. These were kept in place by being tied to a ridge-pole at the highest part of the roof, and by several other poles between the top and the ends of the branches. A hut of this description is soon built, and is not only a cool and comfortable place, but is also a perfect protection against the rain. They rarely have windows, but get the light from two openings or doors, one of which usually opens on the land side,—the other on the sea.

"Of course I speak now of the huts on the coast, (inland, they follow no particular method,) and the reason for it is that the winds generally blow from the sea during the daytime, and from the land after nightfall; so, by leaving

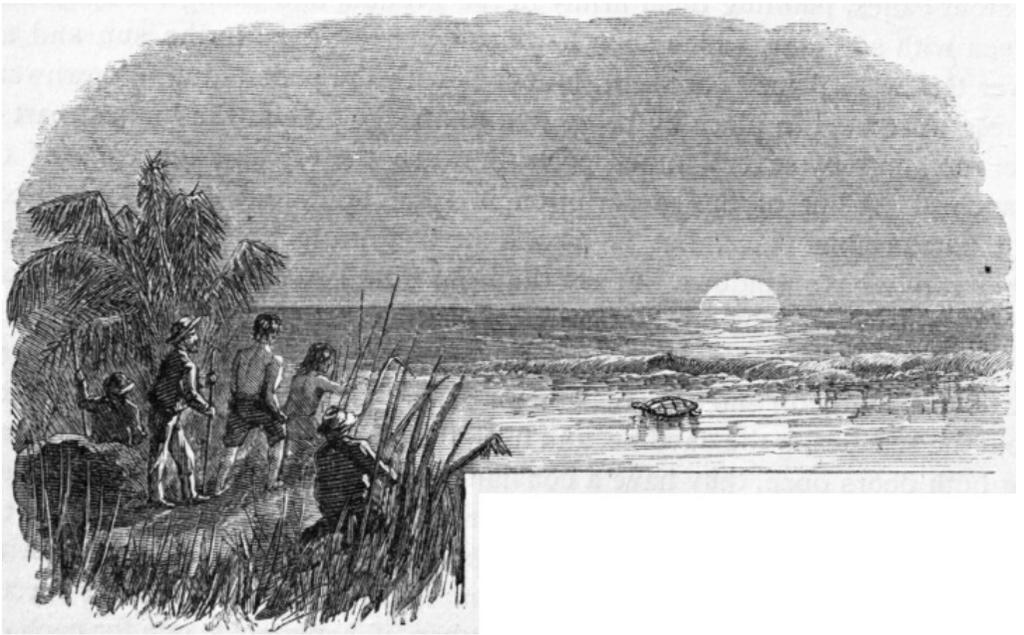
both doors open, they have a constant breeze. If the hut is located near swampy ground, from which rises a fever malaria, they close the door on the land side, leaving open the one toward the sea, and so escape the fever without depriving themselves of the cool air. Within, from stout posts erected at intervals along the sides, swing a number of hammocks, one for each occupant; and so nicely are they arranged, that, when we retired at night, and set our hammocks swinging, each bed took its allotted curve without interfering with its neighbor. These huts are found usually near cocoa-nut and banana trees, which give not only shelter, but also food.

“Our party made themselves at home among the hospitable occupants of the island, and by their invitation went up the beach the night following the disaster to see them catch the turtles on which grows the valuable article of commerce known as tortoise-shell.

“During the early spring months, the turtles come into the shallow waters around the small islands lying out at sea, to feed on the tender grasses, and to lay their eggs. They are such timid creatures that they rarely come on shore until after the sun goes down. Then they crawl out on to the sand, dig a hole with their flippers above high-water mark, and deposit fifty or more eggs, which they cover with great skill. After this, they take no further care of their progeny, as the hot tropical sun heats the sand, and the hot sand hatches the eggs. So you see it is only during the laying season that the ‘old folks’ can be caught in sufficient numbers to induce the Indians to leave home and follow turtle-catching as a business.

“But, although the eggs are so skilfully covered, the natives, who are acquainted with the habits of the turtle, often succeed in finding them. The wild beasts are also expert in discovering the deposits, and, in common with the Indians, seem to esteem the eggs as choice morsels; and so, between man and beast, the turtles that are to be have but a slim chance of ever paddling about the shallow waters to nip the tender grasses, and the gayly-painted nautilus, as he sails quietly by. So a single meal for a tiger may deprive hundreds of little girls of their coveted back-combs.

“‘Why do the tigers eat the eggs?’ Why, it is just as natural for them to eat the eggs as for the turtle to eat the *mollusca*,—just as the chicken snaps up the grasshopper, and you in turn eat the chicken.



“Well, we walked up the shore about a quarter of a mile, when the Indians directed us to follow them into the edge of the bushes that grew just beyond the reach of the surf. There we waited, preserving the utmost silence, eagerly scanning the water, which was lazily tumbling upon the sand. After half an hour’s watching, we were rewarded by the sight of a fine specimen creeping up the shore, unconscious of the danger that awaited it.

“Yes, I ‘did feel sorry for the turtle,’ because I instinctively knew that there was something unpleasant in store for the poor thing, and I was strongly inclined to make a noise, and so frighten it away; for, although the wise men tell us that they are cold-blooded creatures, and have but little feeling, I think you will agree with me in the statement, that the process of getting off the shell is anything but a desirable experience, even for this lower order of God’s creation, which is said to be without nerves.

“When it had got far enough from the water to make capture certain, out darted two of the Indians, armed with iron hooks, and in a minute the poor thing was on its back, helpless!

“We caught three that night, and dragged them down the beach to the hut. Here we got coffee and *tortilla*, a kind of corn-cake, and soon after went to our hammocks, the Indians promising to call us at daybreak to see the shells taken off the backs of the living animal.

“This shell, you must know, is not a solid piece covering the whole back, like that of the common fresh-water turtle which you saw in the aquarium the

other day, but is a series of oblong scales or plates, thirteen in number. A small portion of these are large and quite flat, but the greater number on an average-sized turtle are about five or six inches in width, by eight and sometimes even twelve inches in length, and about one quarter of an inch in thickness.

“The next morning, just as the sun lifted himself above the edge of the ocean, we followed our chocolate-colored friends to the beach. A little way from the water we found the three turtles pinioned by their flippers, with their backs covered with dry sticks and leaves. These were ignited, and when the shell was sufficiently heated, (an operation requiring much experience, as too much heat spoils the shell, and too little causes it to crack and tear in the removal,) a knife was skilfully placed beneath the scales, one by one, and they came off without difficulty. Can you imagine the fearful sufferings of the poor creatures?”

Little Helen sighed.

“After the plates were taken off, the animals were released, and, much to my surprise, crawled down to the water and disappeared! And the Indians told us that the operation, if carefully performed, seldom killed the turtle, and that after a time a new shell formed in one solid mass over the whole back. This of course is not a marketable commodity, but it serves as a protection against its marine enemies, and by the time the next season comes it is ready to lay more eggs, and so on to the end of its life.

“All this care is used on the part of the Indians to preserve the life of the turtle, because it is from only one variety, the ‘Hawk-bill,’ that the valuable shells are procured, and if every one was killed that is robbed of its ‘plates,’ the species would soon be destroyed, and shell-combs would be in the possession of the ‘first families’ only.”

“But do the combs grow all ready for use?” said one of the little ones.

“No, when the shell is properly cleaned, it is sold to merchants in Belize, who send it north, where it is manufactured into many beautiful articles; and it is only after the shell is polished that it becomes semi-transparent, and the bright reds, yellows, and browns make their appearance as positive colors.

“Of course all the shell used does not come from the little island where I was wrecked, nor are all the fine combs made in this country; but the largest and probably the completest factory in the world is in Providence, R. I. There they make every variety of shell jewelry, working fanciful ornaments of gold into the surface of the shell. I have no doubt that your mother’s combs with the gold stars and crosses on them were made at that place.

“To work the shell, it is necessary first to soften it in boiling water, when it can be cut and bent without danger of cracking or splitting. Sometimes, to get the proper curves, it is put between plates of iron or brass, and so allowed to cool, when it hardens into any form desired. Even the clippings of the shell can

be melted into a solid bit. You recollect when your mother broke out one of the teeth from her comb? Well, I sent that to a shell-worker, who put the comb into boiling water, stuck in a new tooth, and the comb became as perfect and as solid as before. By the same means the shell is bent for card-cases, and ornaments used in inlaying fancy boxes and furniture.”

After I had finished my story, little Helen, who has a delicate, sympathetic nature, sat wrapped in thought. Presently her face brightened; she had evidently discovered a way out of the difficulty.

“Pa,” said she, “I think it very wrong and naughty to hurt the turtles so much, and I wouldn’t care to have them burnt just so I could have a comb, but may be you could find an old one, that belonged to a dead turtle. Then he wouldn’t be hurt anyhow, and I wouldn’t be encouraging the killing of ’em, you know.”

So I suppose I shall have to buy her a comb that grew on a dead turtle.

A. V. S. Anthony.



EMILY'S FIRST DAY WITH PUSSY WILLOW.

We left little Miss Emily Proudie lying like a broken lily, stretched out on the white bed that Pussy Willow had made for her, where, tired with her day's ride, she slept soundly.

Dr. Hardhack had been very positive in saying that neither her mother, nor any of her aunts, nor indeed any attendant who had taken care of her in New York, should have anything to do with her in her new abode. "She is to break all old associations," he said, "and wake up to a new life. I can't answer for her health if you give her even a servant that she has had before. Engage some good, wholesome country-girl for a companion for her, and some good farmer's wife to overlook her, and turn her out into a nice, wide old barn, and let her lie on the hay, and keep company with the cows," he went on. "Nature will take of her,—only give her a chance."

About five o'clock the next morning, Emily was wakened by a bustle in the house. What could be the matter? she thought, there was such a commotion on the stairs. It was, however, only the men folk of the household going down to their breakfast; and Pussy and her mother had been up long before, in time to get the corn-cake baked, and coffee made, and everything ready for them.

Then there began to come up into the windows such a sound of cackling and lowing and bleating, as the sheep and the cows and the oxen all began, in different tones, calling for their morning breakfast, and gossiping with one another about a new day. Emily lay in her bed and watched the pink light, making her white curtains look all rose color, and the sounds of birds and hens and cows and sheep all mingled in her mind in a sort of drowsy, lulling murmur, and she fell into a soft, refreshing doze, which melted away into a deep sleep; and so she slept ever so long. When she awoke again, the sun was shining clear and bright through her window-curtains, which had been looped back with festoons of wild roses, that seemed so fresh and beautiful that she could not help starting up to look at them.

She perceived at once that while she had been sleeping some one must have been in her room, for by the side of her bed was a table covered with a white cloth, and on the table was a tall, slender vase, full of fresh morning-glories, blue and purple and rose-colored and dark violet, with colors as intense and vivid as if they had really been morning clouds grown into flowers.

“O how beautiful!” she exclaimed.

“I’m so glad you like them!” said a voice behind her; and Pussy Willow stood there in a trim morning wrapper, with just the nicest white frill you ever saw around her little throat.

“O, did you bring these flowers here?”

“Why, yes; I picked them for you with the dew on them. I thought it a pity you should not see them before the sun shut them up. They are ever so beautiful, but they only last one morning.”

“Is that so?” said Emily. “I never knew that.”

“Certainly; but then we always have new ones. Some mornings I have counted as many as sixty or seventy at my milk-room window when I have been skimming the cream.”

“How very early you must get up!”

“Yes, about the time the bobolinks and robins do,” said Pussy, cheerfully. “I want to get my work all done early. But come now, shall I help you to dress?”—and Pussy brought water and towels to the bedside, and helped Emily with all her morning operations as handily as if she had been a maid all her life, till finally she seated her, arrayed in a neat white wrapper, in the rocking-chair.

“And now for your breakfast. I have got it all ready for you,”—and Pussy tripped out, and in a few moments returned, bringing with her a tea-tray covered with a fine white cloth, which she placed upon the stand. “Now move your table up to you, and put your vase of flowers in the centre.”

“O what a pretty breakfast!” said Emily.

And so it was, and a good one too; for, first, there was a large saucer of strawberries, delightfully arranged on green vine-leaves; then there was a small glass pitcher full of the thickest and richest cream, that was just the color of a saffron rose-leaf, if any of my little friends know what that is. Then there was the most charming little cake of golden butter you ever saw, stamped with a flower on it, and arranged upon two large strawberry-leaves, that actually had a little round pearl of dew on each of their points. Pussy had taken great pains to preserve the dew-drops unbroken on those leaves; she called them her morning pearls. Then there were some white, tender little biscuits, and some nice round muffins of a bright yellow color, made of corn meal by a very choice receipt on which Pussy prided herself. So on the whole, if you remember that Emily’s chair stood before an open window where there was a beautiful view of ever so many green hills, waving with trees, and rolling their green crests, all sparkling and fresh with morning dew, you may not wonder that she felt a better appetite than for months before, and that she thought no breakfast had ever tasted so good to her.

“Do eat some with me,” she said to Pussy,—for Emily was a well-bred

girl, and somehow did not like to seem to take all to herself.

“O thank you,” said Pussy, “but you see I had my breakfast hours ago.”

“Why, what time do you get up?” said Emily, opening her eyes wide.

“O, about four o’clock.”

“Four o’clock?” said Emily, drawing in her breath. “How dreadful!”

“I don’t find it so,” said Pussy, with a gay laugh. “If you only could see how beautiful everything is,—so fresh and cool and still!”

“Why, do you know,” said Emily, “that, when I heard people moving this morning, I thought it was some time in the night? I thought something must have happened.”

“Nothing but what happens every morning,” said Pussy, laughing. “I hope it didn’t disturb you.”

“O no; I fell into a very sound sleep after it. Why, it must have been two or three hours before I woke again. What do you find to do?”

“O, everything you can think of. I feed Clover, and milk her. You must get acquainted with Clover; she is just the gentlest, most intelligent little beast you ever saw, and I make a great pet of her. Mother laughs at the time I spend in getting her breakfast ready every morning, and says she believes I put eggs and sugar in her corn-cake. I don’t quite do that; but then Clover expects something nice, and I love to give it to her. She has beautiful, great, soft eyes, and looks at me with such gratitude when I feed her! She would be glad to lick my hand; but her tongue is rather too rough. Poor Clover, she doesn’t know that! But you ought to see the milk she gives. By and by perhaps you would like to come down to my spring-house and see my pans of milk and cream.”

“And do you really make butter?”

“Certainly; I made this that you are eating.”

“What, this morning?”

“No, yesterday; but I stamped it this morning on purpose for your breakfast. It has a pansy on it, you see; Brother Jim cut my stamp for me,—he has quite a taste for such things.”

“Dear me!” said Emily, “how much you must have to do! I think I must be quite a trouble to you, with all your engagements; I think Dr. Hardhack ought to have let me bring a maid.”

“O, she would only be in the way,” said Pussy; “you had a great deal better let me take care of you.”

“But you must have so much to do—”

“O, my work for to day is about all done; I have nothing to do really. The butter is made, and set away to cool, and the dinner all put up for the men to take to the field; and they won’t come home till night. This is my time for sewing, and reading and writing, and doing all things in general. And so, now, when you feel like it, I’ll show you about over the premises.”

So the two girls put on their hats, and Pussy began to lead her frail young friend about with her.

First, they went down along by the side of the brook, at the bottom of the garden, to the spring-house. It seemed refreshingly cool, and the brook pattered its way through it with a gentle murmur. On either side was a wide shelf set full of pans of milk, on which the soft, yellow cream was rising, and there was a little rustic seat at one end.

“There is my seat,” said Pussy, pointing it out. “Here’s where I sit to work my butter, and do all sorts of things. It’s always cool here,—even in the hottest days.” Then Pussy showed Emily her churn, and the long row of bright tin pans that were sunning on a board on the outside.

All this was perfectly new to Emily; she had never in her life thought how or where butter was made, and it was quite a new interest to her to see all about it. “If only you didn’t make it so very early,” she said, “I should like to see you do it.”

“It is right pretty work,” said Pussy, “and it is a delight always new to see the little golden flakes of butter begin to come on the cream! Perhaps, by and by, when you grow stronger, you might get up early for one morning. You have no idea what beautiful things there are to be seen and heard early in the morning, that never come at any other time of day. But now let’s go to the barn. Wouldn’t you like me to take you to ride while it’s cool? There is old Whitefoot left, that the men are not using. I can have him whenever I please.”

“But you say the men are all gone,” said Emily.

“O, I’ll harness him,” said Pussy; “Whitefoot knows me, and will let me do anything I please with him. I do believe he’d buckle his own girths, and harness himself up to oblige me if he could,—poor Whitefoot!”

So saying, they came into the large, clean, sweet-smelling barn, now fragrant with the perfume of new hay. It had great wide doors on either side, and opened upon a most glorious picture of the mountains.

“Now,” said Pussy, “you must need rest awhile, and I’m going to get you up into my more particular haunt,—up this ladder.”

“O, dreadful! I couldn’t go up there,” said Emily, “it would set my heart beating so.”

“O, never mind your heart,” said Pussy; “just let me get my arm round your waist, and put your foot there,”—and before Emily could remonstrate she found herself swung lightly up, and resting softly in a fragrant couch of hay.

“You didn’t know how easy it was to get up here,” said Pussy.

“No, to be sure I didn’t,” said Emily. “What a nice, queer old place, and how sweet the hay smells.”

“Now,” said Pussy, “let me carry you to my boudoir, and put you on my sofa.”

There was a great open door above where the hay was pitched in, and opposite this door Pussy placed Miss Emily, with a mountain of sweet-smelling hay at her back, and a soft couch of it under her.



“There, now!” said Pussy, “you are accommodated like a Duchess. Now, say if I haven’t a glorious prospect from my boudoir. We can look quite up that great valley, and count all those cloudy blue old mountains, and see the clouds sailing about in the sky, and dropping their shadows here and there on the mountains. I have my books out here, and some work, and I sit here hours at a time. Perhaps you’ll like to come here days, with me, and read and sew.”

Now, to tell the truth, Emily had never been fond of reading, and as for sewing, she had scarcely ever taken a needle in her hand; but she said nothing about this, and only asked to look at Pussy’s books. There were Longfellow’s “Evangeline,” Bryant’s Poems, Prescott’s “Ferdinand and Isabella,” and “Paul and Virginia” in French.

“So you read French,” said Emily, in a tone of slight surprise.

“A little; I don’t suppose I pronounce it well, for I never really heard a

French person speak. Perhaps, by and by, when you are better, you will give me a few lessons.”

Emily blushed,—for she remembered how very negligent of her studies she had been at school; but she answered, “I never was a very good scholar, but they used to say I had a very good accent; one cannot be years in a French school without acquiring that.”

“And that is just what I need,” said Pussy, “so it all happens just right; and you will give me a lesson every day, won’t you?”

“You are so kind to me,” said Emily, “that I should be glad to do anything I can.”

“Then it’s all settled,” said Pussy, exultingly. “We will come and sit here with our books, and breathe the fresh air, and be all still and quiet by ourselves, and I will read to you,—that is,” she said blushing, “if you like to be read to.”

“O, you are very kind,” said Emily; “I should like it of all things.”

“And now,” said Pussy, “if you would like a little drive before the heat of the day comes on, I’ll just speak to Whitefoot.”

“You’re not really in earnest in saying you can harness him?” said Emily.

“To be sure I am; how should we women folk ever get about if I couldn’t? I can push out the wagon, and have him in in a twinkling.”

And, sure enough, Miss Emily, looking through a crack, saw old Whitefoot come out of his stable at the call of his young mistress, and meekly bend his sober old head to her while she put on the harness, and backed him between the shafts of the carriage, and then proceeded to fasten and buckle the harness, till, finally, all was ready.

“Now let me bring you down,” said Pussy.

“You seem to think I am only a bale of goods,” said Emily, laughing.

“Well, you are not to exert yourself too much at first. Mother told me I must be very careful about you, because I am so strong, and not expect you could do anything like me at first.”

“Well, I think I shall try to help myself down,” said Emily; “it was only foolish nonsense that made me afraid. I can hold to that ladder as well as you, if I only choose.”

“To be sure. It is the best way, because, if one feels that way, one can’t fall.”

Emily had never done so much for herself before, and she felt a new sensation in doing it,—a new feeling of power over herself; and she began to think how much better the lively, active, energetic life of her young friend was, than her own miserable, dawdling existence hitherto.

The two girls took a very pleasant drive that morning. First to mill, where Pussy left a bag of corn to be ground into meal, and where Emily saw, for the

first time, the process of making flour. Emily admired the little cascade, with its foamy fall of dark water, that turned the old, black, dripping mill-wheel; she watched with somewhat awe-struck curiosity the great whirling stones that were going round and round, and the golden stream of meal that was falling from them. She noticed all along on the road that everybody knew Pussy, and had a smile and a word for her.

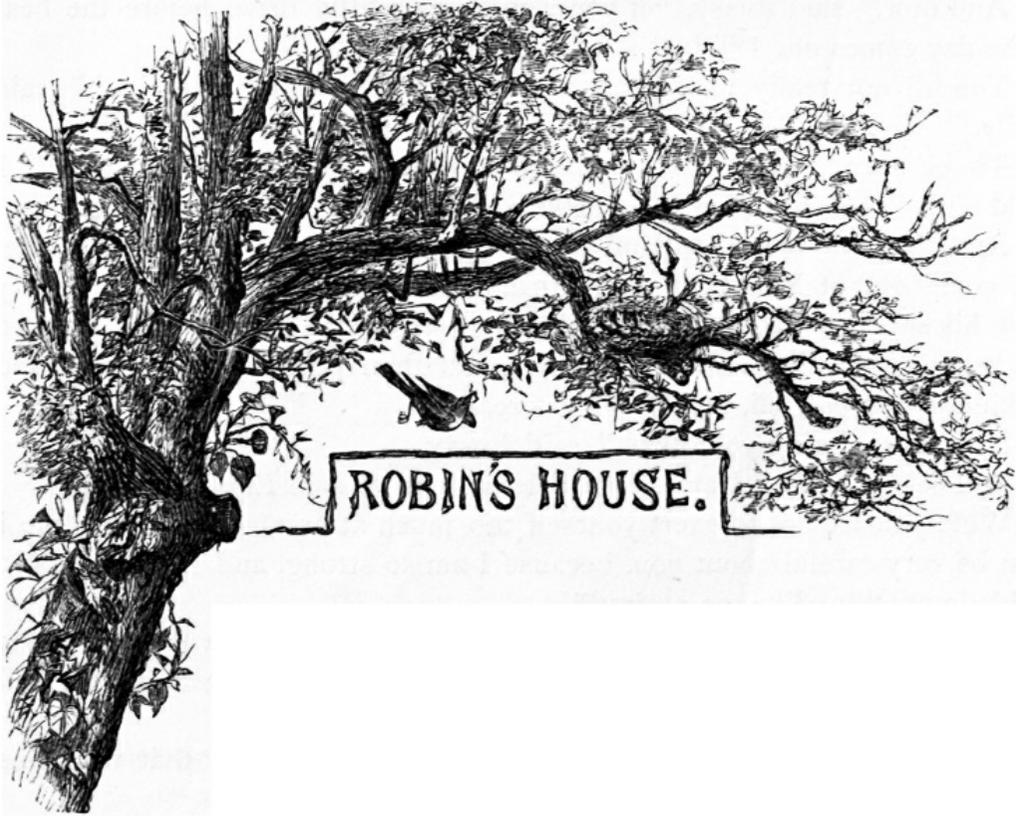
“O, here ye be!” said the old miller; “why I’m glad to see ye; it’s as good as sunshine any day to see you a comin’.” And in return, Pussy had inquiries for everybody’s health, and for all their employments and interests.

So the first day passed in various little country scenes and employments, and when Emily came to go to bed at night, although she felt very tired, she found that she had thought a great deal less of her ailments and troubles that day than common. She had eaten her meals with a wonderful appetite, and, before she knew it, at night was sound asleep.

Harriet Beecher Stowe.



ROBIN'S HOUSE.



“Where shall it be, Mrs. Robin,
This dear little house of ours?
What nook all cosey and shady,
And safe from the winds and showers?”

“Now you are mine, little lady,
My own little bonny bird-bride,
'T won't do to be roaming like gypsies
Over the world so wide.

“Come then, and we'll find in the meadow
Green branches so cool and deep,

Where I'll build you the daintiest palace,
And sing you to sweetest sleep."

Up glanced little fond Mrs. Robin,
With happy, approving look,
And away they flew over the valley,
Just stooping to drink at the brook.

"O, see what a beautiful maple!
Shall we build it, my lady, here?"
"No, no, it's too straight and stately;
It isn't our style, my dear."

"Ah! there is an elm, Mrs. Robin,
So graceful; now what do you say?
But that was too high and airy,
And onward they kept their way.

"Look, look! O, look, Mr. Robin!
For here is the very tree,
Bending its crooked old branches
Into crannies as snug as can be.

"And O what snow-flakes of blossoms,
Filling with sweetness the air!
And O what bluebells go climbing
And clustering everywhere!"

So merrily went the young robins
To work, like the busiest bees,
Gathering queer little hay-straws,
And odd little sticks from the trees.

And then they bent and they twisted,
As only the birds know how,
Till at last, all soft and downy,
In the kind old apple-bough

Was the clearest and daintiest palace,
The sweetiest and coseyest nest,
And a jubilant song filled the orchard

As the sun sank down in the west.

So, all through the June days, the breezes
Whisper their magic spells,
And nearer the bright morning-glory
Climbs, swinging its airy bells,

And five little blue eggs are nestled
Under the brooding wings,
And five little younglings are learning
The love-song Sir Robin sings.

So, slowly, and surely, and safely,
They grow 'neath that tender care,
Till they spring to the happy sunshine,
Into the glad, free air,

And five more pert young Red Breasts,
At the daylight's earliest peep,
Are chattering under our window,
To waken us out of our sleep.

L. G. W.



GOOD OLD TIMES: OR, GRANDFATHER'S STRUGGLE FOR A HOMESTEAD.

X.

As Cloutman was going into garrison, and must therefore leave his field to a great extent unwatched, he had bestowed extra labor on his fencing. The day before the occurrence we are about to relate he had "top-ridered" it all round with spruce-trees, leaving all the brush on them. This morning he was sowing grain, which was the last work he had to do before going into the fort.

The field was surrounded by woods in which the Indians had hidden themselves. Five of the strongest and most active concealed their guns in the woods, and, armed only with knives, prepared to grapple with him, and, if possible, take him alive, as they expected a large ransom, while the other three kept their arms, in order to shoot him rather than permit him to escape. Watching their opportunity, when his back was turned and he was sowing from them, they sprang towards him. Hearing the footsteps, he turned, and saw the great odds against him, and that they had got his rifle, which he had left at the end of the piece.

He instantly ran for Bryant's house; but when he came to the fence, which he had made so very high the day before, in attempting to leap it, he got tangled in the brush, and fell back. Once more he attempted it, with the same result. Cloutman was, like many men of great size and strength, deficient in agility. William McLellan or Bryant would have cleared it at a leap. Finding the Indians were upon him, he turned and faced them. He struck the first with his fist, with such force as to break his jaw, felled the second with a back-handed blow, and, catching up the third, flung him senseless upon the ground, and put his foot upon his neck. As he had his back to the fence, he would doubtless (such were his enormous strength and courage) have got the better of the whole of them, had not the others, coming up, presented their guns at his breast; seeing that further resistance was useless, he surrendered. Had he not fenced his field so well, he would have got to the Bryants', and saved himself and them.

Bryant was an exceedingly active man, a great wrestler, and very swift of

foot. He was wont to say that, in a two-mile race, he could outrun any Indian he ever saw. When the Indians came upon him, he, with his son, a lad of twelve years was fencing, having no gun with him. He told his son to hide himself in the woods, while he ran for the garrison. The Indians, knowing Bryant would alarm the garrison, pursued him at their utmost speed; but he ran like a deer, and distanced them in a moment. Seeing that he would escape, one of them fired and broke his arm.

As he was obliged to hold up the shattered arm with the other, they now rapidly gained upon him, nearly exhausted with loss of blood and with his efforts. He had reached the bank of a little brook that skirted the high ground upon which the garrison was built; a little farther and he would be in safety. As he summoned his failing strength to leap the brook, he heard the footsteps of his relentless foes. In that terrible moment he caught sight of one of his neighbors, Daniel Mosier, coming down the hill from the garrison, with a loaded gun on his shoulder. "Fire, Daniel, for God's sake, fire!" cried Bryant, with the energy of despair, as the footsteps of his pursuers came nearer.

But Mosier hesitated. A man of excellent capacity and character, and ever ready to do his part in all other respects, he yet lacked the nerve required to act up to the stern code of the settlers, which required every man to stand by his neighbor to the death. At the summons of Bryant, he levelled his rifle at the foremost Indian, who, seeing the motion, slacked his speed, which gave Bryant opportunity to leap the brook. In another moment he would have been in safety; but Mosier hesitated to pull the trigger. That hesitation was fatal to Bryant. The two savages—who were armed only with knife and tomahawk, having thrown aside their rifles to run—saw it, and, leaping the brook, buried their weapons in his skull. One of them then, placing his knee on the dead man's breast, and taking hold of the hair upon the top of the head, lifted the head up a little way from the ground; he then made a circular cut with his knife around the roots of the hair, and, taking hold of the raw edge with his teeth, tore off the scalp. It was the work of but an instant to him, made familiar with it by long practice.

Mosier returned to relate the tale to the inmates of the garrison, by whom his failure to fire was never either forgotten or forgiven. As for the Indians, they hastened to join the rest in completing their work of vengeance at Bryant's house.

The boy ran through the woods for McLellan's, but, fearing that the Indians would overtake him, plunged into the brook, thrusting his head under the roots of a tree that grew on the edge of the bank, while his body was immersed to the neck, and concealed by the bank. The Indians, coming to the brook and losing his track, did not search narrowly for him, as they were eager to plunder the house, and destroy the rest of the family.

Bryant, when he left home, had charged his wife to keep the children near the house, and not permit them to go ranging about in the woods. In order to do this, she had promised them, if they would stay round the door, that they should have some maple syrup, and boil it down to sugar. She had just gone down cellar, through a trap-door in the floor, to get it for them, telling them, as they attempted to follow her, that if they didn't stay up stairs they shouldn't have a drop. Thus debarred from following, they all got down on their knees, at the mouth of the hole, trying to peep down to see where their mother put it, and what she kept it in, and how much she had. Thus the devoted family were all together on the floor.

Scarcely had she disappeared in the cellar, when the savages, finding the door unfastened, rushed into the room. The children at the sight of these demons set up a cry of horror; the mother thrust her head up the trap, when she beheld the chief of the band, a gigantic savage, his hands red with blood, and the scalp of her husband at his belt. He instantly slammed the door down upon her head, and stood on it, while the rest proceeded to the work of slaughter.

Maddened by the screams of her children, perishing beneath the tomahawks of the savages, the mother made frantic efforts to lift the door, but in vain. In a few moments the cries ceased. The door was thrown open, and the mother beheld the elder children mangled and scalped, lying in their blood upon the floor. While the miserable woman gazed upon this heartrending sight, an Indian, in whom she recognized the one upon whom more than a year before she had flung the hot suds, was in the act of drawing the babe from its cradle by the feet; swinging the little creature around his head, the cruel monster dashed out its brains against the stone jambs of the fireplace, and threw it on the bed. With a mother's instinct the poor woman rushed to the bed, caught the mangled form in her arms, and pressed it to her bosom.

While she was thus engaged, the chief whose prisoner she was, passing a thong of deer-skin over her arms, pinioned them to her side. No sooner was this done, than the savage who had destroyed the babe, snatching it from her grasp, flung it into a kettle of boiling water that hung over the fire, exclaiming in hellish glee, "Hot water good for Indian dogs, good for pappoose too." He then danced before her, snapping his bloody fingers in her face, and, pointing to the bloody scalp at his companion's belt, assured her it was that of her husband. He then raised his hatchet to cleave her skull; but it was instantly wrested from his hand by the big Indian, who, enraged at this attempt to rob him of his captive, flung the other with great violence against the wall of the house. The Indians were very fond at this period of taking female captives, whom they sold for servants into French families; and as our grandmothers were excellent housewives, they were always in request in Quebec and Montreal. The Indians now ransacked the house, and, taking the guns, powder,

and bullets, with what provisions they could carry, the wretched mother, and the fresh scalps of her butchered household, they hurried to the woods.

Meanwhile, the McLellans were busily at work. William, with one gun upon his shoulder and another fastened to the top of the yoke, drove the cattle and harrowed in the grain which his father scattered upon the smoking furrows of the virgin soil, filled with fertilizing ashes and the mould of decayed forests. The birds sang overhead, and the robins followed the harrow to pick up the grubs and worms which it dislodged from the dead bark of the old stumps, and all seemed peaceful and propitious. The children and their mother were no less busy at home. Elizabeth was sitting in the door, spinning linen thread. The children were making a garden in the sun at the door; Abigail was digging up the ground with a hoe, and Mary with a butcher-knife. Alexander had fastened one of his father's shoes to Bose's tail, and was pulling him by the neck and trying to make him draw it along. But all Bose would do was to wag his tail back and forth, and thus twitch the shoe from one side to the other, licking the child's face between whiles.

"Mother," cried Abigail, "do make Cary come into the house; he keeps getting right on to my hoe, so that I can't plant my beans."

"Ma, I can't hoe one mite!"

Just as Elizabeth rose from her wheel to see to the children, she heard the report of the gun that was fired at Bryant. She then told Abigail to go up to Bryant's and see what that gun was fired for. Now there was nothing Abigail loved better than to go to Bryant's and get with their children. But she remembered the alarm of the last night and was afraid to go, and went and hid in the brush. After some time had passed, her mother, finding she had not been, boxed her ears, and sent her off. The little girl went on her way, but reached the house just after the Indians had gone. She heard them talking in the woods as they went.

As she came up to the house, Sarah Jane, whom the Indians had scalped and left for dead, lay right in the door, with her raw and bloody head sticking out at it. She knew Abigail, and in a faint voice asked her to give her a drink of water. But the child was too much frightened to heed; she ran for home, and when she reached there fainted at the threshold. Her mother put her on the bed, and threw some cold water in her face. She revived, said "Indians," and fainted again. Elizabeth instantly blew the horn, barred the doors, and loaded the two guns that were in the house.

The moment the sound of the horn was heard in the field, William, reaching over the shoulder of the nigh ox, unhooked the chain, and, without stopping to unyoke them, he and his father seized their guns, and ran for the house. When they reached the house, they found it fastened, and Elizabeth at the loop-hole with a gun. The child by this time was able to tell what she had

seen. They knew not but the garrison was surprised, and all in it, together with the other neighbors, killed. They drew water, filled all their vessels, and prepared for a siege. "If they master our scalps," said Hugh to his son, "they shall cost them dear, and not while this powder holds out."

The men in the garrison had been told by Mosier of Bryant's slaughter; but being few in number, and not knowing how great the force of the Indians might be, they remained within the walls, only firing the alarm gun to warn the neighboring garrisons that there were Indians around.

The McLellans kept watch that day and the following night. At noon the next day a body of men were seen coming over what is now called the Academy Hill. At first they took them for Indians, and prepared themselves for an attack; but they proved to be rangers from Portland going to the fort. They had heard the alarm gun, and hastened to the rescue.

They came to the house, where they were gladly welcomed. William went to the field, and found the oxen feeding near where they had been left. Loading their things on a drag, they then went to the garrison. They now, with the inmates of the fort, began to investigate the fate of their neighbors.

Proceeding to Bryant's house, they found the dead body of the eldest daughter still lying in the door-way, over the sill of the door, whither she had crawled in her death-agony, perhaps in the vain attempt to follow her mother. The Indians had taken the blankets from the beds, and what bread was baked, and left the marks of their bloody fingers on the milk-shelves that Mrs. Bryant had taken so much pride in keeping as white as soap and sand could make them. "By the living God!" exclaimed Edmund Phinney, "if we don't revenge this accursed butchery, we don't deserve the name of men."

They found the body of Bryant lying on the side of the brook, and, not finding that of Mrs. Bryant or Stephen, concluded that they had been carried away captive. In Cloutman's field, they saw the marks of a desperate struggle, but found no blood. At the brook, they found the chain Reed had flung from his shoulder, and in the mud evident traces of his struggle. While they were looking at the trail, Bose, who had been shut up in the fort, came tearing through the woods, and in an instant rooted out from among the leaves an Indian belt, part of Reed's shirt that had been torn off in the scuffle, and a bunch of deer-skin thongs.

"That dog," said Captain Bean, the leader of the rangers, looking on with admiration, "is worth his weight in gold. What will you take for him, my boy?"

"Sell Bose!" cried William. "I would as soon sell my soul."

"It is as plain as day now," said the Captain. "They waylaid Reed here, and bound him,—these are some of the thongs they had left; and they have taken Cloutman, and Bryant's wife, and the oldest boy, and made tracks for Canada. I believe this dog will find their trail."

“That he will,” said William. “He would track a humming-bird from one thistle to another.”

They instantly put Bose on the trail, and he tracked them to the place where they had collected their captives; they saw the footprints of Reed, Cloutman, and Mrs. Bryant, but not of the boy; they therefore concluded that he had been shot in the woods. But while they were debating about it, he made his appearance. Bose led them to the bank of Little River, where the trail was lost. It was evident that they had here entered the water, which threw the dog off the scent; and as it was now dark, they were obliged to relinquish the pursuit for the night.

With the dawn of day, the rangers were on the track. The whole forenoon was consumed in regaining the trail, so artfully had it been concealed by the savages. It was then manifest that they had too much the start to be pursued with any hope of rescuing the captives, and the pursuit was reluctantly abandoned. Deep and general was the sympathy manifested when Stephen Bryant was brought by the scouting party to the fort. The poor boy had remained up to his neck in mud and water till nearly dark. He then crept from his hiding-place, and concealed himself in a hollow tree that grew near the bank of the brook, where he remained till he recognized the voices of William and Hugh among those who were searching for Reed.

As he stood amongst them, pale, covered with mud, and the rotten wood from the tree, which stuck to his wet clothing, his face scratched with briars, and bearing the traces of recent tears, every heart yearned over him.

“Have the Indians gone?” was the first question of the bewildered boy, upon whose mind the impress of those horrible forms still remained vivid.

Being told that they were gone, he then said, “I want to go home; I want to see my mother.”

At this declaration there was not a dry eye among the inmates of the fort, who, from the youngest to the oldest, were grouped around him.

“Your mother is not there,” at length said Elizabeth, “the Indians have taken her to Canada.”

“Did they kill my father?”

“Yes.”

“I was afraid they had; I heard the gun when I was running through the woods. Where are my brothers and sisters?”

“They are dead.”

“Where is the baby?”

“That is gone, too.”

“Did mother carry it with her?”

“No, the Indians killed it.”

“The little baby?”

“Yes.”

“Then I’ve no father, mother, brothers, or sisters. There’s no place for me to go to, and nobody to take care of me,” said the desolate boy, bursting into tears.

“God bless you! you poor little soul, you,” cried Elizabeth, taking him into her motherly lap and kissing the tears from his cheeks, while her own fell fast and mingled with his. “I’ll be a mother to you; we’ll all be your mothers! You shall come and live with us, and as long as God gives me a crust you shall have half of it!”

Elizabeth now set herself to provide some food for him, as he was nearly famished, having been two days without eating. In the mean time Daniel Mosier’s wife washed his face, and washed and combed out his hair, which was all matted together, and filled with mud and leaves and dust from the rotten tree, for he had lost his cap in running from the Indians. She then put some clean clothes of her son James on him.

While he was eating, Abigail drew her mother one side, and asked her if she might give Stephen her tame crow. She said he felt so bad she wanted to give him something. There was nothing Abigail valued so much as her crow, and she knew no other way of showing her sympathy.

His hunger being satisfied, Hugh took him by the hand, and led him to view the remains of his father and brothers and sisters, which, having been cleansed from blood and filth, were laid out in one of the flankers. They then put the poor child, worn out with fright, sorrow, and fatigue, to bed; and as he seemed fearful of being left alone, Mrs. Mosier lay down with him, and soothed him till he fell asleep.

The stern necessities of their situation left the settlers little time for grief or despondency. Their crops must be put in, and the Indians, made bold by success, would doubtless return as soon as they had disposed of their captives, and received the bounty for their scalps. The government now furnished them with eleven soldiers to assist in procuring food and defending the garrison. These soldiers, dressed in Indian fashion, were armed with rifle, tomahawk, and scalping-knife, and were most of them old hunters, accustomed to Indian fighting, and eager for Indian scalps, for which the government gave a bounty. They had a corporal of their own, and were under the command of Captain Phinney. A good part of their time was employed in scouting through the woods, in order to keep the Indians at bay, while the people were at work in their fields.

The men now labored in squads; they would all go to one field and hoe the corn, or gather the harvest, and then to another, being thus so strong in numbers, part keeping watch while the others worked, and all having their arms with them, as to bid defiance to the Indians.

The restless savages, secreting themselves in the woods in such a manner as to elude the vigilance of the scouts, prowled around the garrison, watching the opportunity, when the men were at work and the soldiers away, to get in and kill the women and children. Some two months after the attack on Bryant's family, Elizabeth and Mrs. Watson were bringing water from the spring to wash, the men being away at work; as the gate to the stockade was heavy, they left it open when they went in, not closing it till they came out again. All at once Bose, who was asleep in the sun before the gate, jumped up, ran into the yard, and began to growl; Elizabeth, who had just taken up the pail to go after another "turn," instantly pushed to the gate, and fastened it. "There are Indians round," she said to her companion, "we shall have to do without water to-day."

"Perhaps he smells some wild creature," replied Mrs. Watson; "the woods are full of them."

"What is it, old dog?" said Elizabeth;—"Indians?"

Bose at the word "Indians" drew back his lips, and showed all his teeth, looking ugly enough. "There, I don't want any plainer language than that! Let us go up in the watch-box. They saw the gate open, and meant to get in. If they come near enough, I'll shoot one of them."

The two women went up to the watch-box over the flanker, and looked long and patiently. At length Elizabeth said, "See that bush move; there is an Indian behind that bush."

"It is the wind," said Mrs. Watson.

"There is no wind," was the reply.

"Perhaps the cattle are rubbing against it."

At that moment an Indian rose and peeped cautiously over the bush, looking at the fort. Mrs. Watson gave a little scream, but it was drowned in the report of the gun Elizabeth fired. The men were soon at the fort; she went with them to the bush, behind which a large pool of blood was found, and a trail showing that the savage had been carried off by his companions.

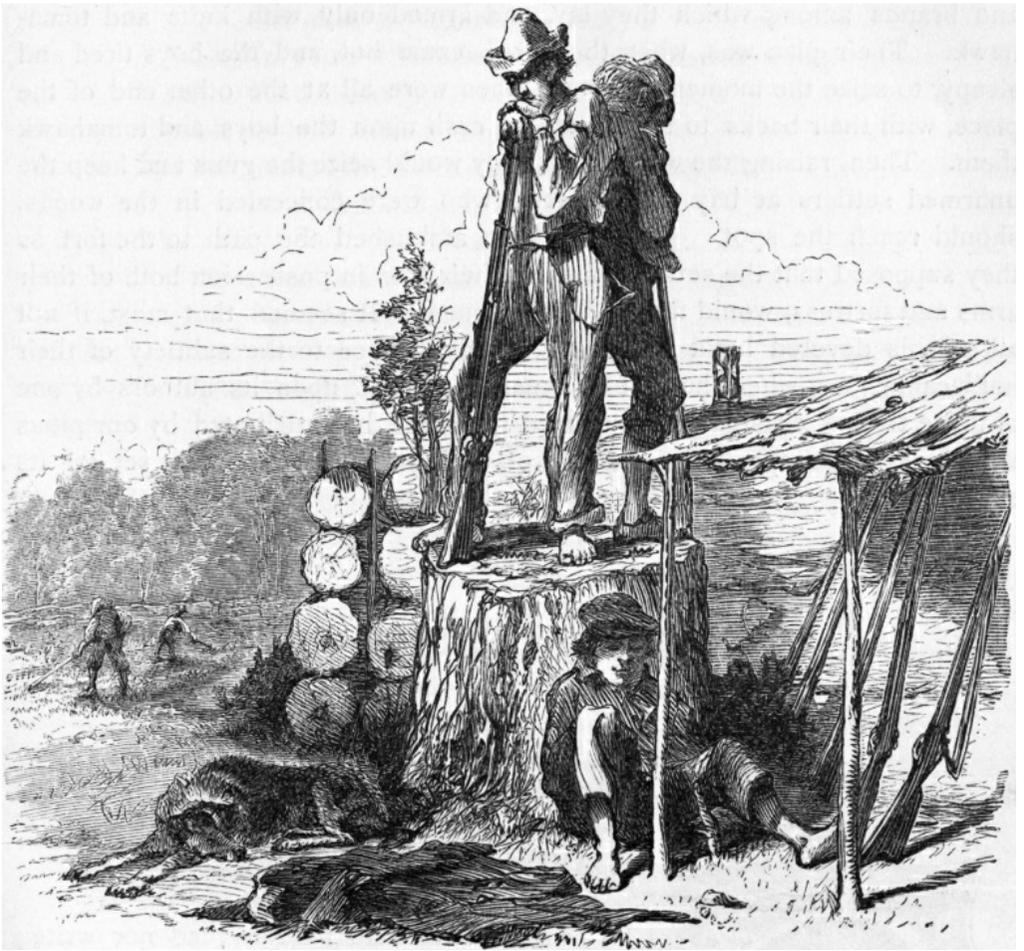
That night Captain Phinney's old "line-backed" cow and a heifer did not come home with the rest of the cattle. The next morning Edmund Phinney went to look after them. The Indians, who had killed the cattle, fired upon him, breaking his left arm, and wounding him in two other places. Getting behind a tree, he took his gun in his right hand, and, by retreating from one tree to another, kept them at bay till a party who had heard the firing came out from the fort to meet him. There was no doctor in the fort, and, wounded as he was in three places, Eliphalet Watson and a hunter by the name of Thorn went on foot to Portland with him to have his wounds dressed.

During the following years, the settlers were gradually reduced to the

greatest distress for bread and clothing. It was so dangerous working the land, and so much time was consumed in guarding against the Indians, that they could raise but little. Sometimes there was not more than two quarts of boiled wheat in the fort. The Indians burnt up the mill, and they had to pound all their corn in a mortar, and boil their grain, and eat it so. Their oxen and cows were killed, and as they were not able to plough their old fields, nor to keep down the weeds and sprouts from the stumps, but were obliged to raise crops on burns, (since they could do that after a fashion without cattle,) the fields went back in a great measure to a state of nature, and their hay-crop was nearly destroyed. They were obliged, at the greatest peril of life, to resort to hunting for food, and to clothe themselves with the skins of beasts, and all, from the highest to the lowest, wore moccasins. Hugh and Elizabeth, no novices in the school of adversity, resorted to all their old expedients for procuring food, and she, laying aside her wheel, began again to dress deer-skins.

At this period, his father and the rest having gone to hunt, William was hoeing corn alone. Leaning his gun against a stub some ten feet high at the corner of the piece, he began to hoe the outside row, next to the bushes. Casting a look at the other end of the row, he saw through the bushes the face of Conuwass, one of his Indian playfellows. He then began to hoe backwards, as if to do his work better, till he got the stub between him and the Indian; then, seizing his gun, he crawled behind a windfall, and lay in ambush, with his finger on the trigger. Presently the Indian came creeping through the bushes that skirted the edge of the corn, to the foot of the stub, and, rising cautiously up, looked around it, exposing a good part of his body. William instantly fired, calling out at the same moment, "Conuwass, you no shoot young Bill this time!" The Indian, clapping his hand on the wound, ran into the woods, exclaiming, "Bill, you shoot him well this time." The good old gun-barrel with which William shot the Indian is now in the possession of Colonel Hugh D. McLellan of Gorham.

The settlers, continually harassed by the Indians, who were spread over the whole frontier, from the Kennebec to Wells, cleared a large field on Bryant's and Cloutman's lands, which they planted and sowed in common. In the middle of this great field, out of gun-shot from the woods or the log fence, they raised their crops. Here also they made a breastwork of logs, behind which they might take shelter if the Indians should attack them in force.



In the middle of this breastwork stood a large stump, upon which they placed two boys, a little and a big one, back to back, as sentries. The guns were set up against the breastwork, over one corner of which was a bark roof as a shelter in case of a shower, and to keep the guns dry. The boys were relieved every hour, a half-hour glass placed on the top of the breastwork serving to divide the time. Some of the boys who were lazy, and had rather keep guard than hoe, were not very prompt about turning it.

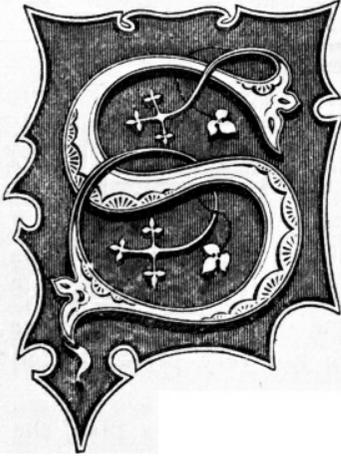
Foiled by this arrangement, the savages at length hit upon a plan, the ingenuity of which was only equalled by its audacity. Within twenty feet of the gate of the breastwork was a large rock, the northwest side of which was perpendicular, and about breast-high. Some half-burnt logs had been set up endways against this, one end of which rested against the top of the rock, the other on the ground. Small stumps and brush had been from time to time flung upon this in clearing the land, and among these rotting logs, blackberry and

gooseberry bushes had grown up, completely darkening the cavity underneath. Into this hole four Indians had crept during the latter part of the night, their bodies naked to the breech-clout, and painted with smut and bear's grease, the better to harmonize with the burnt logs and brands among which they lay, and armed only with knife and tomahawk. Their plan was, when the sun became hot, and the boys tired and sleepy, to seize the moment when the men were all at the other end of the piece, with their backs to the stump, to rush upon the boys and tomahawk them. Then, raising the war-whoop, they would seize the guns and keep the unarmed settlers at bay till the rest, who were concealed in the woods, should reach the spot. They had also ambushed the path to the fort, as they supposed that the settlers, finding their foes in possession both of their arms and fortress, would flee to the garrison. It seemed that most, if not all, of this devoted band must now fall a sacrifice to the subtlety of their implacable foes, when the plot was made to recoil upon its authors by one of those trifling circumstances termed fortunate, but attributed by our pious ancestors to the special providence of God, at the very moment set for its execution.

Elijah Kellogg.



SIR AYLMER'S LAST FIGHT.



Sir Aylmer was a doughty knight
As ever buckled steel.
To be sure, he could neither read nor write;
But his mail-clad arm had a brawny might
I should not like to feel.
Sir Aylmer had been to the Holy Land;
And, with many a weighty blow,
Had cut down scores of Saracens,—
How many, I do not know.
He had fought in many a furious fray,
And given such heavy thwacks,
That over they rolled, those knights of old,
To match his sinews over-bold,

Stark stiff upon their backs.
His lance would spit a warrior through,
As a cook would truss a fowl,
And his battle-axe crack a head in two
With no more trouble, nor more ado,
Than it might a wassail-bowl.
He could eat and drink as well as fight,
And yet I fain must say
That after the sack his head was light,
And he did not seem to be so bright
As after the grand *mêlée*.
But in those old times 'twas a common thing,
And nobody cared at all.
Sir Aylmer was a tough old blade,
As titled gentlemen then were made,
And honored his ancient hall.

The day was fair, and the sun was high,
As Sir Aylmer galloped along.
He was bound for the tourney. Before the king,
The knights were to gather within the ring,
A gay and gallant throng.

If you wish to know what a tourney was,
You must read it in Ivanhoe.
The glittering armor, the waving crest,
The swinging mace, and the lance at rest,
That wonderful tale will show.

Sir Aylmer had reached his private tent
In stern and warlike mood.
He settled his harness on his back,
And quaffed a quart or two of sack
To cool his heated blood.
The court was there; and ladies came
And ranged themselves around.
In times of old, the noble dames
Enjoyed those downright, muscular games:
They did not faint, nor shriek, nor cry,
To see some dozen gentlemen lie
All smashed upon the ground.
Their interest was to see, and know
'Twas the work of their particular beau
Whose arm had dealt the crushing blow.
No prudish fear their nerves would show
At any unusual pound.
Sir Aylmer strode within his tent,
And grimly sat him down.
Outside, there hung his blazoned shield,
A bull's head on a crimson field,—
Of wide and proud renown.
It was the custom, in that game,
That whatsoever champion came
To touch the shield, with sword or spear,
The owner must in arms appear
To meet, in sport or deadly fight,
As should become a valiant knight,
And then the breeze would bear afar
The clamor of the mimic war.
Then smash would go the iron mace,
And clattering fall the sword;
Till chopped and banged and beat about,
All human semblance battered out,
They tumbled on the sward.
But still it was the fashion then:

But still it was the fashion then.

These were the sports of gentlemen,
As chronicles record.

Sir Aylmer waited for his chance,
Armed cap-a-pie, with sword and lance,
When through the lists there rode along
A warrior through the glittering throng,
His horse, the armor that he wore,
His waving crest, the shield he bore,
All snowy white. None knew his name,
Nor when, nor whence, nor why he came
And as he rode, by one consent
All stopped to view him. On he went,
Up to Sir Aylmer's pennoned tent,
As though on special purpose bent
All silent as the grave he rode.
What might that wondrous sight forebode?
His steed appeared with velvet shod,
For no one heard him as he trod.
No clank of mail could any hear.
'Twas strange, that rider's still career!
Before Sir Aylmer's tent he stayed,
And drew a strangely fashioned blade,
That like a scythe was bent,
And touched the shield; but yet no sound
Reached them who, gazing, stood around,
Rapt in astonishment.

Sir Aylmer buckled his harness tight,
For, wonder at this as well he might,
The challenge he must meet.
Yet, brave as he was, I fain must say
A shudder came over him on that day,
And he shook on his steel-ribbed seat;
But forth he rode with the stranger knight,
And drew his trusty blade,
That many a time, in fatal strife,
Had taken Christian and Paynim life,
And terrible havoc made.
The king and the nobles and ladies there,
And all the motley crowd.

They looked with a strange, unearthly fear
As the champions of the lists drew near,
 And spoke ne'er a word aloud.
And then the sound of the trumpet came,
 Like the blast of the judgment day,
And bold Sir Aylmer grasped his brand,
As he heard the note, and nerved his hand
 The mandate to obey.
His ponderous sword he raised at length,
And struck, with all a giant's strength,
 Full at the snowy crest.
Through man and horse it sheared its way.
No plaited mail that blow could stay,
 No shield its weight arrest.
Through helm and corslet went the blade
One long and trenchant sweep it made,
 Down through the stranger knight.

O mighty arm! O trusty steel!
That such a skilful blow could deal
 With such terrific might.
But could it be? They rubbed their eyes
And gazed in wonder-struck surprise,
 And so indeed would you.
The cloven knight received the blow
Like a pin-prick; nor seemed to know
 That he was sliced in two.
Quick as a flash *his* weapon went,
As 'twere a bolt from heaven sent,
 A touch,—and it was o'er.
And yet Sir Aylmer reeled and fell.
The doughty knight who struck so well,
Whose prowess many a tongue could tell,
 Would lift his sword no more.
They, wondering, bore his corse along;
And where the wassail, laugh, and song
Had nightly echoed, late and long,
 There in his castle hall
His stalwart form in state they laid.
The guests they drank and the monks they prayed;
And then with a vulgar pick and spade

For the proud old warrior a bed they made,
So low, that he never by mortal aid
 Would rouse at the trumpet call.

The stranger knight, he went away;
But where he went none ever could say.
 And yet, I believe we all
Shall hear his challenge at our tent;
A summons to that struggle sent
Where all our strength is vainly spent,
 Where all must surely fall.

Charles J. Sprague.



THE SEA AND ITS SWIMMERS.

At the close of our "Swimming" chapter we were on the starboard tack, in a heavy gale of wind. Five days and nights it blew very hard, but towards midnight of the fifth night there were signs that the gale was about to break. The wind began to whistle and shriek through the blocks and running-rigging, and this is regarded at sea as a pretty sure token that the force of a gale is nearly spent. There was one chance, however, to which we looked with a good deal of anxiety. Gales from the east and southeast in the North Atlantic are often the precursors of still heavier weather from the northwest. The wind lulls suddenly and chops about. A break in the clouds no bigger than a man's hand is seen upon the northwestern horizon, and the wind comes away from that quarter a regular screamer. "Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind." If things had taken this course at that time, I do not think I should be now writing this article, for our ship would probably have foundered; no boat could have lived in the cross-sea, and no swimming so far from the land would have been of service. But the gale died away suddenly, and was not succeeded by a northwester.

At twelve o'clock the next day there was hardly any wind at all, and the sky was clear. But the sea still ran high, and there being no wind to fill the sails and steady the ship, she pitched and walloped about very hard. Every time her head went down, it seemed to go lower and stay longer than before. So the going down of the gale in that manner increased, rather than diminished, our present danger, and we were like to have gone down with it. She seemed to be getting more by the head. A consultation was held by the captain, the mates, and the carpenter, and they resolved that, in order to save her, it was necessary to lighten her by the head. Overboard went everything belonging to the ship that could be spared,—butts of water, spare anchors, &c. Then came the cargo's turn. I had nearly gone over myself while we were unlashng the spare anchors. The vessel shipped a heavy sea over the weather bow, and it swept half a dozen of us to leeward with resistless force. At such times sailors always grab for that which is the dread of the desperately wicked,—a rope. We all got hold of something. I caught the standing part of the jib halyards, and hung on until my arms cracked in their sockets. A purchase was now rigged, the fore hatches ripped off, and we broke out the krang-jangs of fine white sugar, five hundred-weight each. Over they went, and, as they floated lazily away, I thought what a prize some of them would have been to the poor people on the

coast of Donegal, off which we were. I suppose we hove over about fifty tons. It had a good effect. Instead of rooting down like a hog, the ship rose buoyantly, and we went to the pumps with more satisfaction.

The next day we spoke a brig from Liverpool, bound to the Mauritius. The gale which had driven us so far to the north and west of the chops of the Channel had forced her to come out by what is called "north about,"—that is, instead of coming by the south end of Ireland, Cape Clear, she had come round the north end, and between that island and the Western Highlands of Scotland. She gave us a couple of bags of bread and some tobacco, which was hardly less prized, as we had been without any, and smoking burnt coffee, coarsely crushed, for some time. It is not a bad substitute, and tea is another tolerably good one; but nothing at all equals the pipe of good Cavendish to the tired sailor.

Soon after, we made the Irish land, the coast of Donegal, and, sailing along it, let go our anchor in the roads at Tory Island. Here we got store of fine, big, mealy potatoes in exchange for sugar and coffee. We were liberal in barter, although the property did not belong to us; but then our sinews, at the pumps for above a hundred days, had brought this leaky ship and her valuable freight into port. Our tariff was a bucketful of sugar and half a bucketful of coffee for a bushel of potatoes. The islanders traded readily on these terms. They also offered poteen, but we had had a liberal allowance of East India arrack all the passage, and we liked that better. I could say a good deal as to the effect of six glasses of strong arrack every day, both in preserving health in the deadly harbor of Batavia, and in enabling us to stand the terrible strain at the pumps, week after week and month after month, in addition to the regular duty of working ship. But there is much objection to strong liquors, even in trying times, and it is not for me to make any argument or excuse for them.

We left Tory Island three times before we succeeded in getting through the passage between the Mull of Kintyre and the Mull of Galloway, being forced back twice by the current. The Scottish coast here is grand to behold. The Western Highlands, mountain on mountain and peak on peak, all crowned at that season with snow, were glorious to see. The Paps of Jura, three lofty peaks, dominated the whole. We passed the Cock of Arran, to put into the Clyde. As we entered the Firth, the steamer Admiral, from Greenock for Liverpool, was coming out. She hove to while we ascertained how much our ship leaked per hour, in order that she might take the news to the owners and underwriters. There were no telegraphs then. The amount of leakage was ascertained by sucking the pumps dry, removing the boxes, and finding, by means of an iron sounding-rod covered with chalk, how many inches of water came in in five minutes. It was three inches; therefore the ship made three feet an hour, in depth, and she was a hundred and forty feet long. With nobody at

the pumps, a very few hours would have seen her water-logged, and in a sinking condition. At Greenock she was partly unladen, and taken on the ways, and then the falsity of the diver at the Cocos was made apparent. Her forefoot was not knocked off at all; but her starboard bow had been sent with such force against the steep coral rock that it started a butt in the planking, not far under the water. It was, indeed, sometimes out of the water when she careened very low to port, and this was how it was that she could be kept free by the pumps, on the starboard tack, but not upon the larboard tack, in the five days' gale.

To come back to swimming, instead of sailing, if you want to know how to use your limbs in learning to swim, watch a frog in the water. The stroke of a man, in the best, easiest, and most lasting method, is as much like the frog's as can be. The frog in his stroke spreads his arms and legs wide outside of him while flat in or on the water. So does the man. The dog, the horse, the ox, swim in a different manner, pawing the water beneath them as it were. Now some people say that the dog method, or the Italian method, which resembles it, is the best way for a man to swim; but I think the dog only swims that way because the oar-like method, with which the frog and the man use their feet and hands, is impossible to him. He is so tied in at the shoulder and elbow, that the oar-like stroke is impossible to him. You can stretch out your arm to its full length sideways, with the palm of the hand behind, whether in the water or out of it. A dog cannot do so with his paw, and therefore he is confined to the forward and downward stroke, while you can make the side-stroke with both arms at once, the palms of your hands and the soles of your feet being the blades of four oars which shove you along. I could never tell how the otter swims, though I have often seen them in the streams; for they dive so suddenly and swiftly that I could not catch their action. I suppose it resembles that of the dog and the water-rat. I once saw an otter in Michigan swim above half a mile with his head out of the water. He went so swift, and left such a wake behind him, that I thought at first it was a line of ducks. He was near the farther bank of a wide river, swimming against the stream, too far off to shoot at with any chance of killing with a duck-gun, and too far off for his leg action in the water to be seen; so I sat down and watched him. I saw him land, and a fine big fellow he was,—a dog otter, no doubt, for so the male is called.

Soon after I brought the prairie-wolf and silver-gray fox from Iowa, and presented them to the Central Park, I had the promise of an otter or two from the lakes and streams in the northern part of that State. The people in authority at the Park, however, seemed to think that it would be a great favor to me, to construct a proper tank and house for the otters my Iowa friends and myself proposed to give them. Now I did not think so; and therefore I wrote to the trappers to let the young ones roam and swim as free as their own wild waters, at least until their skins were worth a reasonable price. The otter is a desperate

fighter, and always dies silent, like a thorough-bred bull-dog. The female is as brave and devoted to her young as any animal I know of. The following anecdote of an English female otter is strictly true. A cub was taken on the Cary Water, near Ashwater in Devon, and carried to Hayne, where it was placed in a large tub in the stable yard. Early in the morning, the spur of the old otter was tracked round the yard by the keeper, Blatchford, and the marks of her teeth were visible on the tub, where she had tried to force an opening. She had taken the line of the men who had captured her cub, and had come a distance of eight miles across country, accompanied by another cub. The latter remained in a large pool in the grounds of Hayne, situated in the dense wood under St. Hubert's Hall. The small hounds of Mr. William Eastcott, of Norton, were soon on her line, and, leaving the cub, marked her in the Headweir Pool, under Town Wood; at that place they were joined by the warranted otter hounds of Mr. Newton of Millaton, and then ensued a long chase by Eastlake Wood, Lower Mill, and Thorntleford, to Patshill, turning into a little rivulet under Orchard, which the otter followed to its source, breaking away over Orchard Common to Combbow Wood, and then reaching the Taw River. Going down stream rapidly, passing Lower Trenchard below Raddon, and on to Leigh, she got into the deep pools of the Lyd by Sydenham, and was left towards nightfall in a strong hover between the Warren and Whiteleigh. That same night she was again at Hayne, in the stable-yard, and was found the following morning in the river, going away, as the day before, up stream. Four or five couples of hounds, however, having been sent forward to Thorntleford Bridge to come down stream, in order to meet the body of the pack, the otter was forced into the open, but succeeded in reaching the mill beat, passing Borfootbridge, going through the wilderness at Hayne, and was captured in the large pool under Babriball Wood. She was given her liberty with her cub late at night, and the next day they were traced up the bed of a shallow rivulet by Rowden over Bradymore to Down Mill, by Shallowford, breaking ground over Downicary Moor to Tower Hill and the Cary Waters, whence the cub had been taken.

Some have said that the otter can swim as fast as a salmon, which is a very swift fish; but that is a mistake. I think he is as fast in the water as any quadruped, unless it be the beaver; but the salmon can swim three or four feet to his one. I think the swiftest fish that I have seen is the dolphin, when in chase of a shoal of flying-fish. In the tropical seas I have often gone on to the foretopsail-yard to watch them, as they hunted their prey through the waters. Their appearance is very beautiful. They are of a bright green, in the dark blue waters, and dart ahead like an arrow loosed from a strong bow. When on deck, dying, their color changes quickly, and they present a rich golden or bronzed shade, mingled with purple and green. The dolphin is fair eating, but not as

good as his particular friends the bonita and albercore, which hunt the flying-fish also. Persecuted by these swift fish in the water, and by sea-fowl whenever they rise out of it, the flying-fish have a hard time, yet their numbers are very great.

The albercore is a very large and fast fish. I was once nearly dragged off the bowsprit-head by one. I was sitting on the heel of the jib-boom, dangling a line in the water, which had been rigged for catching dolphin or bonita. The way is to bait the hook with a piece of white rag, or a bit of tin, and just let it play up and down with the heaving motion of the ship, sometimes on the top of the water, and then in the air again, like the flying-fish. I had this line in hand, carelessly, when a monstrous albercore took the hook with a tremendous rush, and, if the line had not parted, I should have gone overboard. The second mate was looking on, and said, "If the hook had held, you would have caught a mighty big fish." "No," I answered; "if it had held, the fish would have caught me."

The shark is not fast, so far as I have observed. He seems to be a lazy, sluggish sort of fish. It is curious that the real deep-sea shark is always attended by one or two little fish, about four or five inches long, beautifully barred across the back like the zebra. These are called pilot-fish, and they swim about the head of the shark, and pilot him to his prey.

Since, in the former article, I gave it as my opinion that the shark is afraid of a man in the water, and will avoid him while he keeps in motion, I have had a conversation on that point with a gentleman whose experience is as large as mine. He is a civil engineer, a man of fine attainments, who has sailed and travelled much, and had many stirring adventures. He is a good diver, and owns the diving-bells which are used in New York harbor. He has never known a shark to attack a man in motion, nor has he ever met with a man who did know of such a case from personal observation.

At one time this gentleman was much in the Bahama Islands, and putting on a diving-helmet, which came to his waist, he used to go down in water from ten to twenty feet deep, and collect rare specimens of the coral which is found in such beautiful and various shapes in those waters. Once, while thus employed, a large shark came towards him. He sat down on a rock and presented the point of the harpoon he always carried in these marine explorations, and waited to see what the shark would do. The shark poised himself as if for a dart. There was no action of his fins or tail, and there he was motionless. He did not like the look of the helmeted man at the bottom of the shallow sea, and, after a good survey, he sheered off in quest of something whose shape he could understand. This same gentleman once walked across a bayou on the back of an alligator that was eighteen feet long. He killed him, too, and has his skull.

He was out shooting in the southwest part of Louisiana, and across a narrow bayou, which was dry, but full of soft mud, he saw one of those large white cranes which are rare specimens in collections of birds. The crane was not within shot, and the sportsman desired his boy to cross the bayou and make a sweep round behind the bird and put him up, so that he might fly over toward where the gunner lay in ambush. But the boy said he could not find a log, and my friend, getting impatient, determined to cross himself, and stalk for a shot. He saw what he supposed to be the top of a log just above the mud, and stepped on to it. Half-way across he felt it moving under him, and when he leaped upon the other bank, the jaws and tail of the alligator were in motion. But he was not active, luckily, being imprisoned almost in the mud. It took eight rifle-shots at close quarters to kill him. When he was hauled out on the bank, by a yoke of oxen, he measured eighteen feet from the snout to the tip of the tail, and his skull was five feet long.

You will remember that, in a former number, I told you of an immense alligator I saw alive in the possession of some men who had caught him in a lake or bayou in Louisiana. These men said they determined to catch him because he had taken a negro. My friend says they must have been mistaken. The boy was no doubt taken by a gar-fish, a dangerous and most formidable creature inhabiting the same waters as the alligator. The latter will not attack men or boys, either in the water or out of it. There is indeed one time at which they will show fight. They watch the place where the female has laid her eggs in the sand, and if a man interferes with the nest, they will defend it. Their weapon is not their tremendous jaws, but the horny tail, with which they give a round sweeping blow. The idea that this reptile, with his short legs and vast bulk, can chase a man on the ground and make prey of him, is absurd. He is not a fast swimmer.

Although the dolphin is, in my opinion, the swiftest fish that I have seen in motion, circumstances have come under my observation which lead me to believe that there is a fish in the sea whose speed far surpasses it. I mean the sword-fish, an inhabitant of the tropical waters, and very seldom seen. I have seen the planking and oak timber of a ship which had been penetrated to the depth of ten inches by the round, spike-like sword of one of these fish, where it was broken off. Now the sword-fish is not large, and I conceive that the velocity at which he struck the ship when he drove his weapon in to that depth must have been enormous. I do not pretend to be able to estimate the rate at which the fish must have gone through the water when the blow was struck, and I have never happened to meet with any account of the sword-fish by an eminent authority. It is said that the sword-fish kills the sperm-whale by piercing him under the belly; and from all that is known of the species, and that is but little, he is the most quarrelsome and vindictive inhabitant of the

great tropical seas.

It has been set down that the whale is fast. I doubt it. I have never seen one swim swiftly on a level. When the whalers are fast to a sperm-whale, if he goes twenty miles an hour it seems to be an immense rate to them. But this would be a mere nothing to the speed of the dolphin, and almost standing still, I think, to the rate of the sword-fish, when he delivers his lightning stroke. I have no doubt the whale *goes down* very fast, when he throws his flukes up, and sounds head downwards towards the bottom, but that he swims very fast on a level, I can hardly believe.

Charles J. Foster.



ECHO. THE STORY OF A FOOLISH TONGUE.

Once on a time, great Pan, the country god, kept lonesome ways, and mourned in bosky hiding-places through all the golden summer of Arcadia. Though the mountains and the meads were his, and the forests and the fields, and the springs and brooks and pools, and all the fleecy flocks and all the dappled herds,—and at his bidding the dales blushed deep with blossoms, and the demure little lakes broke out in pretty, pensive dimples, and the birds sang, and the springs danced, and the brooks laughed, and the waterfalls romped and shouted, and all the air was full of songs, and the vines of eager whispers, and the grass of tender murmurs soft and low, and all the woods and glens of fantastic stories, and the rocks and moors of awful legends, and the twilight of

romance, and the moonlight of rapture, and the midnight of wonders,—yet he who set all this loveliness to music, and wound up the seasons like a cunning clock, to play their happy tunes, drew no delight from the entrancing concert of his own melodious choir, but left its ecstasy to lighter hearts, and kept his lonesome, silent ways, and moped in caves and leafy coverts.

For even the grand old gods had their grand sorrows, and were the grander for them. Jupiter, king of gods and men, had mourned with terrible tears for the cruelty of the mortal race; Vulcan, the celestial artist, who built the brazen houses of the gods, and fashioned the golden handmaids who waited on himself, had been flung headlong from highest heaven into the lowest depths of sea; Apollo, glorious giver of music and inspiration, once wandered, an exile, in Thessaly, and fed, in servile poverty, the flocks of King Admetus; Ceres, munificent foster-mother of the tender fruits of the earth, who crowned the ripening corn with gold, and plumped the purpling grape with wine, sought her lost darling, her playful Proserpine, from land to land, from sea to sea, never resting by night nor day,—through hunger and thirst, through terror and despair, following her even to the grim gates of the dreadful Under-world.

And in the high holiday of that lovely, melodious Age of Gold, when the rich rivers rolled with milk, and the woods dripped with honey, and the ready ground “produced without a wound, and the mild serpent had no tooth that slew,” when

“The nymphs and shepherds sat,
Mingling with innocent chat
Sports and low whispers; and with whispers low
Kisses that would not go,”—

in that faerie Age of Gold, when the mountains drew rainbows about their shoulders as a lady draws her scarf, and ivory and rubies and the tails of peacocks grew on trees, and all the face of earth was dimpled with the smiles of happy people,—in the gay noontide of that Age of Gold, this poor Pan carried in his bosom thoughts as dark as night, and a heart as heavy as lead; for he looked into his soul, and all was loveliness and tender yearning,—he looked upon his shape, and all was ugliness and cruel forbidding,—a beautiful, musical angel within, a hideous, discordant monster without. Poor Pan!

He mourned for Pitys, the dainty meadow-nymph, graceful as a doe and gentle as a dove, whom he wooed with all his sweetest songs and quaintest gifts; and she was kind to him. But furious Boreas, the North Wind, hated her because of him; and so he blew her from the top of a high rock whither she had climbed for golden lizards, and crushed her tender body with the fall.

Then Pan, all farewells and despairs, took her up lovingly, with many imploring kisses and passionate moans, and brought her to the secretest place

in the woods, and laid her down by their dear old trysting-stone. And he changed her swaying body and her beckoning arms into this lithe young pine-tree, at whose foot he now flung himself weeping; and as he clasped her graceful trunk in his embrace, and laid his sobbing breast and tearful cheek against her soft brown bark, and called, "Pity! O Pity!" a murmur of compassion ran through all her branches, and into his love-lorn bosom she dropped her prettiest cone. Poor Pan!

He mourned for Syrinx, the bashful wood-nymph, timid as a hare and shy as a partridge, whom also he had wooed with wild-wood offerings,—belts of fire-flies and bracelets of burnished beetles, the songs of orioles and the stories of katydids; but she denied him. And when at last he beheld her, radiant with blushing beauty, as she passed by Mount Lyceum, returning from a childish chase, her scarf filled with flying-squirrels and field-mice, and ribbon-snakes and chirping lizards, his love grew reckless at the sight, and he would have seized her; but she broke away from his goat's horns and his matted beard, his cloven feet and his shaggy knees, and fled with cries of terror. And Pan pursued her over the hills, around the lakes, across the fields, from tree to tree, from rock to rock; till suddenly Ladon, the deep river, that was friend to Pan, flung himself right across her path, and cut her off. Then she fell upon her knees, and stretched forth her arms, and cried to her cousins, the water-nymphs, in an agony of fear, "O Naiads, help!" and when, in a moment more, the eager, panting Pan, with an exultant shout, burst through the fence of osiers, laughing madly, he seized in his shaggy arms no helpless, trembling nymph, but only a tuft of hollow, shivering reeds that just now were his bashful Syrinx.

And Pan wept, and the reeds were shaken with his sighs, and moved in a murmur of pity. Then he plucked seven of the hollow reeds, and made him a simple pipe that, as often as he sighed upon it, sang to him the sad song of Syrinx; and on it, since, as sweet a piper has piped to a child a song about a lamb:—

“ ‘Pipe a song about a lamb.’
So I piped with merry cheer.
‘Piper, pipe that song again.’
So I piped: he wept to hear.”

Poor Pan!

He mourned for Echo, the merry mountain-nymph, tricky as a jackdaw and talkative as a magpie, pert as a wagtail and foolish as a fly, whom lately he had wooed with vanities in fashion in the mountains,—veils of mist and scarfs of rainbow, nets of the spray of waterfalls and complexions of sunset; but she only laughed, and mocked him,—mocked the bleating treble of his love-songs,

and the goat-like caper of his dance, the wistful wagging of his matted beard, and the grotesque fun of his amorous faces, and the clumsy stammer of his tender speech, till bebies of beautiful nymphs, met in the meads to gossip, made the still twilight air ring with their laughter, like a burst of bells, at the droll but cruel mimicry of giddy, vain, and thoughtless Echo. Poor Pan!

Though still he kept his lonesome ways,—Pitys, the pine-tree, the only monument to his lovely loss,—Syrinx, the pipe, his only solace, (in the bitter sweetness of pity singing to him of that crown of sorrows which is remembering happier times,)—though still he mourned alone in the secretest places of the woods, and would have hidden his heavy trouble even under his dear old trysting-stone,—the mocking laugh of Echo found him out, and shamed and shocked his soul.

Then the grand old gods grew weary of that foolish, impious jay, whose flippant flings at sacred things, her heartless, unchecked chatter, conceived in idleness and brought forth in vanity, spared neither the Terrible nor the Holy, but scolded Jove, and scandalized Diana, and made a small-talk of the Awful Mysteries,—the gods were sick of Echo.

So Minerva, mistress of wisdom and prudence, proud and severe, put a check upon the nuisance forever. Nevermore should Echo *converse*, nevermore partake of the cheering interchanges of friendly thoughts,—the genial address, the playful reply, the witty rejoinder,—sweetest, dearest, holiest of all, the tender confidence. But as she had abused the divine gift of Speech, whereby the Immortal is distinguished from the Brutal, and made her tongue, that should have been a cunning instrument of melody, a rude weapon of treachery and mischief, impiety and shame, henceforth there should be left to it no nobler use than to repeat what she might hear; it should be turned against all that was dearest, sweetest, holiest to her own heart; and she should mock and tell, mock and tell—forever.

“All that was dearest, sweetest, holiest to her own heart! Mock and Tell! Mock and Tell! Forever! O, forever!”

Distracted, demented, she flew to the forest. Narcissus hunted there,—of all the youths of Arcady the bravest and most beautiful; Narcissus, for whose love a thousand nymphs contended,—most passionately of all, Echo, and Echo most in vain.

A spotted hind, with an arrow in her side, burst through the vines, and bounded across the path, Narcissus pursuing.

“Hal-loo!” cried he.

“Hal-loo-oo!” mocked Echo.

“Come hither!”

“Hith-er!”

“Who art thou?”

“Who art *thou*?”

“I do not know thy voice.”

“Not know thy voice?”

“Art thou mocking?”

“Mock-ing,” cried Echo, in agony.

“I will smite thee.”

“I will smite *thee*.”

And Narcissus, furious, plunged impetuously through a thorny thicket, and stood before her, bleeding.

Echo, all horror, and imploring anguish, would have fallen upon his neck; but the youth, with flashing eyes, flung her off. “Fool! I never loved thee,” he cried.

Then Mercury, the god of Chance, who listened to the contest behind a cloud, pitied poor Echo, and helped her—once.

“Ever loved thee, ever loved thee!” she repeated joyfully.

“If I pity thee, thou wilt tell.”

“Will tell,”—ah, wretched Echo!

“Now I shall hate thee forever.”

“Forever—ev-er!”

When Echo had pined with shame and hopeless longing till nothing was left of her but bones and a voice, the high gods changed the bones into rocks, where the Foolish Tongue still mocks. And poor Pan is avenged.

J. W. Palmer.

HOW WE PUT OUT OUR FIRES



Walking through School Street, in Boston, at anytime of evening or of night, you will see lights shining out from the little windows away up under the dome of the new City Hall. There is the office of the fire-telegraph. In that little space are concentrated and governed the numerous wires which you see in the daytime running out in all directions over the roofs of the buildings in the vicinity. If you follow these lines from the Boston City Hall, you will find

a good many of them leading you into churches;—so you see they “are cast in pleasant places.” They tell, through the church bells, when and where a fire breaks out; they send engines and men to extinguish it; they wake up Mr. Smith, who lives in Chester Park, and give him the unpleasant information that the fire is in the district in which his store is situated, down town, and they wake up others who have no store down town, and who don’t care particularly whether Mr. Smith’s store is on fire or not.

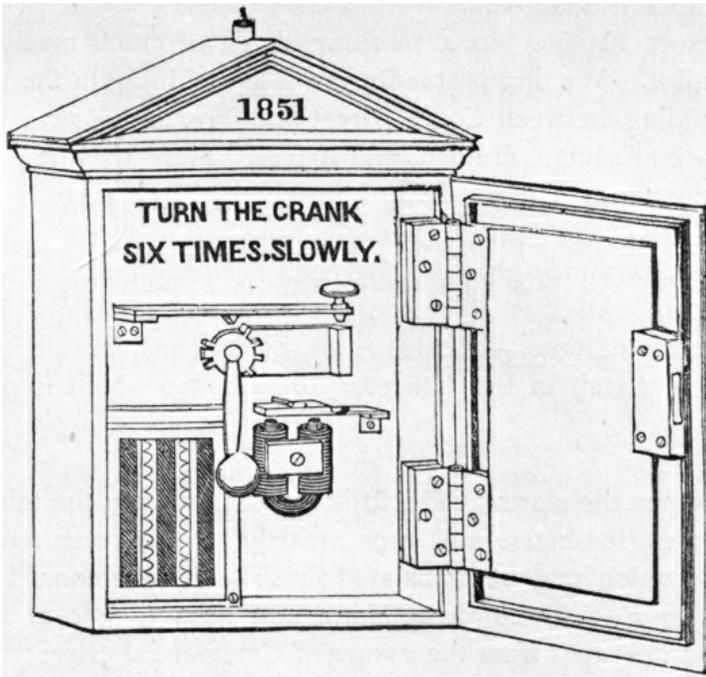
Suppose we mount the long stairway in the City Hall, and take a look at this telegraph office, and inquire into the manner in which the alarms are given.

The room is divided by a rail, and we must stand outside unless specially invited in by the Superintendent. There is only one chair in the room, which is a significant hint that accommodations are not afforded for a long visit. On a counter which stretches across the room is a curious array of shining brass instruments and machines, by which sixty different wires are operated upon. Some of the wires ring church bells, and some sound gongs in the engine-houses; but the largest number of them end in little iron boxes, which are fastened against the large buildings on some corners of the streets, and make no noisy demonstrations.

The electric current for a certain number of the wires is produced by a very powerful magnetic battery, and for others by a chemical battery of four hundred cups. This chemical battery looks just like a host of flower-pots, arranged on a pyramidal stand in a conservatory.

Four men are employed in the office besides the Superintendent, two of them being on duty all the time. Connected with the operating room are a sitting-room, containing a small collection of books, and two bedrooms. The men spend most of their time here; but even at home they are not free from their occupation, as the telegraph lines pursue them there and may summon them back at any moment.

Now we will see how the alarm is given, and the fire department called into action.



Policeman No. 56, going along his beat on Commercial Street, and trying the doors to see that they are fastened, comes to the door of a big granite warehouse, and sees a light through the crevices, and smoke issuing from the upper windows. He runs to the next corner, takes a key from his pocket, unlocks the iron box containing the end of a telegraph line, and gives a certain number of turns to the crank of a little machine which is inside, and the motion of which sets the electric current astir upon the wire which is connected with it. The box is numbered 14. A little bell in the telegraph office at the City Hall then calls attention in a sharp, brisk tone, and immediately a ribbon of white paper, about an inch wide, issues out between two rollers, with these characters stamped on it:—

. . — . . . — .

These characters, you will of course understand, mean 1, 4. 1, 4.

The operator at the City Hall, seeing this at a glance, then goes to another machine, with hands like a clock, moves one hand to the figure 1, and the other hand to figure 4, gathers up his lightning reins, gives a touch to his fiery coursers, and away they go over the house-tops to the west end, to the north end, scuttling over to East Boston under the water, flying over the bridge to South Boston, and waking up the sleepers in Ward Eleven with their racket. King's Chapel replies promptly, in a solemn, dignified tone, the Old South

follows sharp in a livelier strain, and then, from all directions, come hurrying up responses from a score and more of bells, all speaking at once in an eager, distracted way, some with musical sounds, and some in harsh, discordant, cold-in-the-head tones. After thus striking once, there is a little pause, and then the bells strike four times in succession, that is, each figure in the number of the box is represented in turn by its proper number of strokes,—1, 1 1 1 1. 1, 1 1 1 1, &c. This alarm is repeated six times, and then ceases unless another signal is received from box 14 that more force is necessary to subdue the fire.

The fire department are now in motion. There are eleven steam-engines, ten hose-carriages, and three hook and ladder companies. Each engine company has eleven men; three are on duty constantly, and the others only attend when an alarm is given.

We will select Engine No. 4 to run with,—a “crack masheen,” as the news-boys call it. We find it standing trim and shining in the north end of Scollay’s Building, between Court Street and Tremont Row. Here are the three men,—engineman, fireman, and driver. Here they *live*,—sleeping, and playing dominoes a good deal, I suspect. Their duty is to get their engine to the fire in the shortest possible time. A delay of ten minutes in the first movements may give the fire such headway that it cannot be overcome for hours. All this elaborate telegraph system is put in operation to save this trifle of time,—a trifle to us, but of considerable importance to the man who is asleep in the fifth story of a house which is on fire under the stairway.

But here comes the alarm. The little messenger from the telegraph office darts into the engine-house and raps smartly on the gong, *one—one, two, three, four*,—which may be translated thus:—“Mr. Kennard presents his compliments to Engine Company No. 4, and begs to inform them that he has received a despatch from the corner of Commercial Street and Eastern Avenue, that a fire has broken out in that vicinity, and the services of Engine No. 4 are requested at the earliest possible moment.”

But that would be a very liberal translation. The firemen understand it to say, “Fire—corner of Commercial and Eastern Avenue,”—and they are on their feet at the first stroke. The stout, good-natured looking horses, stabled in a room adjoining, prick up their ears and stamp impatiently. The sound of the gong is to them as the bugle to the war-horse.

The fire is lighted under the boiler of the engine, where the coal, wood, and kindlings are all ready, needing only the match to ignite them, for the purpose of getting up steam; the horses are “put to”; we mount the box, and are off for Commercial Street in a wonderfully short space of time. The horses start into a clumsy gallop of their own accord; the machine is whisked round the corners

in a way that makes us, who are new to the business, feel rather nervous; a shower of sparks streams out from the smokestack, and the burning cinders, dropping from the fire-box into the street, leave a brilliant trail to mark our passage. In five minutes from the time that signal was given by Policeman 56, the engine is on the ground. It is drawn up to the hydrant nearest to the fire, the iron cover marked B. W. W. (Boston Water Works) is pried up, and a short hose connects the hydrant with the engine. This furnishes the supply of water, which is thrown out through the long hose at the rate of six hundred gallons in a minute.



The first alarm calls out that third of the force which is nearest the fire; namely, three steam-engines, one hook and ladder company, and three hose-

carriages. The members of the other companies assemble at their houses and hold themselves in readiness for the next alarm.

We have scarcely got ready for action when the Chief Engineer arrives. He is a great power now,—a king,—his white-topped fire-hat an awe-inspiring crown, his big rubber overcoat a robe of state, and his trumpet a potent sceptre. He holds absolute sway. He can break into buildings, smash doors and windows, blow up walls, and compel any citizen in the vicinity to help in extinguishing the fire or carrying out the goods. He orders No. 4 to “play away,” or to “hold on,” and should No. 4 refuse to do either, it is disbanded and sent home in disgrace. He surveys the position of the fire, the chances of subduing it with his present force, the height and strength of the walls, and marks out his plan of battle.

The fire is in the centre of a large block stored with combustible materials, and has worked its way up through the ceilings from the first floor to the roof. The police are ordered to clear the street, and stretch ropes across to keep back the crowd. Another despatch is sent to the telegraph office, a second alarm is sounded as before, and a third more of the force is on the ground in a few minutes. A ladder is raised to the windows of the upper story, and a fireman ascends, quickly but cautiously, avoiding the hot slates which have begun to slide from the roof. Arrived on a level with one of the windows, he dashes it in with a swoop of his axe, and a volume of smoke rolls out. He doesn't mind that, but swings himself in carefully, and tries to find out the condition of things up there. Presently he climbs back upon the ladder, and motions for a hose to be sent up. Ladders are now thrown against the adjoining buildings, men mount to the roofs, and the fire is attacked in front and rear, above and below. It fights stoutly, though, and charges up through the roof in such a determined manner that the attack in that direction has to be abandoned. The place grows hot beyond endurance, and No. 4 is obliged to draw off from its advanced position.

The third alarm is sounded, and this brings out the entire force. We have now two hundred and seventy-five men, and the eleven engines are throwing six thousand six hundred gallons of water in a minute. The water on the lower floor is several inches deep, but still the fire roars up through the roof with unabated fierceness. Presently the roof falls in, carrying with it the upper floors. There is a momentary pause, and then the firemen make a desperate onset, before the flames have time to gather strength again. The fire is now in a position to be played upon with full effect, and the result is no longer doubtful. After a few feeble attempts to raise its head, it falls back utterly defeated and crushed. Some of the engines are detailed to play upon the ruins for a while, and the others are sent home.

That is the way they put out fires in Boston, the most expeditious and

orderly way yet discovered; and the system of the Boston fire-alarm telegraph has been adopted by other cities, and is now likely to come into use in all places of any consequence.

The telegraphic fire-alarm system was first recommended to the city authorities by Dr. W. F. Channing, and was introduced in 1852. The steam fire-engine department was organized in 1860. These engines have been so entirely successful that most of the large cities, in this and foreign countries, are adopting them.

In London they have fire brigades stationed in different parts of the city, and when a fire breaks out a policeman or citizen runs to the nearest station, gives the alarm, and despatches are then sent from one station to another by telegraph. There the department is wholly supported by the companies that insure property against fire. If a person lives in an uninsured house he gets very little assistance from the department, unless some insured building is threatened; then they put out the fire to keep it from spreading. They have what are called "Fire Escapes,"—ladders with a sort of canvas trough on the under side,—by which persons in the third or fourth story of a burning building are enabled to slide easily to the ground.

Perhaps you have read of Mr. Braidwood, who was the Director of the London Fire Brigade for twenty-eight years, and came to be known as the "Fire King." He was very much loved by all the firemen, because he always shared their dangers, and looked after their welfare. At a great fire in 1861, he had gone up among the leading hosemen, and was in the act of giving a drink to one of the men, who was suffering from the intense heat, when an explosion took place, and the walls of a great warehouse fell upon him, crushing him to death in an instant.

There is a true story of a dog named "Chance," that used to run to fires, in London. He followed a brigade home one night after a fire, and became so attached to the men, that, when his master came and took him away, he would not stay with him, but ran back and joined the firemen. Whenever there was an alarm, he would jump up on the engine and ride to the fire. He would drag out the hose, and rush into the fire, and bring out burning brands in his mouth, getting badly burned very often. He stayed with the company a long while, going to every fire regularly; but once, after he had been very much injured, and was being nursed and petted by the men, an alarm of fire came, he made a spring to get upon the engine, and fell back dead.

It would probably be impossible now for a fire to do so much damage as was caused by the great fire in New York in 1835, when six hundred and forty-eight houses and stores were burned, with eighteen million dollars' worth of property.* The great fire in London in 1666 lasted four days and four nights, and thirteen thousand houses, eighty churches, and a number of public

buildings were destroyed. The city of Moscow, in Russia, has suffered more from fires than any other city of ancient or modern times. It has been almost entirely burned three times,—in 1536, in 1571, and in 1812, when it was occupied by the French. The most shocking destruction of life by fire, in modern times, was caused by the burning of the Church of the Compania, at Santiago, in Chili, in 1863. A magnificent festival of the Catholic Church had been going on for thirty days, and was to terminate in a grand illumination of this church. There were over twenty thousand lights, most of them supplied by camphene. A large image over the altar represented Murillo's Madonna of the Immaculate Conception, with her feet resting upon an illuminated crescent. In lighting up this crescent, the hangings above took fire, and in an instant the fire swept upward through the flimsy devices. More than three thousand women were kneeling on the floor, and the fire had been in progress but a few minutes when the lamps above were loosened and fell among them; the doorways became blocked up by those struggling to escape, and nearly two thousand were burned to death.

James M. Bugbee.

* The great fire at Portland, on July 4, 1866, so remarkable in all respects, its insignificant beginning as well as its tremendous ravages, is an exceptional case which is not likely to be repeated elsewhere.



WILLIAM HENRY'S LETTERS TO HIS GRANDMOTHER. FIRST PACKET.

MY DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—

I think the school that I have come to is a very good school. We have dumplings. I've tied up the pills that you gave me in case of feeling bad in the toe of my cotton stocking that's lost the mate of it. The mince pies they have here are baked without any plums being put into them. So, please, need I say, No, I thank you, ma'am, to 'em when they come round? If they don't agree, shall I take the pills or the drops? Or was it the hot flannels,—and how many?

I've forgot about being shivery. Was it to eat roast onions? No, I guess not. I guess it was a wet band tied round my head. Please write it down, because you told me so many things I can't remember. How can anybody tell when anybody is sick enough to take things? You can't think what a great, tall man the schoolmaster is. He has got something very long to flog us with, that bends easy and hurts,—Q. S. So Dorry says. Q. S. is in the abbreviations, and stands for a sufficient quantity. Dorry says the master keeps a paint-pot in his room, and has his whiskers painted black every morning, and his hair too, to make himself look scareful. Dorry is one of the great boys. But Tom Cush is bigger. I don't like Tom Cush.

I have a good many to play with; but I miss you and Towser and all of them very much. How does my sister do? Are the peach-trees bearing? Dorry Baker he says that peaches don't grow here; but he says the cherries have peach-stones in them. In nine weeks my birthday will be here. How funny 't will seem to be eleven, when I've been ten so long! I don't skip over any button-holes in the morning now; so my jacket comes out even.

Why didn't you tell me I had a red head? But I can run faster than any of them that are no bigger than I am, and some that are. One of the spokes of my umbrella broke itself in two yesterday, because the wind blew so when it rained.

We learn to sing. He says I've a good deal of voice; but I've forgot what the matter is with it. We go up and down the scale, and beat time. The last is the best fun. The other is hard to do. But if I could only get up, I guess't would be easy to come down. He thinks something ails my ear. I thought he said I hadn't got any at all. What have a fellow's ears to do with singing, or with

scaling up and down?

Your affectionate grandchild,

WILLIAM HENRY.

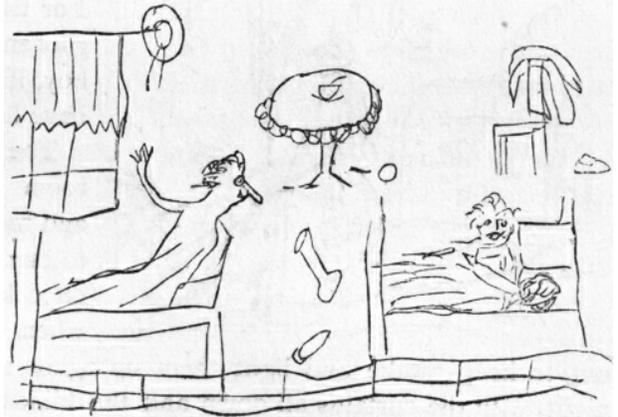
P. S. Here's a conundrum Dorry Baker made: In a race, why would the singing-master win? Because "Time flies," and he *beats time*.

I want to see Aunt Phebe, and Aunt Phebe's little Tommy, dreadfully.
W. H.

MY DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—

I've got thirty-two cents left of my spending-money. When shall I begin to wear my new shoes every day? The soap they have here is pink. Has father sold the bossy calf yet? There's a boy here they call Bossy Calf, because he cried for his mother. He has been here three days. He sleeps with me. And every night, after he has laid his head down on the pillow, and the lights are blown out, I begin to sing, and to scale up and down, so the boys can't hear him cry. Dorry Baker and three more boys sleep in the same room that we two sleep in. When they begin to throw bootjacks at me, to make me stop my noise, it scares him, and he leaves off crying. I want a pair of new boots dreadfully, with red on the tops of them, that I can tuck my trousers into and keep the mud off.

One thing more the boys plague me for besides my head. Freckles. Dorry held up an orange yesterday. "Can you see it?" says he. "To be sure," says I. "Didn't know as you could see through 'em," says he, meaning freckles. Dear grandmother, I have cried once. But not in bed. For fear of their laughing. And of the bootjacks. But away in a good place under the trees. A shaggy dog came along and licked my face. But oh! he did make me remember Towser, and cry all over again. But don't tell. I should be ashamed. I wish the boys would like me. Freckles come thicker in summer than they do in winter.



Your affectionate grandchild,

WILLIAM HENRY.

MY DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—

I do what you told me. You told me to bite my lips and count ten, before I spoke, when the boys plague me, because I'm a spunky boy. But doing it so much makes my lips sore. So now I go head over heels sometimes, till I'm out of breath. Then I can't say anything.

This is the account you asked me for, of all I've bought this week:—

Slippery elm.. 1 cent.

Corn ball..... 1 cent.

Gum..... 1 cent.



And I swapped a whip-lash that I found, for an orange that only had one suck sucked out of it. The "Two Betseys," they keep very good things to sell. They are two old women that live in a little hut with two rooms to it, and a ladder to go up stairs by, through a hole in the wall. One Betsey, she is lame and keeps still, and sells the things to us sitting down. The other Betsey, she can run, and keeps a yardstick to drive away boys with. For they have apple-trees in their garden. But she never touches a boy, if she does catch him. They have hens and sell eggs.

The boys that sleep in the same room that we do wanted Benjie and me to join together with them to buy a great confectioner's frosted cake, and other things. And when the lamps had been blown out, to keep awake and light them up again, and so have a supper late at night, with the curtains all down and the blinds shut up, when people were in bed, and not let anybody know.

But Benjie hadn't any money. Because his father works hard for his living,

—but his uncle pays for his schooling,—and he wouldn't if he had. And I said I wouldn't do anything so deceitful. And the more they said you must and you shall, the more I said I wouldn't and I shouldn't, and the money should blow up first.

So they called me “Old Stingy” and “Pepper-corn” and “Speckled Potatoes.” Said they'd pull my hair if 't weren't for burning their fingers. Dorry was the maddest one. Said he guessed my hair was tired of standing up, and wanted to lie down to rest.

I wish you would please send me a new comb, for the large end of mine has got all but five of the teeth broken out, and the small end can't get through. I can't get it cut because the barber has raised his price. Send quite a stout one.

I have lost two more pocket-handkerchiefs, and another one went up on Dorry's kite, and blew away.

Your affectionate grandchild,

WILLIAM HENRY.

MY DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—

I did what you told me, when I got wet. I hung my clothes round the kitchen stove on three chairs, but the cooking girl she flung them under the table. So now I go wrinkled, and the boys chase me to smooth out the wrinkles. I've got a good many hard rubs. But I laugh too. That's the best way. Some of the boys play with me now, and ask me to go round with them. Dorry hasn't yet. Tom Cush plagues the most.

Sometimes the schoolmaster comes out to see us when we are playing ball, or jumping. To-day, when we all clapped Dorry, the schoolmaster clapped too. Somebody told me that he likes boys. Do you believe it?

A cat ran up the spout this morning, and jumped in the window. Dorry was going to choke her, or drown her, for the working-girl said she licked out the inside of a custard-pie. I asked Dorry what he would take to let her go, and he said five cents. So I paid. For she was just like my sister's cat. And just as likely as not somebody's little sister would have cried about it. For she had a ribbon tied round her neck.

The woman that I go to have my buttons sewed on to, is a very good woman. She gave me a cookie with a hole in the middle, and told me to mind and not eat the hole.

Coming back, I met Benjie, and he looked so sober, I offered it to him as



quick as I could. But it almost made him cry; because, he said, his mother made her cookies with a hole in the middle. But when he gets acquainted, he won't be so bashful, and he'll feel better then.

We walked away to a good place under the trees, and he talked about his folks, and his grandmother, and his Aunt Polly, and the two little twins. They've got two cradles just like each other, and they are just as big as each other, and just as old. They creep round on the floor, and when one picks up anything, the other pulls it away. I wish we had some twins.

Kiss yourself for me.

Your affectionate grandchild,

WILLIAM HENRY.

P. S. If you send a cake, send quite a large one. I like the kind that Uncle Jacob does. Aunt Phebe knows.

Mrs. A. M. Diaz.

BEAUTIFUL SUMMER



Words by EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

Music by J. R. THOMAS.

1. Fair is the morning, Yet from its light Something has vanished, Dewy and bright!
2. When the young daisies Whiten the plain, When the red ro - ses Blossom a - gain,
3. Beauti - ful Summer, Bright was thy stay, Soft - ly thy beau - ty Fad - ed a - way;

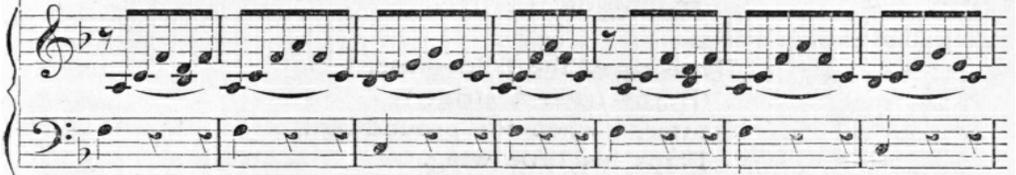
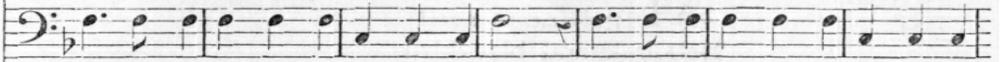
Blue are the skies, But their laughter is dead; Beau - ti - ful Summer, Where hast thou fled?
Then to our val - leys, Tender and sweet, Beau - ti - ful Summer, Say shall we greet?
Still on thy sweet - ness Fondly we dwell, Sad - ly we whisper Words of farewell!

Colla voce.

TRIO. *A little Faster.*



In - to the regions whose magi - cal light Keeps the heart's treasures e - ter - nal - ly
 Many a summer shall brighten the earth, Man - y a blossom to beauty have
 Gather the roses of youth as they bloom, Treasure their brightness, and breathe their per-



bright; There, with their glory untouched by de - cay, Wait the sweet years that have
 birth; Never, O never, on val - ley and plain, Dawn the sweet years that have
 fume; Life hath new mornings to gladden thy way, Sweet as the years that have



vanished away, — Wait the sweet years that have vanished a - way.
 vanished, again, — Dawn the sweet years that have vanished, a - gain.
 vanished away, — Sweet as the years that have vanished a - way!



MORNING AND EVENING.

Morning on the hill-tops
Radiant to see!
Bobolink and blackbird
Trilling on the tree.

Dews upon the field grass,
(Beads upon a string,)
Scattered when the ground-bird
Flaps his little wing.

Buttercups unfolding
Beautiful and sunny!
Bees 'mid the clover-beds
Diving for the honey.

Ruth among the green lanes
Violets to seek;
All the little soft winds
Kissed her on the cheek.



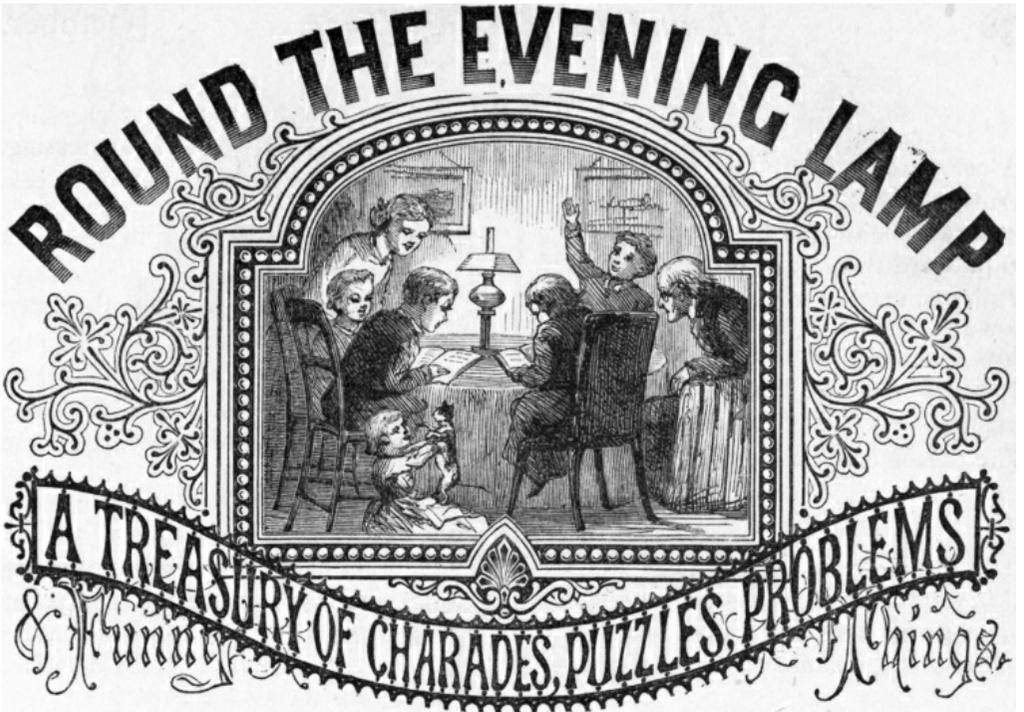
Evening on the hill-tops!
Ruth has gone to rest.
All the pretty song-birds
Hidden in their nest.

When the sun has gone down
They no longer sing,—
Each little downy head
Turned beneath the wing.

Stars in the purple sky,
All their lamps alight;
Winds to the tall trees

Whispering good night.

Ruth within her small bed,
Dreamily she lies:
Came the dear mamma there
And kissed her sleeping eyes.
Mrs. Anna M. Wells.



ROUND THE EVENING LAMP
A TREASURY OF CHARADES, PUZZLES,
PROBLEMS & Funny Things.

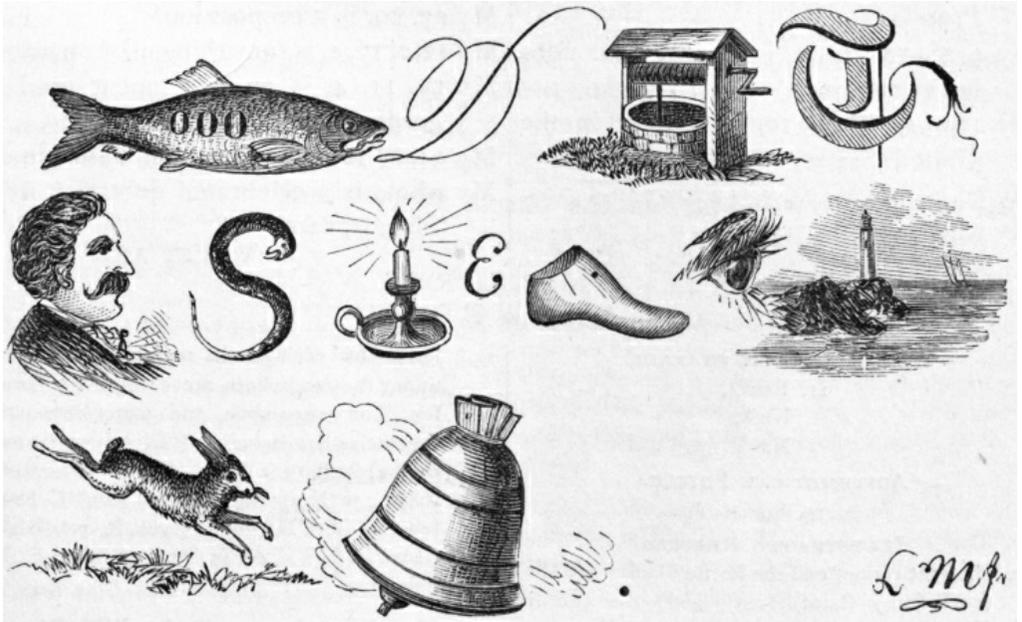
PUZZLE.

No. 11.

My first is in ladies, but never in women.
My second no lady has, but it is human.
My third not at breakfast, but always at dinner.
My fourth, though in breakfast, is not seen in dinner.
My fifth is in pigs always found, not in hogs,
My sixth no pig having it, like hogs and dogs.
My seventh is in lead, and in silver, and gold,
Though in tin and in iron it never is sold.
My eighth may be found in both iron and tin,
And my ninth is in all the sweet smiles you can win.
My whole is a city, known to you all,
Near to Washington; so its name pray promptly call.

J. S.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 15.



LMF

CHARADES.

No. 14.

My *whole* in thoughtful silence sits,
Perusing o'er the pages of my *first*;
To outward things oblivious, he exists
While pampering to quenchless thirst.

Slow o'er the ground, in humble way,
My *second* drags its length along,
Crushed oft by man's more stately tread,
Who deems it not a moment's wrong.

I. R. F.

No. 15.

All through,—and the old folks had given their blessing,
A tear and a smile on every cheek,—
When fondly, yet coyly, my *second* caressing,
We speed in my *first* for a tour of a week.

The Falls and the Springs in the clear autumn weather,
The Mountains that hold up the heavens' high dome,
All vied to enchant us while travelling together,
Ere seeking the joy of our own little home.

At last, in our parlor, we looked on my *whole*,
And rightly decided, my *second* and I,
That no other place, from Equator to Pole,
Could ever such brimming enjoyment supply.

CASPAR.

ENIGMA.

No. 11.

I am composed of 33 letters.

My 18, 9, 3, 26, is a river in the United States.

My 2, 12, 21, 6, 1, is a town in South America.

My 17, 25, 5, 15, 7, is a town in European Turkey.

My 24, 4, 1, 26, is a city in Africa.

My 23, 29, 32, 8, 10, 19, 26, is a group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean.

My 20, 18, 4, 22, 16, 12, is a town of Spain.

My 19, 33, 3, 13, 29, is a river in Europe.

My 14, 19, 16, 32, 12, 31, is a town in Prussia.

My 4, 28, 18, 26, 10, is a river that rises in Switzerland.

My 23, 11, 6, 27, 10, is a river in the United States.

My 30, 18, 16, 27, 24, 7, is a town in Texas.

My whole is a proverb.

Bow.

No. 12.—FOR BEGINNERS.

I am composed of 10 letters.

My 7, 8, 1, 5, is a metal.

My 9, 3, 6, 10, is a hard substance.

My 2, 4, 7, 5, is a metal.

My whole should be in every store.

HAYMAKER.

No. 13.

I am composed of 30 letters.

My 18, 6, 28, 26, was an attendant of Juno.

My 21, 25, 3, 13, is the goddess of youth.

My 20, 6, 28, 17, 5, 30, 19, were sea-animals.

My 23, 24, 22, 4, 7, is the name of a ruler.

My 19, 16, 10, 24, 6, 30, signifies time.

My 27, 29, is a preposition.

My 12, 2, 16, 1, is something used on water.

My 15, 11, 4, is an instrument used in gardening.

My 14, 8, 10, 9, 13, 6, means to shake.

My whole is a celebrated quotation from Shakespeare.

VIOLET AND ROSE.

ANSWERS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC CHARADE.

11. SanD,
UnA,
NavY.

ARITHMETICAL PUZZLE.

5. 8426.

ILLUSTRATED REBUSES.

13. The pot cannot call the kettle black. [(T-he) (pot) (can) (knot) (sea) (awl) the (kettle) (black)].
- 14.* Divers use diving-bells to recover lost riches under the sea, where are charming treasures found of every style, and many interesting spectacles are beheld. [(Die) (verse) (ewes diving) (bells) 2 (re) (cover) L (ostriches *under* the) C, w (hare) (arch) (arm) (inn) G (tress) (ewers) FOUN (dove) (eve) R yst (island) (man) (y *in* T) (rest *in* G) (spectacles) R (bee held).]

* Should have been credited to Willy Wisp.



OUR LETTER BOX

Behold the way that the questions pour in upon us sometimes,—half a dozen in a bunch. This bright little letter is from Worcester.

“TO THE EDITORS OF ‘OUR YOUNG FOLKS’:—

“We are fourteen, and want to know (1) whether it is proper to play Base-ball among ourselves, or with boys, and also (2) what flirting is, for as a boy speaks to us every time we pass his house, we are said by *one person to flirt*, and (3) is it our fault if he wishes to speak to us?

“(4) An enigma written by a friend of ours, signed Richard, has never been published, and all the people of this great city think it very mean. She is a fair-headed little maiden, with curls around her graceful neck, light blue eyes, and her name is Grace.

“(5) For a club of how many subscribers will you send us the three volumes of Dante; we are anxious to get them, (6) and can they be old subscribers?

“(7) When will Mr. Longfellow contribute his poem?

“I hope, dear Editors, you will be able to make this letter out.

“Will you please to answer this as quick as is convenient to you? and oblige your humble servants,

L. and E.”

We draw a long breath, and begin,—

(1) It is as *proper* for girls to play base-ball, as to play croquet; but the game requires more exertion than most girls are able to make, and more steadiness of nerve than most of them possess. Base-ball is almost a dangerous game, unless the players are quick of eye, hand, and foot, and girls are not so well fitted by nature or by habit and costume to meet its risks and demands as the tougher sex. (2) Flirting is coquetting on a small scale; it consists—as nearly as definition can render it—in a fickle and wayward behavior, whose purpose is to attract notice and win attention, without thought of any consequence beyond present pleasure; it is selfish and dangerous. But a natural desire and effort to please others and be pleasant with them is not flirting, any more than a natural hearty appetite, and enjoyment in it, are greediness and intemperance. (3) Not necessarily. (4) We are sorry to have caused such an extensive grief. Please to console Grace for us, won't you? (5) For twenty subscribers, at two dollars each, whose names (6) are not now on our list. (7) There is no poem by Mr. Longfellow promised; we gave one in the last January number.

Della's pleasant letter includes this bit of description, which will be as interesting to the children as to us:—

“I wish you could see where I am sitting now: it is the sweetest spot on our place, and I call it ‘my nook,’ for this is where I write all my compositions, and study my lessons. It is a rustic seat, shaded by an old beech-tree, with a little streamlet winding its way at my feet, and such a pretty view;—our house surrounded by trees, with the blue hills in the background.”

S. S. K. and Others. For quoit-playing the directions are simple. The players must first agree upon the distance between the iron stakes or “hobs,” which should be eighteen or twenty yards apart for boys fourteen or fifteen years old. Sides are then chosen, and the players alternately pitch from hob to hob the number of quoits which have been decided upon, and which must of course be equal for all. The quoits nearest the hob, and within a given distance, count one each toward the game, *with this important limitation*. If a quoit thrown by James is nearer to the hob than any thrown by George, and the remainder of James's quoits lie between one of George's and the distance mark, then James only counts *one*, because George “cuts in” and breaks the order of James's quoits. The same rule will apply to George if there is a third player, and so on. The number of players and the distance of the limit are to be agreed on before beginning. When the result of the first throwing has been determined, the players take their places by the hob at which they aimed before, and pitch their quoits back to the first hob.

Jean P. Archery is not so much known in America as in England; if it were as thoroughly understood, we are sure that it would be as much practised, for it

is a charming and useful sport.

*E—n and E—*a wish to be told about “behind the scenes” at the theatre. But they do not say whether it is the mechanical construction of the stage, the kind of people assembled in a theatre, or the behavior and customs of such a place about which they wish to know. So, for the present, we must content ourselves with saying briefly that theatre life is something like sea life; it has its pleasures and fascinations, of course, but it has also its great evils, its hard labors, its much bad company, and its undesirable associations, and is best left alone by all who can avoid it.

Madge thinks that her little brother’s account of his batch of troubles and tribulations may amuse our little folk, and so she has transcribed it. The young gentleman certainly seems to have had rather a hard time.

“MY DEAR SISTER:—

“I am feeling very lonely to-day. Albert has gone off selling books. Then I had a young dog that was very pretty and affectionate. I taught him several things while I had him, although I got him only last Saturday, and sold him this morning. Mother does not like dogs very well, and did not want me to keep it; so to please her I let it go.

“Next on the list of my woes, the kitten (which is also very pretty, and I like very much) Amelia says must be executed without delay, just because she will taste the pies.

“The pig is sold, so I am left without any pets, except an occasional hen, which slyly gets into the garden and brings me out of the house to drive it away just as I have taken the first mouthful of breakfast.

“Don’t you think I have good reason to be sad? But I guess it won’t pay to mourn much over my misfortunes. I mean to keep up a stout heart, for mother says, ‘These slight disappointments and crosses are sent that we may with fortitude bear’—I have forgotten the rest, but it means the trials of life.

“Next time I shall tell you of some of my enjoyments.

“Your affectionate brother, C.”

E. L. V. A good shop in New York for bows, &c. is at No. 150 Broadway.

Utor. You do not seem to know what you are talking about, or else you are unlucky in attempting to express yourself. Try to be more fortunate in your language when you write again.

Hymaker. All the contents of “Round the Evening Lamp” are supplied by the children, and for every one which we use we have perhaps two hundred that are not just right for printing.

Clara Clinton. Get Pycroft's "Course of English Reading." In that you will find laid down a guide through all departments of literature and history.

We have yet another proverb packed into a picture by J. L., which seems to us a capital one. The solution of last month's is, "Fast bind (b *in* d), fast find."



TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been fixed.

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