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STACK FOUR

NEW YEAR'S TANGLES

7621

AND OTHER STORIES



35-48

[Alden, Isabelle (Macdonald)]
BY PANSY *[Macdonald]*

Author of "Ester Ried yet Speaking," "Mrs. Solomon
Smith Looking On," "The Hall in the Grove,"
"The Pocket Measure," Etc.

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NEW YEAR'S TANGLES.

SOPHIE sat all day and sewed until her cheeks were very pink. It was the day before New Year's, and she felt that her new blue suit must be finished. She was sewing on buttons, and there were so many of them, and they were so small, and so slippery, that really it took much time and patience. But Sophie gave patience and perseverance, and at last the dress was done. With a happy heart she hung it away in the clothespress. To-morrow she was to wear it. Helena, the married sister who lived in the new handsome house on the corner, was going to receive calls all day in her lovely parlors that were just settled: and Sophie had been invited to spend the day, and help wait on the guests, and enjoy all there was to enjoy. There was nothing that Sophie liked much better than to be dressed up, and play grown-up young lady in her sister's beautiful home.

Alas for her plans ! There was another married sister, living three miles away, and on that last night of the old year her baby grew sick, and in the gray dawn of the morning, a sleigh stood at the door, and Sophie's mamma came, with cloak and bonnet already on, to speak a last word to Sophie.

"I must go, dear, of course ; baby may not be very sick, but Alice is sadly frightened and wants mother. And Sophie, you must stay at home, of course, with little Fannie to-day. It will not do to leave her with Jane, she is too new a girl ; I am not sure that I could trust her ; and Fannie must not go out, you know. Good by, dear ; kiss Fannie for me when she wakens ; I'll come back to-night if possible."

And the sleigh drove away, carrying all the brightness out of Sophie's life with it. Had mamma forgotten the new suit that she worked so hard to finish, and the New Year's calls in Helena's lovely parlors ? And here she must stay cooped up all day, playing with Fannie. New Year's day ! And her birthday too ! Do you wonder that she cried ? You don't know what suddenly stopped the tears, and made the little woman hop out of bed and dress herself

rapidly. I do ; it was one of her Christmas presents, and hung at the foot of the bed. An illuminated motto, done in her favorite colors, blue and gold : “ *Even Christ pleased not Himself.*” She had promised to try to live by it. It would never do to desert it on New Year’s morning. I might write a book about the trials of that day. Fannie was just getting over the measles, and was not perfectly angelic, I assure you. She needed amusing the whole time. She needed watching all through breakfast time. She wanted her milk in a certain goblet that was not on the table, and she wanted a certain spoon that was not to be found ; and she did *not* want her toast wet, nor her egg soft. Poor baby, she wanted her mamma ! It seemed to Sophie that the papa took less notice than usual, but left Fannie to her care. Patiently she tried to steer the cross baby through the trials of breakfast and prayers. Patiently she humored her whims, even keeping her still and happy after dinner, while papa sat in the room and wrote letters. A string that could be woven by skilful fingers into all the queer cat’s cradle shapes, was the thing that amused her then. But one unlucky moment it tangled itself in a

dozen knots, and Fannie's temper was not proof against them. She squealed dismally because Sophie could not instantly pick them out; but Sophie tried, picking, and petting, and beginning a funny little story in a whisper while she worked. Certainly Sophie did not try to please herself during all that trying day. It closed at last, and Fannie, tired out but happy, was put to bed and sung to sleep, and Sophie came down to the sitting-room to rest. Mamma had returned and was resting in the easy-chair.

"Alice's baby wasn't much sick," she was saying, as Sophie came in. "She has a cold and was pretty hoarse in the night, and you know how easily young mothers are frightened. I've taken care of baby all day and let Alice rest. They will do nicely to-night, I think."

Surely Sophie was glad that Alice's baby was better, but it made her weary day seem so unnecessary. What a trial it had been to give up Helena's! But nobody seemed to notice it. This was her birthday, and she had not had a single present from anybody. True she had not expected it; she had always preferred to receive them with the family on Christmas; but then papa and mamma most always took some notice

of the day and gave her a book, or a little picture, or something to remember it by. This day had passed without notice; and Fannie had been so cross, and she was so tired, and it was all so unnecessary. She wondered if Helena had missed her.

“Did you call at Helena’s?” mamma asked just then, as if she could see the thoughts in Sophie’s heart.

“Yes,” papa said, he stopped a moment; “Helena had callers; the house had been full all day; she had missed Sophie sadly.” Then he turned to that sad-faced little woman sitting in a dull heap in the corner. “Are you too tired, daughter, to go over to Helena’s this evening? She said I was to bring you over at eight o’clock to get your birthday. So put yourself into that blue dress, for I suspect there will be other company. But first, my dear, can you untangle this knot for me? I saw you were patient about such work this afternoon?”

He handed her a little white paper package, a small square box; the string was tied several times in knots; but fortunately they were bow knots, and Sophie’s fingers soon undid them.

The cover was lifted off. Pink cotton, with

a card on it that said: "For a little girl who cheerfully pleased not herself, all day." Could the cotton speak? Or what soft low voice was that whispering under it? "*Tick, tock, tick, tock!*" That was what it said. But the way in which it fitted into the new watch pocket of the blue dress, that Sophie did not know was there, and how she appeared in the new suit at the birthday surprise party, I shall leave you to guess.

GRETCHEN'S WONDERFUL DAY.



HE never knew that it was wonderful. She thought it exactly like other days. It began by her getting up even a little earlier than usual, so that she had time to arrange her hair neatly, and Mrs. Dunlap, the American lady, meeting her on the stairs, said to herself, "The child has very pretty hair."

But of course Gretchen did not hear that.

Gertrude was up early too, and out of the house, with bare feet, and into mischief; that little Gertrude was really the most mischievous four-year-old who was ever born, I do think!

Gretchen was sent for her in haste, and coaxed her in. What do you suppose she had in her hand? A half frozen bird!

"Poor little thing!" said Gretchen, meaning the bird, and she took it tenderly in her hands, and fed it, and petted it back into life, and bore

silently the rather sharp scolding of the house-mother for letting the naughty little four-year-old out in the cold. She did not even explain that she was in the outer kitchen, at work on something which the house-mother had sent her to do, and knew nothing of Miss Gertrude's movements.

"It is a wonder she doesn't explain," said Mrs. Dunlap, the American lady, who had been looking on, and knew all about it. This thought interested her so much that, later in the day she asked Gretchen about it.

"What use?" said Gretchen smiling. "She knew she sent me to another place to work; when she thought it over, she knew all about it; but just then she was tried; and what use for me to try her some more?"

"She is a thoughtful little girl, and good tempered withal," said Mrs. Dunlap. But this she said to herself. That half frozen little bird received much care that day; yet I have never heard that Gretchen neglected any of her work; and she had much to do. Up-stairs and down, chambermaid, housemaid, errandmaid, where did *not* her busy feet have to run? She sang, much of the time, bursting into little snatches of



DOING HER BITS OF DUTIES.

happy song when she thought she was out of hearing, keeping quiet as a mouse when anybody was near. "She has a wonderful voice," said Mrs. Dunlap, but nobody told Gretchen that.

A good deal of Gretchen's time was spent in the kitchen. Not a pleasant place for a little girl to stay. At least Mrs. Dunlap thought so. The house-mother had different ideas about kitchens from American mothers. To be sure every thing was neat and clean; but it was in what Minnie Dunlap called "a huddle." Kettles and pans and pails and dippers, almost without number, hanging on the walls, and a smell of something boiling or sizzling on the great stove all the time. Out of doors the day was bright, and half the children of the town were out enjoying the flurry of snow. They had come for Gretchen, but the house-mother said "No, Gretchen had work to do." She seemed always to have work to do. Mrs. Dunlap, watching her, wondered if she would cry, or look gloomy and pout. She did neither. She was still for a few minutes, and then as she seated herself to grind the black coffee for supper, she kept time to the grinding with a queer little German

air, that was half sad, half merry. Mrs. Dunlap had come to the kitchen on an errand and saw her.

"Gretchen is a cheerful little thing;" she said this to the house-mother, after they had left the kitchen.

"Yau," the woman answered; she was good natured always; and why shouldn't she be? She had plenty to eat, and good clothes to wear, while many another, whose father and mother were dead, went hungry to bed. All this she said in queer-sounding German words, but Mrs. Dunlap understood. The honest-faced German woman, seeing that she had a good listener, explained that while she had only taken in Gretchen out of charity, she meant to do well by her, and teach her to work, and earn her own living. By and by she could go across seas, maybe, and get good wages, doing housework.

"I don't believe she will," said Mrs. Dunlap with a smile; but this she said to herself. And Gretchen, thinking everybody was out of hearing, sang on, a gay, cheery song.

Putting all the little bits of that day together, watching Gretchen, tender to the little bird,

tender to the mischievous little girl, respectful to the house-mother who wasted no tender words on her, industrious, patient, faithful all that busy day, Mrs. Dunlap settled something in her own mind.

It was when Gretchen came to bring her candles, and answered her cheery German "yes ma'am," to a loud call, and hastened away with as quick a step and as pleasant a face as though she had not been called a hundred times before that day, that Mrs. Dunlap said to Minnie:

"I mean to do it."

And Minnie said:

"Aunt Katie, I'm so glad!"

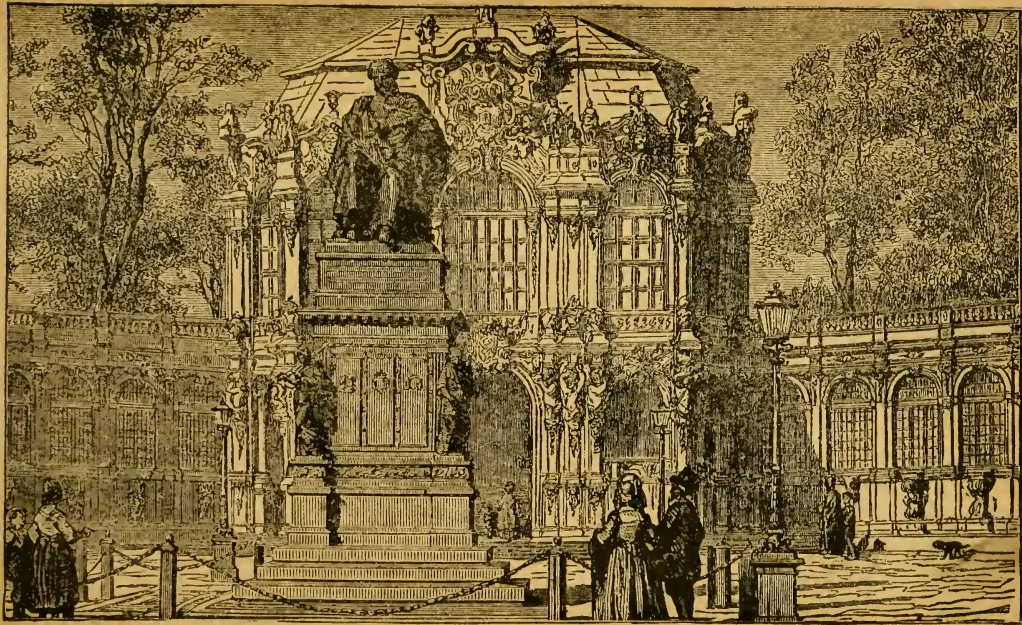
The next morning the story came out. Mrs. Dunlap, the rich American lady, wanted to take Gretchen the orphan girl, "across seas" with her, this very fall. She liked her face, liked her voice, liked her gentleness, liked her ways with little children, liked every thing about her, and would send her to school, and teach her to sing, and to play the piano, and be a friend and companion to her always. Would Gretchen like to go?

Ah, wouldn't she! I cannot begin to tell you how dearly she loved the American lady.

“Gretchen,” she said to her one day when they were on the great ship, “do you know it was that Thursday, when the first snow came, and the little bird was almost frozen, and Gertrude ran away barefoot and found it, that I, watching you, made up my mind fully to take you home with me? You decided it, my dear.”

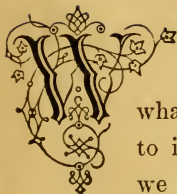
“Me, ma’am!” said Gretchen with sweet, wide-open eyes. “I did not do any thing that day, only just my bits of duties.”

Ah! If each day, we only did our bits of duties.



DRESDEN : ENTRANCE TO THE ZWINGER, AND THE STATUE OF FREDERICK AUGUSTUS.

DRESDEN.



WOULDN'T you like to see the beautiful old town? Well, what is to hinder? Suppose we go to it this very hour, and see what we can find. First, though, how old is it? Let us see how many years places have to live before they can claim the word "old," as belonging to them. We have had a hundred years of country ourselves, and begin to feel rather old, sometimes, but behold! as far back as the year 1206 we hear of Dresden. We must shrink into the background with our baby history. Dresden is *old*. Where is it? Well, let us get out the atlas. Not much room does *it* give to the beautiful city, poking it down in bits of letters in the German Empire. That small black thread which winds near it could hardly be taken for a river if we did not

know that it was the picture of the beautiful Elbe.

Let us see, it must be rather more than a hundred miles south of Berlin, and not so far as that from Liepsic.

The small black thread has widened now, and the Elbe shows something of its beauty. It flows through the centre of the town, there being perhaps a third of the people living on one side the river, and two thirds on the other. In the picture, you get a view of the arches of a handsome bridge that spans the river.

On the left bank of the Elbe is Altstadt, or Old Town; and on the right, Neustadt, or New Town. Everywhere there are beautiful trees; indeed, Dresden must be noted for its trees, for travellers say that, approach the city from whatever direction you may, the first impression is that of a mass of foliage.

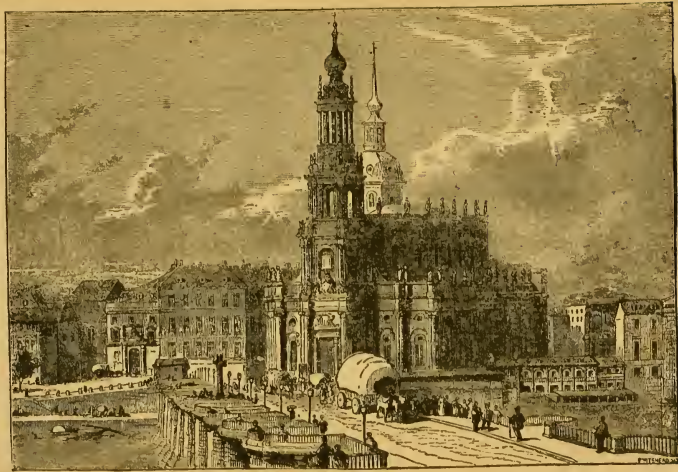
But it has many other beauties besides trees; splendid buildings, with massive domes and spires and wonderful carvings; for instance, there is the church of "Our Lady," built more than a hundred and fifty years ago, with a cupola three hundred and eleven feet high! Then there is the Royal Palace, with a tower three hundred and eighty-seven feet high. That is the

highest in Dresden. People say the palace is rather ugly-looking, however, on the outside, but makes up for it when you get an inside view. I think if I were there, I should want to spend some time in the Green Vault. That doesn't sound like a very attractive place, but oh, the wonderful collection of precious stones, and pearls, and works of art, in gold and silver, and amber and ivory! I am sure it must take hours and hours just to glance at them. There are three thousand different objects to examine, all made from choice metals, or gems. Tableaux, you know, actual pictures of court scenes, with people in full dress, all made in gold, or silver, or amber. Not very large pictures, some of them, it is true: for instance, there is a plate of silver about four feet square, upon which are represented one hundred and thirty-two figures! This is a court scene. The Green Vault is one of the departments of the Royal Palace, and has eight rooms belonging to it, where these treasures are arranged.

Now perhaps we ought to go to the Zwinger.

Here is the entrance, with its massive carvings, and its celebrated statue of Frederick Augustus.

Wonderful things to see in the Zwinger. How many days would you like to spend in going through its Museum of Natural History? If you could spend but a few hours there, I suppose you would be a good deal wiser than you are now. Be sure when you visit Dresden to go to the Zwinger, and use your eyes faithfully. Remember, each one is bound to use his eyes for the benefit of all his other friends. Some of you boys would also like to go into the department where mathematical instruments are kept. As for me, I think, after all, I should spend the greater portion of my time in the Dresden picture gallery. You see it would take a good deal of time, for there are about twenty-five hundred paintings, and all of them are thought to be wonderful. All those famous old artists who have been dead for so many years have work there. Hanging in a beautiful room, all by itself, is that marvelous painting by Raphael, of Jesus and his mother. I think I should like to see that most of all. I have been thinking about it to-day as I read an account of the way one lady felt when she looked at the lovely face of the child Jesus. I thought of all the crowds and *crowds* of people who have gone to that room to

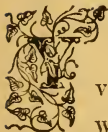


DRESDEN : BRIDGE OVER THE ELBE.

see that picture ; people from every country in the world ; people from our own America, thousands of them ; and they have stood and looked at the picture, and exclaimed over it, and cried over it — some of them — and I wonder, oh, *I wonder*, how many of them bow down to the real Jesus, and own him as their King. It would be pleasant to go to Dresden and see the picture of him in the palace gallery, but what is that compared with going to the Royal Palace in the golden city, and seeing the King sitting on his throne, and seeing him look at me and smile, and hearing him say : “ Come and sit with me on my throne.”

Only think ! Such a blessed opportunity as that is open for each of us ! We may very few of us have chances to go to Dresden, but nothing can keep us from going to this other city, if we really wish to go. Shall we all be there, and walk about its golden streets, and see its gates of pearl, and sit down by the river of life, under the shade of the trees whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, and forever and forever behold the “ King in his beauty ?”

THE PIPE THAT TOLD THE SECRET.



EARS ago, there lived in one of the villages across the ocean an old man and woman who for thirty years had been known and respected by everybody. They had two grown-up sons, who were fine young men. So, at least, people thought.

One night a long leaden pipe was stolen from the village church. It was a very heavy thing, too heavy it seemed for the thief to carry, so he dragged it along on the ground, never seeming to remember that its tracks would tell tales.

Early the next morning the sexton of the church discovered that the pipe had been stolen, and looking for it found its footsteps along the street, and followed them until they stopped before this very home where the much-respected family lived. Of course he was very

much astonished, and thought that the thief was surely hiding somewhere about the house. After a very short search he found a piece of the pipe hidden away in the wood-shed. Oh, dear me!

Don't you think that sexton found, not only the leaden pipe, but all sorts of stolen things hidden in and around that shed! Under the stone of the back yard, under the board walk that led to the house, under the rose-tree in the garden, he found valuables that had been missed from time to time in the village. The stolen pipe was the means of bringing that old man and woman and their sons to spend their days in prison.

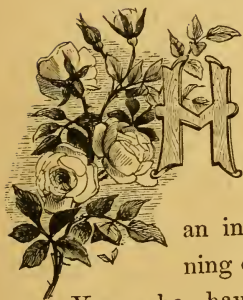
The traveller who wrote this account was in the village when the discovery was made, and says that he saw the seventh cart-load of stolen goods brought to the police station. The villagers were very much excited, and gathered in crowds to look over the goods and claim their property. Some of the things found had been missing for years, some only for weeks; but nearly every man and woman in town found among the goods things that were known to belong to them. The poor old man and woman who had lived among their neighbors for thirty

years without being suspected, were proved to be thieves, and were bowed down with shame. When I heard the story I wondered if they had ever heard a certain verse in the Bible: "Be sure your sin will find you out."



PAUL REVERE'S RIDE.

A BIT OF U. S. HISTORY.

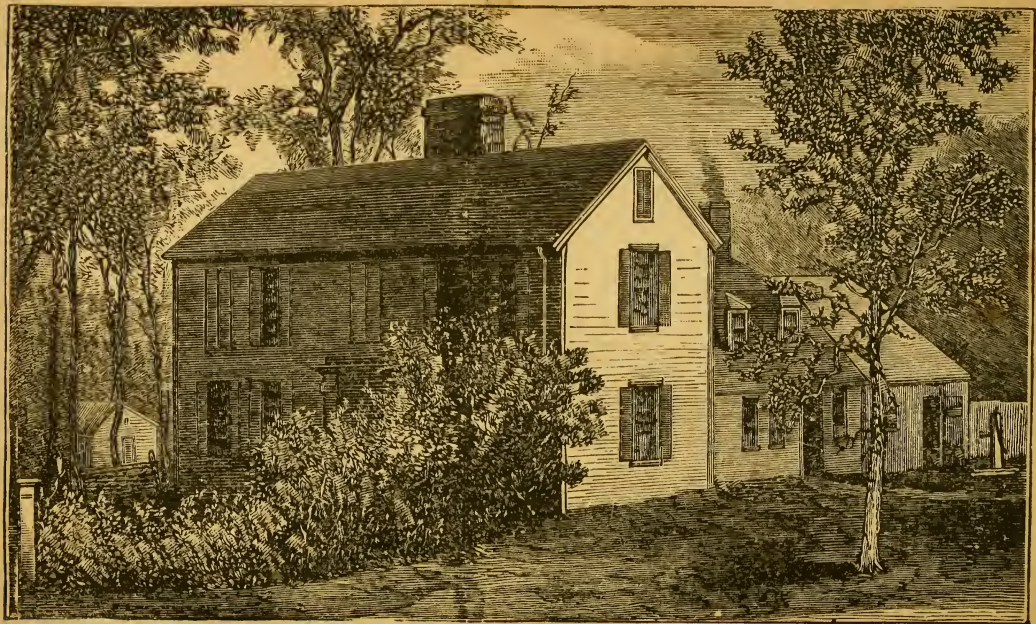


HOW many of you have read Longfellow's poem "Paul Revere's Ride?"

It is the story in verse of an incident at the very beginning of the Revolutionary War.

You who have studied history know that when the British troops were stationed at Boston in the year 1775, and the colonists had a quantity of firearms and ammunition stored at Concord, it was suspected that the British were to march from Boston to Concord for the purpose of destroying the stores. And Paul Revere having arranged with a friend that signal lights should be hung in the tower of the Old North Church, as soon as he saw the signals and knew by the number of lights which way the British were going, started upon his memorable ride. His intention was to ride to Concord and give

notice of the approach of the enemy, also to alarm the people along the route. And it is the story of this ride that Longfellow tells us in the poem. I hope that you will get the book and read it right away. I am sure you will like it. I always read it to my history class when we reach this point in the history of the United States. John Hancock and Samuel Adams were two very prominent men among the colonists, and they were spending the night at Mr. Clark's house in Lexington, and as one good result of Paul Revere's ride these two were able to escape. There was a sharp fight at Lexington, and the first blood of the Revolutionary War was shed at Lexington, April 19, 1775. A monument has been erected at Lexington to honor and perpetuate the memory of the brave men who were the first to lay down their lives for American liberty. And you have here pictures of Paul Revere's ride and Mr. Clark's house where the two patriots were staying. The British marched on to Concord after completing their work of death at Lexington, and succeeded in doing what they had been sent to do. But by the time they were ready to return, the whole country had been aroused; and men from every



THE CLARK HOUSE.

direction were gathering. From behind hillocks, trees and buildings these men fired upon the British as they were marching back to Boston after their day's work. And the result was that but a small part of the one thousand men who marched out of Boston at midnight ever returned. And this was the beginning of that long struggle for the liberty which we enjoy. It is a wonderful story, this of the Revolutionary War, full of thrilling and romantic incidents. I hear boys and girls saying that history is dull. But begin with Paul Revere's ride and I am sure you will want to know more.

STORY OF A CAT.

FANNIE BROWN was very fond of cats. One summer she went out to her uncle's farm; it was seventeen miles from the little village where Fannie lived. At the farm she found the "nicest cat that ever was," to use Fannie's expression. How she wished she had just such a splendid great cat.

One day her uncle said, "Fannie, you may have the cat and kittens too, if you want to take them home with you."

Fannie was delighted, and when the day came for her to go home she had the cat and the little bits of kittens all fastened up in a basket and put into the carriage. Mrs. Brown was somewhat astonished, but being an indulgent mother she concluded to make the best of it. Fannie soon had a bed arranged for her pets. She fed the old cat with plenty of milk, and after visiting



READY TO WELCOME FANNY.

the family in their new quarters the last thing, she went to bed. But she was up early and out in the shed to look after the kittens. But none were to be found. Mother and kittens had disappeared, and all search was in vain. But a week after that Fannie received a letter from her uncle in which he said the cat and all the kittens were at the farm. It had caused much wonderment, for the little things could not have walked seventeen miles! A few days later Fannie's uncle was speaking of the circumstance to a friend who lived about half-way between Fannie's home and her uncle's. This friend said he could solve the mystery, he thought. He said that one morning he watched the queer actions of a cat. He saw her going along the road with a kitten in her mouth. After awhile he looked up and saw the same cat carrying what seemed to be the same kitten in the same direction. This thing being repeated, the gentleman thought he would investigate, and he found that the cat had seven kittens which she seemed to be moving. She would carry one of them a short distance, deposit it in a safe place, and go back after the second, and so on until she had removed the seven. Then repeat the perform-

ance. And it was doubtless in this way that she brought her family back to the farm, over the seventeen long miles. What a slow and toilsome journey. I think she must have been a very homesick cat to have undertaken it.

Fannie's uncle wrote that the old cat should have a home at the farm as long as she lived, and that whenever Fannie came to make them a visit she would find her favorite ready to welcome her.

Now, little readers, there is just one question I would like to ask you. See if you can think it out.

How did the cat-mother find the way back to her old home?

A FLYING MACHINE.

MARIA was doing most of the talking. She had the advantage over all the rest, inasmuch as she was the young lady who had travelled. She was twelve years old on this very day, and was just home from New York. Very eager was she to tell all the little incidents of her journey; how a man tried to jump on the train after they had left the depot, and missed his footing and fell back, and if it hadn't been the last car, everybody said he would have been killed.

“I shouldn't have thought he would have tried to get on *our* train,” she added. “Papa, we just flew! I never knew the cars did go so fast before.”

“How fast?” asked Paul who was ten, and inclined to think that Maria imagined a good deal of the swiftness in her journey.

“Oh, I don't know, we must have gone as much as forty miles an hour.”

“Poh! don’t believe it,” said Paul promptly. “Why, New York isn’t more than fifty miles from Philadelphia, the way you came.”

Then there were cries of “Oh! Oh!” from Maria, and a “Why, Paul!” from Marion, and papa said: “Sure of that, my boy?”

“No sir, I’m not exactly sure; but I don’t think it is much more than that, by the air line. They make the trip in a little more than two hours, and trains don’t often run faster than twenty-five miles an hour, do they?”

“Twenty-five miles is very fair speed even for railroad cars, but there are roads that make faster time. For instance, this air line. Who knows just how far it is from New York to Philadelphia by the route that Maria came?”

This started such an eager discussion, and so many different opinions, varying from fifty to a hundred and twenty miles, that at last Paul went for the railway guide and read aloud:

“It is exactly ninety and four tenths miles! I didn’t think it.”

Then his father said it was a good thing to have a discussion once in awhile, to learn that they had not very accurate knowledge even of the things that they thought they knew.



MARIA WAS A YOUNG LADY WHO HAD TRAVELLED.

“But, papa,” said Maria, “Paul was the sur-est that he knew, and he came farther from the right answer than any of us.”

“Paul was only making believe sure, daughter. He ‘guessed’ at it, as we Yankees say, because he knew the length of time which it takes to make the distance between the two cities, and he ‘guessed’ again that the cars travelled only about so fast.”

“Well,” said Maria, “we came home in exactly two hours and fifteen minutes. Nobody will ever travel much faster than that, will they?”

“I don’t know, daughter. I won’t venture a decided answer to that question; it would be wilder than Paul’s guessing.”

“Why, papa, do you really suppose that there will ever be any faster travelling than that?”

It was Marion who asked the question, and Maria listened eagerly for the answer.

“That reminds me of a story. There was once a man who made this same trip from Philadelphia to New York. He went in what was called ‘The Flying Machine,’ and he made the fastest time that had ever been known. ‘That is what you may call flying, sir,’ he said proudly

to his little boy ; and then he sat down by the fire and told the boy stories about the things that happened to him on the way, very much as Maria has been entertaining us ; and they both agreed that it was improbable that the trip would ever be made in more rapid time than that."

"And how long had it taken him?" Both Paul and Maria asked the question, listening eagerly.

"I doubt if you could 'guess' that, Paul. It took him exactly two days!"

Then you should have heard the shouts of laughter, in the midst of which Paul found a chance to ask when that was, but Marion was too quick for him.

"Why, I know about that," she said: "I wonder I didn't think when papa said 'Flying machine!' That was what they called the stage coach that was started in 1712, wasn't it? Oh, just think! Two days in going from Philadelphia, and they called it fast travelling!"

"But after all," said Maria, returning to the charge, "there is nothing in *that* to make us believe that people will ever travel any faster than I did to-day; at least not much faster. *Do*

you believe they will, papa?" she continued.

"I expect to," said papa with animation. Then the children gathered around him with loud calls for an exclamation.

"Let me see, how long was the angel in reaching Daniel? I expect to do something like that."

"Oh, but papa, that will be in Heaven!"

"Yes," he said in great satisfaction, "that will be in Heaven. Think of flying over *worlds!* Always going just where one wants to, and doing just the work that of all else one would like to do! I tell you, children, *that* will be travelling! Don't one of you miss the opportunity for taking such journeys as that."

SEVENTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY.

THEY walked home from school hand in hand, swinging their school bags, and talking it over. Dorothy was nine, and Mary was "most eleven." It was the eighteenth day of May, in the year 1780. A good while ago, you see. If I had a picture of Mary and Dorothy you would see by their queer-looking dress how long ago they lived. But they were just as full of business as girls are now; and for the past week there had been a great deal to do, for the next day was May-day. Not the first day of May, of course, but the first day in May that they had been able to plan for a May party out in the woods. The first few days of the month had been rainy, and then two of the boys that they depended upon most, went away, and the rest had to wait for their return. Now everything was ready. The beautiful moss-covered throne was built, and the path leading to it was made smooth, and the canopy



AND THAT VERY SATURDAY AFTERNOON THE MAY PARTY WAS HELD.

over it was festooned with vines and branches, waiting for the flowers to be added in the morning. Mary and Dorothy had been the hardest workers, and were rather the leaders in most things; so they had much to talk about.

“I’m awful glad we didn’t have Jane Ann,” Dorothy said.

“So am I. It serves her right. She peeks in geography class lots of times; and that time she got ahead of me I most know she peeked.”

“I know it; and she is cross about her dinner — won’t exchange pie, nor anything. I’m as glad as can be that we had her left out. I do hope it won’t rain to-morrow.”

“Oh, it won’t! See how red the sun is; that isn’t a sign of rain.”

But it was in the gray dawn of the May morning that Mary, who had been awake for some minutes, at last made a doleful remark:

“Dorothy?”

“What?”

“It rains!”

“I know it. Isn’t that just awful?”

“Maybe it is only a shower,” said Mary soothingly. There was a sound of tears in her younger sister’s voice.

Sure enough, after a little the rain ceased falling, and Mary and Dorothy hurried their dressing, to see what father would say about the weather.

“How dark it is!” said Dorothy at last, trying to lace her shoe, and being unable to see the holes. “I’m just afraid there is going to be an awful storm. Who ever knew it to be so dark on a May morning?”

“I know it,” said Mary. “I think we were real silly to choose Friday for a May-day; and I told the girls so. It is sure to be unlucky.”

“O, Mary Bascomb! You know father doesn’t want you to believe in luck.”

Father Bascomb was out in the barnyard among the horses and cows.

“What does this mean?” he asked the girls, as they came out; and then they all looked up into the sky.

The sun seemed to be hiding itself behind a misty veil, from under which it peered, looking red and angry. “Is it going to storm, father?” the girls asked.

“Never looked more like it,” he said. “Queer kind of storm, too!”

That was a very trying morning. Mary and

Dorothy found it hard work to attend to their usual duties. They wanted to keep watch of the sky and the clouds. A little before ten o'clock came a thunder storm.

"Now I guess it will clear up, after this," Dorothy said with brightening face.

"But the woods will be wet," objected Mary.

"Oh, no, I guess not. The sun will come out hot and dry them up before two o'clock."

But the sun did no such thing. Instead, it did not come out at all; every minute the world grew darker.

"What in the world is going to happen?" said Mother Bascomb; and she left her work and came and looked out of the window. "Look here, children! Over at the lower farm they've got candles lighted; you can see them from the window." Candles in the middle of the forenoon of a May day! But it wasn't ten minutes after that when Mother Bascomb herself lighted two candles, declaring that she could not see to thread her needle; and there those candles sat, and winked and blinked at the girls from out the gloom.

"There's father coming home!" exclaimed Dorothy; and she and Mary and Mrs. Bascomb

went to the door, to meet him. "What does all this mean?" said she.

"I'm sure I don't know. It got so dark I couldn't see to run the team; and the horses seemed kind of scared. Look at Brindle and Shorthorn! They think it is night, and have come home from the pasture."

"O mother, look at the hens!" said Dorothy, her voice low and frightened. "They are going to roost. O mother, mother! what is going to happen?"

"I don't know, child; whatever happens, we ought to be doing our duty. Go in, and set the table; and don't waste any time worrying over what you cannot understand. If you are busy it won't seem so strange. And you, Mary, look after the potatoes; it is getting noon. Light another candle, child; you can't see in the dark."

How do you think it seemed to sit down to the dinner-table on the nineteenth day of May, in a town just a few miles from Boston, with two lighted candles on the table to show people the way to their mouths! Not much dinner was eaten. To tell you the truth, the girls, though they did not cry—it wasn't the fashion in those days to cry—were very much

frightened; and why should they not be, when even their father and mother looked grave and anxious? By the light of the candles the dishes were washed and dried, and then Mary stole away to take one sorrowful look at the white dress that was to have gone to the May party that day. Frightened though she was, she could not quite forget the beautiful throne waiting for its queen, nor the wonderful wreath that she had hoped to wear if they had happened to choose her. It was just possible, you know; every girl of them thought that. But she came back in haste from the bed where the white dresses lay, her face white with fear.

“Mother! O, mother! Our dresses have turned yellow!”

This was the astounding news with which she burst into the kitchen.

“Nonsense!” said the mother; and Mary looked at her in wonder; she had hardly ever heard her mother use even so mild an exclamation as that. “What dresses do you mean?”

“Why, our white ones! O, mother, mother! they have! Do come and see!”

Sure enough! the beautifully ironed dresses that had been so white in the early morning,

seemed to have changed to a bright yellow.

Oh, such a day as it was! If I should fill all the columns of this paper, I could not begin to describe to you the strangeness of it. An eclipse? Oh, no! the sun and moon were not even near neighbors at that time. Then what was the matter? Why, really that is more than people seem to know, though a good many shrewd guesses were made. But that it actually *happened*, at the time, and very much in the manner that I have described, any history of our country will tell you. But there is one thing about Mary and Dorothy that you will not find in the history, so I will tell you of it:

“They sat close together, trying to make out their Bible verses, for it did not seem quite right to them to study anything but the Bible on such a dark day, when suddenly Dorothy said in a whisper: “I’m dreadful sorry that we did not ask Jane Ann.”

“So am I,” whispered Mary. “She didn’t mean to peek, maybe; anyhow, perhaps she’s sorry for it.”

“Yes, and maybe she didn’t peek at all, that time she got ahead; you know we didn’t see her.”

“No, that’s true; we didn’t.”

Silence for a few minutes, then Dorothy, her face grave with the thought of it :

“I tell you what, Mary, if there ever *does* come another day, and the sun shines, and things are just as they always have been, and we do have the May party after all, let’s get the girls to ask her the very first thing.”

“Let’s,” said Mary; and then she began to say over her Bible verse.

“Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another.” Queer that it should have been just that verse, wasn’t it?

Have you any idea how beautiful the world was the next morning, when the sun shone, and the birds sang, and the hens clucked, and the cows mooed contentedly, just as usual? Mary and Dorothy were sure there never, no, never had been such a beautiful morning. Dorothy, however, was looking thoughtful. By and by the thought came out :

“Mary, you don’t suppose, do you, that we could have had that *awful* day, yesterday, just because we did not invite Jane Ann?”

“No-o,” said Mary, with slowness and gravity, “I don’t suppose it could have been that; but

then it is queer that it cleared off and was nice again, most as soon as we settled it."

"Anyhow," said Dorothy, with a relieved sigh, "I'm glad we settled it to have her go."

And that very Saturday afternoon, the May party was held, and Jane Ann went. What is more, it was she whom they crowned! You can see her crowned head in the picture.

“SUPPOSE.”

SUSIE had lingered in the sitting-room listening to the talk. She was very much interested, or thought she was. Her grown up sister Sarah was on the committee to raise money for the mission-box, or rather the box that was to be sent to a home missionary. She had been making out a list of the people on whom to call. Susie had tried to help, and mentioned several people on whom *she* would be sure to call, if she was “committee.”

Sister Sarah did not seem to think much of her advice; in fact, she told her once, that she talked too much for such a little girl; and finally her mother sent her up-stairs to change her dress.

“I don’t care,” said Susie, as up in her room alone the business of dressing went on rapidly; “I know I could get more money than Sarah can. I would go to people that she says there is no use in calling on, and I would tell them so

many nice things, that they could not help giving. Oh, I wonder where there is a big pin! I must go to Sarah's cushion."

There, she found a pin, and several other things. Among them, Sarah's hat with its elegant long plume, and Sarah's handsome lace cape that she wore with her new silk dress.

"Now suppose," said Susie, "that I was a grown up lady, and this was my hat, I would wear it just so; then I would put this lace around me, so, and I would go out to make calls. I'd call on Mrs. Schermann, and tell her all about that poor family, how the children can't go to Sunday-school nor anywhere, because they have nothing to wear. She would give me a great shining gold piece, I most know. I'd be very nice and polite, to match my hat. I would bow when she came into the room, just this way."

Down bent the curly head in what was to be a very low and graceful bow. Alas, for the elegant hat! Over it went, bumping against Susie's nose and landing in the washbowl half full of suds, where Sarah had been rinsing her laces.

Ah, you should have seen the long plume



“SUPPOSE.”

then, and the delicate ribbon, on which every drop of water left an ugly stain.

"Well," said Sarah, half an hour afterwards, giving a long-drawn sigh, "it can't be helped, and there is no use in crying about it; but it will take all the money I meant to spend on the missionary box, and a good deal more, to replace this hat."

Susie in her own little room, her eyes swollen with weeping over the mischief she had done, heard this lament and saw how sadly she had hindered instead of helped the missionary box.

"I shouldn't feel so badly about it," said her mother, "if Susie had not such a dreadful habit of meddling with other people's things; and if she hadn't directly disobeyed me by putting on your hat that I have told her not to touch."

"But the poor child forgot," said Sarah. "She is so fond of pretty things!"

"I know she forgot," said mamma; "but that is what she always does. How am I to teach her to remember?"

All this made Susie feel worse than before, and she buried her head in the pillows and cried again. At which I don't wonder. Do you?

“I PLAY GIVE IT.”



IN Mrs. Elson's nursery there was great commotion. Addie was to have a tea party. Five dollies to be dressed in their best, banged hair and all, and go out to tea. To be sure they were only guests, but Addie, their mistress, was as busy and eager as though the house was to be full. "Every speck of work to do myself!" she explained to Adelia Frances Emeline, the oldest and wisest dolly. "It isn't as though I had good help. My Jane means well, but she is as stupid as possible. I cannot trust her with anything, and it is so much more work to watch and direct than it is to do it myself, that I do not try and have her help me."

"What an imitator that child is!" said Mrs. Elson to herself, as she heard all this from the next room, and she wondered if all the remarks she made to her particular friend Mrs. James, would sound so foolish repeated.



"EVERY SPECK OF WORK TO DO MYSELF!"

"I PLAY GIVE IT."

Addie's work went on rapidly; her pretty china was washed by her own careful hands, as indeed her mother's always was, and her round table dressed in its best, with wonderful cups of tea made of milk, a dish of apples for sauce, some real bread and butter, some of it cut into elegant slices to serve as cake, and some of it lying in wafer-like thinness on the tiny bread tray, and at last, as a crowning touch to the feast, a most dainty and delicate bit of choice candy, each in a fancy shape, lay at each dollie's plate. I was visiting her mother, and at this state of affairs was invited into the nursery to get a view of the grandeur. It pleased me to see the very nicest pieces of candy selected for the dollies, while a common bit from the old-fashioned red-and-white "stick" candy, lay at her own plate.

"You give your guests the best," I said, "don't you, dear?"

Addie's sweet blue eyes turned and looked at me for a moment, while their owner seemed to be thinking, then, her honest little heart deciding that there was praise in my tone, she explained: "I only play give it to them, auntie, but I eat it myself, afterwards, you know."

Then did her father, who had followed us to the nursery, burst into a loud and hearty laugh as he said: "I know just where the little mimic learned that lesson; but I don't believe you ladies can guess. It is the working out of a Sunday-school teaching."

"Sunday-school teaching!" repeated her dismayed mamma.

"It is, my dear; the fact is, the class to which she belongs play at giving pennies to benevolence, each Sabbath; they take up a collection and talk about giving to help others and all that, and then what do they do but spend every cent of the money on their own books and papers! That is precisely what Addie is doing with her dollies, and it is easy to see how she became so wise."

Since then, I have thought about it a great deal. I wonder if it can be that any are being taught in their Sabbath-schools to *play* give to God!

KATE'S RABBIT.

KATE went to the children's fair. Her first fair, and with twenty-five cents to spend. She wandered about all the evening trying to decide what to buy, changing her mind so many times that her small brain must have felt dizzy. At last she chose a great white Canton flannel rabbit with pink-lined ears, looking so exactly like the Bunny that raced around the yard at home, that we asked Kate what she wanted of two rabbits.

"I bought him just on purpose to please Bunny," she explained. "I know he is lonesome, poor Bunny is, when I go to school, and with this Canton flannel rabbit he can make believe have good times, and play with him, and they can eat together, only Bunny can have all the nice things, for this one's mouth won't eat."

This last idea seemed to please Kate very much. Well, she carried the rabbit home and

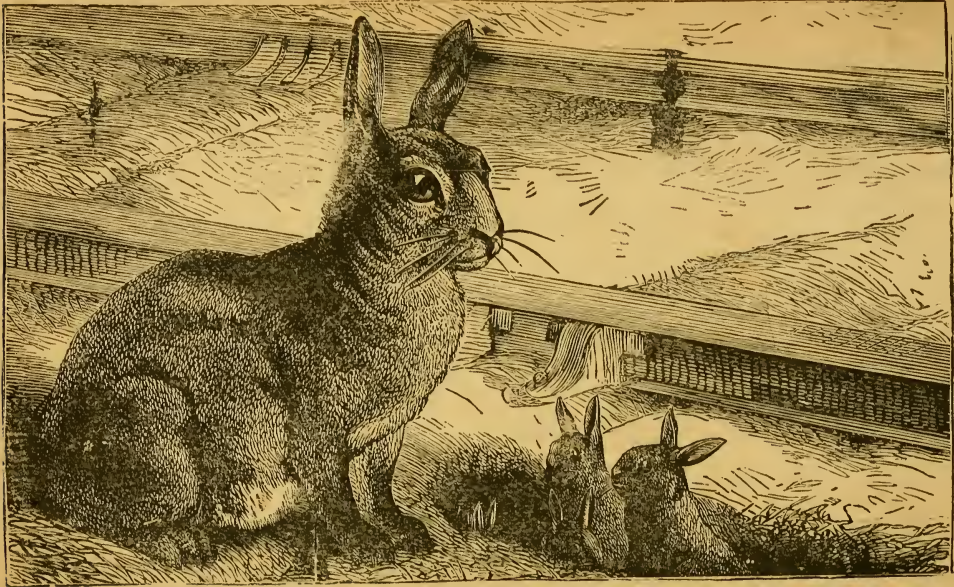
set him up in the corner of the nursery, very much amused over the fact that nurse mistook him for the real Bunny, and tried to frighten him from the room.

The next morning Kate excused herself in haste from the breakfast-table, and coaxed to be allowed to bring Bunny in to see his new friend. The Canton flannel rabbit was set up properly in the corner of the dining-room, and Bunny was let in.

His bright eyes spied the little white ball the first thing, and he stepped cautiously forward, seeming to say, "Are you a friend, or a rival who has come to steal Kate's affections from me?" Very slow steps, drawing nearer and nearer; there was something about the quiet, well-behaved white rabbit that seemed to fill him with suspicion.

He drew close, and then stepped back, sat down on his hind feet, and seemed disposed to think about it awhile; then he stepped close again; then he walked around the quiet rabbit. At last he plucked up courage and leaned forward and smelled of it.

Did you ever see a rabbit angry? This one, the moment it had smelled of its new friend,



BUNNY HAS ALL THE NICE THINGS.

put on the most contemptuous face you ever saw, took its whiskered nose and its fore paw and coolly tipped the poor little humbug of a rabbit over on its side, then ran away under the table, and actually wouldn't eat any breakfast because it had been deceived!

"I don't understand it," said Kate with a grieved lip. "I thought Bunny would like it real well; I'm sure I like my dollie, and she is only a play baby."

Papa tried to comfort her. He took her in his arms and sat down in the arm-chair to explain. "I'll tell you what I think is the difference between you and Bunny: He hasn't any 'think' put inside of him. You can cuddle your dollie in your arms and think, 'Suppose this was a real truly baby, and was tired and sleepy, then I would cuddle her up just so, and sing to her, and pet her to sleep.' But Bunny cannot 'suppose' anything, so he isn't content with a make-believe rabbit."

After a few minutes, Kate said: "It must be dreadful stupid to be nothing but a rabbit and have no 'thinks' inside of you. When I say my prayers to-night, I'm going to thank God for making a *Kate* of me, instead of a rabbit!"

A GIRL IN BLUE.

THIS was just the way Helen looked when her cousin Carrie peeped in at her from the crack in the door that led to the dining-room. And this was much the way that Carrie talked to herself about it:

“There she sits in her elegant new morning dress, nothing in the world to do but amuse herself, and I must stain my hands paring potatoes, and onions, and I don’t know what all, for her dinner! A dress with a train, and she only sixteen! Only two years and a few months older than I am! How would *I* look in a train? I *never* expect to have such an elegant dress as she has on this minute, and it is only her morning dress. To-night she will wear that lovely garnet silk trimmed with white lace. Think of me in my old blue flannel! It is everything I have to wear. I don’t see why there should be such a difference between cousins! I wish Helen had stayed in New

York. Why she wanted to come to the country in the winter is more than I can understand. She isn't homesick a bit. I just believe I'll stay at home to-night. Almost all the girls will wear new dresses, and my old one will look older than ever beside Helen's grand one."

"Carrie," called that young lady's mother, and Carrie went to the kitchen.

There she gave her hands to the potatoes, and her thoughts to the discouragements around her. At last she spoke some of them aloud :

"Mother, I don't believe I'll go to-night after all."

"Not go to Kate's Christmas party! Why, what has happened? Is the child sick?"

"No'm, I'm not sick; only discouraged. I don't want to go and wear that old blue dress, and that's the truth. I shall look different from any of the others, and seeing me with Helen will make everybody notice it more."

"My child, Helen's father is worth a million, and your father isn't worth a thousand dollars besides what it takes to support his family."

"I know it, ma'am; I'm not finding fault, only I don't want to go to be looked at, that's all."

The mother looked very sober, and something besides the steam that puffed out of the pudding-dish made her eyes moist. Carrie split a large potato savagely in two, and looked gloomy. Then the mother said, speaking low :

“ Won’t you disappoint a good many people to-night, daughter? Isn’t Kate depending on you to help with the charades and the music?”

“ I can’t help it, mother. People mustn’t depend on me. Most every girl but me has a new dress for to-night, and I can’t be going there just to help other people have a good time when I know I shall be feeling mortified all the evening.”

“ Can’t you? Why, daughter, even Christ pleased not himself.”

After that, not another word was said in that kitchen for nearly an hour. Carrie finished the potatoes and ran away. Where she went, or what she did, mother did not know ; but when she came to set the table her face was pleasant to look at, and she stopped on her way to the pantry to kiss her mother.

“ I’m going, motherie ; and I’ll have as nice a time as I can, and not grumble a bit.”

She looked very pretty in her blue dress with



THIS IS JUST THE WAY HELEN LOOKED.

its deep lace collar and bright ribbons in her hair. At least her mother thought so ; though when Helen came down in all the glory of her garnet silk and gold bracelets there was certainly a difference.

It wasn't a young people's party entirely ; in fact it was a sort of family Christmas gathering to which all the city aunts and uncles and cousins had come ; and there were some elegant dresses there, and Carrie in her old blue one, did really feel a good deal alone. Yet she went cheerily through the evening, helping with the charades, and the music, helping in a dozen quiet little ways that nobody knew about, and yet trying to keep out of notice as much as possible.

Cousin Helen played and sang, and did both very nicely, while Carrie only played accompaniments for others to sing.

Later in the evening there was a whispering between two of the city cousins, and presently it became known that Mr. Ames, who was uncle Howard's college friend, was a wonderful singer and would entertain the company if anybody could be found who would play for him.

"I wish he would sing *The Storm King* for us," said aunt Alice ; "it is the most wonderful

thing! I would like to have mother hear it. Helen, couldn't you play for him?"

"I! No indeed; his music is all awfully hard, and he is awfully particular; and that piece I don't know, anyway."

But aunt Alice was determined that her mother should hear *The Storm King*. She talked with Mr. Ames, and then she moved among the guests trying to find one who was willing to play the accompaniment. Not a cousin could be found; they were all afraid of the great singer, and the difficult looking music. At last the girl in the blue dress grew ashamed of herself.

"Aunt Alice, I will play it!" she said, coming out of her corner.

"You!" said aunt Alice in surprise, for Carrie was one of the youngest of the cousins. "Do you know it?"

"No, ma'am, I don't know it; but I can play from the notes."

Then did Helen look at her young cousin in respectful astonishment.

"Can you play pieces that you do not know?" she asked her.

"Why, yes," said Carrie laughing. "I can

if they are not *very* hard; I ought to, I have taken lessons steadily for three years."

"Well, but I have taken lessons for most five years, and I can't do it."

"Carrie is very faithful with her practising," said Carrie's mother, with a pleased smile.

And Carrie played the accompaniment, which really was difficult, and played it so well that Mr. Ames, the great singer, told her he had never had a player who pleased him better.

And don't you think she forgot all about her blue dress, until her attention was called to it in a very strange way.

"She not only plays remarkably well," said Mr. Ames to his wife, "but she is the best dressed young girl in the room."

"Yes," said Mrs. Ames, "I noticed that; all the rest of the young people are over-dressed. She must have a sensible mother."

They did not know that Carrie stood just behind them, and heard it all. But really I think it did her good; just as honest compliments often do good. It made her realize that there were two sides to the question of fine dresses.

HETTY'S THANKSGIVING.

PART ONE.



CAT!" said aunt Jane. "That everlasting cat is always under my feet; what I stand it for is more than I know. Scat! I say; get out with you, and don't let me see you again to-day!" and she took the broom to help poor kitty out. Then Hetty thought that her cup of unhappiness was full. Much she knew about it. Just as Muff, the cat, sat down in a miserable little shivering heap in the snowy walk, Miss Florence Percival stopped and leaned over the rail, her hands outspread, and made a remark to her. "You poor creature, how cold you look! Come here, pussy. What have you done to be sent out in the snow? I suppose you have been naughty and scratched the baby, but since it wasn't my baby I forgive you. Come here."

"Meow!" said Muff, but she sided up to the lady with a sweet voice, very unlike aunt Jane's.

She even sprang to the top of the railing and stood looking at the lady out of beseeching eyes. Pleasant words were not so plentiful from grown-up people that she could afford to miss any.

“ You poor thing ! ” said Miss Florence again, and she reached out and took the cold cat in her arms, and cuddled her under furry sleeves. “ A bit of brown calico around your neck, tied like a ribbon ! You are some poor little girl’s pet, I know. Why did you run away from her ? Where do you live ? ”

She walked along the street as she talked, petting Muff who purred contentedly, but for all that pricked up her ears when she saw Hetty at the window, and announced that she was ready to go to her.

“ That’s your mistress, is it ? A poor little pale girl ; you were naughty to leave her. What a dreary-looking house she lives in ! And what a sad face she has ; I hope you are good to her, for she doesn’t look as though people were. Kitty, I wonder if she would like a call from me ? ” Waiting for no answer from Muff, Miss Florence knocked at the side door ; she was in the habit of doing pretty nearly what she wanted to.

“I’ve brought your little girl’s kitty home I think,” she said pleasantly to aunt Jane, who looked cross at her. “The poor thing seemed to be very cold and dismal. If she has been naughty I dare say she is sorry. May I come in and see your little girl?”

“She is a perfect plague!” said aunt Jane, but she meant the cat, and she held the door open for Miss Florence to enter.

“Are you sick?” the visitor asked, as she took the little cold hand in her soft warm one. “What is the matter, my child?”

“It’s the misery in my knee, ma’am; it won’t let me walk nor anything; it is most four months since I have taken a step.”

“Poor little girl! Have you had the doctor?”

“I should think we had!” burst forth aunt Jane; “I paid him four dollars and a half of hard-earned money; and much good it did! He says it is rheumatism, and she’ll get over it maybe when warm weather comes. But land! Cold weather hasn’t much more than come, and I have to keep her sitting in that chair and wait on her like a queen; and that everlasting kitten forever under my heels.”

“It is all the friend I have, ma’am,” said Hetty

beseechingly, as if she feared that the beautiful lady in her furry cloak and hat would carry it away. Aunt Jane had dashed into another room, so she did not hear this confession.

“Poor child!” said Miss Florence. “So you will have to eat your Thanksgiving dinner in a corner; or do they move you up to the table?”

A sickly little smile appeared for a minute on Hetty's face, then she said gravely: “I never had a Thanksgiving dinner, ma'am.” But aunt Jane heard that speech and flashed out an answer: “I should like to know if you hadn't! That shows how grateful you are! As if I didn't work my fingers to the bone to give you three meals a day, every day of your life!”

Hetty's pale cheeks began to grow pink, but she answered meekly: “I didn't mean that, aunt Jane; I was thinking about real, truly Thanksgiving dinners like what there was in that book—a turkey, and mince pie, and jelly, and oh, lots of things. I never saw such a dinner, you know.”

“People who do nothing to earn their dinners, but just sit in a chair and make trouble, ought to be thankful for bread and potatoes.” Aunt Jane was certainly *very* cross. Miss Florence

did not pay much attention to her; she was thinking how strange it was for a little girl to be almost ten years old and know so little about a Thanksgiving dinner!

She thought a great deal more than that; thoughts, you know, work very fast, and by the time she was ready to speak again she had something wonderful to say. "I'll tell you what we will have to do, little Hetty. You and kitty will have to come to my house and eat a Thanksgiving dinner this very week; day after to-morrow, isn't it? We are going to have turkey, and mince pie, and jelly, and lots of other things, and I'm sure you would like to be my guest."

It is a pity that I could not show you a picture of Hetty's eyes just then. They looked so very bright, and yet so full of astonishment.

"But ma'am, I can't walk," she said timidly.

"No, but you can ride in a nice sleigh, tucked in among the nice furry robes. Our John can take you in his arms and land you right in the middle of the cushions; he will think you are nothing but a nice little mouse."

Whereupon Hetty laughed gleefully, and then was frightened at the sound of her own voice, and looked around to see if aunt Jane heard.

PART TWO.



UNT Jane heard, and came back presently with a pleasanter face. The idea of Hetty's really being invited out anywhere to get a good dinner, was something new. Hetty listened in astonishment while her aunt said she was sure she would be glad to have the poor child get a little pleasure and something better to eat than she could afford her. It sometimes made her real cross to think of Hetty sitting there day in and day out.

Hetty, thinking it over, made up her mind that after this she wouldn't mind aunt Jane's crossness so much.

There was business to be done now in the little gloomy house. Hetty's old brown wool dress that she wore last winter was hunted out, and mended, and sponged, and pressed, and really looked very nice. By nine o'clock on Thanksgiving morning she was dressed and sitting by the window to watch for the sleigh.

Down the little narrow street it came with a wonderful jingle of bells, and the horses pranced before the door, and the gay robes fluttered in the wind, and John came in and himself wrapped Hetty in a soft warm shawl which Miss Florence had sent, and took her in his arms as though she had been a mouse indeed, and sunk her in among the furry robes and away they went!

At Dr. Benedict's a regular after-breakfast frolic was going on. The girls and their cousins were having a merry-making over the fresh box of toys that had come from uncle Max, the night before. Into the midst of all this warmth, and brightness, and fun came John bringing his mouse, which he dropped into the great easy-chair beside the glowing grate.

"It feels like a feather bed, such as grandma used to have once, before she went to heaven," said Hetty, leaning her happy little head against the cushions.

The next thing she said after a few minutes of thoughtful silence, astonished the children very much :

"I guess this is heaven, and your aunt Florence is one of the angels; and I'm glad I've got here."

So were the children, but it seemed funny to them that this was Hetty's idea of heaven.

About the wonders of that Thanksgiving dinner there is no use to try to tell you! To the Benedict children it was nothing more than a good dinner; but to Hetty it was like stepping into a story book which she had once read, and being one of the characters.

"I've had just the very things that Laura had in the book, jelly and all! There's only one thing different."

"What is that?" Maud Benedict asked, thinking in her loving little heart that if it was nice and to be had, Hetty should have it.

"Why, she could hop all around, and she went skipping through the room, singing. But then walking doesn't matter much, when I can sit in such a chair as this."

Florence, in the library, heard this, and she spoke to her brother:

"Now, Dr. Benedict, I want you to use your skill to take away that 'difference,' and make Hetty just like the Laura in the book."

"I've been thinking about that," said Dr. Benedict; "I will make an examination by and by, when she feels better acquainted with me."

I don't think there can be any thing serious."

How did it all end? Why, it hasn't ended. Dr. Benedict looked at the poor knee that had so much "misery" in it, and decided that with care, and daily treatment, she ought to get well very soon; then they had a family council, and decided that the very best place for her to stay until she got well, was right there where she was. So John was sent back to Aunt Jane with a basket that was packed brimming full from the well-filled cellar — she could have a Thanksgiving dinner indeed — and Miss Florence went along to explain, and they brought Muff home with them; and that night when Hetty was tucked into her beautiful bed, she actually kissed Muff right on her cold nose and whispered:

"Oh, you dear, darling cat! if it hadn't been for you, I shouldn't have imagined what heaven was like; and now I can."

"Something besides Muff ought to be thanked if you like it. Don't you know, little girl, that your dear friend, the Lord Jesus, told me to take you home and see if Dr. Benedict couldn't cure you?" This was what Miss Florence whispered to her as she kissed her good-night.

THIRTEEN YEARS.

DO you ever think of the days full of trouble when all through Connecticut and Massachusetts, and indeed everywhere in our country, the Indians were rising up every little while, and making war, and killing people in awful ways? Did you ever look away back and see how the Indians came to hate the white man so? It makes me sad to think that perhaps little of the trouble would ever have been if white men had kept their promises. Oh, how they cheated the poor wild men whom they found in this new world! From the very beginning of trouble until now, it is really hard to find an account of people who acted toward the Indians as they promised that they would. They seemed constantly to be trying to deceive them.

Let me tell you about Major Waldron. It became his duty to arrest some of the Pequod Indians. How do you suppose he did it? He sent out an invitation to all the Indians about

Dover to come to the garrison, as he wanted to have a pleasant time with them. They were acquainted with him; they trusted him; and without any thought of danger, they came. With them came the Pequod Indians whom he wanted to arrest. He explained to his company that he had planned a sham fight for their amusement. He arranged that they should at a given signal fire their empty guns. The Indians, ever ready for warlike sport, raise their guns and fire just as they have been told, doing no damage. Now he is sure that they have nothing with which to defend themselves, and in an instant his soldiers surround them, taking them all prisoners. Then they were sent to the West Indies and sold as slaves.

And this is very much the way in which the poor Indians have been managed. Do you think it strange that they have learned not to trust white people? But I said they were *all* taken prisoners; there was one who escaped. In the excitement of the moment he slipped away, and ran into a house near at hand.

Mrs. Heard lived there. A woman with a warm heart, and one who believed that God made Indians, and that they had souls to

be saved. She could not make up her mind to tell the soldiers anything about him. Instead, she hid him until they had marched away.

Indians have good memories. It was thirteen years afterwards. Major Waldron was an old man. Indians were all around him, and they had never forgotten how their brothers were treated. They thought out a plan by which to cheat him, as he had cheated their race. They sent two Indian women to his garrison to ask if they might stay all night, and to say that a party of Indians were coming the next morning to trade.

Major Waldron was glad to hear this, for very good bargains could be made with Indians. So he invited the squaws to spend the night. But when all the soldiers were sleeping, the squaws slipped out, leaving doors unfastened, and the Indians slipped in. Oh, dear! It is an awful story. They were savages. They knew nothing about the story of Jesus and his love. They took no prisoners, but killed every man, and woman, and child whom they found.

One woman escaped. How? Why, her name was Mrs. Heard! That evening she was coming home late from a journey; she had her children

with her. She heard the savage cry of the Indians, and she knew only too well what it meant.

It was just as she reached Major Waldron's house that an Indian touched her shoulder. She was so frightened that she sank down on the ground; but he raised her up.

"Me know you," he said. "You no hurt. Indian take care of you. You took care of Indian once; me take care of you now. Indian never forget."

It was the very man whom she had hidden from the white men thirteen years before. And he saved her and her children!

"Indian never forget." If he had had only kindness, and patience, and truthfulness to remember, what a different story there might be to tell about his poor cheated race! Isn't it a blessed thing to remember that to-day a great many of these fierce forest men have heard of Jesus, and have given their hearts to him, and will *never forget* that he died on the cross to save them?

A STORY ABOUT YESTERDAY.

A WARM bright afternoon in August. Plenty of work going on in Mrs. Kilburn's log cabin. Such a pretty spot as that cabin stood in! Just at the foot of one of the New Hampshire hills, lovely green meadows stretching out in front of it, and in the distance the Connecticut river slipping lazily by. Inside the house, as I said, work was going on. Mrs. Kilburn and her young daughter always had work to do. What with cutting and contriving and planning all the clothes for their own household, even the coats and pantaloons for father and the boys, added to everything else that they had to do, kept them busy enough.

On this particular afternoon, it was cooking that was being done. To-morrow some of the friends who lived quite a distance away were coming to see them, and mother and daughter were very anxious to show how nicely they lived

in their log cabin, and how many comforts they had.

Out in the field Mr. Kilburn and his son John, with a neighbor and his young son, were at work with the wheat. A splendid crop they had, and while they worked they talked together about the coming winter, and how the great harvests that were being gathered in would save them from many of the trials of last winter. Cheery, hopeful talk, and hard work.

Suddenly came Ruff, the dog, bounding along at full gallop, his hair seeming to stand up all over his back, his ears set as if in rage, and uttering low growls.

"Look at Ruff," said Mr. Pike, the neighbor. "What is the matter with him?"

Mr. Kilburn dropped his scythe and seized his gun.

"Indians," he said briefly. "Come on, boys. Let's make for the house! There is no time to lose when Ruff looks like that."

John was acquainted with Ruff's habits, and had seized his own gun even before his father spoke, and was now taking long steps toward home and mother.

"The Indians are coming!" he said to his

mother the instant he pushed open the cabin door.

Do you suppose she screamed, and the little girl fainted? Not a bit of it. She dropped the tin she was setting in the oven, it is true; but she said quietly:

“Get the guns.”

And in less time than it takes me to write it, mother and daughter each were armed with a gun, the men were inside, their guns leveled, the doors barred, and two hundred Indians were yelling around them outside.

There was one thing about their log house that you will not be likely to see in any house nowadays. All over the roof there were loopholes for guns to be pushed out! The Indians yelled at the family to come out, and promised to save their lives if they would give themselves up as prisoners.

“Come out, old John! Come out, young John!” they said.

Do you suppose the father and son went out? Not they! Instead, they pushed their guns through the loopholes and fired. So did Mr. Pike and his son; and as they fired Mrs. Kilburn and her little daughter loaded other guns,

and pushed them up through loopholes for the men to fire.

What a battle it was! *Bang, bang, bang!* went gun after gun, gun after gun; mother and daughter loading them so fast that the firing could be kept up all the time, and the Indians were made to think that the house was full of armed men. One after another their number fell, as the guns of the two brave men and the two brave boys were aimed at them. Meantime the Indians had guns too, and as they grew angry, they began to creep nearer the house and fire their bullets down through the roof. Down they pattered like great drops of hail about that mother and daughter, yet not one hit them, and not for a second did they stop their work of loading guns. At last Mrs. Kilburn said:

“We are almost out of bullets!”

Then, in another instant:

“Why, no, we are not! Run, child, run for a blanket; I’ll hang it up and catch the bullets that come through the roof. Get the ladle, child, hold them in the fire; we’ll melt their bullets and run them again; and they shall furnish us the means to save our lives!”

How fast they worked! How speedily the



THE FIRST SETTLERS.

great fire, ready for baking, ran those spent bullets into melted lead, and with what eager haste they were run into shape again! Then out they whizzed to do their duty, and defend the lives inside.

Think what an afternoon it was! Think of the hills of New Hampshire looking down on such a scene as that! Think of the Connecticut river flowing by amid such sounds as those! All the long August afternoon the fight continued. One bullet slipped the blanket and hit poor, brave Mr. Pike, and he fell down; but he said:

“Don’t stop for me; go on.”

And they had to go on, while he lay suffering. But at last, *at last*, the Indians having lost so many men, grew frightened; and when an Indian is frightened, he runs. They concluded that a great army was hidden in the log cabin; or that the Great Spirit was helping the people inside. So they killed all the cattle they could find, set fire to the lovely fields of wheat, and went yelling away, conquered by two men and two boys, and a woman and a girl.

When was all that? Can you believe that it was not so very much over a hundred years

ago? Does it seem possible? Dear me! I don't suppose John Kilburn lay in bed until seven o'clock in the morning, and then grumbled because he had to get up so early, and wished there was no such thing as school.

It is what I heard John Barlow say one day. Neither do I believe that the little girl who melted bullets cried all that evening because she could not have her new blue dress trimmed with velvet; yet Katie Lewis who studied about this very girl in her history lesson this morning spent this very evening in tears over just such an important matter. Are the girls and boys really worth less than they used to be?

"I don't care," said John Barlow. "I'd just like to have lived in those days; there was something worth living for. There is nothing to be brave about nowadays; a fellow hasn't half a chance. I'd like to fight Indians first-rate."

The idea! There was an Indian had him in his grasp only yesterday, and he made not the slightest attempt to fight him. The name of the Indian was Ill Temper. Do you know him?

A SEA VOYAGE.

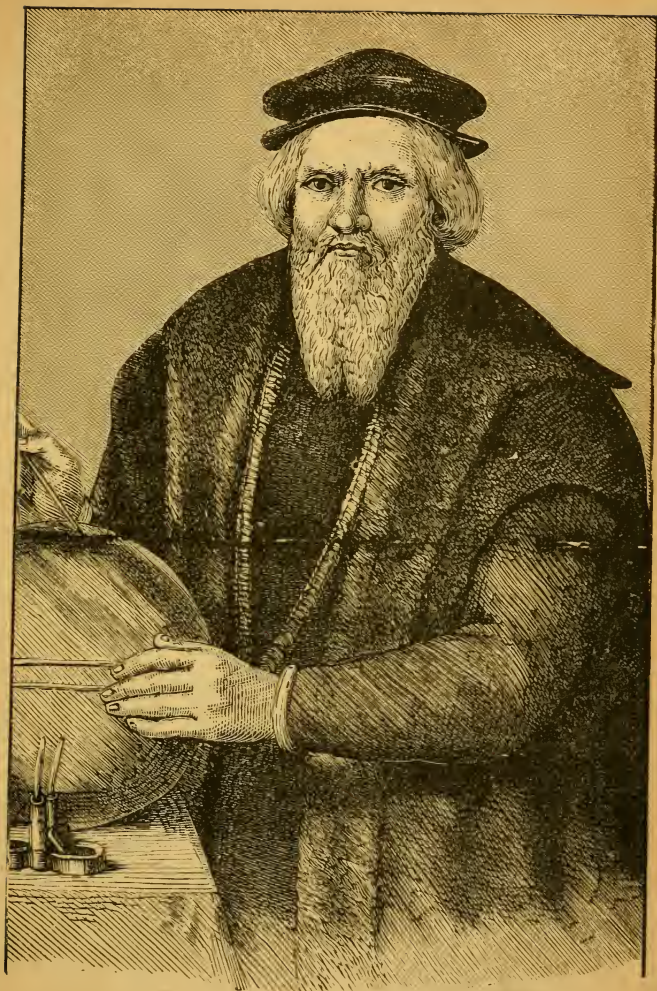
THE vessel went sailing along over the great watery world. But for being sure that he had left, not long before, a green and sunny country, where flowers bloomed, and fruits grew in luxury, the captain might almost have thought that the world was made of water. Where were they? Really, they did not know. What! not even the captain? Well, he was in some doubt about it. Not that he had lost his way; but he had started on a voyage of discovery, and how could he tell where he might, by and by, find himself?

After a time the water began to grow less deep, and looking over the sides of the vessel one might have seen great fish swimming all around—codfish. Now fish was exactly what the sailors wanted; and nothing was easier than to catch them; so caught they were, in large numbers. Then the vessel sailed on.

What sights those sailors looked upon! Here

was a country where the inhabitants seemed to be all fishers. That is, all they did from morning to night was to plunge in and out of the sea and catch fish in their paws. The fact is, they were great white bears! A wild-looking place was this. I don't wonder that the sailing-vessel decided to hurry back home. They thought they had seen wildness enough. But no sooner were they safe at home again, than one of the captains, the younger of the two, wanted to take another journey, and see what else he could find besides codfish and bears. I'll tell you what haunted him. He believed he could find out a secret that he had been studying over for years; if he could only go west far enough, he was sure he could prove his ideas correct; so he started again.

On went his vessel, until it slipped into what is now called the Bay of Fundy. Get your maps and see where that is. Then what did he see? Wonderful sights! Great pine forests of Maine, Mt. Desert holding up his head above all around him. On sailed the vessel, past Cape Cod, still southward as far as Virginia. Well, what was there so strange about that? You've been to Virginia yourself, and as for Mt. Desert,



SEBASTIAN CABOT.

in Maine, you go there every summer. Oh, you do? Well let me tell you something: the wonder of it was, that at the time this young man about whom I am telling you, stood on his vessel's deck and looked over at Mt. Desert, nobody had ever been there!

When was it, pray, and who was the man?

Why, it was not quite four hundred years ago; and the man's name was Cabot, Sebastian Cabot, and the secret he was after, was to prove that the world was round. *You* knew that years ago? I dare say, but the fact is, if Sebastian Cabot or some other person had not studied it out, you would not have known it to this day.

You thought Columbus discovered America? So he did, my dear, a piece of it; that is, he was the first one to set eyes on one of its islands, but Sebastian Cabot discovered the mainland. I wonder if you have ever been troubled about the name America?

When I was a little girl, I thought that our country ought to be named Columbia. Then when I became acquainted with the Cabots, father and son, for they went together on that first voyage of which I told you, I thought *Sebastian* would have been the proper name;

and it puzzled me long, to know how it happened to be called America.

Would you like to know? Why, behold there was another sailor, Amerigo Vespucci by name, who went sailing away to see what he could find; not indeed until after the Cabots had made their first journey; but he visited the West Indies, and some other points, and became so much interested, that when he reached home, he wrote a book about it, and that book was published in Germany as well as in Spain, and people began to talk about the New World which they had read of in this book, calling it "Amerigo's country;" and so, sure enough, after a time the name became fastened to the country.

So the man who wrote a book had the advantage over those who discovered. No, it isn't quite fair; there are a great many things in this world that are not quite fair; but I don't suppose either Columbus, or the Cabots, care anything about it now. Why did I tell you all this? Oh, just to answer a very few of those "Where's," and "Why's," and "What for's," and "When's," that the eyes and tongues of my readers are always asking; and to remind you that there was a time when the world was

younger and more ignorant than it is now ; and that many curious things happened that are nice to know.

Some of you knew all about this, but some of you didn't. See if the wise heads who knew it all, can answer all the questions that the little brothers and sisters will ask when the story is read to them.

A VERY SILLY BOY.

ALL the boys and girls in the schoolroom sat erect, with folded hands, and looked at their teacher. He held an open letter in his hand, and this was the sentence which had called them to order :

“ Scholars, you may lay aside your books and give attention to me. I have something to read to you. This letter is addressed to ‘ School-room No. 4.’ Listen !

“ Whoever would like to spend a day in roaming around my grounds, gathering nuts, and mosses, and anything else he can find, is invited to be ready in the schoolroom at nine o’clock on Thursday morning, when my hay wagons will come for them.

Your friend,

SILAS G. BURNSIDE.”

The reading of this letter made a sensation. The girls looked at one another and laughed ;

the boys puckered their lips in the shape of a 'hurrah,' and swung their arms, and little Peter Bacon, who was apt to be the first speaker, said:

"If you please, sir, can't we give him three cheers?"

"Yes," said the smiling teacher.

And they did.

But the boy I wanted to tell you about was Reuben Parsons. He neither smiled nor cheered. More than that, when Thursday morning came, instead of being up early to blacken his boots, and get himself in trim to spend a day at the great handsome farmhouse, he sat glumly down in a corner of the room, tossed over a book or two, and wished he had something that was worth doing.

"Why, Reuben Parsons!" his sister Emma said, dashing into the room ready dressed. "Did you know it is almost nine o'clock, and your hair isn't even combed! I don't believe they will wait a minute after nine o'clock. You aren't going! Why not? Are you sick?"

"I don't go to places where I ain't invited."

This was Reuben's surly answer. But his

sister was only the more astonished at it.

“Why, Reuben Parsons! What do you mean? Don’t you belong to room No. 4?”

Of course he did, Reuben snarled. What was the use of her asking such silly questions, he would like to know.

Well, didn’t he hear the letter read, and didn’t it say:

“Whoever wants to spend a day there?”
And didn’t he want to go?

“It was likely he wanted to go,” Reuben said. “A fellow wouldn’t be so foolish as to not want to go to such a place when he could; but that was neither here nor there; he *wasn’t invited*. There wasn’t a single word about him in that letter from beginning to end, and the long and short of it was, he wasn’t going a step.”

For a full minute Emma stood and looked at him; then she spoke her mind:

“Well, I think you are just the silliest boy I ever heard of in my life!”

You think so too? You don’t believe there was ever a boy who acted so like a simpleton as he did?

Well, to tell you the truth, I don’t know that



A VERY SILLY BOY.

there ever was about going to a nutting party. I just imagined it.

But I'll tell you what made me think of it. I had a talk the other day with this same Reuben Parsons. It was about going to spend his life in the beautiful city. I tried to remind him of the many invitations he had received, and how very rude he was in paying no attention to them; and don't you think he told me that he had never been invited in his life!

I found the verse in the Bible that says "whosoever will," but he said that wasn't his name; that it didn't say anything about Reuben Parsons in the Bible. Then I was tempted to tell him that I knew what his name was. It wasn't Reuben Parsons at all, but "Whosoever *Won't.*"

Do you know what I mean by that?

SUSIE'S DREAM.

SUSIE was cross; there was no denying that; and when Susie was cross she was *very* cross. Some little girls are easily made angry, but the recovery is just as sudden and easy; so when the smiles come again, they are like bright rays of sunshine after a shower—more beautiful than ever. Not so Susie. Let me tell you about this particular attack of crossness.

It was a warm June day, without a breeze to stir the air; one of those days when flies and bees buzz, buzz, buzz in that sleep-provoking way. In fact, it was the kind of weather that causes the most ambitious and industrious people to feel lazy; and Susie was *not* ambitious and industrious—that was just the trouble. She had been at play all the forenoon, and after dinner she prepared to take her story book and sit or lie under the apple-trees. She had just borrowed the book, and had only read one chapter, which was so fascinating that her mouth

fairly watered for the rest. As she was stepping off the back porch with the precious volume hugged under her arm, her face all aglow with anticipation, she heard her mother's voice calling:

“Susie!”

Oh, what a change came over Susie's face! The corners of the smiling mouth dropped; the smooth, placid forehead became wrinkled and contorted; the blue eyes gleamed; and in a strained, hard undertone, she said:

“I've got to go to work, I know I have.”

But obedience was the rule in that household; so the little girl walked slowly back to the dining-room.

“Susie,” said her mother, “I want you to wash the dishes.”

Susie set about her task, but in no amiable mood; and as she worked, the storm in her feelings gathered darker and darker. Plates slammed, knives and forks rattled, bowls and cups spun around in a manner more fantastic than safe.

“I *hate* work,” she kept saying to herself through tightly-shut teeth. When the last dish was wiped and the pan hung up, she once

more seized her book and started. But this time the door was shut with a bang, and she did not walk like a light-hearted girl, but slowly, yet with a jerky movement, as though she measured each step and cut it off. As she reached her favorite tree she threw herself on the ground, saying as she did so :

“I hope when I go to *Heaven* I sha’n’t have to wash dishes.”

She could not read though she had the leisure, for her heart was full of hard, bitter thoughts.

As she lay there, a robin lighted on the tree above her, and swaying on the top of a bough, chirped in his merriest tones what sounded to Susie like :

“*Be happy, be sweet, sweet, sweet.*”

“O yes, Mr. Redbreast,” said Susie, “you can sing about being happy and sweet; you have nothing to do but fly and sing, and stay in the open air all day long.”

For the little maiden loved the out-door world, and in her better moods, every tree and flower and spire of grass was dear to her.

“I wonder how you would like to be shut up in a hot kitchen and wash dishes for your enter-

tainment! think you'd feel like singing then?"

Robin did not heed the sarcasm, but continued his cheerful song.

Presently a squirrel darted up a neighboring tree, and after leaping from branch to branch, stopped just over her head and began to chatter. But somehow it did not seem like ordinary squirrel talk; Susie thought this was what he said:

"C-r-r-r-o-s-s g-i-r-r-r-l! laugh, ha, ha, ha!"

So near was he that she could plainly see his little bead-like eyes, and she fancied there was in them an accusing gleam. This made her feel more guilty than ever, and she looked away, determined not to see anything. But staring into vacancy was not very interesting, and soon she began to be drowsy. One by one the hard lines about the mouth were smoothed away as by some magic hand; one by one the shadows faded from her face; lower and lower drooped the silken eyelashes; Susie was fast asleep. And while she slept a strange dream came to her.

She thought the apple boughs stooped down and fanned her flushed face, the tall heads of timothy bowed low as though making obeisance

to her, and the daisies and clover blossoms nestled down lovingly beside her.

Not only were the squirrel and the robin there, but many birds of varied hue and song were making merry that bright, happy summer day. Indeed, such an array was there of living things that it seemed as though all nature was holding a council. The grass and the flowers leaned together and whispered, the birds exchanged knowing glances, and all seemed interested and expectant. Finally the apple-tree stepped forward and addressed Susie :

“Little girl, we who are met here all love you, for you love us all; but we are grieved to see you as you have been to-day, and we want to show you your mistake. You dislike work, and more than once I have heard you wish to be a bird, an animal, or even a tree like myself, so that you need do nothing. This is your mistake, little girl, and a very great mistake it is too : for nature wants no idlers — *we all work.*”

Then the apple-tree told of the stores that squirrels lay by for winter use; of the hives full of golden honey that the bees by close industry gather; of the snug little nests that the birdies build — cosy homes for their little ones; and



SHE THREW HERSELF ON THE GROUND.

many other matters—too many to mention just now.

“When is the world most beautiful?” asked the tree.

“Oh, in summer,” replied Susie gayly; “the world is more beautiful in summer, of course.”

“That is because summer is the working season,” continued the speaker. “From early spring until fall, the earth is at work for you and all the people, providing food and clothing; not merely an hour now and then, but without a moment’s cessation night or day. So when autumn comes, it must have *rest*. But even after all its industry, idleness takes away its beauty. So bare and brown does it become that the kind Heavenly Father sends a white mantle of snow to hide from sight its ugliness. Little girl, would you be beautiful? Then be industrious always, and cheerfully obedient.”

Susie awoke at this juncture, and the great tears were chasing each other down her cheeks; but they were tears of penitence, not anger.

“I know it all,” she sobbed; “my dear mamma has told me all about it before, and I am just as bad as a heathen to be cross. Oh dear, I *never* can go to Heaven if I do not learn

to keep my temper. I wish I could be good; I *must* be! I *will* be! I will begin right here now!"

And Susie did begin. In the quiet orchard, with only the same mute witnesses who had seen her naughtiness, she went in simple faith to Him who alone could enable her to *overcome herself*.

With *His* help she is succeeding.

A NAME TO TRUST.

THERE was work to be done. Frank was at his books early and late. So fond was he of his spelling-book that mamma had to make a rule that it was not to be studied until all the other lessons were learned. Why was he so anxious to study spelling? Oh, there is a story about that!

One day he came home from school so eager to tell a wonderful piece of news that he left all the doors open behind him.

“Louis, O Louis!” he shouted, “I’ve got something to read to you! I copied it exactly from what Miss Evans read.”

Then he took his station under the mantel and read from his paper:

“To every scholar who receives a perfect mark in his spelling lesson, for every day this quarter, I will give a ten-dollar gold piece on examination day.”

“That’s just the way it read; and all the

scholars are going to try! And I'm sure I'll get it; aren't you?"

Louis sat up straighter in his cushioned chair, and let the pillow slip away from his head, while he asked eagerly:

"Who wrote it? Whose name is signed?"

"Robert Smith," said Frank promptly.

Then his brother leaned back among the cushions, and the red slowly faded out of his cheek.

"Pooh!" he said. "That is only a *play* letter. I know Robert Smith; he is a boy in the second room; and he has no ten-dollar gold pieces to give to anybody. *His* name signed to a paper don't amount to anything."

In vain Frank explained that the teacher read it, and the boys all believed it; and it *must* be true. Louis insisted that Robert Smith could no more give ten-dollar gold pieces to the boys than he could; that it was a hoax of some kind.

Just then, into the midst of the discussion came Fanny, and Frank appealed to her as to whether every word of his letter was not true.

"All but the name," she said, laughing as she looked at Frank's scrawling copy. "You have left out a very important part of that: it was signed Robert Smith *Perkins*. Louis, you know

he is the man who lives on the hill in that lovely house, and is away in Europe or somewhere most all the time."

You should have seen what a difference this made to Louis. He sat up again, and began to question and comment, and grew so eager, and his cheeks became so red that mamma thought his fever was rising, and banished the children from the room. Only that evening when she was tucking him into his bed, he said anxiously: "O mother, do you think I will get well enough to go to school soon? I shall have so many lost lessons to make up, I shall *have* to go soon or I won't have any chance. Do you think I can?"

"I hope so, Louis, but it will depend a great deal on yourself; if you are quiet, and patient, you will grow strong much faster than you can if you fret and worry"

"But I can't help worrying," said Louis, the tears almost coming into his eyes. "I am in such a hurry to get well so I can try for the reward. I try not to fret, but I can't help it."

"Don't you remember your verse, 'My grace is sufficient for thee,' and how we talked about what it meant? The name signed to that promise is *Jesus Christ*. It makes a great difference,

you know very well whose name is signed," the mother said significantly.

"So it does," said Louis, smiling now. "So it does, mamma," he repeated. "I ought to trust *Him* as well as I do Robert Smith Perkins, oughn't I?"

And he looked very thoughtful.

BRAVING THE DANGER.

A WINTER day, and the snow lying white on everything around, Nettie as she plodded home from school, thought of the cosy sitting-room and the bright fire, and her mother's pleasant face, and the tea-table, and baby's cooing, and was glad that she had just such a home to go to. Behold, the curtains were drawn close in the sitting-room, and the mat was tucked carefully up to the side door, a sign to Nettie that the key was under the mat. Where could her mother be with the baby? She went around to the side door and looked under the mat. Yes, there was the key. A minute more and she was in the deserted sitting-room, where the fire burned low. She opened the dampers and coaxed the coal into blue flame before she looked around for something to tell her where mother was. Pinned to the table cover was a note in her mother's handwriting. This is the way it read :

“DEAR DAUGHTER:— We have just had a line from grandpa that aunt Tilly is not so well, and your father thinks we ought to go. We are hurrying to get started early, so as to get home before dark; the roads are good, and father says he can drive fast, so we shall not be later than six o’clock, and I know my nice little housekeeper will have supper all ready.

Good-by, MOTHER.”

Nettie folded the note with a smile and a sigh; she was the “nice little housekeeper;” yes, she meant to be; but it was rather doleful to go about that lonely house, and light the lamps, and close the blinds, and start the kitchen fire, and feel that she was all alone. Six o’clock! and now it was only half past four! If she had known about this, she might have had Emma Gage come home with her from school, and they could have had real fun playing keep house; but it was a mile away from the nearest neighbors. Well, never mind, she would go to work and get an extra nice supper, and that would take up the time. So she lighted a lamp and went to the cellar for some potatoes to bake, singing at the top of her voice, to make

believe that she was not lonely. Apples she got, too, and pared them, and made apple sauce, and cut some delicate slices of beef to frizzle in cream, the way her father liked it so much. They should have a splendid supper. Tim brought the milk-pail foaming to the brim, and said :

“Well, I reckon the folks will be along now in a few minutes.”

Then he had trudged off over the hill to his home; and Nettie strained the milk and set a full mug of it for the baby, and did every little and big thing that she could think of, and at last sat down to wait. Ten minutes after six—they would be here very soon surely. She had most a mind to put the beef to frizzling, only that could do itself while father was putting out the horses. She would wait just a little. She went into the sitting-room where the fire was aglow and lighted the shaded lamp, and took her arithmetic and resolved to hurry the time away by studying. It wouldn't hurry, and the example wouldn't come right. Hark! What is that? Oh, only the wind against that loose shutter up-stairs; the wind was rising fast, and the light snow would drift. She did

wish they would come. The clock in the corner ticked and ticked, growing louder every minute; the potatoes baked themselves to a crisp, the steaming apple sauce cooled, the baby's warm milk creamed over, the clock struck seven, the kitchen fire died down, the dried beef dried itself some more, and curled into little rolls, and the clock struck eight, and the wind rose and shrieked around the house as though it was determined to get Nettie, and still they didn't come! Oh dear! What should she do! Suppose they were lost in the drifting snow, and she should never see them again! Then she cried. Hark! What was that? Somebody knocking!

"I'll never let anybody in," muttered Nettie, her lips growing white, "they may knock until they are gray."

Really they seemed to be determined to get in. The knocks grew louder and louder; then they ceased and footsteps sounded on the piazza, heavy footsteps—some awful man! Nettie trembled in every limb. Somebody was trying to undo the fastenings of the shutters! But somebody couldn't; she had made them very secure. Then the steps went back and the



WHERE THE "NICE LITTLE HOUSEKEEPER" LIVED.

knocking began again. There was also a hoarse voice yelling, or else it was the wind. What should the poor frightened girl do? She strained her ears to listen for the sound of sleigh bells; but none sounded; and then the clock struck nine, and the knocking continued. Suddenly Nettie sat upright and tried to still the beating of her heart so she could think. What if that were somebody from Tony Parker's to say that the baby was worse, and they needed blankets and oils, and oh, she didn't know what! Tony Parker was their first neighbor—if neighbor he could be called—and the baby was always getting sick, and they were very poor, and needed almost everything. It would be dreadful to have that baby die just because she was a coward and would not open the door! Who could be there to hurt her anyway? Nothing bad ever happened along this road. To be sure a tramp did come once, a long time ago, and try to get into Mr. Phillip's house, and set the barn on fire because he couldn't. What if this one should do the same! And just then Nettie knew by the great heavy thuds which her heart began to give, that she had decided to open the door. If it was a tramp and he

wanted some supper, he would be twice as likely not to burn the house down if she gave him some, and he need not know but that there were half a dozen men up-stairs. She rose up and went out into the little hall, carrying the lamp, stopping to set it behind the door so the blast of wind should not leave her in darkness. Her limbs trembled so she could hardly stand, and her knees knocked together; but she tugged at the bolt. That baby must not die, and the house must not be set on fire. The bolt slipped, and the door blew open. A tall figure muffled in overcoat and furs—a strong firm voice exclaiming:

“Henrietta Marley Burton! Why didn’t you let me in?”

And she screamed “O, uncle Frank! uncle Frank!” and actually tumbled a poor little faint heap into his arms.

“Here have I been pounding and yelling myself hoarse,” exclaimed uncle Frank after they were in the warm sitting-room, and Nettie had been kissed and comforted. “Why, you see the way of it was, that it grew too cold for the baby to ride home. Signs of a storm, too, which came; and we coaxed your father and

mother to stay all night. Your aunt Tilly coaxed hard, and I agreed to take the four o'clock train and get here at five, so you needn't be frightened a bit; and that dreadful freight and accommodation which runs up at four, ran off the track and kept us fuming there at the junction for four mortal hours! I ran all the way from the depot out here, and the rest of the time I have been hooting around this house trying to get in! A pretty way to receive me when I've come to spend the night!"

"Well," said Nettie, drawing a long quivering sigh, "you would never have got in, I don't believe, if I hadn't been afraid it was Tony Parker's baby taken sick. Now, uncle Frank, come out and help me get you some supper. The potatoes are done, I'm sure."

A DREADFUL NIGHT.

POOOR little girlies! They were not the only ones who were frightened, though mother was too brave to show it in any way but by a very pale face. But Mary was only fourteen, and cried outright. If it hadn't been for that, I think the children might have slept right through that dreadful night. As it was, they sat on the stairs in the dark while Mary went for a candle, and listened to the dreadful sounds. "Boom! boom! boom!" all night long. What an awful battle must be going on! And father and two brothers in it! Even the children had a right to be frightened. If only the cannons would keep still a few minutes, just till Mary got back with a light, poor little Hannah thought she wouldn't feel so scared; but they just rattled and banged all the time. Hannah tried to be brave. She thought over what father said about



THEY SAT ON THE STAIRS IN THE DARK.

General Washington, their leader, and tried to feel proud over the thought that she had a soldier father, and two soldier brothers. She was pretty brave when the cannon did not roar so; but how could she help thinking that perhaps that very shot hit her dear father?

It was a long, long night. The children fell asleep, it is true, and were carried back to their beds, and in the morning were surprised to find themselves there, and thought that they ought to be still sitting on the stairs waiting for Mary. They did all the sleeping that had been done in that house. They did all the eating, too, at the breakfast-table. How could mother and Mary eat until they heard from Boston? When would they be likely to know whether the father and the boys had escaped?

Not very long to wait! While they sat trying to talk it over bravely, hopefully, who should walk into the room but Jacob, the soldier brother! How they gathered around him, and stormed him with questions! All but the mother! She could not speak nor stir. He saw it, and hurried to say:

“All right, mother.”

Then he tried to answer Mary:

“No, I am not in Boston. I am here, as you see, and hungry too. I’ve only an hour’s leave; give me some breakfast; father and John will be along soon. A battle? Not much of a *battle* have we seen!”

And here he laughed.

“Mother, where do you suppose we were all night? The neatest thing General Washington has done yet! Mary, we just tramped out to Dorchester, two thousand of us, and three hundred teams! The stillest lot of fellows we were that ever you saw! Nobody made a sound. The drivers did not even speak to the oxen. The wheels were wound with hay—around the felloes, you know, so they could tell no tales, and on we went. The carts were full of our great swamp baskets, and we climbed the hill, and set them down all around, and filled them with earth. The nicest line of intrenchments you ever saw! We had barrels full of stones too, and we’ve set them up there in such a fashion that it won’t take more than a touch to set them rolling down that hill to meet a redcoat and conquer him. What do you suppose the redcoats thought when they got up this morning and found us perched up there on the hill, em-

bankments built, and everything ready for fun whenever they like, instead of being where they thought us, down in Boston firing cannon? *I tell you* it is a surprise! And it won't be the last one that General Washington will plan for them, I guess."

"And I lay awake all night long and listened to those cannon," the mother said.

"And so did we," chimed in Hannah. "Jacob, we sat on the stairs all night, and listened, and felt awful." This made everybody laugh a little, as the babies had only spent about ten minutes on the stairs; but then, bless their hearts! they thought it was all night.

Now this is the true story of the Dorchester intrenchment; and if you want to know the rest of it, just look it up, and see what happened.

“I’M RUINED.”

THERE wasn’t a soul at home but Patience. She had the great bake kettle before the fire, and was stirring the mixture in it with great care, and thinking, meantime, how she should celebrate. She felt just as glad as anybody could; it seemed a pity that she should stay at home and get supper and leave all the rest to have the fun. Every time a bell pealed out she felt as though she should let the bake kettle take care of itself, and run. Never such a day had been known in Boston! It seemed to Patience that every time she looked out at the door, another flag was to be seen. As for Liberty Tree which she could see from the back window, the boys were at work hanging lanterns all over it, and once, she really did forget the biscuits while she stood trying to imagine how it would look at night when they were all lighted. What was going on? Why, the horrid “Stamp Act”



PATIENCE WAS THINKING MEANTIME HOW SHE SHOULD CELEBRATE.

had been repealed, and now the people of Boston and elsewhere could write the receipts on any kind of paper they chose. Patience knew all about it; such an uproar as there had been in the house over the stamped paper! Her father declared that if he had to go without a deed for his land until his baby son was gray, he would never receive one written on the hated paper, and once he had torn up a receipt for money that was paid, because it was written on stamped paper. If you don't know what was the matter with the paper that made the New Englanders detest it so, you must hunt up your histories and learn; or if you are too young yet to study history, ask those older brothers and sisters who are always so wise. Patience could have told you all about it. She never forgot about the paper, but then she was there, and saw and heard the talk, and the bells, and saw the flags, and that makes a difference. The question was, What should she do to celebrate? Suddenly she clapped her hands; she knew what to do.

Shut away between the leaves of her writing book was a piece of stamped paper; she had been keeping it for a long time, intending to do

something dreadful with it, and at last she had thought what it should be. For the rest of the afternoon, Patience was very busy. When just at dusk her father and the boys came in, tired and happy, eager for their supper, Patience was ready for them. An extra supper, for none of them had been at home to dinner. The loveliest pancakes had Patience made, only she called them flapjacks, and each boy had his favorite dish of something, set beside his plate. In the middle of the table was Patience's celebration. A large round cake, beautifully browned and standing in the centre of it, one arm off, one foot sadly mutilated, and a huge slice taken right out of his head, was a paper man, baked *very* brown, while out of his mouth were issuing two doleful words: "I'm Ruined." A piece of paper was pinned at his breast which said on it: "I'm Andrew Oliver." You should have heard the boys shout! They gathered around the ruined man and discovered that his broken limbs were made of that part of the paper which had the king's stamp on it! Battered and bruised and burned was Andrew Oliver, and the boys, and even their father, laughed over it, and agreed that Patience had

made a funny use of the stamped paper. "And that's the end of it," said Patience decidedly. "There won't ever be another bit of it in this place, will there, father?" and the father thought not. After supper they went out to Liberty Tree and counted the lanterns, and laughed and cheered with the rest, and William, the youngest boy, wore the ruined figure of Andrew Oliver in his hat. Patience could not go out to the tree, for she had to stay at home and see to the little pieces of lighted candle that were fastened to every light of glass in the front windows; this she enjoyed. "I made some lighters of the ends of the stamped paper to light my candles with," she told her father. And that was the way that in one house in Boston the beginning of liberty for America was celebrated.

YEARS AGO.

DEPUTY-GOVERNOR LEET had company. Whether he was glad to see them or not, he treated them with great courtesy and attention. They came direct from England, and were sent over by King Charles II. on important business. They had been duly introduced to Governor Leet: "Thomas Kirke and Thomas Fell, his Majesty's officers, on business requiring immediate attention."

Now it happened that Governor Leet knew very well what their business was. They were chasing two good men who had escaped from England because they could not obey the cruel laws that were in force about that time. Silly laws as well as cruel; one was, that if there were more than four persons in a family a blessing must not be asked at the table! For the reason why, you must look up your histories and find out. But for breaking just such laws

as these, people were thrown into prison, and indeed many of them lost their lives. Well, as I said, these two men had escaped. They had been brave soldiers in England, and were known as General Goff, and General Whalley.

The King's officers asked to see Governor Leet in private, and speedily told him what they wanted. "We are in search of two rascals," they said, "a man by the name of Goff, and another named Whalley; they have escaped from justice, and run over here to your colony. The King desires that you should render us all possible assistance in getting hold of them. We need men to help us in the search. We have traced them in this direction."

"The gentlemen are not here," said Governor Leet. "They have been here, but I have not seen them for weeks. I could not tell you where to find them. Do you say that you have authority to arrest them?"

Oh yes, indeed; they had great solemn-looking papers written most carefully, and signed with the King's seal. Governor Leet held out his hand for them, and began in a loud, strong tone to read the long-worded directions and commands. The King's officers interrupted him.

“ We must remind you sir, that these papers should not be read aloud ; these are traitorous times ; we cannot tell whose households conceal enemies ; some one may be lying in wait at this moment, against your knowledge or ours, to warn the scamps that we are on their track.”

Was Governor Leet deaf, or so much interested in the papers that he could not stop ? He read them slowly, and aloud ! Then he thought over the matter with a great deal of care. At last he seemed to have made up his mind. “ I’ll tell you what, gentlemen,” he said. “ It is late and the night is dark and stormy ; you must remain here and get a good night’s rest, and in the morning we will drive to New Haven and consult with the Council ; of course you could not expect me, the Deputy-Governor of a colony, to act without advice from the Council ; it would not be according to law and order.”

How very polite Governor Leet was ! It was a dark night, and rainy ; they could do nothing without his help. His advice seemed to be reasonable, and they went to bed. The Governor having seen that all their wants were supplied in the best possible manner, bade them good-night, and came hurriedly down the long

hall, opened a door at his left and said to a woman sitting by the great open fire: "Is all right? Did Massassoit get off?"

"Yes. He is well on the way by this time."

Who was Massassoit? Why, a brave, swift-footed Indian, not afraid of darkness, or rain, or forest; ready to speed anywhere to obey Governor Leet's directions; and he was by this time well on his way to New Haven where the Governor and his guests were to ride next morning, and where the Council was to sit.

The morning dawned brightly; and the officers, in good spirits after their night's rest, were soon on the way to New Haven with their polite host. The Council received them with great politeness, but were the slowest people to decide anything that you ever heard of. If you will believe it, they talked, and talked, and talked over this matter all day long, and then decided that it was too important a question for them to settle, and they must call the Assembly together. By this time the King's officers were cross. They laid aside some of their politeness, and told the Governor and Council pretty plainly that they had lost time enough, and they should now proceed to hunting the rascals themselves.

Among other houses in New Haven where they went on their search was the one where Mrs. Eayers lived. Now Mrs. Eayers was a perfect lady, and treated them with politeness.

“Oh, yes,” she said. Indeed she knew their friends General Goff and General Whalley! What delightful gentlemen they were! She had had the pleasure of entertaining them at her home, and had enjoyed it so much! She looked forward to the hope of meeting them again. All this, and much more, in the gentlest of voices, showing the officers meantime all sorts of little kindly attentions. They did not know what to say to her. It was quite evident to them she did not understand their mission, and quite as evident also that she could not help them had she understood it. So nothing remained to be done but bow themselves away, which they did with the best grace possible under so embarrassing circumstances.

Just what they would have done if they could have looked up-stairs at that moment in Mrs. Eayers' spare bedroom and seen the two men for whom they were searching, waiting with what patience they could for their enemies to go, I will not pretend to say.

What with delays and Councils, Assemblies, swift-footed Indians, and quick-witted women, the King's officers had a sorry time of it. But they were obliged to return to England without their prisoners. Ah me! What times were those to live in!

How long ago? Oh, only a little over two hundred years.

A CHARMED MOUSE.

DID you know that the little creatures were fond of music? Jennie Smith, of Washington, tells of a mouse that made a perfect nuisance of itself in a friend's house.

Various ways were tried to get rid of mousie; but she was too smart for them all, and nibbled around her small world in high glee over the fact that neither trap nor cat could catch her.

But alas for mousie! It happened with her, as with so many others in this world, pride got the better of prudence.

One fine evening the lady, whom she nightly tormented with her sharp teeth, had company, — a gentlemen who played the violin beautifully. As the friends sat enjoying the music, who should steal out of her room but a small mouse dressed in gray velvet.

She had sat with her bit of tail curled up about her, for some time, thinking the matter over. "Ah, but that is too lovely for any-

thing!" she said to herself, as the soft, sweet strains from the violin stole in to her. "Why couldn't I slip out there where I could see as well as hear? I'd risk my being caught; I'm too quick motioned for anybody to hurt me. Now he is playing that lovely tune I've danced to so many times. Dear me! I can't stand that; I just know I can dance charmingly, and I'm so tired of hopping around in this dark room with nobody to see me, I'm going out this minute. I'm not in the least afraid of being caught." And out she went.

For a time all went merrily. Miss Mousie in her gray velvet under the shadow of a friendly rocking-chair skipped about to the sound of music in a way that she imagined was perfectly charming.

At last to her great delight she was discovered and exclaimed over. She came out from the shadow of the rocking-chair, in order to give them all a better view. How should she know they were plotting her ruin? Too late she discovered it. Dizzy with dancing, and grown reckless with pride she actually whirled herself between the feet of a man with a poker. And that was her last dance.

AGATHA'S TOKEN.

SHE was holding Fritz, feeling as if he were the only friend left in all the wide world. Poor little Agatha! She was only eight years old, and felt very much alone.

Mamma was in Heaven, and papa had been in London for ever so many months. She went all over it now — how she had coaxed to go along, and how papa had said that it was quite impossible, because he was going on business; but how, just as soon as he had a good home ready in London, he would send for her and aunt Annie. For aunt Annie had promised to go out to London and keep house for her brother whenever he was ready.

Then she remembered how, with very quivering lips, she had said: "But, papa, how would aunt Annie and I know that he was the right man to take us? Some naughty, wicked man might come, and pretend that you had sent



AGATHA.

him, and carry us off where we could never see you again."

Then Papa, with a curious twinkle in his eyes, but without attempting to reason her out of this queer notion, had said: "Well, now I'll tell you what we will do: We will put a new ring with a pearl in it, on your finger, and this dear little old one that you have worn so long, papa will carry away with him; and whoever comes to take my little girl out to London, must bring this ring with him; then you will know that I sent him."

All this happened months ago. Papa went away that night, and Agatha, a little comforted by the lovely new ring that gleamed on her finger, began the very next day to watch for the messenger from London. The months went by, and Agatha had a very good time. Aunt Annie was the most patient and loving of aunts, and did all she could to give her little niece a happy home. But on this day a great many doleful things had happened.

Aunt Annie went to Boston to stay three whole days, and it was Agatha's birthday, and it had rained all day, and she couldn't go to take her music lesson, and no letter had come

from papa. Everything was horrid. No wonder Agatha cried. The distant door-bell rang sharply, and presently the library door opened, and Mary Ann said:

“A note for you, Miss Agatha, and the man is waiting.”

Agatha dropped Fritz to seize the note.

On the paper was this sentence: “Papa is ready for his darling, and wants her as soon as she can come. Here is the token.” And behold, there gleamed her little gold ring!

Then what a flutter was Agatha in! How the whole house was turned topsy-turvy to get them ready. A telegram brought aunt Annie from Boston before that day was done, and in three days more they were off. Papa had been true to his promise.

CAPTAIN ROBERT.

IT was but the day before Thanksgiving, and the Dunlap family were very busy.

All but Robert; he was kept in the house by a cold, and really did not know what to do with himself. He flattened his nose against the glass, and watched a military procession pass by. They were in very gay uniform, with very bright buttons, and kept step beautifully.

Robert watched until the last glimmer of their brightness disappeared around a corner, then turned with a sigh to watch his mother place pies in the oven, and say to her: "I would like to be a soldier."

"Very well," said his mother; "then I would be."

Robert stared at her a few minutes, and then said: "Would be what?"

"Why, a soldier. Wasn't that what you said you wanted?"

“Well, but how could I be?”

“Easy enough; that is, if you put your mind to it. A soldier’s life is never an easy one, of course. Clara, you may hand me that other pie; I think I can make room for it.”

“But mother, I don’t know what you mean.” This, Robert said.

“Don’t! You haven’t forgotten the verse we talked about so long? ‘Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. It takes real soldierlike fighting to rule a spirit, I can tell you.’”

“Oh!” said Robert; and he flattened his nose against the glass again and thought.

“But mother,” he said at last, “I didn’t mean that kind. I would like to be a captain, and have soldiers under me.”

“Nothing easier,” said his mother, shutting the oven door with a satisfied air. “There are your ten fingers, and your eyes, and your ears, and that troublesome tongue that hates to obey. I’m sure you have soldiers enough to control. I pity any captain who has as troublesome ones.”

Robert laughed. He had had so many talks with his mother that he understood her very

well, yet this was a new way of putting it. He stood there a good while, thinking about it, deciding that he would be a captain forthwith, and that his soldiers should obey perfectly. Then he wondered what orders he should have to give them first.

Poor fellow! In less than ten minutes from that time he knew.

He went to the sitting-room to find that baby Carrie had been there before him. There lay his birthday books, his beautiful *Family Flight* on the floor, some of the loveliest pictures in it torn into bits. His photograph album was on the sofa; but chubby fingers had tugged at mamma's picture until it lay loose and ruined, and papa's page was gone entirely.

Oh, how angry was Captain Robert! He wanted to rush after Carrie, and slap her naughty fingers; she was almost two years old, and ought to know better. He wanted to run to his mother, and with red face and angry voice tell his story of wrong, and demand that Carrie be whipped. He wanted to bury his head in the sofa cushions and cry just as loud as he could roar. Why did he do none of those things? Just because he remembered in time

that he was a captain and had soldiers that must obey. "Halt!" he said to his feet, as they were about to rush away; and they instantly obeyed.

"Stop!" he said to the tears, as they began to rush in torrents up to his eyes; and back they all went, save one little straggler who rolled down his nose, and was instantly wiped out of existence. In short the boy proved himself a good captain, for that time at least. He even sent his feet up-stairs, presently, with a rosy-cheeked apple for Carrie, and bade his arms give her a very loving hug, which they immediately did.

Mamma found out all about it, as mammas almost always do; and when papa came home at night, what did he do but bow low, and say: "Captain Robert, I am proud to salute you. I hear you have fought a battle and won a victory to-day."

LONG AGO.

IT was long ago that Mrs. Ried sat in an old-fashioned parlor, in an old-fashioned chair, by the old-fashioned fireplace, and told the story to Susannah Bristow, her husband's niece, and it was much longer ago that the story happened which she told.

“Oh, yes,” she said, sitting back in her chair and looking at nothing in particular, “I like to think of those old times when I was a girl; doesn't seem so very long ago either; time travels fast. And so your father never told you about it? But then he wasn't there, and I was; that makes a difference. You see there had been a great deal of trouble about the flag. It was all very well to have a stripe for each State, so long as there were but thirteen of them. It made a nice pretty shape, and I suppose folks thought that the country was never going to be any bigger. But it kept on growing and *growing*. Father used to say that it seemed as

though folks would go to bed at night thinking they knew how big their country was as well as the next one, and they would wake up in the morning to find there was a new State. Let me see! Indiana came in in 1816, and Mississippi in 1817, and Illinois and Alabama followed right on in the next two years, and the stripes on the flag kept getting narrower and narrower, and getting out of shape it was too, to say nothing of having to be fixing over the flag all the time. Something would have to be done. People kept saying that; but for a long time they couldn't find out what it would be. You see everybody had got to loving the flag then, by that time. They couldn't forget how it looked that morning when it was run up in the place of the British rag, as we young folks couldn't help calling it. People who were not born when that happened had heard all about it so many times that they thought they saw it. I used to have a kind of a notion that I was there.

“ Well, the talk went on until one day Samuel Ried brought forward a plan that he thought would do. Yes, he was a relative of your uncle, not so very far back either. I have been at his house many a time; he lived in New York.



SHE TOLD THE STORY TO SUSANNAH BRISTOW.

His plan was that the old flag should always and forever have its thirteen stripes to stand for the brave States who began the New World, and that for every State added, a nice little white star should be sewed on. But I don't believe he had any kind of a notion what a huddle of stars there would be by this time. People all liked his idea first-rate; and in the spring of 1818, Congress passed a law that it should be done. So one day a party of ladies were invited to Captain Ried's to help make a new flag. I was rather young to go, but my father and Captain Ried were old friends, and mother was sick and couldn't go, so I was invited in her place. What fun we had! Folks used to have nicer times together, seems to me, than they do nowadays; they didn't meet so often, you see, and had no chance to get tired of one another. Then we almost always had some useful thing to do, and that made it interesting. I worked that afternoon as hard as any of them. I made the prettiest little twinkler of a star that you ever saw. I remember just what a time I had with the points. They wouldn't lie straight and nice, but would pucker up. Your uncle was there. The men weren't invited, but he

was related and a great favorite with Mrs. Ried, and the captain too. He was a favorite with all the people who had any sense, your uncle was. He came and sat down by me and pretended to help by holding the scissors, but he tangled them around the thread dreadfully. It's queer how men most always tangle things. I told him what a time I was having to get that star not to pucker, and he said it was because I attracted it so it couldn't stay in its place, but kept twisting around toward me.

“Then I said it was a poor mean little star if anybody could attract it from its duty, and I was ashamed of it. Your uncle and I understood one another, and had a sort of right to talk nonsense together. There was one thing real queer about it. Your uncle had a chance to go away out West to Indiana; it had only been admitted a little while before, and it was a pretty rough country. I didn't more than half want him to go, and on account of that and some other things, he didn't more than half want to go, and yet we both sort of thought that he ought to; so what I said about the star was kind of sharp.

“Well, pretty soon Mrs. Ried called to me to

come and fasten on my star; your uncle asked what State it was, and I said I didn't know, and he whispered to me that he would adopt the State it represented for his, and do for it all he could. Of course he was only in fun; but if you'll believe it, when I got that star in place, and counted up, according to the way the States were admitted into the Union, it stood for Indiana. I've always thought that kind of influenced your uncle's going out there; and I'm sure the State has more to thank him for than any ten men you can name. You may say he has good as educated all the boys and girls; for he worked at the school question until there wasn't a State in the Union ahead of us, and he made himself felt in every good thing. Yes, child; that was the reason he always wore a little star on his watch chain; and he said it was the very star that was attracted by me. Your uncle knew how to talk a lot of pretty nonsense, as well as more sense, than most men.

“I prayed a great deal about his going out West; that if it was right for him to go, the way might be plain, and I have sometimes wondered whether the Lord didn't have that star count for Indiana as a kind of a sign for us.

It would have been an easy thing for him to do, and I s'pose he had a right to answer us in that way if he thought best. Anyway, neither your uncle nor I, nor the State of Indiana, ever had reason to regret that he chose that for his home. And this is the true story of the new flag; that little business about the star is between ourselves, of course.

“You may imagine that your uncle and I didn't put it in print; but the other part of the story you can read in your histories.”

“TOO DE.”

YOU don't know who or what that is, I presume. How glad and thankful I am that you do not know in the way that so many people do! It is the name of one of the gods worshipped in China, and I copy this account for you, from a letter written some time ago, by Rev. Mr. Mateer, who is a missionary in that country. He says:

“The history of Too De, as given in Chinese books and generally believed by the people, is as follows: There was in ancient times a good king called Chew Ching, whose justice and wisdom made the people good and happy. He made a law that outside of each village there should be built by the roadside, either on the east or south, a small house, and that if any one found anything that had been lost, he should put it in this little house, where the loser might go and find it. This custom continued for

over a thousand years, and this little house grew at last into a temple, and had a little god in it. The way this came about is believed to be as follows: Over a thousand years ago there was a man of great learning called Han Yu. He had a nephew called She-Er-Lang, who wanted very much to become a priest, but his uncle would not allow it. At last She-Er-Lang wrote a very fine essay on virtue and piety, and sent it to his uncle, and then ran away. He went to a mountain called Tsung Nan, and lived there many years, and finally was changed into a god.

"His uncle by and by grew old, and gave up his office. He was one day standing alone on the street when a young man came up to him, and made a very low bow. He at once recognized him as the nephew who ran away, and was astonished to see him still a young man. From this, he knew that the nephew must have become a god. He thought to himself, 'I am old and have not long to live. The best thing for me would be to get my nephew to take me with him up to heaven.' So he asked him if he would, and She-Er-Lang opened his wide sleeve and told his uncle to jump in. He did so, and

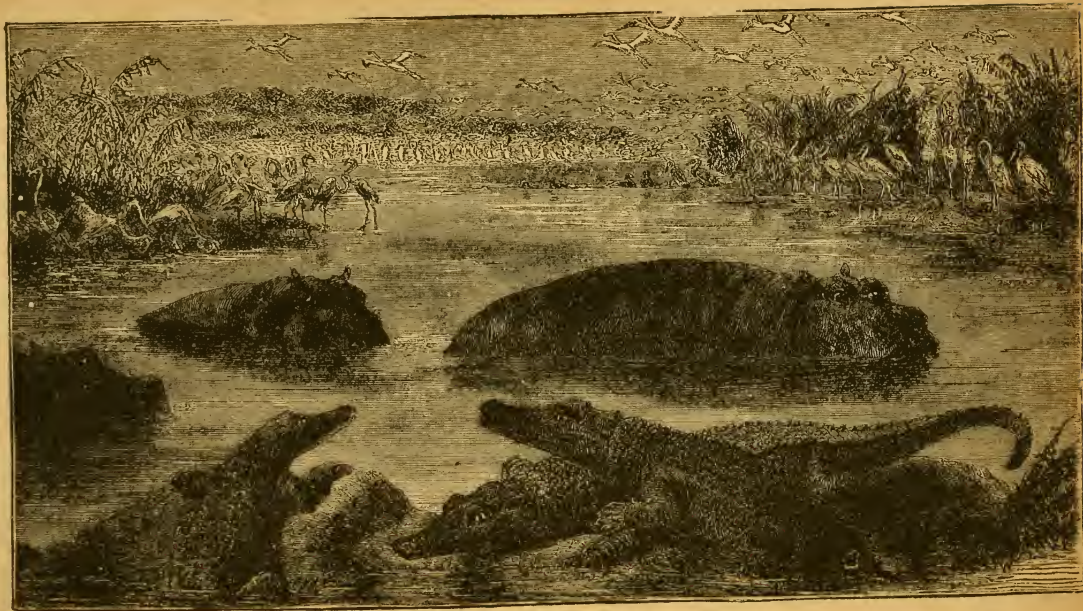
in a moment was sailing far away among the stars. Suddenly he found himself set down before a great gate, twelve rods high, and three and a half rods wide. The boards of the gate were nailed with nails of gold. The walls were built with pearls, and the tower over the gate was set with diamonds. At the side of the gate hung a telescope through which could be seen everything that was done in the world, and an ear trumpet by which could be heard everything that was said. He heard a voice saying :

Let men be careful how their lives appear,
For every little thing is noted here.

"Han Yu knew that this was the gate of heaven, and he thought he would go in; but suddenly remembering his wife and children, he drew back. This made his nephew angry, and he gave him a slap with his long sleeve, which sent him flying, and he fell back like a stone to the earth, and the fall dashed him in pieces! She-Er-Lang was sorry for his miserable death, and as his soul was leaving its body, called out to him: 'When you see a *red* door, go in.' But Han Yu understood him to say, 'when you see a *door*, go in.' So the first door he came to,

being one of those little Too De houses, he went in and stayed there, and became a little god!"

There is much more about this remarkable idol which the people of China call a god. At some future time I will try to give you the rest of the story.

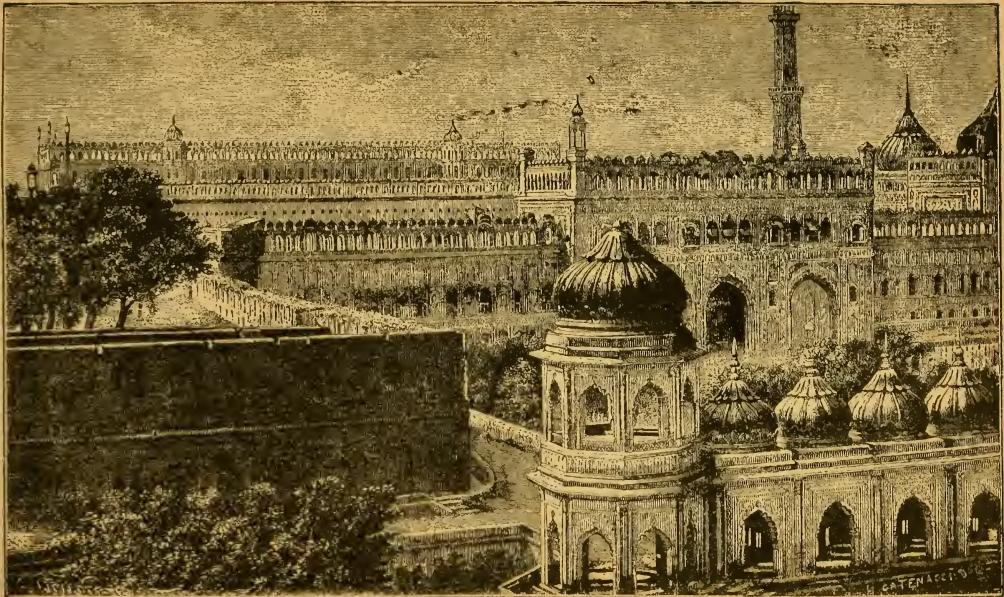


AN AFRICAN RIVER.

AFRICA.

DO you know that at a place called Onitsha, on the river Niger, in Africa, there used to be the horrible custom of dragging a man, or woman, or child, sometimes two or three miles, and then throwing the poor creature into the river to drown? Not because the victim had done some dreadful sin, and they thought that he or she ought to be punished, but because they thought all the people had been so wicked that their god would be angry about it unless he had a sacrifice offered him. Only about two years ago a poor little girl was dragged through the town, and then, when she tried to get away in her great terror, the cruel man beat her on the head with a club until she was dead, then threw her into the river. Yet perhaps I ought not to call him cruel. At least it may be he did not know he was doing a wicked thing. You see his

religion had taught him that it must be done, or the whole village would be destroyed by an angry god. Think of having such a god as that! However, there is good news from Africa. The awful custom is done away with. No more victims are thrown in the river to die for the people. From our missionaries, the people have learned of One who died for them all, and many have learned to pray to Him. But there are many others who have never yet heard of Jesus. Surely we must hasten and help to send them the blessed news of a Saviour.



IMAMBARA. LUCKNOW.

GOOD NEWS FROM LUCKNOW.

DO you know where that is? Away off in India. Rev. Mr. Craven, a missionary there, wrote a letter to a certain Sabbath-school in America, and among other good things in it, he paid a compliment to the boys in the Mission School in Lucknow.

A rich heathen merchant told Mr. Craven one day that he liked to get his clerks from the Mission School, because they were honest and truthful. And a railroad man told him there was one thing about Christian boys that he liked; you could trust them.

Ah, but it costs something to be a Christian boy in Lucknow. What would you think of seeing a crowd in the street following a young man, hooting at him, throwing stones, and among them his own mother? What! throwing stones? Yes; just that you might have seen in Lucknow one day last year. What had the

young man been doing? Why, he was on his way to be baptized, and to confess that he meant to love and serve the Lord Jesus.

It takes another kind of courage too. One day a boy came to Mr. Craven and said :

“ Here is a dollar and fifty cents ; it is all the money I have. I stole two dollars and fifty cents from you once, but I am a Christian now, and I want to bring it back.”

FIRST STEPS.

HOW nice it was in baby to begin to walk on New Year's Day! The children said that to one another a great many times. "So cunning," and "So queer!" and "Just as though he knew it was the day for beginning things."

"Why?" asked Nell, "what do you begin on New Year's Day?"

"Oh, resolutions and things," Josie said. "I always decide on New Year's to take new starts, and be different, you know."

"And the day after New Year's you take to break the resolutions, don't you?" The children laughed over this, but the mother said: "Don't make light of Josie's resolutions; it is a great deal better to try, even if you fail, than it is to think nothing about it and make no effort to do right." She sighed as she spoke. There was a shadow in this mother's life that made her end many things with a sigh.

“He copied father!” said Josie, going back to the baby. “Didn’t you notice how earnestly he watched this morning, when father was pacing off the length of the library? Little Will looked at his feet all the time, and then he crept up by a chair and tried it. I believe that was the first time he thought of walking.”

Then they laughed again, but the mother sighed, and the father who was holding out his hands to the baby, looked at her gravely.

“Mother has her sober look on,” said Fannie. “What are you thinking, mother? That baby will walk into mischief as fast as he can?”

“No,” she said, smiling now. “I was only thinking how sure the little sons and daughters are to copy father and mother, and how careful we ought to be to take the right steps.”

Father did not stay long, after that. The children gathered around him, begging that he would come home early to let them have a nice New Year’s evening together, but he did not promise, and after he had kissed them all, and gone away, the mother looked graver than before.

“I don’t like New Year’s Day,” said Josie, “and I don’t think men ought to go calling with-



BABY'S FIRST STEPS.

out their wives. When I have a wife I will take her along."

And then the mother felt that Josie was growing old enough to understand the meaning of the shadow in their home. New Year's Day and New Year's calls were temptations to her husband. He came home late, and gloomy, if not positively cross, and his breath smelled strongly of wine, and he spent the next day in bed, with a throbbing headache. It was not simply once a year that these experiences came, either; they were growing more frequent of late. Would the sons in this home copy their father's steps? This was the heavy shadow that so often darkened the mother's heart, and was already creeping over the children.

The New Year's dinner was on the table — an extra dinner, for the shadow on the mother's heart was not allowed to show much in her life — and baby was fastened into his high chair, and the noisy merry group were about to sit down, when their father's step was heard in the hall.

Mother's face grew pale. Father never dined with them on this day; his round of calls was not completed in time, and besides, he always

stayed away from the children's eyes when he had been drinking wine. Had the dreaded hour come when he had fallen too low to remember this?

She half arose to go and meet him, then sat down again. He came into the dining-room, steady step, clear eyes, smiling face. The glad children fluttered around him. "Did you come home to take dinner with us, father?" and "Oh, father! are you going to *stay*?" This was a treat indeed! Business held him during the usual week days, and fashion, on New Year's, so the dinner table saw little of this father. "I've come to stay," he said, kissing his wife, and then the baby. He left a glad light in the mother's eyes, for there was no smell of wine about him.

"Well, sir," he said to the baby, "have you forgotten how to walk, old fellow?" Then the eager children:

"Oh, father, he has been practising all day. And we all think he is copying you, for he tries to take long steps, just as you did this morning."

"I must take care how I step," said the father, and he looked over at his wife. "Shall I teach him to copy father?" he asked her.

But she could not answer, and her eyes filled with tears. Oh, if she only *dared* to have her babies copy him in all things!

“I have brought you a New Year’s present,” he said, and he leaned forward and pushed across the table a slip of paper.

“Is it a check?” said the eager children.

“Yes,” he said, smiling; “it is a check on Resolution Bank, and I mean it shall be honored. I’ve been copying Josie to-day, and making resolutions. Josie, my boy, we won’t break them to-morrow nor to-morrow, will we? If this baby is going to copy us, we must be careful.”

Then the mother, through her tears and her smiles, and stopping once to say “Thank God!” read her “check.”

I, the undersigned, do solemnly promise never to taste again anything that can intoxicate. So help me God.

Signed this New Year’s Day, 1884,

JOSEPH WARD HOWE.

“Oh, but, father!” said Josie, “perhaps you will *have* to taste it, for medicine, you know.”

And when the mother heard his decided answer: “I never will, my boy!” she said again, “Thank God!” So the baby was not the only one who took a first step that day.

A MISUNDERSTANDING.

THEY had come to aunt Helen's to live, Cora and her little sister Milly. Aunt Helen was mamma's own dear sister, and next to being with mamma herself, the children could think of nothing nicer than to be with auntie. Mamma had gone to heaven.

One morning there was a great deal of work to be done. Aunt Helen had a new girl who did not know how to make bread or dress a turkey, or in fact, do much of anything but break dishes, and what should uncle Dick do but send up a note that he would bring three business friends home with him to dinner. Aunt Helen wished that she had two pairs of hands. She wished several other things besides. One was about Cora's hair, the long fine hair that looked in the sunshine like spun gold, and tangled easier than gold would have thought of doing.

“Oh, dear!” said aunt Helen, twitching at the comb as it tangled in the yellow threads. “What a perfect nuisance this hair is. I wish it were no longer than Milly’s; it would look a great deal neater and not be such a trial to take care of.”

Poor Cora! If aunt Helen had not been so busy, she would have seen the great tears in the little girl’s eyes. She did not care so very much about the yellow hair herself, and it was a trial to have it combed, especially when people were in a hurry, and pulled; but dear mamma had seemed to love each separate hair, and it made Cora cry to think of losing it. Still she thought about it a great deal; all the morning indeed, while she ran of errands for the busy auntie. It was not until nearly twelve o’clock that she found Milly alone in the nursery and came to her with the great shears.

“Now, Milly,” she said, “if I should sit real still, do you suppose you could cut my hair off even and nice, so I could comb it like yours, before we go down to dinner?”

“Why, Cora Parker!” Milly said in dismay. “You mustn’t cut off your hair. Aunt Helen wouldn’t like it.”



CORA AND MILLY.

Then did Cora turn on her astonished eyes. "Didn't you hear her say that she wished it was cut off short like yours? And you know she has trouble combing it, and of course she wants it off, or she wouldn't say so. You don't think aunt Helen would tell what wasn't true!"

"Why doesn't she cut it off, then?" asked wise little Milly.

"Why, I guess maybe she thinks I would cry and feel badly, and she is sorry for me. And I have cried two times this morning and I feel pretty badly; but for all that I've made up my mind. Didn't papa say we must try to give her just the leastest speck of trouble, and that it was very good in her to take us, when she had three boys to see to! Oh, I know it is right, and I've made up my mind; so Milly, you just hurry and cut."

And Milly, little barber as she was, stood on tiptoe and went about her task. Snip, snip, went the dreadful shears! Only a minute or two, and the spun gold lay in great waves on the carpet, and Cora's head looked as neat and smooth as Milly's; only I am obliged to say, the hair was not very evenly cut.

Cora could not see that, however, and

smoothed her hair with great care, and was ready for dinner, just as the bell pealed through the house. Poor child, she had no idea of the uproar she was going to create! Aunt Helen having seated her guests, was just looking around for the children when they slipped in. Instead of seating them, she stepped back in great dismay.

“Why, Cora Parker!” she exclaimed. “What have you been doing? Where is your hair? O, Lewis, what a fright the child has made of herself!”

And then, actually, aunt Helen burst into tears! What a time they had! Uncle Dick tried to explain to the guests, and comfort his wife, and question the children, all at once. Finally poor Cora cried so loud that he sent her away, and aunt Helen, much ashamed, sat down at last.

“The child gave me such a start,” she said. “She doesn’t look in the least like herself; and to think that she has spoiled her beautiful hair!”

“What possessed her?” asked uncle Dick.

“I’m sure I don’t know; I suppose the naughty little thing was spunky, because I said this morning that her hair was more trouble than

Milly's. I remember now, that she has been rather gloomy all the morning. I didn't think she was such a naughty little creature."

Now it was Milly's turn; she had been very quiet and sober through all the uproar, but just here she burst into a storm of tears, and kicked her mad little feet against the table. "You're naughty," she shouted; "I don't love you a bit, I don't. Cora is good; she did it to please you; she cried dreadful, and she said her hair gave you trouble, and you said you wished it was short like mine, and it *must* be short to please you; and she is good." All this, before she could be hushed or carried from the room.

Well don't you think, that evening, when the storm was all over, two people asked to be forgiven; one was Milly, for speaking such naughty words to her auntie, and one was auntie, for saying in her haste what she did not mean. But that did not make Cora's hair long again.

"Never mind," aunt Helen said, "it will grow long some day; it shows you were an unselfish little girl, if not a very wise one, and were used to being with people who meant what they said. It has taught me a lesson."

BENNIE IN TROUBLE.

TROUBLE enough, and like many another, he brought it on himself. It really seems horrid to tell it, but the whole thing began by getting very angry with Tommy Burns. Never mind what Tommy had done, some silly thing that vexed his playmates, Bennie and Walter. What do you think they agreed on coming home from a fishing expedition?

Why, that they would tell Madam Selmo that her missing French book was taken from the desk by Tommy Burns; that in fact they *saw* him do it. I want you to notice how fast this sin grew. In the first place they made themselves believe that they would not tell a lie; oh, not for anything! Bennie *did* see Tommy Burns take an arithmetic from the desk, and saw him put it back again. But they somehow made themselves believe that to tell Madam Selmo about a book, in such a way that she



COMING HOME FROM A FISHING EXPEDITION.

would think it was her French book, would not be a lie. "We can't help what she *thinks*," said Bennie.

This is the way the thing worked. Madam Selmo, feeling sad to think so good a boy as Tommy Burns would take her French book without leave, and then deny it, resolved to talk with each of the little accusers separately, Bennie first; this is the conversation they had:

"Bennie, are you *sure* that Tommy Burns took a book from my desk?"

"Yes'm," said Bennie, holding up his head, and feeling very glad that the madam said "book," and not French book. "I saw him."

"Are you sure it was my French book?"

"Yes'm;" but Bennie hung his head; this was a hard question.

"When was it?"

Bennie thought—What should he say to this? he had not planned answers to so many questions; he tried to remember when he saw Tommy take the arithmetic. "It was Thursday morning," he said at last.

"What makes you sure?"

"Because it was the morning I was late, and the arithmetic class was reciting."

“When Tommy took the French book?”

“Yes’m — no’m,” said Bennie, his face growing red as he remembered that this very teacher sat at the desk at that time; “when I came in; and he took the book just afterwards.”

“What did he do with it?”

“He put it in his bag with the rest of his books.”

“How came he to have his bag at that time of day?”

“I don’t know,” said Bennie, his face very red. How many questions was she going to ask? There was only one more.

“Was Walter Mills with you when you saw him take it?”

“Yes’m,” said Bennie briskly; and he told his conscience that *that* wasn’t a story; Walter Mills was with him most all the time.

Ten minutes afterwards came Walter Mills to this same room to be questioned. Now these two boys had not counted on being asked questions separately, and had not planned what they should say; so when Walter was asked when he saw Tommy take the book, he thought he must pick out some time, and said:

“Friday afternoon.”

“How do you know it was at that time?”

“Because,” said Walter, searching through his mind for a reason, “it is Friday afternoon we have singing, you know, and it was while we were singing.”

“Was Bennie Stuart with you?”

“Yes’m; and he whispered to me to look at Tommy Burns with your French book; and he said he guessed Tommy was going to steal it, to pay you for scolding him in the geography class.” It is a sad fact that Walter had told falsehoods before, and could do it with less blushing than Bennie.

“What did Tommy do with the book?” said the teacher; and Walter, growing interested in his own stories, saw from the window the lake gleaming sunshine, and said:

“Why, Madam Selmo, don’t you think he threw it in the lake! I was awful scared, and I nudged Bennie to look quick, before it sunk.”

What do you think the madam did? She sent for Bennie and made him, before Walter, repeat exactly what he had told her such a little while before; then she made Walter repeat *his*

answers in Bennie's hearing. Then she asked one more question:

“Did you two little boys never read a story in the Bible about some men who were called to be witnesses against a good man, and it was discovered that they were *false* witnesses, because *their stories did not agree?*”

Poor Bennie Stuart! and poor father and mother of Bennie Stuart! Poor Walter, without any father or mother! I could almost be glad that they were not on earth to suffer over their little boy.

Think back, and see if you can tell how Satan got hold of these two little boys in the first place, and led them into such slippery places?

TRAINING.

IT was general training day. If you don't know what that means, ask grandma. John knew; and he wasn't deaf. Not he. Nobody heard the drum and fife that morning any plainer than he did. I don't know that it sounded sweeter to any boy's ears. Yet he wasn't rushing along the streets of Windsor with the rest of the boys, eager to join the procession. Instead, he was out in the back lot, away up in the northwest corner, hoeing potatoes with all his might. A nice little patch of potatoes; none better looking in all the town of Windsor. I doubt if there were any that received such care. Every hill of them belonged to John, and it was about all that he did own in the world, unless I except an old arithmetic with one of the covers gone entirely, and the other hanging by half its back; but every problem in that arithmetic John

could do! And there were some hard ones.

He hoed away. The band was playing, and he tried to make his hoe keep time to the music, while he whistled it loud and clear. Jo Parsons leaned over the rail fence and looked at him.

“You don’t say you ain’t a-going!” said he.

“Well,” said John, “I didn’t say it, so far as I know, but I can if you want me to.”

“Well, now, if you ain’t one of ’em! Why not?”

“Why not what?”

“Why not ain’t you going to general training, when every man and boy in this town is on hand?”

“Got other business. Every man and boy can do all the work that there is to do at general training, without me, and my potatoes are spoiling to be hoed, and this is the only day I’ve got.”

“Why can’t you hoe ’em to-morrow just as well?”

“Because to-morrow I’ve got to go and help Governor Wolcott hoe his; there’s acres of them, and it will take me all the rest of the season; before I’d have another chance at

mine, they'd spoil, sure ; no, sir, I've looked at the sum on all sides, and worked it up every way I could think of, and the only answer I got was that I must stay at home and hoe. I'm training, though. Don't you hear my hoe keep time to the music ?”

“How many potatoes do you expect to get out of that patch ?”

Jo said the word “patch” in a very contemptuous way. The fact was, he might as well have told his friend John just what he thought, that that potato patch was a very small affair.

“Dunno,” said John cheerily. “Just as many as I can coax into growing for me.”

“And what are you going to do with them when you get them ?”

“Sell every blessed one ; father has promised me seed enough to plant again, next season, so I sha'n't have to lay by any.”

“Well, what do you want to sell them for ? What are you after, anyhow ?”

John stopped his busy hoe and leaned on it for about one minute, while he said in a slow and very impressive voice :

“There's a good many things I would like to

get, and there are two or three things that I mean to get if I can with these potatoës ; but there's one thing that I'm after with all the strength there is in my hoe, and that I'm *bound to have* ; and that's one of the new geographies with pictures of the rivers, and towns, and everything !”

“ Ho ! ” said Jo ; and the way he took his arms off the fence, and stood up to put force into the word, gave you to understand that he had a very small opinion of geographies, and thought that John Fitch was a simpleton.

He went to general training, and had a good time, I presume ; but whether he did or not, no one will ever know ; for so far as I can learn, nobody ever heard of him again, though I suppose his mother and a few friends knew all about him.

And John kept at his hoeing ; and then when that was finished he went home and did the “ chores.”

Hard work, was it ? Of course it was hard ; but then wait a bit. To-day there is not a well-informed boy in the country who doesn't know more or less about John Fitch. Among other things they know, that a few years later, when

he had earned his geography, and studied it, and studied several other things, one day he went gliding up the Delaware River on a steamboat of his own planning, the first one that was ever used in the world! I'm inclined to think that he hoed his patch of potatoes to some purpose.

The truth was, he had a "general training" every day in the year, and trained his mind to think and to plan.

PEACE AND WAR.

THE other evening after the boys had finished studying their history lesson, they went to talking over matters that Howard did not understand. Howard is only eight years old.

“I wish our name was anything but Benedict,” remarked Willis; “I would rather have any other name in the world than that.”

“Oh, I don’t know,” replied Chester, “it isn’t like a first name; we can’t help it, and our father couldn’t; nor our grandfather. I’d rather it would be that than Arnold; think of Arnold Gilson! If that was my name, I’d run away to England or somewhere.”

Then for the fourth time, little Howard asked “Why?”

“Tell Howard about it, my boys,” said mamma.

And so, though Willis declared that he didn’t know how to tell things, and Chester said it

wasn't an easy thing to tell, it ended by Willis giving the following story.

“Why, you see, Howard, Benedict Arnold was a scamp. He was a traitor, and that is meaner than anything.”

“What is a traitor?” asked Howard; “what did he do?”

“Why, he was a general in our army, the American army, you know, and he got into



MAJOR ANDRE.

trouble because he didn't keep things straight under his command, and drank, and all that, and Washington had to give him a scolding, and that made him hate Washington, and he just

made up his mind that he would help the British. Did you ever hear of Major André? Well, he was a young British officer who got acquainted with Benedict Arnold, and Arnold made out a lot of papers, that told all about West Point, how many guns there were, and how many soldiers, and, oh, everything, and gave them to Major André to take to his commander. Then Arnold got him a pass, so he could pass the Union soldiers; the name on it was John Anderson. He got past the guards all safe, but a little way out, he met three soldiers who stopped him; first he thought they were British soldiers taken prisoners, and that he would be safe with them, and he was very careless, didn't show his pass, and talked foolishly, and they were suspicious of him, and went to searching him. They didn't find anything wrong, though, and were going to let him pass, when one of them said:

“ ‘We haven't looked in his boots.’

“Then he began to make excuses; he said his boots were hard to get off, and he was in a hurry, and wouldn't they excuse him? But they saw he had grown very pale, and they determined to have those boots off; and in



ARREST OF MAJOR ANDRE.

them they found the papers which told all about our army. That showed Major André to be a spy. Then he begged for his life. He offered them his horse, and his gold watch, and a hundred guineas, if they would let him go, but they said if he would give them ten thousand guineas, they would have to take him prisoner. All this while General Washington was trusting General Arnold, and thinking he was a brave soldier and true friend. Only two days after Major André was taken prisoner, Washington went to take breakfast with General Arnold, who lived right opposite West Point. He had been away from home and had not heard the news."

"I should have thought they would have telegraphed to him," interrupted Howard.

"Bless your heart!" said Chester; "There were no telegraphs then."

"Oh, no," said Howard, "of course not." And the story continued.

"Before Washington got to his breakfast, a letter came to General Arnold giving him the news that Major André was taken prisoner; then, says I, he knew he must get to the British ship somehow, or be hung for treason. He had

company, but he told them that he was called at once to West Point. Then he told his wife that he wished to see her a moment, and she came away from the breakfast table to be told that he must run for his life. She fainted dead away, and he left her lying there and ran, mean scamp that he was! Everything about him was mean.

“Just after he had gone, Washington arrived, and sat down and ate his breakfast, not knowing yet what had happened. The guests told him that Gen. Arnold had been called to West Point, and that Mrs. Arnold was sick in her room.

So after breakfast he rode away to visit West Point, and he told his friends that as Arnold was over there waiting for them, they would probably be saluted by the cannon. But they were not; instead, came an officer riding post-haste with the news that General Arnold was a traitor.

“What became of him?” asked Howard much interested in this bit of off-hand history.

“Oh, he escaped to the British, and they made a general of him, but their good men would have nothing to do with him because he was a traitor.”

“And what became of Major André?”

“Oh, he had to be killed, you know, because he was a spy; that was the law in the army. The British people tried to save him, but they couldn’t.”

“Well,” said Howard, drawing a long sigh, “that seems kind of hard. I suppose he was only doing what he thought was right. He was helping the folks he had promised to help.”

“Yes,” said the boys, “he was no traitor.”

Then all agreed that, look at it which way you would, war was a dreadful thing, and they were glad there was none in our country. Howard even went so far as to add that he *most* didn’t believe it was ever right to have war.

Whereupon Willis told him that if he had been a slave he wouldn’t have thought so. Howard immediately began to ask what that meant, but the mother foreseeing another story, pointed to the clock, told them to wait until to-morrow, and sent lecturer and audience to bed.

JOHN AND HANNAH.

HANNAH KNOX made haste with the hooks and eyes that she was sewing on her dress. It was a great, great day for all the country. She was going to join the procession; everybody was going. The bright November sun looked out upon the streets of New York full of people hurrying to and fro. There was a sound of drums in the distance.

Hannah, in her new dress, went out and stood on the steps of her father's house, looking eagerly up and down the street. Her cheeks were flushed with haste and excitement, but I think they grew just a little pinker as a handsome boy of about sixteen came hurrying by.

"O John," she said, stopping him eagerly — and even in his haste he seemed to be quite willing to be stopped — "have they gone?"

"Yes; the last boat has just put out. And Hannah, see what they have left behind! Step down here. Can you see? Shade your eyes

with your hand, so, and look in the direction that I point. What do you see?"

Hannah gazed away into the sunshine.

"Look up high," said John. Hannah looked, then dropped her hand and turned her head, speaking quickly: "O John! that rag!"

"Yes," said John, "I think as much! Leaving that to wave over us. As if we would ever have anything more to do with the British flag! Hark! Do you hear the drums? If we were down at that corner we could catch a glimpse of General Washington as he passes. Come, Hannah, let us get there in time to see them."

So they hurried off; Hannah, who was used to walking, felt out of breath as John in his eagerness broke into what was almost a run. But she pushed on; girls were brave walkers in those days; besides, she wanted to see General Washington.

And she saw him. What a grand-looking man he was! Hannah had seen him before, but to-day he looked grander than ever. They found a good position, in time to see the leaders of the procession turn the corner. "Look, Hannah!" cried John, "we are right under the British flag! Isn't it too bad for General Washing-

ton to pass that rag? If I only had the Stars and Stripes!"

And just at that moment there walked up an American flag with its red and white stripes, its bit of sky in the corner all aglow with stars.

"Oh, good!" said John; "oh, good! Now, Hannah, look!"

And Hannah looked. John seized the Stars and Stripes, went through with some rapid motions with cord and pulley at the foot of the flag-staff, then clasped his quick-motioned arms and legs around it, and was off like a cat. Up, and up, and up! At the very top! Hannah shaded her eyes again, and grew cold, and then hot, but looked. Now he is tearing away the British rag! Now what is he doing? Tumbling? Oh, no, indeed! How did he do it? Hannah cannot imagine, though she has stared every minute, but the Stars and Stripes are waving overhead, and John is coming down the flag-staff. Oh, what cheering! Are the people going wild? The procession is upon them. General Washington, General Knox, Governor Clinton—hosts of great men. How they are shouting, and how their cocked hats swing! They are shaking hands with John!

Yes, and with Hannah! For he has come to her side; and actually, General Washington is shaking her little brown hand! John has become a hero, and somehow, he has contrived to put some of the glory all around her.

"John," she says to him long afterward, when the excitement of the day was calming down, "didn't you know about that flag this morning until you got to the corner?"

"Why, yes," owned John, "the thing had been planned out, you see; but I wanted you in it, and I knew you wouldn't come if I told you, so I kept still."

All this happened exactly a hundred years ago; last week John and Hannah's great grandchildren went to New York. Her name is Lilian Maude, and his name is Van Arsdale Belmont. She sat back in a carriage and ate chocolate creams, and he smoked a cigarette. And both of them would have been ashamed of John and Hannah, striding through those streets. Times are changed.

TEMPTED.

IT was a bright spring afternoon; that is, it was bright just then, but being April, one couldn't be certain what the sky would do in five minutes; it had rained three times since noon, but now the sun was shining.

Constance Perkins paid no attention to the sun; she was reading a lovely story in her new spelling-book. A story in a spelling-book! Yes, indeed, and I can assure you it was a great pleasure to Constance, for she lived in the days when stories were scarce. The spelling-book from which she was reading, had only been in print a few years, and the man who made it—whose name by the way was Noah Webster—was the first one who seemed ever to have thought of making stories for young scholars to read.

I really suppose, though, that the first thing which led Noah Webster to want to make a

spelling-book was because in all the schools English books were being used, and he thought it was time that America had spelling-books of her own. So he made one, and here is a copy of the story that Constance was reading.

“An old man found a rude boy up in one of his trees stealing apples, and desired him to come down; but the young saucebox told him plainly he would not.

“Won’t you?” said the old man, “then I will fetch you down.” So he pulled up some tufts of grass and threw at him; but this only made the youngster laugh to think that the old man should try to beat him down from the tree with grass only.

“Well, well,” said the old man, “if neither words nor grass will do, I must try what virtue there is in stones.” So the old man pelted him heartily with stones, which soon made the young chap hasten down from the tree and beg the old man’s pardon.

MORAL.—“*If good words and gentle means will not reclaim the wicked, they must be dealt with in a more severe manner.*”

And she thought that was an interesting story! Yes, she did, and if you had as few

stories to read as she had, you would think so too.

But Constance had more than the story to think about ; there was the hard spelling-lesson to get ; harder than usual, and Mr. Stebbins was very particular.

Constance was very anxious to do well in spelling, not only on account of the honor in school, but because if she wore home the medal at the end of the week, her father was going to get her a little curly white dog for her own.

No wonder that Constance studied, for if there was one thing more than another that she thought she wanted, it was that curly dog. But another girl was studying for the medal if not for the dog, and a good speller she was, too ; that was Penelope Bates. Constance looked over at her now ; she was rocking her little body to and fro, and her lips were making a perfect buzz of the spelling-lesson. Constance took on fresh energy from just a look at her, and went to rocking herself and buzzing.

Not long to buzz, for the spelling-class was the very next one called. Something new they had to-day. The fashion of writing spelling-lessons had not even been heard of at that time ;



MR. STEBBINS WAS LOOKING OUT OF THE WINDOW.

but good Mr. Stebbins sometimes got ahead of the times.

After the regular spelling-lesson, each scholar was to take slate and pencil, and write, as the teacher repeated them, the words of the "moral" in the story which I have copied for you. Only those who could write the moral without any mistake, in addition to having spelled all the other words correctly, could be said to have perfect lessons. I presume it sounds like very easy work to you; but these children were unused to writing. Words which rolled smoothly from their tongues, refused to roll from their pencils. It happened that when they came with their slates, ready to write, Constance seated herself beside Penelope Bates, near enough to catch glimpses from her slate.

To her dismay, this was what she saw: the word "dealt" written "delt," by Penelope's cramped up little hand.

Then did Constance go to thinking hard. Penelope must know how to spell the word, for it had come to her in the class, and she had gone above Hannah Jones on it. She had just left out the "a" by accident. What was Constance to do? It was against the rules to whisper;

and besides, she must not tell her of her mistake. Yes, and I will not deny that there was another "besides" with which Constance struggled. Penelope would be almost certain to get the medal if she did not; what if that one word should settle the matter?

A little pink flush began to creep up over Constance's cheeks; she was ashamed of herself for this last thought. She must get Penelope to look over her work carefully, and it must be done without speaking.

Mr. Stebbins had his back to them, and was looking out of the window watching one of the April showers. Constance made violent motions toward the slate that was turned face downward on Penelope's lap. But Penelope, jealously suspicious of her, chose to think she was being made fun of, and called out, "Mr. Stebbins, Constance Perkins is making faces at me."

"Constance Perkins will stay after school," said Mr. Stebbins severely. Then the pink in poor Constance's cheeks changed to red, while Penelope presently turning her slate rubbed out the "delt" and wrote it again with a crooked little "a" in it.

Well, Penelope Bates wore home the medal in triumph ; and Constance stayed after school and learned another line in her spelling-book ; and, so far as I know, neither Mr. Stebbins nor Penelope ever found out that the faces were made by a brave little heart trying to do right, though tempted to do wrong. Neither did Constance get the little dog, for her father was a man of his word ; and yet I tell you, I don't think any little girl carried a quieter heart out of that old schoolhouse, a hundred years ago, than little Constance Perkins.

And I'll tell you another thing : Her great grandchildren are brave little men and women to-day, whom everybody trusts.

HOW THE HORSES HELPED.

IT was a bleak day without a hint of spring in it, though the almanac said that spring was near at hand.

So said the winter school, where three boys went, who lived near together, and were good friends.

They were good scholars too, and, strange to say, were sorrowful over the thought that the school would close for the season, in four weeks.

“Though I don’t know why I should care,” George Hudson said, “I couldn’t go to it any longer; it is about time for spring work to commence.”

“If you could only go to the evening class,” said Ben Jarvis, speaking mournfully.

George laughed. “You might almost as soon talk about my going to college!” he said, trying to speak gayly: “Why, the books they are to use cost five dollars and a half, and ten dollars

tuition. There's no such luck as that for me. Are you going to join, Jesse?"

"Don't know yet," said the third boy, "but it looks doubtful. I wrote to father about it more than two weeks ago; I told him it was a splendid chance to go on with Latin and arithmetic, and that the money had to be paid in advance. I guess that last is the rub; father hasn't answered a word; money is scarce.

"Well," said George, "it is worth a good deal to have a father to write to about it; I haven't any.

By this time they reached the post-office; Jesse came out shouting.

"Hurrah!" he said, open letter in hand. "Now you don't have a thing and now you do. Here's father's letter and the money; I'm going to join. What a difference ten minutes can make!"

At the corner, the friends separated; Ben Jarvis went home to his father's house; Jesse Holt went to his uncle's where he worked for his board, to tell the good news, and George Hudson went to Mr. Chester's barnyard. Out of school hours he was errand boy, and stable boy. This dull wintry afternoon he looked

sober. How much he wanted to join the evening class which a college student was just starting in the little country neighborhood, only boys who love their books and have little time for them, can understand.

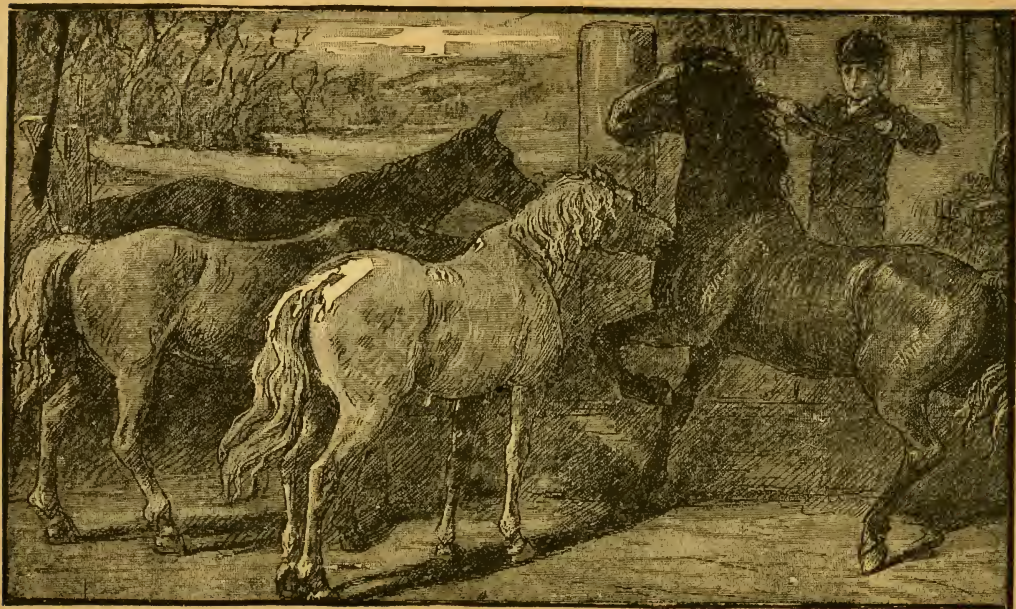
"Ten minutes will make no difference with me," he said, smiling mournfully over Jesse's words. "In ten minutes, and ten hours, and ten years, for all I can see, it will be just the same.

"Plod along. I've no father to expect anything from. Whoa, Prancer! You mustn't drink now, you are too warm. Wait a bit. Where have you been travelling to get so warm?" This to one of the ponies who was eager for water.

"Hold up, Dobbin, you are drinking too fast; stop for breath." This to the great gray horse, who always poked his nose far down in the trough.

"Let them drink fast and be done with it," said a voice from behind the barn. "And come out here, I want to see you."

"Can't come. The horses must be fed as well as watered, and put up for the night, and all my chores are waiting for me."



HOW THE HORSES HELPED.

“Bother the chores! I want you to go around to Foster’s with me. We’ve got a nice plan; the boys told me to bring you, and I’ve been waiting this half-hour.”

“I’m sorry for that, but as I said, I can’t come. School was late to-day and there’s more than usual to do.”

The voice behind the barn belonged to a red-headed boy who now appeared in sight, and gave his advice: “Shirk the chores for once; shut the horses in, and let them take care of themselves.

“It is a splendid plan for fun, that we’ve got cooking.”

George turned from the horses, and looked at the red-headed boy. “Did you ever hear what the F in my name stood for?” he asked. “My name is George Faithful Hudson, and I don’t mean to dishonor it.”

“Bother your name!” said the boy, and departed.

The upper window of the barn closed quietly. Mr. Chester did not spend much time there, but it happened that on this day he stood by the window and heard and saw.

“I think I’ll do it,” he said aloud. “Straws

tell which way the wind blows." The wind was blowing, to be sure, but down in the yard there was not a straw to be seen. So what Mr. Chester meant, you must decide for yourself.

Five minutes afterwards he called George to the library, and gave him money to join the private class.

When astonished George tried to stammer his thanks, and questioned with his eyes as to what it could all mean, Mr. Chester said, smiling, "Your father told me you were to have this done for you."

When George went into the yard again, he said two things:

First, with a laugh, "Now you don't have a thing and now you do," and then his face sobering, "it seems that I have a father, after all." But he never knew that the horses helped.

A PARTNERSHIP.

I WISH," said John Howe, "oh, I *do wish*—" and then he stopped.

"What do you wish?" asked Nathan.

Then John laughed:

"It wasn't a very polite wish," he said, his face growing red.

"I was going to say that I wished that thing was mine for about two hours."

"That thing" was a tool chest, open, so that all its treasures were in view. It had belonged to Nathan for three happy weeks, during which time he had cut his fingers nearly every day, and pounded them times without number.

"What would you do if it was yours?"

"I know, quick enough. I've had an idea in my mind this long time, but I can't get a chance to do anything about it. Something for mother, you know."

John turned away with a sigh, and Nathan

thrust his hands into his pockets and whistled.

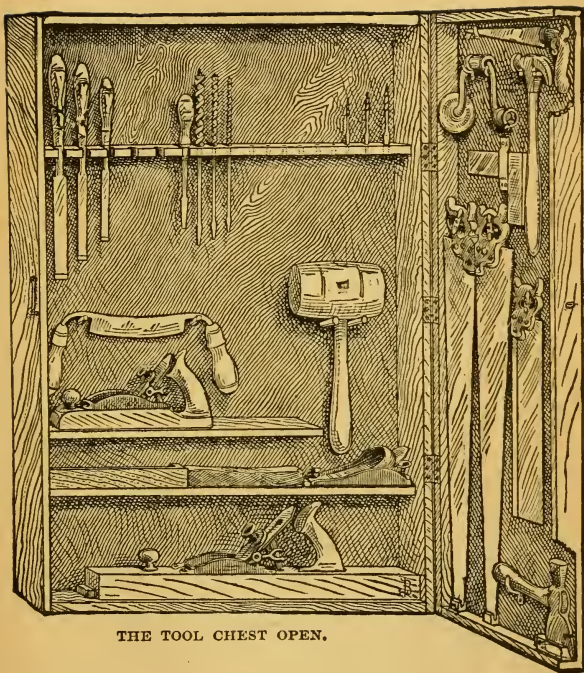
His mother had no need that he should think about and plan for her. When she needed anything that money could buy, she had only to send for it, and pay the bill. But it was different at John's home; there was no father, and bills were hard to pay.

John was always thinking about his mother.

"Look here," said Nathan, when he had finished his whistling. "I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll lend you my tool chest for three hours, or six hours if you need it, and you can act just as though it belonged to you and I'll act just as though I had come to spend the afternoon and help you. Now, then, what is it you want to do?"

John was radiant. What he wanted to do was just this: among other things that his mother did to earn her living, she took in fine ironing.

"And she has just awful times," explained John, "without any clothes bars. She has to hang them on chairs, and little lines here and there—the clothes you know, not the bars—and they are forever slipping off and getting dirty. Now my plan was this: down at the



THE TOOL CHEST OPEN.

curtain factory they gave me a lot of old curtain sticks once, oh, a great bundle of them, and I've got a great square beam of wood five feet long, that was left at our house when the barn was built, and Mr. Perkins said I might have it; so I've wanted to make mother some clothes-bars, this long time, but it takes tools, you see."

"But I don't see how you would go to work to make clothes-bars out of one square stick, and a lot of round ones."

"I do. I lay awake for two hours once, and thought it out. I'd bore holes in the long stick, and cut the round ones to the right length, and round up the ends nicely, and drive them into the stick every which way, so that their arms would stick out in all directions. First, of course, I'd fix a good firm standard for the old fellow to stand on."

"Where did you ever see a clothes-bars like that?"

"Never saw one in my life. But I know that would make a good one; it would be just like a great giant holding out his arms for clothes."

In twenty minutes from that time, the two boys were at work. It took more than three hours; in fact, it took the leisure time of several

days; but when the thing was done with many improvements from the first plan, the boys considered it a success. So did the mothers. Nathan's mother said she thought it a most ingenious thing, and she would not mind paying for one like it: so they made her one, and she paid.

Then Mrs. Stuart who lived next door, said she would take one.

"I'll tell you what it is," said Nathan, "this is the first sensible thing that my tool chest has done. I tried to build a hen house, but the thing wouldn't build; then I tried to make a rocking-chair, but that was worse yet. Now I've got the tools and you've got the brains to use them, let's put them together and go in partnership."

In the spring when they dissolved partnership because Nathan was going away to school, there were twenty-three dollars to divide in the firm. But John's best payment was when his mother kissed him one night after he had gone to bed, and told him she didn't know what she should do without him to look out for her comfort.

LITTLE HANDS.

THEY all belonged to the primary class, and they all wanted to help at the coming Sabbath-school concert.

“Dear me!” said the teacher, “they are such little dots, I don’t know what I can have them do! But yet, I want them to learn early to speak for Jesus. I must try to think.”

So she thought, and the result was, that on a sunny Sabbath afternoon, the eight little dots stood up in the church, in the space between the seats and the pulpit, and recited the sweetest verses.

Mamie was first, and her voice was sweet and clear as she said :

Oh, what can little hands, little hands do,
To please the King of heaven ?

As she spoke, she held up her chubby little hands, and looked at them thoughtfully.

Mabel, the seventh girl in the row, bent forward and gave her a bit of an answer.

The little hands some work may try,
That may some simple want supply.

Then wee Alice, the smallest in the class, but a very clear-voiced maiden, said :

Beautiful hands are those that do,
Work that is earnest, brave, and true,
Moment by moment the long day through.

Then did Mamie fold her small hands and raise her eyes to heaven and say slowly :

Such grace to mine be given.

Anna was the next to speak, and she had a good word : “ Jesus said : ‘ Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.’ ”

And Carrie said sweetly :

Little deeds of kindness to a wandering soul,
Blessed by God may lead him back to Jesus’ fold.

Belle, the sixth little girl, held up her hands and said :

These two little hands must be ready to labor,
For Jesus all my days.

And now all the little girls who had spoken, clasped their hands and looked up, and said:

Such grace to mine be given.

Ida had a wonderful promise ready: "He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."

And Kate added: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness and will hold thine hand and will help thee."

Then the eight little girls folded their hands, bowed their heads, and said in concert:

Take my hands and let them move,
At the impulse of thy love.

Now, just at their sides, held by ribbons, were the little squares of bright-colored pasteboard, which the little dots held in their hands.

As they finished reciting this prayer, they raised their bright boards, forming an arch over their heads, and on each square was a word, so that the whole read:

HIS BANNER OVER ME IS LOVE.

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