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**A FAMILY IN DANGER.**

## **SQUIRRELS AND WILD-CATS.**

The most graceful of all the little inhabitants of the forest is the squirrel. It is to be found in nearly every country, and is always the same merry, frisky little creature. The general name for the great squirrel family is *Sciurus*, a compound of two pretty Greek words signifying shadow and tail, the beautiful bushy tail being a universal family characteristic. Of the many varieties found in our Northern woods the most common of all is the little chipmunk, a beautiful creature of brownish-gray, with stripes of black and yellow on its back, and a snowy white throat. It is the only burrower of the family. Choosing some sheltered place under a stone wall or a clump of bushes, it digs a hole which often descends perpendicularly for a yard or more before branching off into the winding galleries and snug little apartments, some of which serve as store-houses where nuts, corn, and seeds of different kinds are hoarded away for its winter supplies. The little corner of the burrow used as a nest is carefully and warmly lined with dry leaves and grass, and here the tiny squirrel slumbers during the cold winter months. Chipmunks are very plentiful in the country, and may be seen any sunny day scampering along the stone walls, or up and down the trunks of nut trees, their little cheeks, if it is in the autumn, puffed out round with nuts, which they are carrying to their winter store-house.

The larger varieties of squirrels, which make their nest in trees, are the red squirrel, often found in pine woods, as it is very fond of the cones of pine and fir trees; the gray squirrel, a magnificent fellow, with such a voracious appetite that it is said one squirrel alone will strip a whole nut tree; and the black squirrel, a handsome, glossy creature, which is so hated by its gray brothers that both are never found together in the same nutting grounds. As the gray are the most numerous, at least in this part of the country, they generally succeed in driving away the black members of the family, so that they are not very often seen.

The little flying-squirrels, the dearest little creatures for pets, are natives of the Rocky Mountains, but are found in all parts of the United States. They are very lazy, and sleep nearly all day, coming out at twilight for a merry frolic, leaping, flying, or scampering at pleasure among the tree-tops. They generally make their nest in some hollow trunk, where it is very difficult to find them.

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The nest of a gray or red squirrel is a wonderful piece of architecture. It is usually built in the crotch of some large branch, near or directly against the main trunk of the tree. The spherical-shaped exterior is a mass of interwoven twigs, so carefully placed as to afford ample protection against rain or snow; leaves and grasses are stuffed inside, while the little bed where the squirrel nestles and takes its nap is of the softest and driest moss. In this pretty snuggerly five or six little squirrels are born early in the warm weather. The mother is very watchful and very affectionate. If any wicked boys disturb her, or a natural enemy, some beast or bird of prey, comes near, she takes her little ones in her mouth, like a cat with its kittens, and hastily carries them to a more secure hiding-place. The parent squirrels never go away from the nest, but play and jump about on the branches near by, until the little ones are strong enough to accompany them, when the whole family may be seen springing from tree to tree, or scampering up and down the tall trunks, waving their beautiful tails, and breaking the silence of the woods with their merry chattering. They are wonderful jumpers, and can spring from the highest branches to the ground without harm. They are not runners, but can jump so nimbly through the grass and dried leaves that it is impossible to catch them.

The favorite food of the squirrel is acorns, nuts, and seeds and grain of all kinds, and it will sometimes nibble leaf-buds and tender shoots of young trees in the spring. Its teeth are so sharp and strong that it will gnaw the hardest nutshell. Nothing is prettier than to see this graceful creature sitting upright, its beautiful tail curled over its back, gnawing at a nut which it skillfully holds in its fore-paws. As it is not afraid unless one approaches too near, when it whisks out of sight in a twinkling, its habits may be easily studied.

It is a very provident little animal, and lays up large stores of nuts for its winter food. As those which live in trees have no store-house like that of the chipmunk, they deposit their hoard in hollow trunks or under

heaps of dried leaves. Nothing is more common than to find little stores of nuts in a snug corner in hickory woods, carefully packed together by these cunning creatures.

Squirrels make pretty pets, and when captured young can be tamed, and often become very affectionate. A young squirrel may be allowed to run about the room, and it will often be found curled up fast asleep in mamma's work-basket, or papa's pocket, or some other funny hiding-place. As it grows older it becomes more mischievous, and must be kept in a cage, or books, furniture, and everything in the room will bear the marks of its sharp little teeth. It belongs to the order *Rodentia*, or gnawing animals, and if kept in confinement, must be given a plenty of hard-shelled nuts to use its teeth on. Its cage should also be kept very clean, for the squirrel is the neatest little beast imaginable, and spends much time at its toilet.

It is sad to think that this innocent, playful denizen of the woodlands should have many and deadly enemies. Even in the forests of inhabited regions, from which wild beasts have been driven, hawks and owls are ever on the watch to pounce upon it; and in the wild woods, especially in cold countries, where the squirrels are most plentiful, there are many enemies—pine-martens, which climb trees and spring from branch to branch almost as nimbly as the poor little squirrel they persecute, and the terrible wild-cat, which seeks its unsuspecting prey by night, or in the twilight, when the squirrels are gambolling merrily among the leafy branches before cuddling to sleep in their little nests. With sly caution the wild-cat creeps noiselessly through the underbrush, and with one savage spring it destroys the peace of some poor little squirrel family.

Wild-cats, although they belong to the same great family as the quiet little pussy which likes to sleep on the hearth-rug, are considered by naturalists to be an entirely different species. They are much larger than the domestic cat, and have a short, stubbed, and very bushy tail. They are terrible enemies of birds and all the small inhabitants of the forest, and will often attack animals larger than themselves. They pass most of the day stretched out upon some large limb of a tree, sleeping, after the fashion of cats, with one glistening eye always on the watch for prey. At night they descend, and creep through the underbrush, searching for food. They are very skillful at fishing, and are often found near large ponds, where they watch not only for fish, but for all kinds of water-birds which haunt the surrounding marshes.

They seldom attack men unless enraged or brought to bay. Woe to the hunter who fires a careless shot, for the angry beast springs at him with great fury, and inflicts fearful and sometimes even fatal wounds with its sharp claws. It has no fear of dogs, and will pounce upon them, sometimes killing them before the hunter can come to the rescue. Tschudi, the Swiss naturalist, tells of a wounded wild-cat, which, lying on its back, fought successfully with three large dogs, holding one fast in its teeth, while with its claws it dealt powerful blows to the other two, with singular instinct aiming at their eyes, until the hunter, by a skillful shot, put an end to the conflict, killing the ferocious beast, and relieving the poor dogs, which were nearly exhausted.

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[Begun in No. 5 of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, December 2.]

## THE HISTORY OF PHOTOGEN AND NYCTERIS.

A Day and Night Märchen.

BY GEORGE MACDONALD.

XVIII.—REFUGE.—(*Continued.*)

"You come, then, or I shall shut them," said Nycteris, "and you sha'n't see them any more till you are good. Come. If you can't see the wild beasts, I can."

"You can! and you ask me to come!" cried Photogen.

"Yes," answered Nycteris. "And more than that, I see them long before they can see me, so that I am able to take care of you."

"But how?" persisted Photogen. "You can't shoot with bow and arrow, or stab with a hunting knife."

"No, but I can keep out of the way of them all. Why, just when I found you, I was having a game with two or three of them at once. I see, and scent them too, long before they are near me—long before they can see or scent me."

"You don't see or scent any now, do you?" said Photogen, uneasily, rising on his elbow.

"No—none at present. I will look," replied Nycteris, and sprang to her feet.

"Oh! oh! do not leave me—not for a moment," cried Photogen, straining his eyes to keep her face in sight through the darkness.

"Be quiet, or they will hear you," she returned. "The wind is from the south, and they can not scent us. I have found out all about that. Ever since the dear dark came I have been amusing myself with them, getting every now and then just into the edge of the wind, and letting one have a sniff of me."

"Oh, horrible!" cried Photogen. "I hope you will not insist on doing so any more. What was the consequence?"

"Always, the very instant, he turned with flashing eyes, and bounded toward me—only he could not see me, you must remember. But my eyes being so much better than his, I could see him perfectly well, and would run away round him until I scented him, and then I knew he could not find me anyhow. If the wind were to turn, and run the other way now, there might be a whole army of them down upon us, leaving no room to keep out of their way. You had better come."

She took him by the hand. He yielded and rose, and she led him away. But his steps were feeble, and as the night went on, he seemed more and more ready to sink.

"Oh dear! I am so tired! and so frightened!" he would say.

"Lean on me," Nycteris would return, putting her arm round him, or patting his cheek. "Take a few steps more. Every step away from the castle is clear gain. Lean harder on me. I am quite strong and well now."

So they went on. The piercing night-eyes of Nycteris descried not a few pairs of green ones gleaming like holes in the darkness, and many a round she made to keep far out of their way; but she never said to Photogen she saw them. Carefully she kept him off the uneven places, and on the softest and smoothest of the grass, talking to him gently all the way as they went—of the lovely flowers and the stars—how comfortable the flowers looked, down in their green beds, and how happy the stars, up in their blue beds!

When the morning began to come he began to grow better, but was dreadfully tired with walking instead of sleeping, especially after being so long ill. Nycteris too, what with supporting him, what with growing fear of the light which was beginning to ooze out of the east, was very tired. At length, both equally exhausted, neither was able to help the other. As if by consent they stopped. Embracing each the other, they stood in the midst of the wide grassy land, neither of them able to move a step, each supported only by the leaning weakness of the other, each ready to fall if the other should move. But while the one grew weaker still, the other had begun to grow stronger. When the tide of the night began to ebb, the tide of the day began to flow; and now the sun was rushing to the horizon, borne upon its foaming billows. And even as he came, Photogen revived. At last the sun shot up into the air, like a bird from the hand of the Father of Lights. Nycteris gave a cry of pain, and hid her face in her hands.

"Oh me!" she sighed; "I am *so* frightened! The terrible light stings so!"

But the same instant, through her blindness, she heard Photogen give a low exultant laugh, and the next felt herself caught up: she who all night long had tended and protected him like a child, was now in his arms, borne along like a baby, with her head lying on his shoulder. But she was the greater, for, suffering more, she feared nothing.

### XIX.—THE WERE-WOLF.

At the very moment when Photogen caught up Nycteris, the telescope of Watho was angrily sweeping the table-land. She swung it from her in rage, and running to her room, shut herself up. There she anointed herself from top to toe with a certain ointment; shook down her long red hair, and tied it round her waist; then began to dance, whirling round and round, faster and faster, growing angrier and angrier, until she was foaming at the mouth with fury. When Falca went looking for her, she could not find her anywhere.

As the sun rose, the wind slowly changed and went round, until it blew straight from the north. Photogen and Nycteris were drawing near the edge of the forest, Photogen still carrying Nycteris, when she moved a little on his shoulder uneasily, and murmured in his ear,

"I smell a wild beast—that way, the way the wind is coming."

Photogen turned, looked back toward the castle, and saw a dark speck on the plain. As he looked, it grew larger: it was coming across the grass with the speed of the wind. It came nearer and nearer. It looked long and low, but that might be because it was running at a great stretch. He set Nycteris down under a tree, in the black shadow of its hole, strung his bow, and picked out his heaviest, longest, sharpest arrow. Just as he set the notch on the string, he saw that the creature was a tremendous wolf, rushing straight at him. He loosened his knife in its sheath, drew another arrow half way from the quiver, lest the first should fail, and took his aim—at a good distance, to leave time for a second chance. He shot. The arrow rose, flew straight, descended, struck the beast, and started again into the air, doubled like a letter V. Quickly Photogen snatched the other, shot, cast his bow from him, and drew his knife. But the arrow was in the brute's chest, up to the feather; it tumbled heels over head, with a great thud of its back on the earth, gave a groan, made a struggle or two, and lay stretched out motionless.

"I've killed it, Nycteris," cried Photogen. "It is a great red wolf."

"Oh, thank you!" answered Nycteris, feebly, from behind the tree. "I was sure you would. I was not a bit afraid."

Photogen went up to the wolf. It *was* a monster! But he was vexed that his first arrow had behaved so badly, and was the less willing to lose the one that had done him such good service: with a long and a strong pull he drew it from the brute's chest. Could he believe his eyes? There lay—no wolf, but Watho, with her hair tied round her waist! The foolish witch had made herself invulnerable, as she supposed, but had forgotten that, to torment Photogen therewith, she had handled one of his arrows. He ran back to Nycteris and told her.

She shuddered and wept, but would not look.

### XX.—ALL IS WELL.

There was now no occasion to fly a step farther. Neither of them feared any one but Watho. They left her there, and went back. A great cloud came over the sun, and rain began to fall heavily, and Nycteris was much refreshed, grew able to see a little, and with Photogen's help walked gently over the cool wet grass.

They had not gone far before they met Fargu and the other huntsmen. Photogen told them he had killed a great red wolf, and it was Madam Watho. The huntsmen looked grave, but gladness shone through.

"Then," said Fargu, "I will go and bury my mistress."



**"IT TUMBLED HEELS OVER HEAD  
WITH A GREAT THUD."**

But when they reached the place, they found she was already buried—in the maws of sundry birds and beasts which had made their breakfast off her.

Then Fargu, overtaking them, would, very wisely, have Photogen go to the king, and tell him the whole story. But Photogen, yet wiser than Fargu, would not set out until he had married Nycteris; "for then," he said, "the king himself can't part us; and if ever two people couldn't do the one without the other, those two are Nycteris and I. She has got to teach me to be a brave man in the dark, and I have got to look after her until she can bear the heat of the sun, and he helps her to see, instead of blinding her."

They were married that very day. And the next day they went together to the king, and told him the whole story. But whom should they find at the court but the father and mother of Photogen, both in high favor with the king and queen. Aurora nearly died for joy, and told them all how Watho had lied, and made her believe her child was dead.

No one knew anything of the father or mother of Nycteris; but when Aurora saw in the lovely girl her own azure eyes shining through night and its clouds, it made her think strange things, and wonder how even the wicked themselves may be a link to join together the good. Through Watho, the mothers, who had never seen each other, had changed eyes in their children.

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The king gave them the castle and lands of Watho, and there they lived and taught each other for many years that were not long. But hardly one of them had passed before Nycteris had come to love the day best, because it was the clothing and crown of Photogen; and Photogen had come to love the night best, because it was the mother and home of Nycteris. Were they not both ripening, however, to bear the power of a brighter sun still, when the one should follow the other into a yet larger room?

THE END.

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**Carrier-Pigeons.**—The speed of carrier-pigeons appears to depend as much on the clearness of their sight as on the strength of their wings. In an experiment recently made with some Berlin pigeons, on a clear day, a distance of over three hundred miles, from Cologne to Berlin, was accomplished in five hours and a half, or at the rate of nearly sixty miles an hour; while the most expeditious of a group let loose the next day—a day not of the same kind—took twelve hours to reach Berlin. Hence it would appear that in the latter case a good deal of the pigeons' time was taken up in exploring the country for landmarks. It is not by instinct, but by sight, that the carrier-pigeon guides its course.

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## PUTNAM'S NARROW ESCAPE.

BY BENSON J. LOSSING.



**"RUSHING DOWN THE HILL  
LIKE A MADMAN."**

Many years ago I was riding in a light carriage between Greenwich and Stamford, in Connecticut. After descending from high ground by a road cut through a steep declivity, I observed some rude stone steps upon the abrupt slope, which were half concealed by shrubs and brambles. An old man was standing at a door-yard gate near by, and I inquired of him the meaning of those steps.

"Before the Revolutionary war," he said, "the people from this way, when going to the church on the hill yonder, had to go nearly a mile around. To give those who were on foot a nearer cut, those steps were placed there. They are the rocks," he continued, "that people believed 'Old Put' went down when he escaped from the British dragoons at Horseneck. He didn't go down the steps at all, but went zigzag from the top to the bottom of the hill, very near them. I stood just here listening to the firing above, when I saw the general rushing down the hill like a madman, as he seemed, for you see it is very steep. As he flew past me on his powerful bay horse, all bespattered with mud, I heard him cursing the British, who had pursued him to the brow of the precipice, but dared not follow him further."

My informant was General Ebenezer Mead.

The whole story may be briefly told. Putnam and a few foot-soldiers were attacked near the church by some British dragoons on a warm morning in March, 1779. So much greater was the number of the assailants than the Americans, that the latter fled for safety to the swamps near by. Their leader, who was mounted, turned his face toward Stamford. Finding himself in danger of being caught, he wheeled suddenly, his horse at full speed, and descended the declivity as described. The dragoons dared not follow him in his perilous ride, but sent pistol-balls after him. Putnam escaped unharmed to Stamford, where he quickly gathered the militia, and rallied some of his scattered followers. Then he pursued the invaders in turn as they retreated toward New York, and making nearly forty of them prisoners, he recovered much of the plunder which they were carrying away with them. Those famous steps, associated with one of the perilous feats of a bold American soldier, may be seen at this day, not far to the right of the highway, as you go from Greenwich to Stamford.

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## HARE AND HOUNDS.



have never taken part in "Hare and Hounds," but I feel as if I had, because in the first place, I have read *Tom Brown*, and in the second place, I have a brother who is devoted to athletics, and who has just returned from a "run" with his club. It is just like a real hunt, only all the animals are human beings; two boys are hares, and carry bags full of scraps of paper, which they scatter as they go; any number of boys are the hounds, and follow this paper scent; two boys are the whippers-in, who call the "pack" together with great tin horns; one boy is master of the hunt, and does nothing in particular, though he is supposed to arrange everything.

My brother got up at an unearthly hour on the morning of his hunt, in order to meet his fellow-dogs and their prey at the Grand Central Depôt at nine o'clock. I am sure that he was over an hour before time, though he will not own to more than a quarter of it; I know that he had a jolly time, anyway. But I will give his report in his own words.

"Such fun! We ran twelve miles—*twelve miles!* Just think of it! Why, we got way up round Spuyten Duyvel—from High Bridge, you know; but first, you know, we all met at the depôt; then when we got to High Bridge we went to the hotel and changed our things. We started from there. We only intended to run twelve miles, but the hares took us twenty; they meant to take us up to Yonkers, they said. Never mind; they got the worst of it—they had to run the fastest, you know. Didn't we tear through the country!—up hill and down dale, over stone walls and brambles and down swamps; one fellow got up to his knees in water. We lost the scent once, near a railroad track, and it took us about five minutes to find it.

"The hares had colored papers, pink, blue, white, and yellow, and they looked quite pretty scattered all over the ground.

"The people about the country seemed to take a great deal of interest in us; one or two told us which way the hares had gone; a policeman too, near High Bridge, told us. They seemed to understand all about it. I thought they'd think we were crazy—a whole lot of fellows in white caps tearing through the country in that way.

"Oh, that reminds me: two little boys asked one of our fellows what we were going after. 'Two men.' 'What have they done?' 'Stolen our watches;' and they stood staring after us with their eyes and mouths as wide open as—as—oh, anything.

"Oh, I must tell you: one time just as we were going along the road we heard a tremendous noise on the other side of the fence; we thought it was one of the whippers-in blowing the horn—it sounded exactly like it—and we turned round, and there we saw a little donkey coming hee-hawing over the hill after us—a pretty little gray donkey; then one of the whippers-in blew the horn, and the donkey was just delighted—tickled to death; he hee-hawed and capered about, and ran alongside of the fence, wanted to join us—had a fellow-feeling, I suppose. Just then a little girl came running out of a house, calling him; she was afraid we were going to hurt him, or something, I suppose; and when we looked back again he was standing still, just as quiet as could be, and the little girl had her arms around his neck. It made me think of Titania, in Shakspeare, you know.

"We did have a run, I can tell you. One of our fellows got hungry, and stopped at a farm-house, and got some bread and goose. I wish I'd thought of it too. Some of the country we went through was beautiful—up by the Hudson. We could see the river winding along, and catch glimpses of the Palisades—perfectly beautiful. We couldn't have had a better day, just cold enough, and not too cold.

"We were *awfully* tired, though, and *hungry*—you'd better believe it! Why, it was two o'clock when we got back to the hotel, and we had started at *ten*, you know—four hours. Didn't we go for that dinner just as soon as we'd changed our things!—they'd kept it waiting for us since twelve. Didn't we eat! Turkey, cranberry sauce, potatoes, cider, coffee, pumpkin pie, and I don't know what besides. We were almost too hungry to enjoy it at first, but we *did* eat. I had two plates of turkey and four cups of coffee; the coffee was pretty weak, but we made up for it by taking enough. I think we must have scared those hotel people. The

man and his wife and daughter waited on us, and we did carry on so—firing things at each other, you know; and then after dinner we went up in the parlor and played and sung college songs, 'Upidee' and 'Cocachalunk,' and all those things. Such a row as we made!

"But coming home in the Elevated was the worst. How those fellows did carry on! Just imagine—about twenty of us—my gracious! what a noise we did make! We kept the car in a roar. One fellow would go 'Ee-oh,' and then another fellow would go 'Oh-ah,' and then they'd all go together. One of the fellows put his head out of the window, and another fellow immediately dragged him in and began patting his hair down as if it was a wig, you know. We made puns on each other's names, and whistled and sang, and oh! carried on like sixty. One man with a black beard laughed at us ready to kill himself, and a brakeman on the back platform was grinning from ear to ear.

"Well, we did have a day of it, I can tell you—but won't we all be as stiff as bricks to-morrow!"

I will only add that I do wish I had been one of those boys; but—I am glad that I wasn't that hotel-keeper.

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## THE SCHOOL-CHILDREN'S WELCOME.

Saturday, December 20, was a splendid holiday for the school-children of Philadelphia. All through the week they had been reading of the receptions given to General Grant in honor of his return from his journey around the world, and now they were to take part in a welcome of their own.

There was, in the first place, a grand street procession of boys, to the number of nearly four thousand—quite an army, in fact—who marched in four great divisions, each headed by a band. The boys were well drilled, and stepped gayly to the music, with soldier-like bearing and precision. As the General rode between their lines he was greeted with enthusiastic cheers. No doubt he was as much gratified by this boyish welcome as by the grand military display that attended his entry into the city.

After reviewing the lads, General Grant was escorted to the Academy of Music, where almost as many school-girls as there were boys in the procession were assembled to give him a reception of a gentler kind. It must have been a pretty sight—more than three thousand lassies, all in their teens, and all in their best attire. As soon as he appeared, two thousand sweet voices joined in the grand melody of "Hail to the Chief!" which was sung with enthusiasm and fine effect. The General acknowledged the courtesy in a short address. Several other speeches were made, interspersed with patriotic songs.

Of all the festivities of the week, the one General Grant will probably remember with most pleasure will be the reception given him by the boys and girls of the public schools.

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## "OLD PROBABILITIES."

The next time the Professor came, it was in a dense fog. The morning was so damp and disagreeable that we hardly expected to see him. He did not disappoint us, but seemed to have come almost before the sun was fairly up, it was so dark.

"What makes a fog?" asked Gus.

"I meant to have talked about something else, Gus," answered the Professor; "but you have chosen a subject for me. It is a very good one, too, and quite suitable to the occasion. Fogs are nothing more nor less than clouds. They usually float aloft, a mile or more, high, but sometimes drift down to the ground and lie all around us. They are so light that they rise and fall from very slight causes, when there is no wind. A brisk breeze soon drives them off."

"But what are clouds made of?" inquires May, who has become such a favorite with the Professor that she never hesitates to stop him when she wants anything explained.

"Clouds, May, are made up of small particles of water or vapor slightly chilled. When vapor or steam is hot, it can not be seen, but is invisible like the air. You have noticed the steam from a tea-kettle. Near the spout it is hidden, but a little farther off, where it has got cooled by mixing with the air, it begins to look gray, like a cloud. If the kettle be allowed to boil a long while, so that a large quantity of steam is formed, it will collect on the walls and window-panes, where, becoming thoroughly chilled, it turns again to water, the same as it was when first poured into the kettle. So it is with the clouds out-of-doors; when the sun comes out bright and hot, it dries them up, as we say; that is, it heats them so much that they become invisible. Cool air mingling with them brings them into sight again; and, if cool enough, it condenses."

"Oh dear!"

The Professor laughs. "There can be no doubt about it, May, science is full of big words. We will say that the cool wind makes the clouds heavy by squeezing them together, and sends them down in drops of rain. This is called condensing."

May rewards the Professor for his simple explanation with such a bright glance that he proceeds with an illustration.

"You have made soap-bubbles, and seen how they will float around in the air, and sometimes be wafted clear up above the trees, until they get broken, when they come down drops of water. The particles of vapor that form clouds are little bubbles, or hollow spheres filled with air. When a cold wind crushes them, they become solid, unite with one another, and fall as rain-drops. Cold water is much heavier than air; but water made hot by fire or by the sun, and turned into vapor, is lighter. In time of a fog the vapor is just warm enough to have the same weight as the air, so that it neither rises nor falls, but remains quietly near the ground."

"Professor," remarked Joe, "did you not say that when the sun came out bright and hot, it dried up the fog?"

and is not the fog the very thing that keeps the sun from coming out?"

"Yes, my dear; but fogs usually gather at night, and when the sun rises in the morning, he goes to work at once to heat them up and make them disappear. But when he finds them very thick, and is hindered by cold air, he may be a good part of the day in working his way through, or he may even have to go down before he is able to show himself. Generally, however, he gets help from the wind, and then the fog goes off in a hurry."

"Is there no way," asked Gus, "of knowing when the wind will spring up, and give us some clear cold weather? Ted Wynant's cousin has an ice-boat, and we are all waiting for a ride on the river."

"There is Old Probabilities," said Jack; "but he can only tell a day or two ahead, and seems rather uncertain at that, and afraid to express a decided opinion. It is a little this or a little that, a little cloudy or a little cooler, and the wind is to blow a little in nearly every direction. Most people laugh when they talk about him, as if he was not of much account, or had grown stupid in his old age. If he would only foretell a hurricane or a deluge, and bring it around, why, then we would know what he is good for."

"Such a test would be rather costly," said the Professor, smiling. "It is better to give the old gentleman a little time to establish his reliability; for in truth he is yet very young—a mere child of eight or ten years. And considering that he undertakes to forewarn our whole country as to the coming weather, so that everybody will have time to get ready for it, we must admit that he is doing all that his age warrants."

"Where does he live?" asked Gus.

"We have been talking somewhat absurdly," replied the Professor. "Instead of a single person, there is what is called the United States Signal Service, which has been in operation eight or ten years, and comprises some two hundred or more men, scattered all over the country, from Maine to California, and from the Gulf of Mexico away out to the Northwestern lakes. The men at these various stations watch the weather very closely, and at a particular time every day send word regarding it by telegraph to the main office at Washington, where the different reports are carefully studied, and an opinion formed as to what the weather is likely to be in different sections of the country during the next twenty-four hours or more, and the result is then published in the daily newspapers and at the numerous post-offices throughout the land. The matter is yet somewhat uncertain, and occasionally mistakes are made."

"But will they ever get so that they can tell exactly every time?"

"We hope so. The warnings given are usually right, and are becoming more and more reliable every year. In 1872 it was estimated that about seventy-seven out of a hundred of them were found to be correct; more recently they have been declared accurate about ninety times in a hundred. So, you see, good progress is being made; and the Signal Service system is becoming very useful to the nation, for property and life can often be saved from destruction when the approach of a severe storm is known.

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"The New York *Herald* has encouraged the study of the weather for many years, and its managers now send word to England by the Atlantic cable when a storm is to be expected there. They have lately sent notice of so many ugly ones, which have promptly arrived, that our English cousins are complaining of the unfair treatment of the *Herald*."

"Are they really so absurd?" asked Jack.

"Yes," said the Professor; "they facetiously intimate that when Providence controlled the weather they fared well enough; but that since the *Herald* has undertaken to run that department they have been doomed to storms, fogs, and rain. To give an instance of the faith, Jack, that the English people put in our Signal Service, there is a story told of an English lady who last autumn desired to give a lawn party. The season was an unusually rainy one, and such entertainments had, in consequence, been given up. The lady, however, sent her invitations, and calmly announced that the day she had selected would be clear. When asked how she had dared to take such a risk, she replied, 'There was no risk whatever; I had telegraphed to the man in New York.'"

The children all laughed, and it was some time before the Professor could quiet them sufficiently to add the few words that concluded his little lecture.

"The most violent storms have been found generally to whirl in circles, and are called cyclones. In some parts of the world they are very disastrous. One occurred in India in 1864 that destroyed 45,000 lives in a single day. Ten years earlier, when the English and French were at war with Russia, a storm was observed to begin in France and to be moving eastward. Timely warning was sent to the allied fleet in the Black Sea. The storm came with such terrific violence that, had it not been expected, it would probably have destroyed one of the most splendid navies that ever rode the waters, and perhaps have changed the issue of the war."

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## TROUBLE IN THE PLAY-ROOM.

"I don't care—I'm just as mad as I can be. To keep me in just for a little rain! I won't be good—I won't play with my dolls. I'm going to whip every one of them, and put them to bed this very minute."

Such a little termagant as Bessie Hatch looked at that moment, with her black eyes flashing, her hands clinched, and her cheeks like two flaming poppies! Half irritated, half amused, Annie, the Irish nurse, regarded her for a moment.

"Indade, but it's a swate timper you have, Bessie Hatch; and I hope for your own sake it'll be minded afore you grow up. It's not I will be lettin' you out, when your ma lift particular orders you wasn't to go if it rained. Just hear how the storm's batin' agin the windows. Your cousin won't expect you at all. Oh, bate your dolls as much as you like!" as Bessie made an angry rush toward them; "it won't hurt their feelin's much, I guess. There's Baby cryin'!" she added, suddenly, and hastened toward the room at the end of the hall.

Bessie meantime had snatched her largest doll from the chair where she was reposing, and belabored her



soundly with a piece of whalebone that lay near at hand. Then, after shaking her heartily, she tossed her on to the bed, where she lay with her black eyes shut, as if overcome by her feelings. She was a very handsome wax doll, with chestnut hair done up like a lady's in puffs and curls. She had a somewhat haughty expression, carried her head a little to one side, and was dressed in the "latest style." Grace, a porcelain-headed doll, dressed simply in a blue muslin and a white apron, received her punishment next, and was deposited by Miss Augusta's side.

But Winnie, dear Winnie, Bessie's favorite doll, could she have the heart to punish *her* this way?—Winnie, with her golden-brown curls and beautiful hazel eyes, and her dear little face rounded and moulded like a child's. How lovely was her smiling mouth! With what confiding affection she seemed to look up at Bessie, as the latter took her up in a hesitating way! But the recollection of her lost pleasure came back to her, and with it the spite and anger that had animated her a moment before. Winnie received her whipping like the rest; but instead of tossing her on the bed, Bessie set her back in her little chair, turning her face to the window that she might not see it.

Somehow her anger seemed to have spent itself with that last whipping, and a feeling of shame was creeping into her little heart. She had intended to go through her baby-house, chastising all its inmates, but instead she took a picture-book, and lay down on the lounge by the window.

How quiet everything seemed! Annie had carried Baby down stairs to feed him. She heard no sound but the murmur of the sewing-machine in the next room, where Jane Kennedy, the seamstress, was working. She felt drowsy and sleepy. Slowly her head sank down among the cushions of the lounge, and the drooping eyelids closed.

A rustling sound near her made her open them with a start, and in a minute more she was sitting bolt-upright, staring with all her eyes. For there stood a little figure no taller than Winnie, dressed in a white fleecy robe trailing on the ground. Her soft black hair reached to her feet, and over it she wore a wreath that sparkled like dew-drops in the sun.

Some fear mingled with Bessie's admiration as she gazed upon her. For a frown was on the fairy's brow, and the dark eyes she fixed upon the child were full of displeasure.

Tap, tap, tap, came the sound of little feet approaching. Bessie looked round, then shrank back, terror-stricken. Well she might, for her dolls Augusta and Grace had somehow found the use of their limbs, and were rapidly nearing the lounge. But they paused not far from the fairy, and reached out their little hands to her with a supplicating gesture.

"Kind fairy! good fairy!" they said, in shrill piping voices, "avenge the wrong done to us. That child, who calls herself our mother, has beaten us cruelly, just because she had nothing else to vent her spite upon; we had done no harm in any way. Punish her, good fairy; make her sorry for having treated us so."

"I will give her into your hands," said the fairy, gravely. "See that you punish her as she deserves."

Bessie, who lay trembling and burning with mingled fear and shame, now rallied her courage, and raised her head again. She could not help laughing at the idea of her own dolls punishing her.

"You foolish little fairy!" she said, laughing; "I could manage them both with one hand; and if—"

She stopped aghast, for the fairy raised her wand, and it flashed like a dazzling sunbeam full in the child's eyes. She covered them with her hands, glancing up just in time to see the fairy float away on her silver wings.

But how came she, Bessie, on the floor, and why did it seem like a great meadow stretching around her? The lounge had become a mountain, and the ceiling of the room looked nearly as broad as the sky.

It was the same room, the same familiar objects, only how monstrous everything had grown! Was that immense building in the corner her baby-house?

Bessie's little head swam; her heart beat tumultuously. A light mocking laugh near her made her glance quickly round.

Who was this tall figure in a trailing gray silk, looking down at her with severe triumph in her black eyes? That chestnut hair, that beautiful red and white complexion—could this be Augusta, her own doll?

With a scream of terror, Bessie was darting away, but waxen fingers seized her tender little arm, closing tightly upon it. Oh, how they hurt! She struggled and kicked, but could not get away.

"Let me go!" she cried out; "I'll pay you off well, Miss Augusta, if you don't. Remember, you're my doll—"

"Pay me off!" cried Augusta, with another shrill laugh. "You poor silly midget! don't you know how the fairy's wand has changed you? Why, you don't reach to my knee. No; I am going to pay *you* off, and handsomely too. Grace, bring that piece of whalebone directly."

"If you dare!" cried Bessie; but Grace clattered up toward her, her stolid countenance fairly beaming. Bessie tried to dodge behind Augusta, but she held her tightly by both arms.

"Lay it well over her shoulders, Grace; make 'em tingle!" she cried; and thick and fast fell the blows, while poor Bessie writhed and protested and threatened in vain. When Grace's arm was tired, Augusta took her turn. After beating Bessie to her heart's content, she seized the child by her shoulders, and shook her till her head fairly turned round.



**"A FROWN WAS ON THE FAIRY'S BROW."**

"There!" she said, tossing her on to the doll's bed in the corner; "lie there, miss, till Winnie comes. Poor thing! she's gone away to cry somewhere, but as soon as she comes back she shall have *her* chance. Come, Grace, we will go for a walk."

She walked haughtily away, followed by the admiring Grace. Poor Bessie lay sobbing and crying. Her shoulders and back were smarting, her little arms black and blue from the pressure of Augusta's fingers.

"I'll run away and hide somewhere," she said at last.

Creeping off the bed very cautiously, she was stealing away, when something seized her again. She gave a cry of despair, and looking up, saw Winnie's sweet face.

"Who are you?" she asked. "Are you a new doll?" holding her gently but firmly.

"Oh, Winnie!" said Bessie, and hid her face in shame. Augusta came mincing up with a triumphant air, and related the action of the fairy.

"Now it's your turn," she said, handing the whalebone to Winnie. But she tossed it indignantly aside.

"Strike her! Never! No; I would rather remember her kindness to me. Don't cry, little mother," she added, stooping to kiss her. "If the fairy comes again, I will ask her to change you back."

"No, no!" cried Augusta and Grace, in a terrible fright, but Bessie did not hear. She was sobbing with her face in Winnie's neck.

"Oh, Winnie! Winnie! how can you be so kind? I would rather you gave me a beating."

But Winnie wiped her eyes, and smiled so brightly on her that Bessie's heart began to revive a little. Ere long they were playing together, and it would have been rare sport for any child to see Winnie wheeling Bessie in a tiny tin cart no bigger than a match-box. Then they had a grand game of hide-and-seek in the stocking basket Annie had left on the floor. Grace soon joined them, while Augusta, quite gracious by this time, sat eying them complacently from her arm-chair.

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"Bessie! Bessie! your mamma's come in, and wants to see you."

Bessie started up, rubbing her eyes. She looked in a dazed sort of way at Annie, then at the corner where she kept her dolls. There they sat, all three in a row as usual.

"Who put them there—my dolls? Did they really whip me?" she asked, confusedly. Then she blushed, and hung her little head.

"Who put them there? Why, I reckon they got tired of lying on the bed, and walked over to their chairs," said Annie, with a mischievous gleam in her eye.

"*You* put them there," said Bessie; but she wished she could feel quite sure. Catching up her darling Winnie, she walked off to her mother's room.

All the rest of that day Bessie treated Augusta and Grace with the utmost respect; and when she had undressed them and put them to bed, she lingered as if anxious to say something. At last she stooped down and whispered: "I don't believe it's true; but I'll never whip you or get into such a passion again. I didn't know how ugly it was till I saw you behave so yourselves. And please, if it is true, don't ask the fairy to make me little again, for I mean to be good now."

As for Winnie, darling Winnie, she lay all night in Bessie's arms, her head hugged close to her breast. And the piece of whalebone stood bolt-upright in Bessie's match-box, where she had stuck it that it might always remind her of the lesson of that day.

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**THE CHILDREN'S WELCOME TO GENERAL GRANT.—DRAWN BY A. B. FROST.—[SEE PAGE 94.]**

## HOW AUNT PAM BECAME A SMUGGLER.

BY MRS. FRANK McCARTHY.

My name is Tom Barnes, and I live on the other side of the river, just far enough from New York to go there once in a while with pa to a show. That's all the city's good for, anyway. We can't get up shows here very well; but when it comes to other fun, we can beat you city folks all hollow. You see, you haven't got the things to work with that we have—the woods and water and things. But I'll tell you about Aunt Pam—her name is Pamela, I think, but we call her Pam for short. She wasn't ever married, though I guess she's old enough. Somebody once said Aunt Pam was an old maid; but that can't be, for old maids are always cranky, and get out of bed backward every morning. Now Aunt Pam was never cranky in her life; and I know she gets out of bed like everybody else, for I've slept with her many a time. And nobody in their senses would call Aunt Pam old, and you'd better believe she's jolly. The house ain't anything without Aunt Pam.

My sisters are all girls, you see, and so taken up with worsted-work, and practicing, and one thing and the other, that I don't know what I'd do without Aunt Pam. I tell her everything; but I couldn't about the smugglers' cave, because the fellows wrote it all down in black and white, and we took a solemn promise to keep it a secret. We all live close to the water; and having everything handy, we made up our minds we'd make a smugglers' cave. We got to work lively; and while some of the fellows were digging out the bank, others chopped down small trees and bushes, and made a covered archway to crawl under, so that the opening of the cave couldn't be seen. We pulled the young twigs and vines down over the chopped ones, rolled logs inside for seats, and things began to look quite ship-shape.

It was no easy job, I can tell you. We worked like beavers to get the cave the way we wanted it; but when it was done, it was what you may call hunky-dory. Bill Drake's father had a flat-bottomed boat that we got into and rowed along shore. We rigged up a sail; but there was something the matter with it, and it kept flopping about, and wasn't much good, but anyhow it looked nice. We never went far from shore. We weren't afraid, but we didn't care to. Smugglers always kept along shore.

We all had blue shirts, and pulled our caps down over our eyes to look fierce. And Bill Drake kept an old pipe of his father's in his mouth; it hadn't any tobacco in it, but it was a real pipe, so we made Bill captain. The thing was to get lots of traps into the cave to look like smuggled goods. We fished up old bathing pieces and bits of broken bottles, and Bill brought down a red petticoat; but the best of all was Aunt Pam's shawl.

Now I'd scorn to do a mean or sneaking thing, especially to Aunt Pam, but she didn't seem to care a button for that shawl. I didn't think it was worth twopence. She used to wear it in all sorts of weather, and it looked to me as if it was patched up out of bits that she hadn't any other use for. I'm sure she'd worn it since she was a baby. I could remember seeing that shawl around as long as I could remember anything, and it was just the thing for our cave. It was kind of like a Turk's best turban as to color; and when it was fixed over Bill Bates's bathing suit, and one corner hung down over the rock, it made the cave look bully. I went into Aunt Pam's room one morning, and found it thrown over the foot of the bedstead, like an old blanket, and I carried it off to the cave.

When I came home from school, I saw Aunt Pam out walking with a worsted thing that one of my sisters made for her, and I thought it was enough sight handsomer in the way of a shawl. I went on down to the cave, and when I got home again there was a regular hullabulloo in the house.

The girls were ransacking the closets, Aunt Pam was flying around like a hen with its head cut off, and everybody was turning everything inside out. "Maybe Tom's seen it," said mamma. "Tom, have you seen your aunt Pam's shawl?"

"That old thing she used to wear around?" I said.

"Old thing!" they all shrieked together. "Why, it's a camel's-hair shawl; it's worth five hundred dollars."

"Oh no!" I said. "I beg your pardon; there wasn't the hair of a camel, or even a cat, in the shawl that I mean; it was just sewed together on the wrong side like a bed-quilt."

"That was it, you ridiculous boy," said my sisters. "Have you seen it?"

"Seen it!" said I; "I've only seen it every day since I was born, and yet I remember it well." I went whistling away, and they began to rush around again for that shawl.

I felt pale under my whistle. Five hundred dollars! who'd 'a thought it? Down in the smugglers' cave! Goodness gracious! No wonder it looked just the thing. No wonder we all cottoned to that shawl from the start.

"I always told you something would happen to it," said mamma to Aunt Pam. "You flung it around like an old rag."

"That was the comfort of it," said Aunt Pam. "It couldn't be hurt. It could be worn in all weathers—to a wedding or a funeral, to church or to a clam-bake. It was always in the fashion, and everybody knew what it was worth."

"Except me," I said, under my breath.

"Oh, my beautiful shawl!" said Aunt Pam, beginning all at once to feel the full shock of her loss. The tears rolled out of her dear old eyes, and my sisters began to snivel, as they always did.

Mamma said it must be looked into, and for a moment I was scared. I thought of the smugglers' cave.

"What must be looked into?" I said.

"Why, the loss of the shawl," said mamma. "It must have been stolen out of the house."

Our up-stairs girl was passing through the room when ma said that, and she turned red and pale.

"Did you notice Maggie?" mamma said, when the door was shut.

"Oh, mamma!" we all cried out, for we thought the world of Maggie. I couldn't help wondering how it was she was so red and flustered, while I was as cool as a cucumber. Aunt Pam declared she wouldn't have Maggie's feelings hurt for the world; and I said she was innocent, in a deep low solemn voice, but nobody paid any attention to me. Then I stopped to think before I went on. How could I betray my comrades and the whereabouts of the cave? I remembered the last piece I spoke in school, and how I hollered out the words,

"O for a tongue to curse the slave  
Whose treason, like a deadly blight,  
Comes o'er the councils of the brave,  
And blasts them in their hour of might!"

Could I be that traitor? No indeed—not much! Yet here was a dreadful row in the house, and the only way to mend matters was to get that shawl again as soon as possible. I resolved to get it that very night, and when I listened to an advertisement that Aunt Pam had written out for the paper, I saw my way clear. She said no questions would be asked if the article was promptly returned. That settled it. I went up to my room, and wrote out the following in a disguised hand:

"Secrit and konfidenshal—the shawl's all right."

I waited till after supper, slipped it under Aunt Pam's door, and going out the back way I took a cross-cut down to the shore. Now pa won't let us go out at night to play, and I think that's a mistake, because we can't get used to the dark if we don't. The whole world looked queer somehow to me by starlight. The moon hadn't come up yet, and at first I could hardly see my hand before my face. I never saw such ugly shadows, and once I had to stop and get breath before I could make up my mind to pass a clump of old mulberry bushes. Once in a while I heard a crackle behind me like a footstep, but I didn't look back. I knew my only chance was to plod ahead, no matter how my heart thumped or my knees shook. I thought of everything I could to bolster me up—of dear old Aunt Pam and poor little Maggie. But the sound of the waves on the beach was awful! They roared like so many wild beasts. It was as black as ink on the water, and the twinkle of the light-house seemed a hundred miles away. It was so lonely and wild that my heart was in my throat. And suppose, thinks I, when I get in the cave, the waves come up and devour me? Suppose somebody has crawled in there to sleep, some tramp or something, and he should catch me by the leg? Or the bank should tumble in on top of me? All my spunk was gone, and I turned to run, when, bunk! I came into something behind me.

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"Ow!" I screamed, and "Oh!" exclaimed somebody, and wasn't I glad to find it was dear old Aunt Pam. She scared me, though, for she was as white as any sheet, and grabbing me in her arms, she began to cry over me.

"Tell me all, Tom," she said. "I got your note, and I followed you. You bad, wicked, dear little wretch, tell me everything. If the shawl's got lost, never mind, Tom; I don't care; only tell me, and come back home."

Poor, dear Aunt Pam! she told me afterward she thought I had done something to the shawl, and ran away in my fright. We were both pretty well broke up, and I couldn't help crying a little bit myself. But of course I couldn't go home now without the shawl. I began to feel as brave as a lion now Aunt Pam was there. The thing was to get her out of the way while I went into the cave. It looked awful down there in the hollow, and the wind was getting up, the water swashed around, and I couldn't help thinking there might be a tramp in there. All at once a bright thought struck me. Aunt Pam wasn't afraid of tramps; she wasn't afraid of anything. And, after all, it was her shawl. If it was worth having, it was worth going after. But how about betraying the boys? Another bright thought struck me. I'd make Aunt Pam one of us. She could say the words over after me, and she could crawl in and get the shawl, while I kept guard outside: and if anybody says Aunt Pam is old after that, they must be crazy. She said all the words solemnly, one after another; then she crawled in, and dragged out every blessed thing she could lay her hands on. I put 'em all back the next morning, and the best of it all was that Aunt Pam never gave us away. She just told the folks she found the shawl herself, and she did, you know—didn't she?

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## MATHEMATICAL PUZZLES.

### No. 5.

Two boys kept neighboring apple stands, and each had thirty apples to sell every day. One sold his at the rate of two for five cents, and received seventy-five cents, and the other at three for five cents, and received fifty cents, the total being one dollar and twenty-five cents. It happened one day that one of the boys was sick, and the other engaged to sell the whole stock of sixty apples at the same rate. "Two for five, and three for five, that's five for ten," said he, and five for ten he sold them. But to his astonishment, when he got through he had but one dollar and twenty cents instead of one dollar and twenty-five cents. Now how did he lose five cents?

### No. 6.

"How old are your children?" asked a lady who was visiting a friend, the mother of three beautiful daughters. "My oldest daughter is just double the age of my youngest daughter," replied the mother, "and the age of my other child is that of her youngest sister and one-third more. Their three combined ages make exactly the sum of my age, and I shall be sixty-six one year from to-day." What was the age of each of the three daughters?

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## THE OLDEST ROSE-BUSH IN THE WORLD.

They say it is the oldest, and who knows that it is not? I will tell you the story as it was told to me, and you shall see what you think of it.

There is a funny old town in Germany called Hildesheim, a little out of the way of travellers, but full of curious and interesting things, and over its fine cathedral walls climbs a rose-bush so large and strong that it may well be a thousand years old, as they say it is.

"A thousand years ago," said the sacristan, "the country all about here was a forest."

If you have studied history, you will see the story may be true so far, for you know Charlemagne became Emperor of Germany in A.D. 800, and that Germany was little better than a wilderness then.

"One day," continued the sacristan, "Louis the Gentle, the son of Charlemagne, went hunting with all his retinue in this forest. They had with them a box of relics."

Relics, you must know, were pieces of the dress of martyrs and saints, or something that martyrs and saints had touched in their lifetime, or perhaps even the bones of martyrs and saints.

"When they encamped for dinner, the gentle Louis wished to put this box of relics away very carefully, and looking about, he saw a beautiful blooming rose-bush, which must have been quite large even then, as he concealed the box in its branches.

"Perhaps they hurried away in pursuit of game after dinner, or perhaps they ate too much, and, as often happens in such a case, they forgot to be as religious as they were before dinner. However it was, at all events they rode away without the relics, and never missed them till the next day.

"Then Louis was full of shame, and declared they must ride back again, and never give up searching till they found the box.

"So they rode for many a weary hour, searching the by-ways of the forest—for there were few roads—till at last they all suddenly stopped, full of awe and wonder.

"It was a beautiful June day, and the birds were singing, and the flowers were blooming; but, lo! just before them they saw a glade in the forest where the fresh white snow lay like a soft thick carpet over everything.

"And yet it did not cover everything either. For in the centre of the glade grew a lovely rose-bush, with hundreds of bright blossoms upon it, and this was the bush in which the box had been hidden. Louis hastened forward, and grasped the box; but, lo! here was another miracle: it had grown into the wood of the rose-bush so firmly that it could not be taken away.

"Then Louis fell on his knees, and said he would receive this as a sign, and he vowed to build a cathedral on the spot.

"They called the snow 'holy snow,' because it had hidden the ugly remnants of their feast with its purity, but had left the rose-bush free, and they named the cathedral and the town which sprang up about it Hildesheim, which in old, old German meant 'holy snow.'"

It is certainly an enormous rose-bush, and its roots grow wide under the cathedral. Over them, in the crypt, is an altar said to be of pure silver, and it looks as if it might be. On the altar are heaped great bunches of artificial roses, which they persuade the ignorant peasants are actual blossoms of the rose-bush itself, even when it is leafless and bare in the winter.

I can not say that all the sacristan's story is true, but I know that the rose-bush of Hildesheim is the largest one I ever saw, and that the town is a very old place. Indeed, a few years ago, some wonderful gold and silver vessels were dug up there, which must have been used by an almost forgotten race. If any of you live near Washington, you can see copies of them in the Smithsonian Institution.

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## CROCHET PURSE.

This pretty purse will make a nice gift for some of our young people. It is worked with red saddler's silk in open-work double crochet, and consists of an oblong bag pointed toward the bottom, and furnished with small slits at the top on both sides. The purse is closed with two metal bars, finished with knobs, and joined with a chain and ring. An ordinary steel slide may be substituted. A metal acorn finishes the bottom. Make a foundation of 96 st. (stitch), close these in a ring with 1 sl. (slip stitch), and crochet the 1st round.—4 ch. (chain stitch), the first 3 of which count as first dc. (double crochet), then always alternately 1 dc. on the second following st., 1 ch.; finally, 1 sl. on the third of the first 3 ch. in this round. 2d round.—1 sl. on the next st., 4 ch., the first 3 of which count as first dc., then always alternately 1 dc. on the next ch. in the preceding round, 1 ch.; finally, 1 sl. on the third of the first 3 ch. in this round. Next work 24 rounds like the preceding round, but in the last 10 rounds narrow at intervals, and instead of 1 dc. pass over 2 dc., so that in the last round only 8 dc. are worked. Run the working thread through the st. of the last round, draw it tight, and set on the acorn. Then finish the purse in two parts, working on the upper side of the foundation st. 3 rounds in the preceding design, going back and forth, and in the last round fasten in the bars as follows: \* 7 ch., pass over 2 dc., lay on the bar from the wrong side, carry the ch. across the bar to the wrong side, 1 sc. on the next ch., 7 ch., carry these over the bar to the front, pass over 2 dc., 1 sc. on the next ch., and repeat from \*.



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## "ONT DAYKUMBOA."

In the parlor of a dear old-fashioned country house two elderly ladies are seated, one knitting, the other

reading the report of yesterday's sermons, giving bits aloud now and then; on the carpet a little boy about three years of age is sprawling, apparently trying to swim on dry land.

The lady knitting is Miss Helena Oakstead, the lady reading is Miss Judith Oakstead, and the small boy is Master Ralph Oakstead, the eldest son of the youngest brother. If you go to the other side of the hall you will find the eldest brother (Master Ralph's uncle) in his study, writing an essay full of great big words. He is Professor Oakstead.

Master Ralph is spending the day with his relatives, and has gotten on with them very well so far, as his sister Daisy, two years his senior, whom he rules right royally, has acted as court interpreter; but she has just departed for a drive with a neighboring friend, and the aunts are left in sole charge of his Highness.

He is very gracious at first, looks over a picture-book with Miss Helena, and makes eager but unintelligible remarks respecting the "bow-wows" and "moos," to which Miss Helena answers, "Um, dear," as being the safest thing to say. But now he is silent, and has been so for at least ten minutes.

"How good Ralph is!" half whispers Miss Helena.

His Highness pricks up his ears.

"Yes, dear little fellow; and he has no one to play with, either."

His Highness sits up—he speaks.

"Ont daykumboa."

"What is it, dear?" says Miss Judith.

"Ont daykumboa," repeats Master Ralph.

"What does the child mean?" asks Miss Helena.

"I don't know. What do you want, Ralphie?"

Ralph, with a look of mingled contempt and pity at his stupid relatives, says, slowly but emphatically, "Ont daykumboa."

"Perhaps he is hungry. I'll go and get him a piece of cake," says Miss Helena.

The cake is brought, and promptly accepted; but it is evidently not the thing for which his soul longs, for after devouring half the slice he plaintively murmurs, "Ont daykumboa."

"Well, isn't that daykumboa?" says Miss Judith.

Ralph gives her a scornful look as sole answer, and finishes his cake in awful silence. As the last crumb disappears he sighs, "Ont daykumboa."

"What on earth and under the sun does the child want!" is the combined exclamation of the aunts.

"Perhaps Elijah can help us."

"Oh yes, he knows everything pretty nearly; but he may not like being disturbed now—he's writing, you know."

"Well, perhaps Victoria might be able to tell; she used to take care of children."

So Victoria is summoned from the kitchen. She is a tall majestic negress, who looks as if she had just stepped out of history. Her speech does not quite come up to her stately mien.

"Why, what's de matter wi' de chile?" she queries.

All of Ralph's reply is lost except "daykumboa."

"Well, come 'long wi' Victoria—she git you kumboa. What, ain't gwine to come? Oh laws! dat ain't bein' good bo'."

For Master Ralph has seated himself flatly on a footstool, and with his back against the wall, refuses in the dumbest of dumb-show to be entrapped into "gwine" anywhere.

Miss Helena suggests that they bring to him whatever they find that is at all likely to be "daykumboa."

So at the feet of his Royal Highness is laid such a queer collection of articles as never before appeared in that trim sitting-room: a *Child's History of England*, a bottle of mucilage, a pair of scissors, a coal shovel, a comb and brush, a bunch of flowers, a photograph album, a bottle of ink, and goodness knows what besides. Miss Helena ransacks her brains and her bureau, Miss Judith brings every portable in the room, and Victoria literally squanders the contents of her larder, but all to no purpose, and what is worse, his Highness, becoming alarmed at such unusual behavior, begins to moan "Ont daykumboa" in a way that draws tears to the eyes of his aunts.

"Judith," exclaims Miss Helena, "the case is getting desperate. We *must* send for Elijah, no matter if he does get angry.—Victoria, just go to the study, and tell the Professor that he *must* come here for a few minutes. Do you hear—*must!*"

Victoria, looking as scared as only a solemn-natured darky *can* look, departs, and returns speedily with the Professor.

"Is anything the matter with Alcibiades?" he asks. Alcibiades, be it known, is what the Professor always calls Ralph—"for short," he says.

"He is in a most peculiar condition, Elijah—persists in calling for *daykumboa*, and we can not understand



"ONT DAYKUMBOA."

what he means."

"What is it that you want, my boy?" inquires the Professor, bending his dignified back and knees, so as to bring his gray head on a level with Ralph's "curly pow."

Ralph turns to him with an expression of relief, as much as to say, "Well, here's a reasonable being at last," and explains, "Ont daykumboa."

"And what is daykumboa?" says the Professor.

"Daykumboa," repeats Ralph, with a lingering hope that perhaps he is going to get some satisfaction; but this creature is just as dull as the rest, and his Highness, with great want of dignity, begins to whimper.

"The child seems to be in pain," says the Professor, standing up, and regarding his nephew with concern. "Perhaps he has hurt himself."

"I never thought of that," cries Miss Judith.—"Have you hurt yourself, Ralphie?"

"Ont daykumboa," is the only response.

"Looks like he gwine to hab a fit. I gib de chile a good warm bath, if I's you," suggests Victoria.

Miss Helena eagerly catches at the straw.

"That's a good idea, Victoria. Just fill the little foot-tub with hot water, and bring it right in here."

Victoria hurries off to get the bath, and the Professor, seized with a new idea for the explanation of the mystery, goes to his study to search his dictionary for "daykumboa" in some dead or living language.

The foot-tub is brought, and the aunts proceed to undress his Highness, whereat he waxes wroth. They persist; there is a frightful howl, a struggle, and the tub of hot water is very vigorously overturned among the photographs, scissors, and eatables that strew the floor. The Professor, in alarm, comes tearing in, a book in each hand. At that moment a patter as of small feet is heard in the hall, and a little figure with flying golden locks darts into the room.

Ralph rushes into her arms in a kind of ecstasy, crying, "Oh, daykumboa! daykumboa!"

"What is it that Ralph is saying, Daisy?" eagerly asks Miss Helena, in the lull that follows. "He has been wanting daykumboa all the afternoon."

"He says, 'Daisy come back,'" answers the little girl. "That's what you wanted—wasn't it, Ralphie?"

"Es, me ont daykumboa," assents his Highness.

The Professor regards his niece with humble admiration not unmixed with awe, and retires to his study to lay his dictionaries by. Victoria rolls her eyes ceilingward, and says, "Well, I declar'!" then falls to work picking up the ruins of their various offerings, and the two ladies turn to help her after a little silent astonishment.

Ten minutes after, his Highness is seen in the garden pouring sand down his sister's neck, and sternly ordering her to "fit 'till," when she objects, in a tone that makes his aunts wonder if this *can* be the same boy who spent the greater part of two hours in wailing, "Ont daykumboa."

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## Little Birdie.

*cres - cen - do.*

1. Come here, lit-tle bir-die, and don't be a-fraid, I would not hurt e-ven a fea-ther; Come  
 2. I don't mean to hurt you, you poor little thing, And Pussy-cat is not be-hind me; So  
 3. Cold winter is come, but it will not last long, And summer we soon shall be greet-ing; Then re-  
*Playfully.*

*cres - cen - do.*

here, lit - tle bir-die, and pick up some bread, To feed you this ve - ry cold wea - ther.  
 hop a - bout pret-ty, and put down your wing, And pick up the crumbs, and don't mind me.  
 mem-ber, sweet birdie, to sing me a song, In re-turn for the breakfast you're eat-ing.

## A SCARECROW NO SCARECROW.

An umbrella for a scarecrow  
 Was in a corn field placed,  
 And with loud caws the sly old crows  
 Around it gravely paced;  
 When suddenly a shower fell,  
 And under it they went,  
 And staid until the rain had ceased,  
 As in a little tent.  
 Then said they, as they all trooped out,  
 "That man's a jolly feller;  
 Not only plants the corn for us,  
 But lends us his umbreller!"

[Pg 102]

**The Paradise of Insects.**—None but those who have travelled on the Upper Amazons can have any idea of the number and voracity of the insect torments which work their wicked will on the bodies of the unfortunates exposed to their attacks. The "sancudos," or small sand-flies, form by far the most important section. In the villages, round which the forest is cleared away for some distance, the sancudos are generally pretty quiet during the day, except where darkness prevails: there they are ever busy, and are a perfect plague. The triumphant note of a sancudo which has made his way under your curtains is more annoying than even his bite; and should you have been careless in getting into bed, and been accompanied by two or three of these blood-suckers, we will defy you to sleep until you have exterminated them.

In the forest and on the river the sancudos are always busy. Men sometimes get into the vessel's tops, and there cover themselves with sacks, notwithstanding the heat, rather than remain below exposed to their attacks. Fortunately they can not stand a current of air, and so when under way the vessel is comparatively free from them, but when at anchor these pests are something awful. To get rid of them is next to



impossible. Creosote will keep them off, but the remedy is as bad as the disease. Whitewash will drive them away, but when dry its power ceases; and the only thing to do is either to cover all exposed parts of the body with black pigment *à la mode Indienne*, or else to "grin and bear it."

Scarcely less troublesome than the sancudos are the mosquitoes, although they have the negative merit of biting only by day. They are minute creatures, not much larger than a pin's head; they prefer the backs of the hands to any other spot for their attacks. But, unlike the sancudo, which, when undisturbed, gorges himself until unable to fly, and becomes an easy prey to your avenging finger, the mosquito never seems to take too much to prevent his easy escape on the slightest appearance of danger, being evidently just as wide-awake when full as when empty.

Everywhere in long grass lurks the "moquim," a little red insect so small as to be almost imperceptible, but which fastens on the legs, causing the most intolerable itching.

There is a fly which burrows in the skin and deposits an egg, both in human beings and animals. This produces a maggot, similar in shape to that of the common blow-fly, but much larger, probably analogous to the Guinea-worm.

Then there are "chigos," which burrow mostly in the soles of the feet. You feel an intense itching, and on examination find a little thing like a pea just under the epidermis; this is the bag containing the young chigos, which must be carefully picked out with the point of a knife, and the cavity left filled with tobacco ash.

Huge spiders abound, whose very appearance inspires a wholesome dread of a nearer acquaintance, but which are harmless enough if let alone. In fact, on board the steamers, almost every cabin is tenanted by one large spider, whose presence is tolerated on account of his being a deadly foe to cockroaches, which abominable creatures swarm on board. Sometimes he is not visible for a fortnight or more at a time; but he leaves tokens of "having been there," in the shape of the empty husks of cockroaches, from which he has carefully abstracted the interior. These spiders have the power of springing upon their prey from a distance, and some of them are so large and powerful as to kill and devour small birds.

In passing through the narrow forest paths it is necessary to be on the look-out for the wood-ticks, which are very difficult to get rid of if once firmly attached; also for the huge black ants, an inch and a half in length, with stings like a hornet's; and the saüba ant, without sting, but armed with nippers like a pair of surgical bone-forceps, which are running about everywhere. One may sometimes chance upon a column of the dreaded "fire-ants," marching in regular military order; and if he does, the only thing is to bolt at once, for neither man nor beast may withstand the fire-ant and live. When at length the traveller stops to rest, he must take care to examine the camping ground to see that neither centipede nor scorpion is there.

Frequently both centipedes and scorpions are found on the steamers, introduced, no doubt, in the wood used for fuel. One day, while the writer was watching the hands taking wood from canoes alongside, from one of the logs pitched on board was dislodged a scorpion, which fell on the naked left arm of a man keeping tally at the gangway. Astonished by his sudden flight through the air, the animal remained perfectly still. The man never moved a muscle, and quietly raising his right hand, flipped it away with his fingers and thumb. It was very neatly and coolly done; and he thus escaped a sting, which he no doubt would have received had he tried to brush it hastily away.

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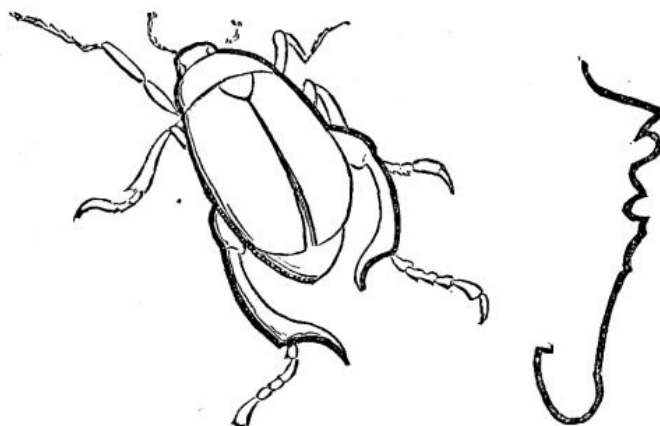
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**WIGGLES.**

Of these two Wiggles, the first is what our artist makes of the outline given in No. 4 of *Harper's Young People*, and the second is a new Wiggle, in which we hope our young readers will take as much interest as they have in those already published.



During this new year we anticipate much pleasant intercourse with our young friends. We thank them heartily for the favors already received, which from their genuine childishness we know have come direct from their own little hearts and hands. Our paper is received by children who live in all parts of this country, in England, Germany, France, South America, Cuba, and Mexico; and we would like to offer them a few suggestions which, if faithfully carried out, will add interest to our Post-office Box, and give much valuable information.

In the first place, many of you have household pets—birds, squirrels, fishes, turtles, and other little live creatures. We are sure of this, because already some of you have asked us questions regarding the care of them. Now, if you watch your pets carefully, you will learn many pretty facts of natural history; and it would do you good, and please us, if you would write us about their habits, what food they like best, and how they behave. If your communications are brief enough, we shall gladly print them.

Then as spring comes on—and it will come very soon to some of you in the South—watch for the first spring flowers, the sweet trailing arbutus, the pretty violets and wind-flowers, the crocuses, and other early spring blossoms, and tell us when you find them, and in what pretty corner they were nestled in the woods, among bushes by the old stone wall, or in the open sunny field. Let us see what little girl or boy will find the first willow "pussies." And you will all be interested to learn how much earlier the spring blossoms come to you who live South and West than to you in Maine and Canada.

Then there will be the coming of the birds to watch for—the robins and bluebirds; some of you will see them all winter, and the dear little snow-birds, which sing and hop about so merrily on cold, biting mornings when your own little fingers are half frozen as you scamper to school over the snow crust. Watch all these beautiful things of nature, dear children, and write us whatever you find out from your own personal observation.

In that way our Post-office Box will become a delightful and instructive natural history exchange between the little folks of all sections of the country. Perhaps, also, the children in England and other lands beyond the sea will now and then favor us with bits of information about their own birds and flowers. You must excuse us for writing so much, leaving not room enough to print half of your own pretty communications.

---

"Earl" writes from Chicago: "I live on the West Side, and the ponds are frozen strong enough for skating. I have been skating twice at Jefferson Park." That does not look much like hunting for willow "pussies," does it? And perhaps you are laughing, because we remind you of spring now just when you are beginning to plan for skating parties. But willows grow all around the ponds where you skate, and you will never see the bare twigs without wondering how soon you can write and tell us the downy "pussies" have appeared.

---

I am six years old, and I live in Hastings, Nebraska. I like *Harper's Young People* very much. I have a duck, a chicken, a pig, and a little rat dog whose name is Jip. I would like to know how to teach him to catch rats. He by accident caught one the other day, fastened in the pig-pen fence, and killed it before it got loose.

ARTHUR S. N.

---

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MARY E. M.

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NEW YORK CITY.

I am very much obliged to you for telling me how to feed and house my land turtle. I have also three water turtles, one bull-frog, two large toads, and twenty small toads. Please tell me how to feed them. I keep them in a large yard, and I never feed them, so I often wonder how they live. Your paper is getting better every week, and the story about "Photogen and

Your toads have found plenty of insects for food in the yard where you keep them. They might be taught to eat sugar, but they prefer a diet of worms, ants, and small bugs. They will probably crawl under a stone or into some hole, and lie numb all winter. Bull-frogs also eat worms and insects, and very large ones are said to eat even small animals, such as mice and moles. Water turtles eat the stems of water-weeds and small mollusks, but they can live a long time without food. They might eat bits of bread. You can try and see. Both they and your bull-frog would be grateful if you gave them a tank of water to swim in.

Welcome letters are acknowledged from Mamie T., Orange, New Jersey; Althea B., Macon City, Missouri; F. Coggsell, Hudson, Wisconsin; H. W. Singer, Cincinnati, Ohio; Ernest B. C., Shelbyville, Tennessee; Willie E. H., Hartford, Connecticut; and Dorsey Coate, Wabash, Indiana.



**HOW TO MAKE A CHEAP SLED.**

**Procure a long, narrow boy, lay him on his back, and fasten ropes to his legs, and your sled is ready for use.**

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, JANUARY 6, 1880 \*\*\*

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