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MISS NANCY TAKES LEAVE OF THE OFFICERS.

NANCY HANSON'S PROJECT.

BY HOWARD PYLE.

It was in the old Quaker town of Wilmington, Delaware, and it was the evening of the day on which the battle of Brandywine had been fought. The country people were coming into town in sledges, and in heavy low carts with solid wheels made of slices from great tree trunks, loaded with butter, eggs, milk, and vegetables; for the following day was market-day. Market-day came every Fourth-day (Wednesday) and every Seventh-day (Saturday). Then the carts drew up in a long line in Market Street, with their tail-boards to the sidewalk, and the farmers sold their produce to the town people, who jostled each other as they walked up and down in front of the market carts—a custom of street markets still carried on in Wilmington.

Friend William Stapler stopped, on his way to market in his cart, at Elizabeth Hanson's house, in Shipley Street, to leave a dozen eggs and two pounds of butter, as he did each Tuesday and Friday evening. Elizabeth came to the door with a basket for half a peck of potatoes. William Stapler took off his broad-brimmed hat, and slowly rubbed his horny hand over his short-cut, stubbly gray hair.

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"Ah! I tell thee, Lizabeth, they're a-doin' great things up above Chadd's Ford. I hearn th' canning a-boomin' away all day to-day. Ah, Lizabeth, the world's people is a wicked people. They spare not the brother's blood when th' Adam is aroused within them. They stan' in slippery places, Lizabeth."

"Does thee think they're fighting, William?"

"Truly I think they are. Ah! I tell thee, Lizabeth, they're differen' 'n when I was young. Then we only feared the Injuns, 'n' now it's white men agin white men. They tuck eight young turkeys of mine, 'n' only paid me ten shillin' fer 'em."

"But, oh, William, I do hope they're not fighting! I expect my son-in-law, Captain William Bellach, and his friend Colonel Tilton, will stop here on their way to join General Washington; and they may arrive to-night."

"Ah, Lizabeth, I've lifted up my voice in testimony agin the young men goin' to the wars an' sheddin' blood. 'F a man diggeth a pit an' falleth into it himself, who shall help him out thereof? Half a peck o' potatoes, did thee say, Lizabeth?"

During the evening rumors became more exciting, and it was said that the Americans had been defeated, and were retreating toward Philadelphia. Late that night Captain Bellach and Colonel Tilton arrived at Elizabeth Hanson's house.

"I've heard the rumors, mother," said Captain Bellach. "I don't believe 'em; but even if there was a file of British at the door here, I would be too tired to run away from them."

Pretty Nancy Hanson spoke up. "But, Billy, they would not only send thee and thy friend to the hulks if they caught thee, but they might be rude to us women were they to find thee here."

"Yes, sister-in-law, if I thought there was any danger, I would leave instantly; but the British, even if they have beaten us, will be too tired to come here to-night."

"I agree with my friend Will, Mistress Nancy," said Colonel Tilton. "Moreover, our horses are too tired to take us farther to-night."

About two o'clock in the morning the silence of the deserted streets of the town was broken by a rattling and jingling of steel, the heavy, measured tread of feet, and sharp commands given in a low voice.

Nancy Hanson awakened at the noise, and jumping out of bed, ran to the window and looked out into the moon-lit street beneath. A file of red-coated soldiers were moving by toward the old Bull's Head Tavern. The cold moonlight glistened on their gun-barrels and bayonets as they marched. Nancy ran to her mother's room and pounded vigorously on the door.

"Mother! mother! waken up!" she cried; "the British are come to town, sure enough!"

The family were soon gathered around the dull light of a candle, the gentlemen too hastily awakened to have their hair *en queue*, the ladies in short gowns and petticoats; Elizabeth Hanson wore a great starched night-cap perched high upon her head.

"You were right, sister-in-law," said Captain Bellach, "and I was wrong. The best thing we can do now is to march out and take our chances."

"So say I," assented the Colonel.

"It's all well enough for thee, Billy, to talk of marching out and taking thy chances," said Nancy; "thee has thy black citizen's dress; but Colonel Tilton is in uniform."

"True; I forgot."

"It does not matter," said the Colonel.

"Yes, but it does," cried Nancy. "Stay now until morning, and I think I can get thee citizen's clothes. I have a project, too, to get thee off. For mother's sake, though, we must hide thy uniform, for if it is found here, she will be held responsible. Billy, thee will have to go with thy friend back to the bedroom and bring us his things as soon as he can take them off. Thee must lie abed, Colonel Tilton."

Nancy's plans were carried into execution. The bricks in one of the up-stairs fire-places were taken up, the sand beneath them removed, and the Colonel's uniform deposited in the vacant place, over which the bricks were carefully replaced.

In the gray of the morning Peggy Allison and Hannah Shallcross, on their way to market, each with a basket on her arm, met in front of Elizabeth Hanson's house. A company of soldiers had halted in Shipley Street, and their arms were stacked before Elizabeth's door. The red-coated soldiers were lounging and talking and smoking. Some officers sat around a fire near by warming their hands, for the morning was chill.

"'Tis a shame!" said Hannah Shallcross, vigorously—"tis a shame to see these redcoats parading our streets as bold as a brass farthing. I only wish I was John Stedham the constable; I'd have 'em in the Smoke-House^[1] or the stocks in a jiffy, I tell thee!"

She spoke loudly and sharply. A young British officer, who was passing, stepped briskly up, and tapped her on the arm.

"Madam," said he, "do you know that you are all prisoners? Be advised by me, and return quietly home until the town is in order."

However patriotic Hannah might be, she did not think it advisable to disregard this order, and both dames retreated in a flutter. As the young officer stood looking after them, the house door opposite him opened, and Nancy Hanson appeared upon the door-step. She had dressed herself carefully in her fine quilted petticoat and best flowered over-dress, and looked as pretty and fresh as an April morning.

"Friend," said she, in a half-doubtful, half-timid voice. The young officer whipped off his cocked hat, and bent stiffly, as you might bend a jackknife.

"Madam, yer servant," he answered. He spoke with a slight brogue, for he was an Irish gentleman.

"We have a friend with us," said Nancy, "who hath been compelled for a time to keep his bed. He was brought here last night on account of the battle, and was too weary to go further. Our neighbor Friend John Stapler, across the street, hath thick stockings, and I desire to get, if I can, a pair from him, as, thee may know, in cases of dropsy the legs are always cold. I am afraid to cross the street with these soldiers in it. Would thee escort me?"

"Madam, you do me infinite honor in desiring me escort," said the young officer, bowing more deeply than before; for Nancy was very pretty.

Friend John Stapler was a very strict Friend, and as such was inclined to favor the royalist side; still, he was willing to do a kindly turn for a neighbor. He was a wrinkled, weazened little man, whose face, with its pointed nose and yellowish color, much resembled a hickory nut.

"Hum-m-m!" ejaculated he, when Nancy, who had left the officer at the door, stated the case to him—"hum-m-m! thus it is that intercourse with the world's people defileth the chosen. Still, I may as well help thee out o' the pother. Hum-m-m! I suppose my small-clothes would hardly be large enough, would they?" and he looked down at his withered little legs.

"I hardly think so," said Nancy, repressing a smile, as she pictured to herself the tall dignified Colonel in little John Stapler's small-clothes.

"Well, well," said he, "I'll just step out the back way, and borrow a suit from John Benson. He's the fattest man I know."

He soon returned with the borrowed clothes, which they wrapped up in as small a bundle as possible, after which Nancy rejoined the officer at the door.

"'Tis a largish bundle of stockings," observed he, as he escorted her across the street again.

"They are thick stockings," she answered, demurely.

When they reached home, she invited her escort and his brother officers, who were gathered around the fire near by, to come in and take a cup of coffee—an offer they were only too glad to accept, after their night march.

"Gentlemen," said Nancy, as they sat or stood around drinking their hot coffee, "I suppose you have no desire to retain our afflicted friend a prisoner? The doctor, who is with him at present, thinks it might benefit him to be removed to the country. I spoke to my friend whom I saw this morning, and he promised to send a coach. May he depart peaceably when the coach comes?"

"Faith," said the young Irish officer, "he may depart. He shall not be molested. I command here at present."

"What is the matter with the invalid?" inquired another officer.

"He appeareth to have the dropsy," answered Nancy, gravely.

In about half an hour an old-fashioned coach, as large as a small dwelling-house, and raised high from the ground on great wheels, lumbered up to the door. The steps were let down, or unfolded, until they made a kind of step-ladder, by which the passenger ascended to the coach which loomed above. The door stuck, in consequence of being swelled by the late rains, and was with difficulty opened. The officers stood around, waiting the appearance of the invalid, and the young Irishman who had been Nancy's escort waited at the door to help her in, for she was to accompany her afflicted relative to the ferry.

The house door opened, and she appeared, bearing a pillow and blanket to make the sick man comfortable. She arranged these, and stepped back into the house to see him moved. Then, with a shuffling of feet, the pretended victim of dropsy appeared, dressed in plain clothes, and so enormously puffed out that there was scarcely room for him in the passageway. The so-called doctor, dressed in black, and wearing a pair of black glass spectacles, assisted the invalid on one side, and Nancy supported him on the other. The dropsical one groaned at every step, and groaned louder than ever as they pushed, squeezed, and crowded him up the steps and into the coach. Nancy and the doctor followed, and the Irish officer put up the steps and clapped to the door, while Nancy smiled a farewell through the window to him as the great coach rumbled away toward the Christiana River.

"Oddzooks!" exclaimed one of the officers, "that is the fattest Quaker I ever saw."

He would have been surprised if he had seen the fat Quaker draw a stout pillow from under his waistcoat after the coach had moved away, while the doctor stripped some black court-plaster from the back of his spectacles, and instead of the invalid and the physician appeared two decidedly military-looking gentlemen.

The coach and its occupants had lumbered out of sight for some time, and the young officer still remained lounging near the door of Mistress Hanson's house, when an orderly, splashed with mud from galloping over yesterday's battle-field, clattered up to the group.

"Which is Major Fortescue?" he asked, in his sharp military voice.

"I am," answered the young Irish officer.

"Order for you, sir;" and he reached the Major a folded paper, sealed with a blotch of wax as red as blood. He opened it, and read:

"You will immediately arrest two men, officers in the rebel army, known respectively as Colonel Tilton and Captain Bellach. Information has been lodged at head-quarters that they are now lying concealed at Mistress Elizabeth Hanson's in Wilmington town. You will report answer at once. By order of

Colonel ROBERT WYCHERLY, R. A.,
Com. 5th Div. H. M. A.

in the Province of

Pennsylvania.

To Major ALLAN FORTESCUE,
Commander at Wilmington,
in the Lower County of Newcastle."^[2]

"Stop them!" roared Major Fortescue, as soon as he could catch his breath. He gave a sharp order to the soldiers lounging near; they seized their arms, and the whole party started at double quick for the ford of the Christiana River, half a mile away, whither the coach had directed its course.

Meanwhile the fugitives had arrived at the bank of the river, where they found that the ferryman was at the other side, and his boat with him. He was lying on the stern seat, in the sun, and an empty whiskey bottle beside him sufficiently denoted the reason of his inertia. When the Colonel called to him, he answered in endearing terms, but moved not; and when the officer swore, the ferryman reproved him solemnly. Affairs were looking gloomy, when Captain Bellach, who had been running up and down the embankment that kept the river from overflowing the marsh-lands that lay between it and the hill on which the town stood, gave a shout which called the Colonel and Nancy to him. They found that he had discovered an old scow half hidden among the reeds; it was stuck fast in the mud, and it was only by great exertions that the two gentlemen pushed it off the ooze into the water. The Colonel then took Nancy in his arms, and carried her across the muddy shore to the boat, where he deposited her; then pushing off the scow, he leaped aboard himself.

"Lackaday for my new silk petticoat, all spotted and ruined!" cried Nancy. "I'd rather have been taken prisoner at once!" And she looked down ruefully upon the specks of blue marsh mud that had been splashed upon that garment.

Neither of the men answered. The boat leaked very badly when it was fairly out in the water, and the

Colonel was forced to bail it out with his hat. The Captain sat in the middle of the boat, paddling it with a piece of board. His hat had blown off, and his black silk small-clothes were covered with mud. The tide was running strongly, and as the boat drifted down the stream, it was swung round and round in spite of the Captain's efforts to keep it straight, while the leak gained on them, until Nancy, with a sigh, was compelled to take her best beaver hat, ribbons and all, and help the Colonel bail.

They were scarcely more than half across when Major Fortescue and his squad of soldiers dashed up to the bank. They ran along the embankment, keeping pace with the boat as it drifted with the tide.

"Halt!" cried the officer; but no one in the boat answered. "Halt, or I shoot!" But Captain Bellach only paddled the harder.

"Make ready! Take aim!—"

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"Down, for your life!" cried Colonel Tilton, sharply, dragging Nancy down into the bottom of the boat, where Captain Bellach flung himself beside them. It was the work of a moment. The next instant—"Fire!" they heard the royalist order, sharply, from the bank.

"Cra-a-a-ack!" rattled the muskets, and the bullets hummed venomously around the boat like a swarm of angry hornets.

None of the fugitives were hurt, though two of the bullets struck the side of the boat; but Nancy's petticoat was entirely ruined by the mud and water in the bottom. Before the redcoats could reload, they had reached the further shore, and run into a corn field near by, in which they were entirely hidden. Captain Bellach wanted to go up the stream and thrash the drunken ferryman; but the Colonel and Nancy dissuaded him, and they made the best of their way to Dover, which they reached after a very weary journey. There Nancy, who considered it safer to absent herself from home while the British retained possession of Wilmington, found herself the heroine of the hour; and she was fêted and dined and made much of, until it would have completely turned a less sensible little head than hers.

In after-years, when her husband presented her to President Washington, "Ah, Mistress Tilton," said his Excellency, "your husband should indeed value an affection that not only endangered a life, but even sacrificed a fine silk petticoat, for his sake."

[Begun in No. 19 of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, March 9.]

ACROSS THE OCEAN; OR, A BOY'S FIRST VOYAGE.

A True Story.

BY J. O. DAVIDSON.

CHAPTER VI.

AN OCEAN PRAIRIE.

Frank found his new work tolerably easy, though it required constant attention, for every joint of the machinery had to be watched, and oiled afresh the moment it began to get dry and hot. There being two other oilers, he now stood his regular watch of three hours at a time, having the rest of the day to himself. Most of this leisure time was spent in talking with Herrick, or studying the ins and outs of the machinery; and Frank soon learned to "take a card" as well as any man on board. This is done as follows: a slip of paper is rolled round a brass tube attached to the valve of the engine cylinder, and a pencil fixed so as to trace certain curved lines on the paper as it turns, the shape of which shows the exact working condition of the engine.

On the fourth afternoon of his new duties Austin heard himself hailed from the upper deck by a familiar voice:

"Hello, Frank, my boy! come up and have a look at Daddy Neptune's pasture-ground."

Up went Frank with all speed; but his first glance around made him start. Instead of the deep blue water that had surrounded her a few hours before, the ship was now in the midst of a smooth green plain, extending as far as the eye could reach, and covered, to all appearance, with coarse grass and broad-leaved plants. Nothing was wanting, in fact, to complete the picture except a few sheep and cattle.

For a moment our hero really thought he must be dreaming; and then he suddenly recollected his school-book pictures and stories of the famous Sargasso Sea, where, for thousands of acres together, the water is quite hidden by a thick growth of "Gulf weed," and knew at once that this must be it.

And certainly this ocean prairie was a wonderful sight. As the steamer ploughed its way through the matted weeds, Frank could see in the narrow openings their trailing roots hanging far down into the clear cool depths below. Above these open spaces thousands of sea-birds were hovering with shrill cries, while ever and anon one of them would swoop down into the water, re-appearing instantly with a fish wriggling in its beak.

In the purple shadow of the weed beds bright-colored fish were moving lazily to and fro, but these darted swiftly away at the approach of the steamer. On every side queer little crabs and turtles were plumping into the water, scared by the plashing wheels, while, stranger still, birds' nests and eggs were seen here and there amid the huge broad leaves of the stronger plants, to the great delight of Frank, who thought the idea of birds nesting in the middle of the Atlantic the finest joke he had ever heard.

A mass of the tangle was hauled on board, and the men amused themselves by stamping on the hollow air-cells which give the weed its buoyancy, producing a series of cracks like the explosion of fire-crackers.

"I've heerd tell, though I can't say I've seen it myself," observed a sailor, "as there's places whar them weeds are so thick and strong that a man can walk on 'em all the same as dry land."

"Well, they can stop a ship, anyhow, whether they can carry a man or not. A chum of mine as v'y'ged here in a Portigee steamer told me that she once got reg'lar jammed among the weed, and only 'scaped by reversin' her engines."

"Well, it's a fact that some whar in these seas there's a place they call the Lumber Yard, 'cause of all the driftwood and floatin' spars and bits o' wreck and sich gittin' jumbled up together; for all the currents sort o' meet there, like them puzzles whar every road leads in and none out. If a ship once gits in *there*, good-by to her; for there ain't no wind, nor tide, nor nothin', and you jist stick there till you rot."

Here old Herrick muttered, dreamily, as if speaking to himself, "I've seen that, and I sha'n't forget it in a hurry."

The men nudged each other, and there was a general silence; for it was but seldom that Herrick could be got to spin a yarn, and he was now evidently about to "get off" one of his best.

"I was cruising in these waters," he went on, "'bout twenty years ago, when one afternoon we sighted a sort o' mound in among the thickest of the weed, with somethin' like a ship's mast standin' up from it. The 'old man' came out to look at it, and then gave orders to lower the boat, and we pulled for the wreck with a will. But as we neared her, the very look of her seemed to strike cold upon us all. Her hull had such an old-fashioned build that it might ha' been afloat for a hundred years and more; and all up the sides and over the deck great slimy coils of weed had trailed, like them eight-armed squids that clutch men and drag 'em down. As we came nigher, the very sun clouded over, and all was chill, and gray, and dismal, and the wreck itself looked so unearthly, with no sign or sound of life about it, that I guess I wasn't the only one who felt queer when we ran alongside at last.

"Up we scrambled, our very tread soundin' hollow and uncanny in that awful silence. Not a livin' thing was there aboard, not even a mouse. The mainmast was gone, all but a stump, and the moulderin' tackle lay on the deck all of a heap. The plankin' was rotten and fallin' to bits, and the place on the stern where her name had been was clean mouldered away. All at once our coxswain, Bill Grimes, gives a jump and a holler as if he'd trod on a rattlesnake; and when we ran for'ard, what should we see, half hid among the weeds, but the skeleton of a man, fastened to the bulwarks by a rusty chain!"

The speaker ceased, and looked round the attentive circle with the air of a man who feels that he has made a hit.

"A slaver, I reckon," said one, at length.

"Or a pirate."

"Or some craft that had got starved out."

"Ay; but how cum that skeleton there? Did *you* never find out nothin' 'bout her, old hoss?"

"*Never*," said the old man, solemnly. "That's how many a gallant ship has ended—just a mark of 'missing' opposite her name in the owner's list, and a few poor souls watchin' and waitin' for them that'll never come back. Ay, boys; for as bright and pretty as these waters look, there's many a black story hid aneath 'em as'll never be known till the day when the sea shall give up its dead."

They were now east of the Azores, and within four days' run of Gibraltar, which was their first halting-place. So the men were set to work to scrub the deck, polish the rails, new paint the boats, mend such of the signal flags as were torn, and "smarten" up the vessel generally; for a sea-captain is as proud of his ship as a lands-man of his wife, and likes to bring her into port as trim as possible.

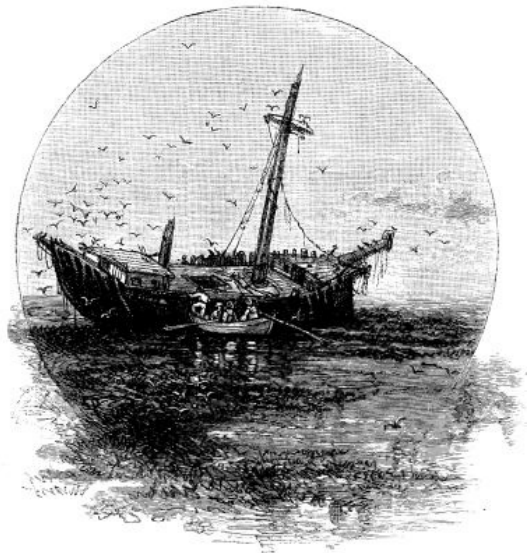
Frank, always ready to be of use, took his share of the work, though he had plenty to occupy him without it. He was never tired of watching the sun make rainbows in the spray of the bow, and the pretty little sea-fairies, called by sailors "Portuguese men-of-war," float past with their tinted shells and outspread feelers; while at night the moon was so gloriously brilliant, and the sea so clear and smooth, that he often staid on deck till midnight to enjoy the spectacle. But another sight was in store for him, even more to his taste than these.

One evening, just before sunset, two sail (the first for several days) were descried by the look-out, quite close to each other. Herrick, after eying them keenly for a moment, pronounced them to be a British steamer and a full-rigged American clipper ship.

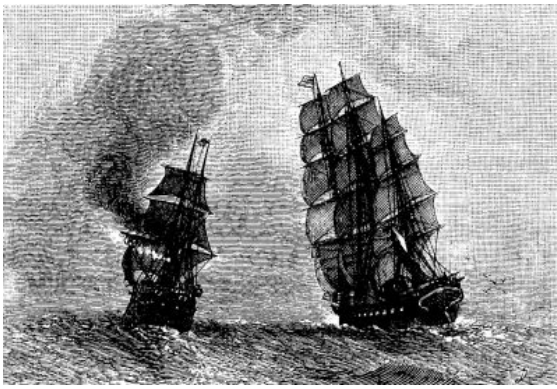
"How on earth can you tell that?" asked the wondering Frank, who could see nothing of the strangers but their topmasts.

"Easy enough. That un's a steamer, by her smoke; and she's a Britisher, by the *look* o' the smoke, for they mostly burn soft coal. T'other's a clipper, by her rig, and the lot o' handkerchiefs [studding sails] she has aloft; and she's a 'Merican, for nothin' else could hold its own with a steamer. But what can they be doin' so close together? Ah! I've got it—they're a-*racin'*."

When the two vessels came near enough to be signaled, and to reply, Herrick was found to be right in every particular, and the excitement aboard the *Arizona* rose



IN THE SARGASSO SEA.



AN OCEAN RACE.

like bees, while the crew were bustling to and fro, setting every sail that would draw. But still on the starboard quarter hung the beautiful clipper, gliding along smoothly and easily, one great pyramid of snow-white canvas from gunwale to truck, while the look-out and the two men at the wheel (the only persons visible on board) grinned from ear to ear at the "Britisher's" vain efforts. Just as the clipper passed, the Stars and Stripes fluttered out jauntily at her peak.

"Come, boys!" cried Herrick; "let's give the old 'gridiron' a cheer."

Mingling with the hearty shout that followed (in which Frank joined with a will) came three sharp blasts from the *Arizona's* steam-whistle, by way of salute. Instantly the clipper's crew sprang up from behind the bulwarks, and, waving their caps, sent back a rousing cheer, answered by the Englishman with a short whistle of defiance as he swept by.

Little by little the racers, still close together, melted into the fast-falling shadows of night; but there were not a few who declared that, when last seen, the clipper was getting the best of it, and their belief in the superiority of wind over steam was greatly strengthened thereby.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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APRIL'S TEARS.

April's tears are happy tears.
Joy when the arbutus sweet
Creeps about her dancing feet,
When the violet appears,
When the birds begin to sing,
When the grass begins to grow,
Makes her lovely eyes o'erflow.
She's a tender-hearted thing,
Bonny daughter of the spring.

BILLY'S GREAT SPEECH.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

Billy was the youngest member of the debating society; that is, the other members were all grown-up men, though none of them were very old, and he was not yet quite fourteen years of age. Some of the boys he knew told him he had been let in by mistake, and some said it was a joke; but there he was, week after week, every Friday evening, sitting on a front bench, and as much a member as the president, or the secretary, or either of the three vice-presidents.

One of the names of that village debating society was "The Lyceum," but it wasn't much used, except when they had distinguished strangers to lecture for them, and charged twenty-five cents apiece for tickets.

The regular weekly debates were "free," and so there was always a good attendance. The ladies, of all ages, were sure to come, and a good many of the boys. Billy never missed a debate; but he had not yet made so much as one single solitary speech on any subject. Nobody knew how often he had entered that hall with a big speech in him, all ready, or how he had always carried it out again unspoken.

A little after the Christmas and New-Years' holidays there was a question proposed for the society to debate that Billy was sure he could handle. It had something to do with the Constitution of the United States, and Grandfather Morton said it "was too political altogether"; but Billy silently determined that at last he would make himself heard. He read several things in order to get his mind ready, especially the *Life of Benjamin Franklin* and *Captain Cook's Voyages*.

He could not see just how they helped him, but he knew that was the way to do it. Then he practiced his speech, too, in the garret, and up in the pasture lot, and out in the barn, where he was sure nobody could hear him, and the night before the debate was to be he hardly slept a wink.

He knew Grandfather Morton and all the family would be there; and they had scared him out of making more than half a dozen speeches before, but he made up his mind not to be afraid of them this time. Speak he would!

He was careful about his dress, as every public speaker should be, and succeeded in borrowing one of his father's standing collars. It was dreadfully stiff with starch, but it would not hurt his ears if he held his head straight.

When he got to the Lyceum Hall it seemed to him to have grown a good deal since the week before, and to have a greater multitude of men and women in it than he had ever dreamed of.

It was warm, too, and grew warmer very fast, and he wondered why the rest did not take off their overcoats. Perhaps they would have done so if they had known Billy was going to address them.

He knew who was to open the debate on both sides, for that was always arranged beforehand, and his chance would come afterward.

He listened to them, and could not help thinking how much better they must feel when their speeches were all spoken. He knew very well what a troublesome thing a speech was to keep in, and without any cork.

Billy thought he had never known men to talk so long as they did—two young lawyers, three young doctors, the tutor of the village academy, the sub-editor of the *Weekly Bugle*, Squire Toms's son that was almost ready to go to college, and the tall young man with red hair who had just opened the new drug store.

That was the man who did Billy the most harm, for his argument was nothing in the wide world but a string of quotations from Daniel Webster. He called him the Great Expounder, and a great statesman, and a number of other names, and wound up by asserting that the opinion of such a great man as that settled the matter. There was a good deal of applause given to the red-headed young man as he was sitting down, and Billy took advantage of it; that is, before he knew exactly what he was doing, he was on his feet, and shouted, "Mr. President!—ladies and gentlemen—"

"Mr. Morton has the floor," remarked the president, very dignifiedly; and Billy, as he afterward said of himself, "was pinned."

There was no escape for him now, and when Grandfather Morton pounded with his cane, and shouted, "Platform!" dozens of other people took it up, and it was "Platform!" "Platform!" "Platform!" all over the hall. He knew what it meant. All the favorite speakers were sent forward in that way, and it was a great compliment; but Billy thought he must have walked forty miles, from the tired feeling in his legs, when he got there. Oh, how hot that room was just then, and what a dreadful thing it was to have a crowd like that suddenly begin to keep still! They must have been holding their breaths.

Billy knew his speech was in him, for it had been swelling and swelling while the others were speaking, but he could not quite get any of it very close to his mouth at that trying moment.

Stiller and stiller grew the hall, and Billy had a dim notion that it was beginning to turn around.

"Mr. President, ladies, and gentlemen—"

He heard some of the boys over by the window crack some pea-nuts and giggle.

"—I don't care a cent for Daniel Webster—"

Billy paused, and was hunting desperately for the next word; but Grandfather Morton had voted against Mr. Webster a good many times, and down came the old gentleman's cane on the floor.

That was the signal for a storm of applause all over the hall; but Billy groped in every corner of his mind in vain for the rest of his speech. Whether he had left it in the garret or the barn, or up in the pasture lot, it was gone; and when the stamping and clapping stopped, and the audience began to listen again, there was nothing more for them to hear.

It was so terribly hot in that hall; and it grew all the more like the Fourth of July, or a baker's oven, all the way to his seat, after Billy gave the matter up, and walked down from the platform.

But how they did cheer then!

The boys did their best, and even the ladies seemed to be shouting.

"Did I say anything so good as all that?" thought Billy.

But at the end of the debate, which came very soon after Billy's effort, Grandfather Morton shook hands with him very proudly; and it was the president of the society—and he had been a member of the Legislature—who came up just then, and said,

"Capital speech of yours, Mr. Morton. Best thing of the evening."

"Good, wasn't it?" said Billy's grandfather. "Laid that red-headed poison peddler as flat as a pancake."

"Best speech I ever heard in this hall, Mr. Morton; it was so splendidly short."

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But Billy kept thinking, all the way home, "What would he have said if I hadn't forgot the rest of it?"

That was years ago, and Billy is a great lawyer now; but he says he has never forgotten what it was that made his first speech so very good.

THE CZAR'S FISH.

BY DAVID KER.

One fine July morning, a few years ago, there was a great stir among the villagers of Pavlovo, on the Lower Volga, for the news had got abroad that the Czar was coming down the river, on his way to his Summer Palace in the Crimea. So, of course, every one was on the look-out for him; for the Russian peasants of the Volga are a very loyal set, and many old men and women among them, who have never been out of their

native village before, will tramp for miles over those great, bare, dusty plains on the chance of catching a passing glimpse of "Alexander Nikolaievitch" (Alexander the son of Nicholas), as they call the Czar.

Among those who talked over the great news most eagerly were the family of an old fisherman, who was known as "Lucky Michael," on account of his success in catching the finest fish, although hard work and experience had probably much more to do with it than any "luck."

But of late "Lucky Michael" had been very *unlucky* indeed. His wife had been ill, to begin with; and one of his two sons (who helped him with his fishing) had been disabled for several weeks by a bad hurt in his arm. Moreover, his boat was getting so crazy and worn out that it seemed wonderful how it kept afloat at all; but the news of the Czar's coming seemed to comfort him for everything.

"If Father Alexander Nikolaievitch would only give us money enough to buy a new boat!" said old Praskovia, Michael's wife, as she put away what was left of the huge black loaf that had served for breakfast; "but I suppose it wouldn't do to ask him."

"Of course not!" said Michael, who was an independent old fellow; "he's done quite enough for us already, in making us freemen, when we were all slaves before.^[3] Now, then, let's get to work. Come, Stepan [Stephen], come, Ivan [John], and let us see what God will send us."

But at first the luck seemed to be still against them, for they drew their net twice without catching anything. The third time, however, the net felt unusually heavy, and there was such a tugging and kicking inside of it that it was plain they had caught a pretty big fish of some kind. John, who was the first to look in, gave a loud hurrah, and shouted, "Father! father!—a sturgeon! a sturgeon!"

There, sure enough, lay the great fish amid a crowd of smaller ones, in all the pride of its spiky back, and smooth, brown, scaleless skin. All three rejoiced at the sight, for a sturgeon will always fetch a good price in Russia, and the two lads began to think at once how far this would go toward paying for a new boat.

They fished some time longer, and made one or two pretty good hauls; but the sturgeon was the great event of the day. John and Stephen wrapped it up carefully, and were quite proud to show it to their mother on getting home; but they looked rather blank at hearing their father say, in a way which showed that he meant it,

"This is the finest fish I've ever caught, and I won't sell it to any one. It's a Czar among fish, just like Alexander Nikolaievitch among us; so it shall be *his* fish, and I'll give it to him as he passes."

The news of Michael's fish, and of what he meant to do with it, soon spread through the village, and created considerable excitement. But there was not much time to talk it over, for, two days later, young Stephen, who had been sent to look out for the Czar's steamer, came running to say that it was in sight. So Michael put his sturgeon into the boat, and away they pulled. It was a hard pull against that strong current, but at last they got near enough to hail the steamer and be taken in tow.

Up went Michael, fish and all, and the captain led him aft to where the Czar and his officers were standing. Many of them were handsome, stalwart men, all ablaze with lace and embroidery; but the old fisherman, with his tall, upright figure, clear bright eye, and hale old face framed in snow-white hair, looked, despite his rough dress, as fine a man as any of them.

"See here, father," said he, "this is the finest fish I ever caught, and so I've kept it for *you*. I want nothing for it; take it as a free gift."

"Thank you, brother," said the Czar; "it's a royal fish, indeed, and I'll have it for dinner this very day, and drink your health over it. What's your name?"

"Michael Ribakoff, father, from the village of Pavlovo."

"Good—I won't forget you. Good-by!"

When the villagers heard what had happened, they all thought Michael rather a fool for giving his fish away, when the Czar would have paid a good price for it. But a week later came a fine new fishing-boat for "Michael Ribakoff," in the stern locker of which were a complete suit of fisherman's clothes and a new net, with a piece of paper inscribed, in the Czar's own handwriting, "*A midsummer gift from Alexander Nikolaievitch.*" And old Michael always said that he valued the paper far more than the boat.

THE HERMIT AND THE ROBBERS.

A gentle hermit, one day, proceeding on his way through a vast forest, chanced to discover a large cave nearly hidden under-ground. Being much fatigued, he entered to repose himself awhile; and observing something shining in the distance, he approached, and found it was a heap of gold. At the sight he turned away, and hastening through the forest again as fast as possible, had the misfortune to fall into the hands of three fierce robbers. They asked from whom he fled, and he answered, "I am flying from Death, who is urging me sorely behind."

The robbers, not perceiving any one, cried out, "Show us where he is." The hermit replied, "Follow me," and proceeded toward the grotto. He there pointed out to them the fatal place, beseeching them at the same time to abstain from looking at it. But the thieves, seizing upon the treasure, began to rejoice exceedingly. They afterward permitted the good man to proceed on his way, amusing themselves by ridiculing his strange conduct. At length they began to consider what they should do with the gold. One of them observed, "We ought not to leave the place without taking this treasure with us."

"No," replied another, "we had better not do so; but let one of us take a small portion, and set out to buy wine and meat in the city, besides many other things we are in need of;" and to this the other two consented.

Now the evil spirit, which is always busy on these occasions, directly began to tempt the robber who was to go into the city. "As soon," whispered the bad spirit to him, "as I shall have reached the city, I will eat and

drink of the best of everything as much as I please, and then purchase what I want. Afterward I will mix with the food intended for my companions something which I trust will settle their account, thus becoming sole master of the whole of the treasure, which will make me one of the richest men in this part of the world;" and as he purposed to do, so he did.

He carried the poisoned food to his companions, who, on their part, while he had been away, had come to the conclusion of killing him on his return, in order that they might divide the money among themselves, saying, "Let us fall upon him the moment he comes, and afterward eat what he has brought, and divide the money between us in much larger shares than before."

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The robber who had been into the city now returned with the articles he had bought, and was immediately killed. The others then began to feast upon the provisions prepared for them, and were seized with violent pains, and soon died. In this manner all three fell victims to each other's avarice and cruelty, without obtaining their ill-gotten wealth.



CARNIVOROUS OCEAN PLANTS.

ANIMAL-PLANTS.

The aquarium presents a field for delightful and ever-varying study, as its inhabitants belong to the most curious and interesting of ocean and fresh-water creatures. Fishes alone are well worthy of close observation; and when to these are added odd little reptiles, queer shell-fish, and different classes of the wonderful zoophytes, an aquarium presents a constantly changing picture of the marvels of ocean life.

The zoophytes are the most remarkable of all marine creatures. The name zoophyte comes from two Greek words—*zoön*, an animal, and *phyton*, a plant—and therefore has the literal signification of animal-plant.

An important member of the zoophyte family, and one often introduced into aquaria, is the actinia, or sea-anemone, sometimes called sea-rose. Sea-anemones were for a long time considered as vegetables, beautiful and gayly colored flowers of the ocean, and only comparatively recent investigation has discovered them to be animals, and blood-thirsty, voracious little robbers and murderers of the worst character.

One of the most common among the many varieties of sea-anemones is the *Actinia mesembryanthemum*. The polypus-hunter who finds this living flower clinging to sea-coast rocks, and bears it home as an addition to his aquarium, unless he is already acquainted with the nature of his prize, will behold with astonishment and delight the wondrous variations in the appearance of this little creature. Clinging to the rocks, the anemone probably appeared like a round leathery bag drawn in at the centre; but when placed on the miniature cliffs of the aquarium, a wondrous transformation takes place. The bag gradually expands, a mouth appears in the centre, and from it unfold a multitude of petals of a variety of colors—pale scarlet, blood-red, orange, and white—which wave gently back and forth like a graceful nodding flower. Now drop a small earth-worm or tiny fish in the water. The instant it touches the least of these petal-like tentacles the whole flower is in commotion, all the arms reaching toward the struggling victim, and holding it in a grasp so firm that escape is impossible, and it is soon drawn into the capacious and hungry stomach. Every animated thing that comes within reach of the tentacles of the anemone is mercilessly seized and devoured. Even small mollusks and Crustacea are unable to resist the power of the grasping threads, and crabs are often conquered and swallowed by this voracious living flower. For this reason sea-anemones are dangerous inhabitants of an aquarium stocked with creatures having the power of locomotion, and are best placed in a tank with other zoophytes like themselves. How often they eat when free in their natural element is unknown, but weekly feeding is said to be sufficient to sustain them in an aquarium. Small bits of meat are acceptable food, which can be dropped into the water. The instant a descending morsel touches the petals, or tentacles, of a hungry anemone, it is eagerly seized and drawn into the open, greedy mouth. The *Actinia mesembryanthemum* is a very long-lived creature, and certain specimens are reported to have lived over twenty years in aquaria in England.

There are many varieties of sea-anemones, and although all possess the same distinguishing characteristics, they vary in the form and color of the open flower. The *Actinia gemmacia*, which is like a gorgeous sunflower, is said to be the most voracious of its kind. An English naturalist describes a specimen

which swallowed a shell as large as a saucer, its own diameter not being over two inches. Its elastic stomach extended sufficiently to receive this enormous prey; but as the shell completely separated the upper half of the animal from the lower, a new mouth began immediately to form, through which to convey nourishment to the lower portion, thus presenting the curious spectacle of a double-headed monster in miniature. So remarkable are the anemones in their reproductive power, that if the tentacles are injured or broken off, new ones immediately form, and if the animal be cut in two, new mouths form, and soon two perfect animals are waving their graceful tentacles to and fro in the water.

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The locomotive power of the anemone, or actinia, is very sluggish. It will remain days and weeks in the same spot, and it moves only by sliding one edge of its base very slowly along the object to which it is fastened, and drawing the other after it. It can therefore never pursue its food, and appears to have no sense except that of touch, as a worm or shiner may float in the water all about the anemone without causing it the slightest agitation; but if the tiniest tip of one of its tentacles be touched, or brushed even, the whole creature is alive in an instant, and grasping for its prey. In the centre of the illustration are two specimens of this animal-plant, the wondrous flesh-eating flower of the ocean. To the left may be seen a specimen of the *Eledone moschata*—a small and very common member of the octopus family. The eledone is a hideous-looking beast. Its small eyes, which it can open and shut at will, are glistening, and of changing iris. Its long arms are strong enough to grasp a mussel shell, and hold it firmly until its contents are devoured. At the least touch a dark color instantly appears spread over the whole body of this curious creature, and dark prickly spines arise, which impart a stinging sensation when handled, like the anemone and sea-nettle.

The two odd-looking things in the background of the engraving are specimens of the limulus, or arrow-tailed crab. The upper side of the limulus is covered with two smooth overlapping shields, in which are two tiny eyes. Armed with six pairs of nippers, the limulus often fights its companions in the aquarium, and boldly engages in battle with the eledone, which, with its long arms, is more than a match for the pugilistic crab, whose retreat and utter discomfiture generally end the battle, for, thrown on its back, it can with difficulty right itself. If a limulus and eledone be confined in the same tank, almost daily must the former be rescued from the arms of the latter.

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The palm-like creature to the right of the picture is a *Spirographis*, or tube-worm. This savage little beast lives in a tube formed of particles of lime or grains of sand, and stretches its gill-like threads upward, in search of food, in the form of a spiral wreath. It is very sensitive, and at the least touch on the surface of the water, or on the walls of the tank, the threads are instantly withdrawn into the tube.

In the background may be seen the waving, bell-like *Medusa aurita*, armed with prickly threads. It belongs to the jelly-fish family, and loves to lie near the surface of the water, but it is with great difficulty kept alive in an aquarium. When it dies, it dissolves itself into the watery element of which it is so largely composed, and its fairy-like skin can scarcely be discovered in the tank.



A VISIT TO THE OLD HOME.

EASY BOTANY.

APRIL.

Now it is April, and the time has come to explore the woods and wilds.

Let us hasten to welcome the first blossom, so delicate and yet daring to face the uncertain sky of early spring.



DRABA VERNA.

Happy are they who live in the country, who have the freedom of rural roads, rocky banks, wooded hills, and smiling meadows! The young botanical student can not expect to become acquainted with all the wild plants in his vicinity in one summer, nor is this desirable; the pursuit will last for a lifetime, becoming more and more enchanting. But every one can make a pretty collection; and if, in addition to studying out the flowers, and keeping an accurate list of them, and pressing some of the most interesting, the young student will learn to draw with pen or pencil a few of the most simple and graceful, the pleasure will be greatly increased. A great deal of information might be given on botanical subjects, but in this brief article little more can be done than to mention the names of those plants which may be looked for during the month, and the localities they choose. Most of the flowers mentioned are found from Maine to Florida, and West and South as well, though some that are abundant in the Middle states and on Western prairies avoid the



HEPATICA.

chills of New England. The wild flowers delight in the semi-seclusion of pastures and meadows, and spring up along the lines of old fences in fields and on the hills and in the dim woods.

Among the earliest come the anemones, and one of the prettiest of these is the *wood-anemone*, or wind-flower. It grows from six to eight inches high, beside old stumps in the moist woodlands; the stem is smooth, and on the top nods a single flower, drooping, graceful, softly white, and shaded on the outside with pinkish-purple. Another of the same family, the *rue-anemone*, has a central blossom, pretty large, which is surrounded by a row of little buds and blossoms, which has given it the name of hen-and-chickens.

Another delightful April flower is the *hepatica*, growing sometimes in New England woods, but abundantly in the Middle States. This charming little plant is fond of the loveliest shades of deepest blue, fading into the palest purple and white, and on the Orange mountains, in New Jersey, are clumps of the most beautiful rose-color. The hepatica grows finely if transplanted.

Do not fail to find the snow-white bud of the *bloodroot*, which comes up wrapped in a charming little green cloak, and also the smallest of all the floral tribe, the *Draba verna*, with atoms of white flowers, and stems only an inch or two high. Some plants that may be easily found are:

- Wood-anemone, margins of fields; New England.
- Rue-anemone, same localities; New England.
- Hepatica, woody hill-sides; Middle States.
- Bloodroot, rich open woods; New England.
- Blue violet, fields, meadows, hills; everywhere.
- Draba verna, sandy fields and road-sides.
- Spring beauty, moist open woods; New Jersey, South.
- Wild geranium, open woods and fields; New England.
- Erigenia, damp soil; New York, Pennsylvania.
- Quaker ladies, road-sides, fields; everywhere.
- Dandelion, road-sides, fields; everywhere.
- Azalea, New England woods and elsewhere.
- Benzoin—spice-bush—damp woods; New Jersey, Pennsylvania.
- American mistletoe, New Jersey and South.

TWO ANCIENT FAMILIES.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE "LITTLE LITERATI" BY MOTHER.

I fear I appear before you but illy prepared for the evening duties, as, mother-like, my week has been full of cares—unusually so. Being left to choose my own subject, I thought to speak briefly of a worthy but almost extinct family, or, indeed, I should say two families.

Many grown persons persist in declaring that the families have passed entirely out of existence, but I find there are a few of them to be found still on the rugged mountain-sides, on the plains, and down in the deep green valleys. Little children know them best, as they seem to be modest, retiring families, seldom or never intruding themselves on the notice of others. I conjecture, from the freedom with which little children use their names, that they must be a kindly, simple people. My little Mary, or Minnie, tells me almost every day of little Johnnie He or little Sallie She, and in my mind's eye I see little Johnnie He coming through his father's gate on his way to school—a plump, rosy-cheeked little fellow in white pants and blouse.

Most amiable and fair he looks,
That little Johnnie He,
While following close behind his heels
Is little Sallie She.
With flaxen curls and laughing eyes,
This little girl we greet,
Exclaim, "How fair is Johnnie He!
And Sallie She, how sweet!"

Very little is known of the ancestors of these simple people who dwell among the hills. It is believed they were a worthy, renowned family in their day and generation; but, alas! history has given us all too little of them. It is known that they were born hundreds of years ago, living bright and useful lives in the earliest ages of civilization. History speaks freely of one who may have been the great-great-grandfather of the present Hes (much less is known of the Shes), and while speaking of him forgets not to take his travelling artist along to sketch him. This noble ancestor is Mr. Zaccheus He, and he is in the act of performing the feat that saves his name from utter oblivion. The deed is made doubly impressive by the travelling artist sketching the same. The poet too lends his sublime aid to render the act one never to be forgotten. In the present age of the world, many parents, from some deep-seated prejudice, strive to blot out this unpretending family entirely; but little children with tearful eyes bring the Historian, the Artist, and the Poet at once to the rescue, exclaiming, "Then why does the book say,

"Zaccheus He
Did climb the tree?"

CHIN-FAN, THE CANTON BOAT-BOY.

BY THOMAS W. KNOX.

How many readers of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE are aware that in China, on the other side of the world, there are thousands and thousands of boys and girls that live in boats? There is a great city in China called Canton, and at this city there is a river which is so crowded with boats that it is not easy to get around among them. They are not large boats like the great steamers on American rivers, and they do not have comfortable rooms where you can sleep as well as in a bed on shore. Some of them are so small that they can only hold three or four persons, and there is no space for walking around; but these three or four must live there from day to day and from week to week, and if they ever go on shore at all, it is only for a few minutes at a time. A whole family will often be found living on a boat which we would hardly think large enough to cross in from one side of the Hudson River to the other. They cook and eat and sleep on the boat, and they manage to earn a little money by carrying passengers over the river, or doing other work. The kitchen where they do their cooking is only a little heap of coals that a man might put in his hat, and it rests on a box of sand about a foot square. When there are any passengers on board, they sit under an awning in the front part of the boat, and the children are kept in a sort of well, like a dry-goods box, near the stern, but at other times they can run or creep about the deck. The smaller children are secured by means of cords tied around their waists, so as to save them in case they fall overboard. Sometimes the cord that holds a baby is fastened to the side of the boat, and sometimes it is tied to a stick of wood that serves as a float to keep him from sinking. The latter mode is generally preferred, as the baby has more freedom, and can drag himself along the deck where he likes. It is very common to see infants crawling around in this way, and it is surprising how soon they learn to keep out of danger. A Chinese child has only to fall overboard once or twice to make up his mind to keep away from the side of the boat as much as possible.

One day a baby was creeping around the deck of one of these Canton boats, and wondering how he should amuse himself. He looked over the side, and as the sun was shining, and reflecting his face in the water, he thought he discovered a new baby that would be a nice playmate for him. His mother was in the forward part of the boat, and busy at the oars, and his father was working on a ship that lay in the harbor. So this baby, whose name was Chin-Fan, was quite alone, and could do as he pleased. He felt lonesome, and when he saw the strange child in the water, he smiled at him, and wanted to make his acquaintance. The strange baby smiled in reply; and then Chin-Fan held out his chubby little hand to lift him out of the water. Of course the other one held up a hand to meet him, but he could not reach far enough. Then Chin-Fan reached down, while the stranger reached up, and pretty soon Chin-Fan lost his balance, and tumbled into the water.

Wasn't he in a dangerous place? His mother did not know what had happened, and she kept on rowing the boat right away from where the poor little fellow was struggling and trying to keep from being drowned. An American baby would have screamed and sunk, but Chin-Fan was not American, and so he did nothing of the sort. He dropped all thoughts of the strange baby, and considered nobody but himself; he managed to get hold of the billet of wood to which his cord was fastened, and by holding on firmly he kept his head out of water. The current of the river carried him along, and very luckily it carried him to where a ship was anchored, with her great cable sloping down the stream. He struck against this cable, and as he did so, he let go of the billet, so that it went one side of the cable, while Chin-Fan went the other. Then he took hold of the cable with both his chubby hands, and next he screamed as loud as his little lungs would let him.

A sailor on the bow of the ship heard the scream, and was not long in finding that it came from the cable. Chin-Fan kept it up until he was rescued, and just about the time he was taken on board the ship he was missed by his mother. She came paddling down the river in search of him, and shouted to everybody she met that her baby was missing. The sailor held little Chin-Fan up so that she could see him, and in a very short time he was back in his place on the deck of the boat.

For a good while after that incident Chin-Fan kept at a respectful distance from the side of the boat, and he did not show any desire to make the acquaintance of strange babies in the water. His mother taught him how to swim, and he became a boatman at Canton, and afterward he was a sailor on one of the great steamers that run between San Francisco and China. He did a great many brave things in and on the water, and his mother was very proud of him; she said she always knew he would be a famous sailor, when he showed so much good sense and coolness at the time of his first plunge.

THE STORY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

BY EDWARD CARY.

CHAPTER I.

One hundred and fifty years ago a sturdy, hard-working farmer lived near the southern bank of the Potomac River, in what was then the English colony of Virginia. On the 22d day of February, 1732, a son was born in the modest farm-house, who afterward came to be the most famous, and one of the noblest, of Americans. His name was George Washington. He grew up a healthy, hardy boy, quiet in his ways, fond of study, and still more fond of out-door sport. His playmates loved him because he was fair and generous, and looked up to him as a leader, because he had a way of doing what he set out to do.

George's father died when he was only eleven years old, but his mother proved a good care-taker for him. She was a bright-minded woman, gentle but firm, and George always loved her dearly.

At the age of seventeen he began to earn his own living as a surveyor. It was no light work in those days, for the country where he had most to do was in the backwoods. Many a day he trudged through the forest from dawn to sunset, and lay down at night with nothing but a blanket between him and the stormy sky. But he was faithful and careful, and got plenty of work.

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From early boyhood Washington had a strong liking for a soldier's life. He used to train his school-mates as soldiers, was an eager student of drill and tactics, expert in the use of the sword, and a skillful horseman. At that time the Indians swarmed through the forest in the back country, and were often urged on by the French (who claimed the Ohio and Mississippi valleys as their own) to attack the whites. So the colony of Virginia had to keep a good many men under arms to protect the homes and the lives of the people. When Washington was about twenty-two years old he became a Major in this little army, and devoted a great deal of time and hard work to training his men.

In 1755 the French and Indians became so troublesome that quite a large army was sent over from England to clear the borders of them. General Braddock was at their head, and he asked Washington to go with him, with the rank of Colonel, as one of his aides; that is, to be always with him, and help him with advice, or in carrying orders, and in any way he could. The gallant young officer was glad to go. The English General did not know much about fighting in the woods, and his slow and stately march toward the Ohio did not suit Washington's ideas, for he knew that nothing could be done against the French unless it was done swiftly.



BIRTH-PLACE OF WASHINGTON.

When the army neared the French fort, at what is now Pittsburgh, Washington, who was on his back in an ambulance, sick with fever, insisted on going to the front, for he knew there would soon be fighting, and hard fighting, too. The fighting began before it was looked for. The British troops crossed the Monongahela River, and marched up a wooded hollow toward the French fort. As they swept up the hollow in close ranks, with gay red uniforms and gleaming arms, there suddenly blazed upon them, from unseen guns on every side, a murderous fire, before which they shrank quickly back. Startled, but not cowed, their officers rallied them again and again; but they could not see the enemies whose fire was mowing them down, and they slowly and in great disorder tried to get back across the river.

General Braddock was mortally wounded. More than half the army were killed or wounded. Colonel Washington behaved "with the greatest courage and resolution." He rode from point to point carrying orders, and seemed reckless of death. "I had four bullets through my coat," he wrote to his brother, "and two horses shot under me, yet I escaped unhurt, although death was levelling my companions on every side of me."

Fifteen years later an old Indian, who was in the fight on the French side, told him that he had fired at him many times, and ordered his young warriors to do so. None of the shots hit, and the Indians, thinking the young officer was under the special care of the Great Spirit, ceased to fire at him.

After this battle, Colonel Washington was kept in bed for four long months with a fever, which was made worse by his exposure on the battle-field. He had little more hard fighting to do, but he learned many a good lesson from the war—especially to rely on himself, and to study his own way out of any troubles that he met. His fame went, too, to the other colonies, and the young Colonel of Militia was becoming known as a man on whose courage and faithfulness and sound good sense it would do for his country to lean in time of trial.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

PUCK AND BLOSSOM.

From the German of Marie Von Olfers.

PART I.

Once upon a time Puck and his little sister Blossom lived together in a great big egg.

"It's too close in here," said Puck: "let's go and see how it looks outside." Bang! went his head, right through the wall.



Outside it was raining, so he drew back his head in a hurry; but the rain came pattering in after him. "Oh, my doodness!" moaned Blossom, "is *that* how it is outside? Now we shall det wet to the skin."

"Come," said Puck, "let's go find us another house; it'll be better by-and-by."

[Pg 325]



So they went, and they went, till they came to old Mother Bee, who lived with her children in the leafy house of the linden-tree.



"Oh, come in," said she; "but you must sit quite still, or else my children will sting you. As for me, I must go and gather honey."



For a little while they sat quite still. "Sister Blossom," said Puck, "it's too close in here. I must go see where

they keep the honey." He was starting off that very minute, but all the Bee children flew up in such a rage, and fastened themselves upon Puck and Blossom, that they got away, they hardly knew how.

"I didn't even get a taste of their old honey, and I'm all stung up," sobbed Blossom.

"Never mind," said Puck, comfortingly, "it'll be better by-and-by."

On the meadow whom should they meet but Master Stork. "Oh, take us with you up to your nest!" cried Puck. Master Longlegs, being quite willing, quickly snatched up the children in his long bill, and set them down in his nest.



"Sit still," said he, "then you'll have plenty of room."



For a little while they sat quite still. "Sister Blossom," said Puck, "it's too close in here. I've seen young storks fly. I know how they do it; I can do it too. Come, now, you do just what I do." He spread his little arms, she spread her little arms, and—



Thump!—they lay on the ground.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN.

I have subscribed for *YOUNG PEOPLE* for a year. When I have read it, I send it to my cousins in England. We are going there in June, to stay at my grandfather's house. I shall be eight years old on the 25th of March, and I have been across the ocean six times. I will write when I am in England, and tell you about the beautiful things I shall see there. Grandma has some rabbits waiting for me. There is a pond there, with ducks, and Chinese geese, and swans, and all kinds of fowls.

JOHN MACC.

MUSKOGEE, INDIAN TERRITORY.

I am nine years old. We live on a hill. There are many hills here just like it, and the people here call them mounds. They are shaped very queer. They rise straight up on one side. There are rocks on some, and on others trees. We have two ponies, and when we go hunting, they let me ride on one of them. When they shoot anything, I go and bring it back to the buggy.

EVA S. T.

JEFFERSON BARRACKS, MAINE.

I am a poor boy. I lived with an officer here, and I was so fond of reading the daily papers and other things that his wife kindly subscribed for *YOUNG PEOPLE* for me, and I like it very much. I live in the woods, and I caught nineteen wild rabbits this winter in traps. I tried to tame some of them, but I could not. I wish you would tell me how to tame them.

JOSEPH D.

Have any of our correspondents had experience in taming wild rabbits?

GRAHAMVILLE, OKLAWAHA RIVER, FLORIDA.

I am a little boy eight years old, and a subscriber to *YOUNG PEOPLE*. I made the money myself that paid for the subscription. I live away down in Florida, and during the winter months I sell flowers and curiosities to the Northern visitors. I have made twenty dollars this season. I don't go to school now, but my mamma and papa teach me at home. I have a handsome scroll-saw, and can make nice brackets. I had a shepherd dog, but it died. I want to take *YOUNG PEOPLE* till I am a grown-up man.

TURNER E.

DAVENPORT, IOWA.

I want to tell you something about myself. My papa was an American. When he was young, he went to Florence, Italy. There he met my mamma, who was an Italian lady, and married her. I was born in Florence. When I was five years old we moved to Spain. Then I learned the Spanish language. Papa taught me to speak English. We staid in Spain one year, and then moved to America, and came out here. We had not been here long when mamma—poor dear mamma!—died. Then papa went back to Italy, and left me with Aunt Esther. He died while he was there, and now I am an orphan. I am eleven years old, and I can speak and write Italian, French, Spanish, and English, and I am studying German now. I want to be an artist some day, and go back to Italy, and make my name renowned. A friend here gives me *YOUNG PEOPLE*, and I like it so much! Please put some nice pictures in it for me to draw.

AURORA.

DANVILLE, ILLINOIS.

Some little girls—my cousins Nellie and Fannie, Clara Hessey, Nellie Woods, and Kittie Short—are going to have a cooking club, and I wish some other little girls would send some receipts. My cousin Nellie sends you a letter too.

PUSS H.

Here is a receipt for sugar-candy that some little girl may like to try: Two table-spoonfuls vinegar; four table-spoonfuls water; six table-spoonfuls sugar (brown is best). Boil twenty minutes, and pour into a buttered plate. I think the Spanish Dancer was very pretty.

NELLIE H.

FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS.

I am a reader of *YOUNG PEOPLE*. I live on the border of the Indian country, and I see plenty of Indians when they come to town to trade. I went to the United States jail not long ago, and I saw about fifty prisoners. Some of them were white, some Indians, and some negroes. They were all together. I felt so sorry for them. I am ten years old, and I go to school.

CARL C. M.

FORT PLAIN, NEW YORK.

My uncle has come home from India, and brought my brother and myself a beautiful bow, quiver, and arrows. The bow and arrows are made of black cocoa-nut wood, and have ivory tips. The arrows have pointed ends, and colored feathers on the head. The target is three feet high, and has an ivory heart in the middle. In the centre of the heart there is a hole. We have a club of girls and boys, and the one that shoots his arrow in the hole gets a prize. The next prize to be given is an upright writing-case. We only shoot once a week for the prize, but we can shoot other times as much as we wish. Charlie Clark got the prize a month ago. It was a pair of skates. We live in Chicago, and are going home in May. We are visiting my grandma now.

PEARL F. S.

FORT WARREN, BOSTON.

I have a pet Newfoundland dog about three months old. I am teaching him to "fetch and carry." He is very intelligent, and learns very quickly. Every morning he waits at the door of our quarters for my papa, and when papa goes to his office he carries his papers for him. He looks so much like a young bear that we call him Oso, which is Spanish for bear. I am ten years old, and I live on an island in Boston Harbor.

MARY B. R.

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK.

I want to tell you about a baby bear I saw yesterday. A man had it in a store. He brought it from the North Woods. It was so gentle that mamma held it in her hands, and I took hold of its little paw. We have two canaries, named Dick and Daisy. Daisy has made her nest, and there are two pretty little blue eggs in it. If we should have any little birds by-and-by, I will write and tell you about them.

ETHEL M. L. (6 years).

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

I am nine years old. I found the answer to the Geographical Double Acrostic in No. 18. "Sadie," the little girl who made it, is three years older than I am, but I have studied geography the last two years, and I think I can find out any geographical puzzle she can make. Ask her to try again, please.

MAUD T. K.

MUNICH, GERMANY.

I am a little girl six years old, and my name is Meta, but my sisters call me Peter. My thirteen dolls have all funny names. My rubber boy doll is Moses in the Bulrushes. My big rubber doll is Pharaoh's Daughter. I live in Germany, and am learning German. I hope next year to go back to America, and I shall be glad to see all my friends again. I have two gold-fishes, and I feed them with fish food. Papa bought me a microscope to look at bugs with. I am tired, so I will stop.

META F.

SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS, *March 25, 1880.*

I wrote you last November, and told you I was lame, and confined to the house. I am in the house still, but better. I have a gentleman friend who comes to see me every other day, and last week he brought me a plant which he got in the woods, called hepatica, and it is now on my window, in bloom. It is sometimes called liverwort. [Hepatica is a Latin word, and signifies pertaining to the liver.] The willow "pussies" have been out here two weeks. As I can not go out and enjoy sports like other boys, I amuse myself by reading, and I enjoy HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE and WEEKLY very much. I fare pretty well for a sick boy, for I take five different periodicals.

HORACE F. H.

ORANGE, NEW JERSEY.

I thought some of the young readers might like to hear about our alligator. It is about nine inches long, from its tail to its nose. It came from Florida last month. We keep it in a tub. It would not eat much, but we feed it by tapping it on the nose, and putting a small piece of meat on its tongue with a stick.

J. O. U., JUN.

You would better give your alligator a piece of board to crawl up on, for it will die if compelled to remain constantly in the water.

MELROSE, MASSACHUSETTS.

I found a caterpillar when I was going to school one morning last fall. When I came back, I brought it home with me. I put it under a glass globe, and fed it with milkweed leaves for about a week, and then it changed into a large brown butterfly, with black and white spots on its wings. We put it on a piece of Brazilian wood, such as naturalists use, which a lady gave me. The time to find the caterpillars is in July and August. I am trying to keep a cabinet. I found willow "pussies" last January. I put the twigs in a vase of water, and now they have leaves on them about an inch long.

ARTHUR L. H.

Your caterpillar must have passed some time in the chrysalis state before it became a butterfly. It is very interesting to watch the process of transformation from a caterpillar to a chrysalis, and nothing is prettier than the butterfly or moth creeping out of its cell, and expanding its wings for the first time.

CHESTER, NEW JERSEY.

I like YOUNG PEOPLE very much. Although I am only eight years old, I can read it all except the hard names you call some of the animals and plants. But papa explains them to me. I have a Maltese kitty. A short time ago we moved, and I was afraid I would lose it. A lady told me to take it to the new house, and rub butter on its paws. I did so, and kitty spent hours licking off the butter. It kept it busy until it became used to its new home, and contented to stay.

MAMIE B. L.

1880.

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE, *March 22,*

We are four children, two boys and two girls, living in rather a lonely place, and YOUNG PEOPLE gives us a great deal of pleasure. In warm weather we hunt wild flowers and go fishing. There is a brook near here, where I have caught a good many nice pickerel. My sister has found trailing arbutus buds, which have blossomed in the house.

B. M.

NEW HAVEN, VERMONT.

I shall be eight years old next August. I have a cat named Pet. I have a little saw-horse and a little saw, and I saw kindling wood for Grandpa Kent.

KENT K.

I have four brothers, and we have lots of fun. We have three lambs, seven rabbits, a pair of peacocks, and guinea-hens, geese, doves, ducks, and eleven little pigs. My brother Bert is eleven years old, and I am nine.

DE VERE V.

C. V. Hess, No. 440 North Seventh Street, Philadelphia, writes that L. H. N., of Lockport, Illinois, can obtain collections of minerals by addressing him as above.

JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY.

I take your paper, and nobody is more happy than I when papa brings it home. Just as soon as my sister comes back, we are going to get up a sewing society. Do you think it is a good idea?

"BLUE LIGHT."

If you intend to devote your time to making clothes for poor little girls like Bidly O'Dolan, your sewing society is an excellent idea, and we hope you will carry it out. If you stop to look about you, there are many poor children within your reach whose lives you can make brighter and more comfortable. You can not realize the good you can do until you begin, and see the effects of your work.

MILLIE B. S.—The fact that you take YOUNG PEOPLE through a news agent makes no difference whatever. "Wiggles," puzzles, and other favors from our young readers all receive the same attention, and are equally welcome.

C. H. W.—Ceres, called Demeter by the Greeks, was the goddess of agriculture. She was pictured by the ancients holding a torch and sheaf of corn, a basket filled with flowers at her side, and a garland of wheat ears interwoven in her hair. Her festival fell on the 19th of April, the beginning of seed-time. There is a pretty legend that Persephone, the daughter of Ceres, was stolen by Pluto, who allowed her to leave his subterranean kingdom only during the period between spring-time and autumn, and that Ceres, enraged at the theft of her daughter, refused to bless the earth with fruits and flowers during those months when she was deprived of Persephone. The name Ceres is derived from the Sanskrit, and signifies to create. Vulcan, whose Greek name was Hephæstus, was the son of Jupiter and Juno, and the god of fire. He was lame and ugly, but was worshipped as the patron of all craftsmen who worked at the forge. He is represented by ancient artists as a powerful, bearded man clad in a workman's cap and short blouse, surrounded by smith's tools. His festival fell on the 23d of August, when the young men of Athens ran torch races in his honor. You can obtain answers to your other question by inquiring at the rooms of the Society, corner of Court and Joralemon streets, Brooklyn.

HARRY VAN N.—Wheeling is the capital of West Virginia. The *New Hampshire Gazette*, published at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, is the oldest paper in the Union which has been continued without interruption or change of name. It was established by Daniel Fowle in 1756. The Worcester *Spy*, still in existence, was established in 1770, and there are several other papers of equal age. The New York *Commercial Advertiser* is one of the oldest dailies. It was established in 1793 as the *Minerva*, but soon assumed its present name. The New York *Evening Post* first appeared in November, 1801. You will find a complete history of American newspapers in Frederic Hudson's *Journalism in the United States*, published by Harper & Brothers.

[Pg 327]

WILLIE S. W.—There are no rules by which you can train cats. They are not so easily taught as dogs and birds; still, with patience and kindness, you may accomplish your purpose.

"NORTH STAR."—Your puzzle is very neatly and correctly made; but we can not use it, as we have recently published one with the same solution. Do not be discouraged, but try again. The book you inquire for is published by Henry Holt & Co., and is a very useful little volume.

C. W. LISK.—The dauw (*Equus burchellii*) is a South African quadruped, intermediate between the zebra and the quagga. It is found in numerous herds in the wide plains north of the Orange River. It is somewhat larger than the zebra, but more easily domesticated.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

EASY NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

The combined numerals in the following sentence form the name of a great poet, which is composed of 11 letters. A little girl sat in the garden watching some 6-2-5-8-7 frolicking on the grass. The gardener was at work with a 10-9-4-11, and he gave her a 7-5-3-10 to eat. Then a poor Italian came up the road with a 2-9-10-7, and she ran to 9-1-4 her mother if 6-9-10-3-2 might give him a piece of bread.

POLLY.

No. 2.

DROP-LETTER PUZZLE.

Each dash represents a letter. The whole is a familiar proverb:

B—r—s—f—f—a—h—r—l—c—t—g—t—e—.

A. T.

No. 3.

ENIGMA.

My first is in battle, but not in fight.
My second is in darkness, but not in night.
My third is in brighten, but not in cheer.
My fourth is in antler, but not in deer.
My fifth is in knot, but not in tie.
My sixth is in near, but not in nigh.
My whole is a tropical fruit.

EFFIE VIOLET (12 years).

No. 4.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

A vegetable. A puzzle. A gem. A buffoon. A bird. Labor. A roll of coin. An affirmation. Answer—Two branches of an important study.

C. P. T.

No. 5.

WORD SQUARE.

First, a governor. Second, to join. Third, flexible. Fourth, a girl's name. Fifth, attachments to fishing-rods.

E. M.

No. 6.

ENIGMA.

My first is in made, but not in done.
My second is in work, but not in fun.
My third is in knit, and also in spun.
My fourth is in take, but not in won.
My fifth is in chase, but not in run.
My sixth is in cake, but not in bun.
My seventh is in left, but not in begun.

My eighth is in mortar, but not in gun.
My whole was a noted French general.

C. W. L.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 21.

No. 1.

Violet.

No. 2.

Story of Robinson Crusoe.

No. 3.

Athens, Orleans, Oporto, Dover, Granada, Naples, Madrid, Paris, Basle, Berlin, Lyons.

No. 4.

Candy.

No. 5.

H ebre W
Umbrell A
D um B
S iberi A
O at S
N eig H

Hudson, Wabash.

No. 6.

Wellington.

Favors are acknowledged from Lula Barlow, May Thornton, William N., Carrie G. Hard, Laura Wharry, C. N. MacClure, H. T., Lura W., William H. M., Frank Haid, Jennie Clark, L. A. G., J. E. Conger, Clarence L. M., Jennie Graves, Robert Hoyt, Amy R. Du Bois, N. Rust Gilbert, M. H. and M. B., G. C. M., R. V. Thomas, Munn Trowbridge, Walter B. and Clara M., Jeanie Curtis, Marion Comer, Nellie Douglas, E. G. L., Lillian Murdoch, Annie Wright, "Frank," Susie Benedict, Florrie Cox, C. B. Albree, M. Isaacs, Lillian Morton, Fanny Pierce, Deffie MacKellar.

Correct answers to puzzles are received from Maud Knowlton, C. H. MacB., George W. Raymond, F. Schakers, Fred and Mary Pitney, Susie Randall, Willie Atkinson, Grace J. Richards, Lottie G., Herbert N. T., Edward Chamberlin, Hugh Burns, Arthur Brigham, George B. Wendell, Fannie and Florence M., Rose C., May Fields, Agnes Witzel, Lily and Carrie Levéy, Huntington Merchant, Etta Rice, Walter Dodge, V. L. Kellogg, Dora Jelliff, W. S. Wenship, Fannie Rockwell, Pierre Jay, "George," C. H. Conner, J. E. Marshall, Clara Jaquith, Willie Morris, Jessie G., Katie and F. Lawlor.

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I'M ALL READY.

DECAPITATED CHARADE.

My whole a churchman is of weight,
Summoned his grievances to state,
Where, in the lofty audience-hall,
The bishops are assembled all.
His head cut off reveals his plan,
Which he will do as best he can.
What's left, again beheaded, shows
The state of mind in which he goes,
As, mounted on his good gray steed,
He rides along through vale and mead.
Behead that word, and, lo! 'tis plain
Why all his efforts were in vain.
Dejected now, at close of day,
He, sighing, takes his homeward way.
Behead once more: see what he did
Ere sleep fell on each weary lid.

A GEOGRAPHICAL GAME.

An amusing and instructive geographical game has just been invented by M. Levasseur, a well-known French geographer. It is called "Tour du Monde," and is played on a large terrestrial globe, richly illustrated, and divided into 232 spherical rectangles, each of which is marked with a number corresponding to a number on a list which indicates gains or losses in the game. A brass rib or meridian running from pole to pole of the globe, but raised above the latter, is perforated with a row of eighteen holes; and there are eighteen tiny flags provided for the purpose of being planted in the holes. Each flag corresponds to one of the principal states of the world, from China the most populous to Holland the least populous.

To play the game the globe is set revolving, and a player, commencing at the south pole, plants a flag into each hole one after another at each revolution of the globe, and advances northward. The score of the player, which may be either a gain or a loss, is determined by the nature of the facts indicated on the rectangular space above which a flag may stand when the globe stops revolving; and this is, of course, the interesting and humorous part of the game. London, for example, counts thirty, Paris twenty, and so on, according to population. A coal mine, a Manchester cotton factory, a grain mart, all are reckoned gains; but an encounter with a Zulu or a lion in Africa, a storm in the Atlantic, a polar iceberg, a crocodile on the Nile, naturally go for serious losses.

A PERSONATION; WHAT IS MY NAME?

BY ELEANOR JOY.

I was a queen of royal birth. I was married on the 8th of September, 1761, to a certain King of England, with whom I lived for fifty-seven years. I had fifteen children, all of whom lived to grow up except two. The king whom I married had never seen me, and was only attracted toward me by my writing him an eloquent letter on the miseries and calamities of war. I was brought to England in a yacht covered with streamers and flowers. I was not very handsome, and the king, my husband, winced when he saw I was not as beautiful as some of his ladies at court. But he soon began to love me, and I lived happily with him till my death. Who am I?

THE METRIC SYSTEM IN COINS.

It may not be generally known that we have in the nickel five-cent piece of our coinage a key to the tables of the linear measures and weights of the metric system. The diameter of this coin is two centimeters, and its weight is five grams. Five of them placed in a row will, of course, give the length of the decimeter; and two of them will weigh a decagram. As the litre is a cubic decimeter, the key to the measure of length is also the key to measures of capacity. Any person, therefore, who is fortunate enough to own a five-cent nickel may be said to carry in his pocket the entire metric system of weights and measures.



GIVING THE BABIES AN AIRING.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] The Smoke-House was a small stone structure something like a sentry-box, only with an iron door and grated windows. In this negroes, petty criminals, vagrants, and drunkards were confined. It stood at the junction of the two most important streets of the town.

[2] Newcastle County, Delaware, formerly a portion of Penn's Proprietary Government in the Americas.

[3] Here Michael must be corrected. Of the forty-nine millions of Russian peasants, only twenty-three millions were actually serfs.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, APRIL 13, 1880 ***

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