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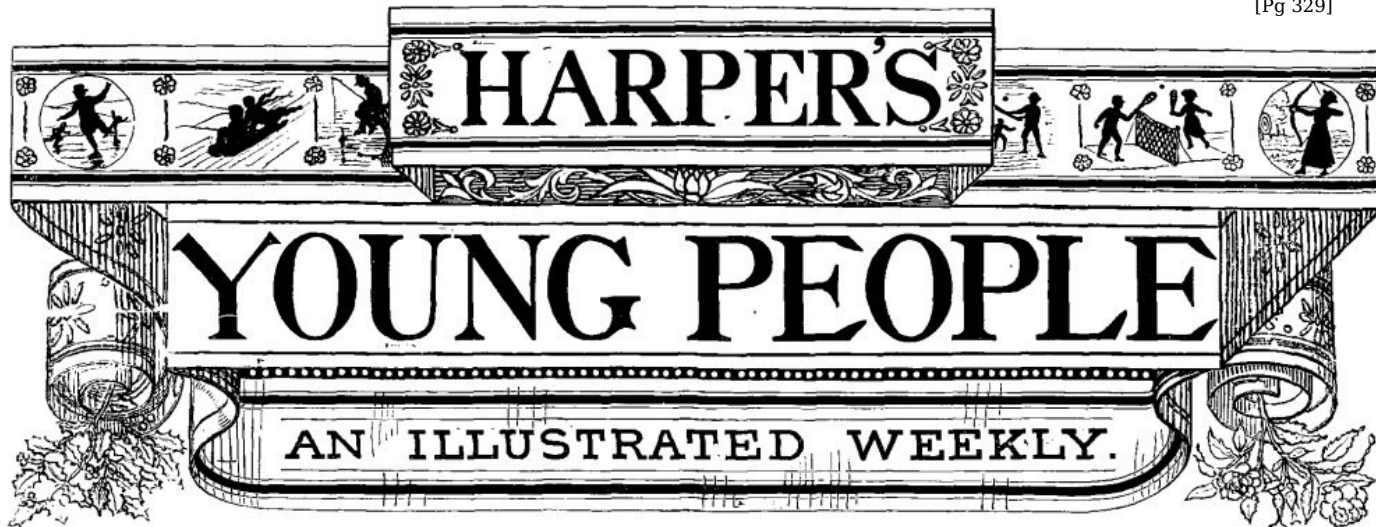
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, APRIL 20, 1880 ***

[SIM VEDDER'S KITE.](#)
[TWO NARROW ESCAPES.](#)
[ACROSS THE OCEAN; OR, A BOY'S FIRST VOYAGE.](#)
[THE ROYAL BLACKSMITH.](#)
[THE BLUE GROTTTO.](#)
[THE ALBATROSS.](#)
[A BEAR STORY.](#)
[PROFESSIONAL DIVERS.](#)
[JOE.](#)
[MR. THOMPSON AND THE BUMBLE-BEE.](#)
[THE STORY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.](#)
[PUCK AND BLOSSOM.](#)
[OUR POST-OFFICE BOX](#)
[THE PENGUIN PUZZLE.](#)
[CHARADE.](#)

[Pg 329]



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SIM VEDDER'S KITE.

BY W. O. STODDARD.

The kite fever visited Hagarstown every year, and caught all the boys over five before it subsided. It generally crept in slowly, a boy and a kite at a time; but this year it came as if a big wind brought it.

Yesterday there had been three kites up at one time in the main street, and Squire Jones's pony had been scared into a canter. The Squire, and Mrs. Jones, and the three Misses Jones, and Aunt Hephzibah had all been in the carry-all at the time, and they had all screamed when the pony began to canter. So the Squire had told the boys he "could not have any more of that dangerous nonsense in the streets," and they had all come out to Dr. Gay's pasture, on the side-hill, to-day, and they had eight kites among them.

[Pg 330]

"Sim Vedder's coming, boys," said Parley Hooker. "He's been making a kite."

"He?" exclaimed Joe Myers. "He's a grown-up man. What does he know about kites?"

"There he comes now, anyway."

They all turned toward the bars and looked, for not one of them had sent up his kite yet.

"Oh, what a kite!"

"It's as tall as he is."

"No, it isn't. He's carrying it on his shoulder."

"It's just an awful kite."

Sim Vedder was the man who worked for Dr. Gay, and he was as thin as a fence rail. So was his face, and his hooked nose had a queer twist in it half way to the point.

He was coming with what looked like an enormous kite trying all the while to get away from him.

All the boys wanted to ask questions, but they didn't know exactly what to ask, so they kept still.

"Kiting, are you? Well, just you let me look at your kites, and then you may look at mine. One at a time, now. Keep back. Make that kite yourself, Parley?"

"Yes, I made it."

"Had plenty of wood around your house, I guess. Your sticks are bigger than mine, and your kite is only two feet high, and mine's five. Look at it."

He turned the back of his kite toward them as he spoke, and they saw that the frame-work of it was made of a number of very slender slips of what looked like ash or hickory wood.

"Mine's made of pine," said Parley. "And yours'll break, too."

"No, it won't. Well, maybe yours'll fly. Set it agoing. There's plenty of wind."

Parley obeyed, and, mainly because there was indeed a good deal of wind, his heavy-made kite began to go up.

"Joe," said Sim Vedder, "hand me that kite of yours."

"Mine's a di'mond. I don't know how to make any other."

"Do you suppose it'll stand steady, with those fore-bands so close together? No, it won't. Up with it, and see how it'll wiggle. Bob Jones, is that yours?"

The third kite was meekly handed to him, for the more the boys stared at Sim's big kite, the more they believed he knew what he was talking about.

"It isn't a bad kite, but those fore-bands are crossed too low. It'll dive all over."

"There's plenty of tail, Sim. It can't dive."

"Tail!—and a bunch of May-weed at the end of it! How's a kite of that size to lift it all? I'll show you," replied Sim.

He was unfastening the fore-bands as he spoke, and now he crossed them again over his little finger, and moved them along till the kite swung under them, almost level.

"That'll do. Now I'll tie 'em hard, and you can cut off your May-weed. There'll be tail enough without it. When I was in China—"

"Was you ever in China?"

"Yes, I was. That was when I was a sailor. I saw kites enough there. They spend money on 'em, just as we do on horses; make 'em of all shapes and sizes. Don't need any tails."

"Kites without tails?"

"Well, some of 'em have, and some of 'em haven't. It's a knack in the making of 'em. I've seen one like a dragon, and another like a big snake, and they floated perfectly. Only a thin silk string, either."

"String's got to be strong enough to hold a kite," said Parley Hooker. "Look at yours."

"Yes, mine's strong; it's made of fine hemp. But it isn't any heavier than yours. What do you want of a rope, with a kite of that size?"

"It isn't a rope."

"It's too heavy, though. Besides, you've tied pieces together with big knots in them. You can't send up any travellers."

"What's that?"

"I'll show you. Some call 'em messengers."

Just then Parley exclaimed, "Sim! Sim! mine's broke! it's coming down!"

"Broke right in the middle, where you notched your big sticks together."

"Just where it needs to be strongest," said Joe, knowingly.

"No, it doesn't. Look at mine."

It was the biggest kite they had ever seen, and it came down square at the bottom; but it was not a great deal wider than Parley's. The curious part of it was the cross-sticks and fore-bands. What did he need of so many?

"So many?" said Sim. "Why, the bands take the strain of the wind. If you put it all on the sticks, they'd bend or break. Don't you see? There's a band tied every two inches, and they all come together out here in the centre knot. It just balances on that."

"Your tail's a light one."

"It's long enough, and it spreads enough to catch the wind. It isn't the mere weight you want in a tail, if your kite's balanced. The wind blows against the tail as hard as anywhere else."

"Won't yours ever dive?"

"Of course it will, with a cross puff of wind; but it'll come right up again. That won't happen very often. I'll send her up. You wait and see."

The other kites were all up now, except Parley's broken one, and most of them were cutting queer antics, because, as Sim explained, their fore-bands were tied wrong, and their tails "did not fit them."

"The Chinese could teach us. But, the way we make kites, there's as much in the tail as in anything else."

"Oh, but our kites are covered with paper, and you've put some old silk on yours."

"Of course I have. It isn't much heavier. The Chinese use thin paper that's as good as silk. It won't wet through."

"Wet? Oh, Sim, it looks as if a storm is coming now."

So it did, and Sim's big kite was going up, up, up very fast, and he was letting the strong brown string run rapidly off from a sort of reel he held in his hand.

"Pull in your kites, boys," shouted Parley. "Let's cut for home."

"I want to see Sim fly his."

"You all pull in yours, and we'll go into the cattle shed. It's only a shower. I can fly mine from the door."

The shed was close at hand, and the door was a wide one. In three minutes more, just as the first drops came down, there was quite a crowd of boys behind Sim, as he stood a little inside, and watched his kite. His reel was almost empty now, and the big kite looked a good deal smaller than when it started.

"How steady it is!"

"It pulls hard, though."

"There comes the rain."

"Thunder and lightning too."

Sim had fastened his wooden reel against the door-post, on a hook that was there, but he kept his hand on the string.

"I declare, boys! Feel of that! The string's wet, and it's making a lightning-rod of itself."

[Pg 331]

Parley and Joe and Bob, and two or three others, felt of it at once.

"Lightning? Why, Sim," said Bob, "I know better than that. I've had an electric shock before."

"That's all it is," said Parley.

"Well," replied Sim, "didn't you ever hear of Dr. Franklin? We're doing just what he did. He discovered electricity with a kite. A wet kite string was the first lightning-rod there ever was in the world."

"Lightning?" exclaimed Bob. "Don't you bring any in here. I won't touch it again."

"Did lightning ever strike anybody when he was flying a kite?" asked Joe.

"Not that I ever heard of," said Sim. "But it's beginning to pour hard. I'll reel in my kite till the storm's over."

He unhooked his reel as he spoke, but it was well he took a good strong hold of it. The wind must have been blowing a gale up where the kite was, and the string was a very strong one for its size.

"I declare! Why—"

But the next the boys knew, Sim Vedder was out in the rain, with that kite tugging at him. He would not let go, and he could not stop himself, and the sloping pasture before him was all down hill. On he went, faster and faster, till his foot slipped, and down he went full length. He held on, though, like a good fellow, and there he lay in the wet grass, with the rain pouring upon him, tugging his best at his big kite.

The wind lulled a little, and Sim began to work his reel. Slowly at first, then faster; and about the time the rain stopped, the wind almost died out, and the wonderful kite came in.

"There isn't a stick of it broken," said Sim, triumphantly, "nor a fore-band. That's because they were made right, and put on so they all help each other."

"Oh, but ain't you wet!" exclaimed three or four boys at once.

Well, yes; he was, indeed, very wet.

TWO NARROW ESCAPES.

BY UNCLE NED.

One evening last winter the children called upon their uncle Ned, who is a sailor, and just home from India, for a story. He willingly granted their request, and at once proceeded to tell them of a narrow escape he once made, as follows:

"At the time of the occurrence I was staying at a small village called Yealah, in India, with a young friend in the civil service, who had a bungalow there. We used to amuse ourselves picking up shells on the beach in the cool of the evening, and later, sitting out enjoying the breeze and smoking our cheroots. One evening, however, our conversation was interrupted by a herd of buffaloes rushing past us at full speed, which we imputed to their being chased by a tiger. On the following morning our surmise proved correct, and we learned that a tiger had carried off a buffalo within two or three hundred yards of where we had been sitting on the previous evening. My friend, who was a keen sportsman, resolved to track the tiger; and I accompanied him, with a number of natives, who took care to keep at a safe distance in the rear. Following the broad track through the jungle, we soon arrived at the spot to which the tiger had dragged his prey, and here we found the mangled remains of the buffalo, but the tiger had betaken himself elsewhere to enjoy his siesta after gorging himself. We proceeded on cautiously; but as the jungle got very thick and tangled, my friend decided it would be imprudent to proceed any further, and we halted. We brought the butts of our rifles to the ground, and being of a botanical turn, I stooped to pick up a flower. At that moment a tremendous roar echoed through the forest, and seemed to stun me. I staggered a little, as if from a blow; but recovering myself, grasped my rifle, for I immediately guessed it was the tiger. My friend, with an exclamation, 'What an escape!' dashed away to the right, and I was about to follow, I knew not exactly whither, when he made his appearance, to my intense satisfaction.

"His first exclamation was, 'The brute has got away. Just like my luck.' And then he added, 'What a lucky escape you had!'

"'What do you mean?' said I.

"'Why, don't you know that, as you stooped down to pick the flower, that tiger sprang at you, and missed you by a few inches?'

"I confess a cold sweat broke out over me, and I inwardly thanked the Almighty for my providential escape.

"As my story is rather a short one, I will tell you another of a lucky escape I witnessed; though first I should mention that soon after this affair my friend paid with his life for the temerity with which he tracked tigers in the jungle.

"The brig to which I belonged was proceeding from Rangoon, and one evening, after having come to an anchor abreast of a small inlet just above Elephant Creek, at the mouth of the Irrawaddy, I accompanied the skipper and a friend in the boat up the inlet to a small village to procure a supply of fruit. On our return my companions expressed their determination to bathe; but as I did not feel inclined to do so, I seated myself in the stern, and taking out of my pocket one of Scott's novels, amused myself with reading until they should have completed their bath.

"About five minutes had elapsed, and the skipper was alone in the water, when my attention was aroused by shouts and screams from the villagers, who were hurrying down to the water's edge. Turning round, I saw my captain, for whom I had no great affection, exerting every muscle to gain the bank, from which he was still at a considerable distance. Not seeing anything to account for the hubbub, my first impression was that a child had fallen into the water, and that he was swimming to the spot of the accident to save it. In an instant I directed the Lascars to 'give way' with the oars, and seizing the helm, steered as nearly as I could guess in the direction to which the gestures of the Burmese appeared to point. Before I reached the point the skipper disappeared beneath the water; but, full of the preconceived impression, I imagined that he was diving in search of the child. A few strokes and we were at the spot, but it was not until the Lascar crew lashed their oars violently into the water that the truth flashed upon me. It must be an alligator that was pursuing him; and soon all doubt was removed, when the master, a few moments later, rose at a short distance from us in a spot where he could feel the bottom, and ran quickly ashore, his shoulder bleeding profusely. The whole transaction occupied a very short time, and the wounded master was conveyed on board the brig with all dispatch.

"On inquiry I learned that the alligator had been first seen by the Burmese, who gave instant notice of his approach, as before described, and the warning was as quickly comprehended by the captain. All his exertions to escape were, however, unavailing, and he felt himself seized a little below the shoulder. By a convulsive effort he succeeded in shaking off his cruel antagonist, and again struck out. The animal, however, again advanced, and seizing him nearly by the same place, dragged him under the surface for an instant or two, when the splashing of the oars compelled him to relax his hold. On examination it proved that the arm, although severely lacerated, was not so much injured as to incur the necessity of amputation; and being placed under medical care at Rangoon, the skipper was soon enabled to resume his duties."

[Pg 332]

[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 VII.

TOWED BY A WHALE.

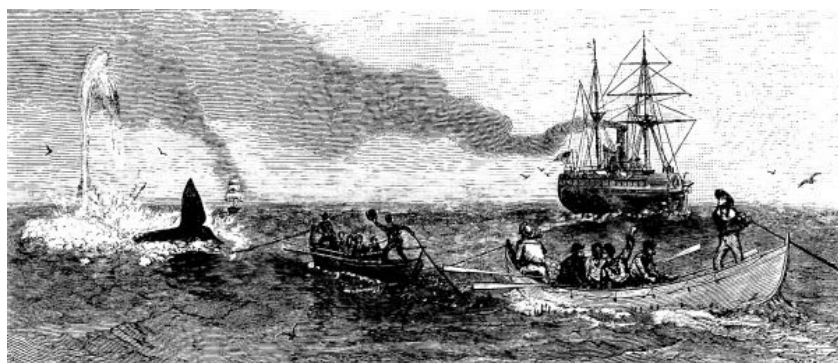
"Have you ever seen a whaler, lad?" asked old Herrick, as Frank came on deck the next morning. "Well, here's one for you *now*, anyway!"

There, sure enough, on the very edge of the great weed prairie which was now almost left behind, lay a large vessel, with her sails hanging loosely against the masts. Alongside of her floated a huge black and white mass, which a second glance showed to be the carcass of a whale, while the thick black smoke that rose from between her masts told that the work of "trying out" the oil was going briskly forward. This was just the sight for Austin, who, in the long winter evenings at home, had devoured every account and engraving of the whale-fishery that he could lay his hands on. He was still gazing, when Herrick touched his arm.

"See them two boats yonder, my boy? They've struck another whale, or my name ain't Herrick."

The whaler's boats were about three miles off, pulling as if for life and death. The other end of the line attached to each was under water, but the disturbance of the surface showed that some large object was in violent motion below. Suddenly both crews "backed water," while a man leaped into the bow of each boat, axe in hand, ready to cut the rope should the whale attempt to drag them under.

The next moment the huge black body broke through the seething foam with a lash of its tail, which, as Herrick said, "sounded like a church tower a-fallin' flat on an acre o' planks." In flew the boats, one on each side, up sprang the harpooners, whiz went the well-aimed weapons, and the wounded whale, giving a leap that set the whole sea boiling, turned and came right down upon the *Arizona*, as if taking *it* for the assailant.



TOWED WITH THE SPEED OF A LOCOMOTIVE.

Frank turned pale in spite of himself, for the charge of this moving mountain seemed able to crush the strongest ship like an egg-shell. But just as it was about to strike the bow, the monster turned again, and made for the distant whaler, towing the two boats after it with the speed of a locomotive.

"Bully for you, mates!" shouted a harpooner, as they flew past. "Ye've turned the critter for us, and now she'll tow us aboard without our pulling a stroke!"

On the sixteenth night of the voyage, Frank was sitting on the fore-hatch, admiring the brightness of the moon. Eight bells (8 P.M.) had just been struck, when the ship's officers were seen crowding together on the after-deck with an appearance of considerable excitement. Before any one could guess what was the matter, one of the men uttered a cry of astonishment, and pointed upward.

The moonlight had become suddenly obscured, not by mist or clouds, but by a huge circular shadow, which moved steadily across the bright disk, blotting it out inch by inch.

"It's a 'clipse, that's what it is," said one; "and I heerd Mr. Hawkins say this minute as some feller ashore, months and months ago, said it ud come this very day and hour. Queer, ain't it, for any land-lubber to be so 'cute?"

The darkness steadily increased, till the men could barely see each other's faces; and with the unnatural gloom, a solemn silence fell upon one and all. Not a word was spoken, not a sound heard, save the rush of the steamer through the great waste of black waters. But the return of the light at length unchained all tongues, and many a quaint comment was made upon what they had just seen.

"Guess the moon's got one side bright and t'other dark, and when she slews round, she brings the dark part broadside on."

"Not much, I reckon; it's them wet clouds goin' back'ard and for'ard over her that spile her polish, same way as the spray rusts our b'ilers."

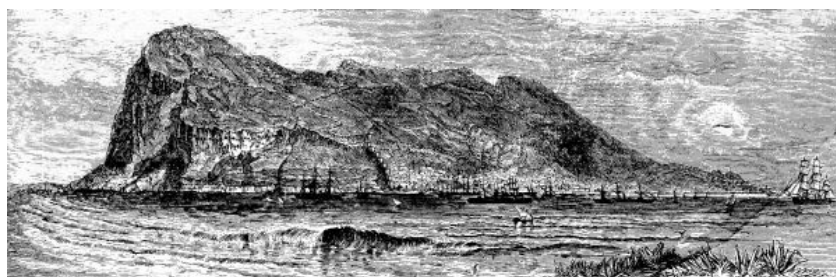
"Shouldn't wonder; for a book-l'arned feller told me once that the sun hisself's all black inside, and them spots ye see on him's jist the black a-showin' through the gildin', like a darky's skin through the holes in his shirt."



THE ECLIPSE.

The signs of their approach to land now became unmistakable. The sea took a greenish tinge; numerous vessels were seen heading the same way as themselves; and various birds, of a kind never met far from shore, came fluttering around them. Frank, too much excited to go below, perched himself in the rigging, and strained his eyes to catch the earliest glimpse of Europe. But Africa came first, in the shape of the Tangier Light; nor was it till 4 A.M. that the haze lifted, and a huge dark mass was seen looming on the port bow, the sight of which made the boy's heart leap, for it was the Rock of Gibraltar.

[Pg 333]



THE ROCK OF GIBRALTAR.

As the dawn brightened, all the grand features of the scene came forth in their full splendor. The long purple range of the African mountains, ending in the bold headland of Ceuta, far away to the southeast; the wide blue sweep of the bay, with the dainty little white town of Algeciras planted on it, like an ivory carving; the flat sandy neck of "neutral ground" between the Rock and the mainland, with all its countless memories of war, from the old-world battles of Spaniard and Saracen to the day when the combined fleets of France and Spain swept it with the fire of 1800 cannon; the bristling masts of the harbor; the long gray curve of Europa Point; the mighty fortress itself, with the narrow eyes of levelled cannon peering watchfully through the terraced rocks that loomed against the bright morning sky like a thunder-cloud; the blue Spanish hills, wave beyond wave, melting at last into the warm, dreamy horizon; and right in front the white houses of Gibraltar, huddled together along the base of the cliff, as if (to quote old Herrick) "they'd been playin' snow-sled, and all slid down in a heap"—all were there.^[1]

To get into Gibraltar Harbor is no easy matter; but the *Arizona*, following in the wake of an English mail-steamer, reached her berth at last, and had barely cast anchor when she was surrounded by a perfect fleet of "shore-boats" freighted with oranges, figs, bananas, cocoa-nuts, monkeys,^[2] parrots, and everything else that any sailor could be expected to buy.

The screams of the parrots, the chattering of the monkeys, the bumping of the boats against each other, the clatter of the oars, the angry outcries of the boatmen, in Spanish and broken English, whenever a monkey or a parrot fell overboard, or a fruit basket got upset, made a deafening



**A GIBRALTAR FRUIT
BOAT.**

uproar. An English man-of-war, anchored close by, was similarly beset; and a mischievous sailor had just lassoed a monkey out of the nearest boat, against which outrage both Jocko and his master were protesting with all the power of their lungs. Frank lost no time in buying a stock of oranges, and tossed a quarter to the tall, black-eyed boatman, whose embroidered jacket, brown handsome face, and round flat hat with a jaunty cockade on one side of it, made a very striking picture. The Spaniard rang it on a knife-blade, tested it with a hard bite from his strong white teeth, and then tied it up in the handkerchief around his head, with a bow and a "Gracias, señor" (thanks, sir), worthy of any grandee in Spain.

"What a fine fellow!" cried Frank, enthusiastically.

"Ay, ain't he?" growled an old tar who overheard him. "If I'd a loose tooth in my head, I'd yank it out 'fore comin' here, for fear some o' them 'fine fellers' ud steal it!"

"You don't say!"

"Fact; and that's why we never let none on 'em aboard. I guess the old sayin's true enough, 'The Spanish wines steals all heads, the Spanish women steals all hearts, and the Spanish men steals everything.'"

[Pg 334]

The captain, purser, and doctor had gone ashore with the ship's papers; but to the no small dismay of the crew (who had expected a long stay in port) a signal was suddenly reported to "up anchor" at once. So the chain-cable was passed around the capstan, the bars manned (for the convenient fashion of getting up the anchor by steam was not yet adopted by the *Arizona*), and to work they went.

The slack of the chain came in easily enough; but to "break" the anchor out of the mud was a harder matter. Up came more men—up came even the "trimmers and heavers" from the engine-room; the bars bent with the pressure of six sturdy fellows apiece, but the anchor never budged. The perspiration rolled down the bronzed faces of the sailors, and their brawny chests heaved like bellows with the strain; but all to no purpose.

Suddenly a "flaw" of wind made the vessel heel, bringing more pressure on the chain. The crew made a desperate effort, and seemed about to conquer, when snap went a bar. The capstan spun back, the men were dashed along the deck like nine-pins, and one poor fellow, jammed between the chain and the hawse-pipe, had his hand cut in two as if by an axe.

"Hello, Yankee Doodle!" shouted a voice from the British ship, "can't git up yer mud-hook, eh? Shall we send a boy down to lift it for yer?"

Frank's eyes flashed fire at the taunt, and the roar of laughter that followed. Forgetting everything in the passion of the moment, he sprang upon the capstan, and shouted:

"Mates, are we going to let that Britisher laugh at us? Not much! Come—all together; now!"

The excited men answered with a deafening cheer, and bent to their work like giants. One tremendous heave, and up came the anchor at last. Round and round they spun, leaping over the cable, which was now coming rapidly in; and while Frank cheered and waved his cap like a madman, they ran the anchor up "chock-a-block," just as Captain Gray and his officers came up the side.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE ROYAL BLACKSMITH.

BY FLETCHER READE.

There was born one day in the grandest palace that ever the sun shone upon a child whose life was for many years a sad and weary one. He was a cripple from his birth; and the Queen his mother, whose heart was so full of pride that there was no room left in it for love, hated the innocent babe, and refused to take him in her arms.

He, poor fellow, would no doubt have been as handsome as any of us if he had been consulted about the matter; but as no one asked him whether he would prefer being ugly or beautiful, he could hardly have been to blame for coming into the world with one leg longer than the other.

The Queen, however, did not stop to think of this. The longer she looked at him, the more angry she became, until at last, when no one was looking, she snatched him from his cradle, and threw him out of the window.

Down through the blue air fell the baby boy; still down and down, till he reached the sea. Stretching out their arms as if to welcome such a royal playfellow, the waves clapped their white hands, until the little Prince crowed and cooed for joy.

Far away beneath the waves lived two nymphs named Eurynome and Thetis, who, when they heard what had happened, decided to adopt the child. Hastening to his assistance, Thetis took him in her arms, and the two hurried along under the sea until they reached the home which they had made for themselves in one of the loveliest of the ocean caverns.

Here the boy lived for many years, but he could not forget his old home among the mountains of Olympus.

"I shall never be happy," he said to himself, "until I regain my rightful place among the sons of Zeus."

He had already displayed great skill in carving, and the little grotto of Thetis was like a piece of

wonderland, fitted and furnished with all manner of curious ornaments made by the lame boy, Hephæstus.

As he grew older he resolved to turn his talents to account, so he made friends with the Old Man of the Sea, an elderly gentleman of uncertain temper, who spent his time in sailing over the ocean in an enormous shell drawn by sea-horses.

To him Hephæstus brought a trident, hoping that the gift would induce him to offer the young exile his assistance in making peace with the Queen.

Now this trident was a magical three-pronged spear, with which the owner could still the waves in their wildest fury. It was therefore almost invaluable to the old sailor; but although he accepted the gift, and praised the workmanship, he forgot to thank the workman, and sailed grandly away.

It was not long after this that the lame Prince, walking one day through the woods, fell in with a band of wandering musicians.

Some were dancing; others were singing; and as he examined them more closely, he saw that they had legs and hoofs and even long ears like goats.

While he stood looking with wondering eyes at these fantastic beings, the leader of the band suddenly approached him, and said,

"What aileth thee, my brother? Tell me thy trouble, that I may make thee glad again, for I can not abide a sorrowful countenance."

"I am called Hephæstus," replied the Prince; "but I know not who you may be, to call me brother."

"You will be wiser when you are older," laughed his new friend. "It is enough for you to know now that I am a son of Zeus. But I like not the solemn grandeur of the court, so I live in the woods, keeping holiday all the year. These fauns and satyrs are my friends; and if you will join our company, I can promise you a merry life and a long one."

But Hephæstus shook his head.

"I can never be happy," he said, "until I have won the love of the Queen-mother. To do that I must show her that I have gifts quite as valuable as beauty; but I have no one to plead my cause, and I, alas! do not know the way to Olympus."

"If that is all your trouble," answered the merry man of the woods, "set your heart at rest, for I myself will present you at court."

With these words, the good-natured Bacchus threw the skin of a wild beast over his shoulders, and the two travellers became the best of friends as they journeyed together along the road which lies between the wooded heights where the satyrs dance, to the hill where the Olympian palace hides half its rosy towers among the clouds.

The Queen at first would not recognize her son; the unhappy Prince hung his head, and the assembled courtiers laughed long and loud at the awkward silence of the youth.

Bacchus, however, was not to be frightened by laughter, however inextinguishable, and he pleaded his brother's cause so well that the Queen finally consented to overlook his ugliness, and ordered that a palace be built for him.

"All I ask," said the Prince, "is a workshop, a pair of bellows, and a forge."

"Then you are not my son, after all," exclaimed the Queen. "You are nothing but a poor blacksmith."

[Pg 335]

"Tis true I am a blacksmith," he answered, "but I will show you that I am no common workman."

Concealing her astonishment, the Queen ordered his request to be granted, and Hephæstus, glad but silent, limped away.

Day after day found him at his work; and at length one morning, when the King and Queen were sitting in their banqueting hall, the doors were thrown open, and there appeared at each entrance a golden table laden with nectar and ambrosia.

One by one the tables walked across the hall as if they had been alive, and close behind followed Hephæstus, supported on either side by lovely maidens, fashioned, like the tables, out of gold.

To the King he presented a golden sceptre and thunderbolts, which no one but Zeus himself could hold.

"Thou art indeed our son," cried the King. "Choose what thou wilt, and it shall be given thee."

Looking around the court, the eyes of Hephæstus rested at last on Venus—a Princess so beautiful that she was supposed to have been made of sea-foam.

"Grant me, O Zeus, that I may have this lady for my wife," said Hephæstus.

The request was granted almost before it was asked, and the wedding which followed was one of the most brilliant that had ever taken place in the country of Olympus.

Venus, however, was as false as she was beautiful, and Hephæstus was often unhappy; but he consoled himself as best he could by keeping perpetually at work, sometimes making a brazen shield for one friend, or forging a suit of armor for another.

So it came to pass that the lame boy Hephæstus, exiled from his father's court on account of his ugliness, became the world-renowned royal blacksmith, honored by all for his patient endurance of wrong, for his matchless skill, and for his loving service.

"Did you ever see any blue-colored people?" asked Miss Bertha, aged ten, shortly after my introduction to that young lady at Naples. I was forced to confess that, though my acquaintances had shaded from white to black, and brown to red, I had never been fortunate enough to boast of a blue one.

"Oh, I saw 'most a hundred the other day!" said she, triumphantly. "Then did you ever see a silver-colored man?"

"A silver-colored man? Miss Bertha dear, I have an idea that you have been to fairy-land."

"He was a real silver-colored man," said she, very earnestly.

"I suppose he was the King of the fairy-land you went to."

"Oh no, he wasn't; he was a big boatman. But it was just like fairy-land; it was splendid!—really, just splendid!"

It proved that the dear little enthusiast had been, a few days previous, on a visit to the Island of Capri to see the famous Blue Grotto; since which she had been startling people with her descriptions of blue folks and a silver man.

Seeing that I couldn't have a better guide than Miss Bertha, the next morning we and a jovial party went on board of the tiny steamer that plies between Naples and the eighteen miles distant Island of Capri, hollowed under the cliffs of which the Blue Grotto is situated. The Bay of Naples, you know, is called the most beautiful in the world, and a sail across it is a lovely thing in itself. There are such glorious blue skies overhead, and such clear blue waters underneath, that the steamer appears to bear one through the air between two skies. Then, close to Naples, is seen that wonderful volcano, Vesuvius, with always a cloud of smoke curling lazily out of its crater. And, besides, the white houses of Naples are so built on a hill-side, the streets climbing to the top, that a few miles away that too is a handsome sight. Miss Bertha told me that they were the marble steps to the giant's palace, whose bird was carrying us to the enchanted island to show us the giant's jewel-room. Capri then looked like a distant light-house, merely a brown rock rising out of the sea.

As we went bobbing over the waves it grew higher and higher, which Miss Bertha explained was the correct thing for it to do, until, when the steamer anchored a little distance from its cliffs, it rose straight up from the water to a dizzy height. A flock of little skiffs crowded around the steamer for the passengers, and Miss Bertha, taking charge of me, led me into one.

"But the Grotto, where is it?" I asked, staring at the huge cliffs, straight at which our red-sashed boatman was rowing us as if to destruction.

Skiff after skiff ahead of us was seen to be swallowed up in the cliffs in the most amazing way, and not an opening in the rocky wall to be seen. "You mustn't be afraid," said my sweet little guide, assuringly: "it won't hurt;" and she gave me her hand, that—perhaps I shouldn't tell—trembled a little, and directly its mate stole into my grasp.

"Lie low down," said our boatman, when the skiff was within a few feet of apparently smashing against the cliff.

"And shut your eyes tight," said Miss Bertha, screwing up her eyes so tight that she showed all of her pretty white teeth in the funniest way. The skiff scratched and bumped on the rocks a few times, and then floated clear.

The bright sky was gone, the gulls flying about the cliffs were gone, the steamer was gone, and the cliffs themselves were gone: we had slipped under them, through a tiny opening, and were in the Blue Grotto. The blue roof rose high above us, and there was ample room within the Grotto for many times the numerous blue skiffs filled with blue-haired blue people, all dressed in blue clothes, and breathing blue air. That is just the way we appeared. The water was lighter-colored than the air, and when a boatman jumped overboard, his every action being distinctly seen, he seemed to be flying in air, and not diving in water. It gave one a weird crawly feeling to see him, and when he came to the surface it seemed to be the most natural thing for him to tumble back to us after capering around in the sky. Then he crawled out on a rock to allow the water to drain off his clothes, and then it was that Miss Bertha's promise of a silver man was made good. He stood there a moment, appearing like a burnished silver statue, and the trickling drops as they fell from him sparkled with silvery glitter.

An oar splashed in the water sent the drops flying into the blue air, to glimmer there in silver brightness a moment, like a patch of the starry Milky Way on a frosty night.

"Isn't it lovely!" said Bertha, clapping her hands joyfully; "and you can get a whole handful of silver by just reaching for it, but you can't keep it." She grasped the blue water as she spoke, and it escaped through her fingers in glittering drops, as if a handful of coins was melting in her palm. Whatever is held in the water assumes, for the time, this silver-color, and the blades of the oars shone as though the Capri boatmen were so rich that they had made them of pure silver.

For hundreds of years the Grotto was known to exist somewhere under the cliffs of the island, but so small is the entrance that it was not rediscovered until this century. It can not be entered except the sea around the island is very calm; and as all the beautiful effects are due to the refraction of light, the bright mid-day sun should be shining without.

THE ALBATROSS.

Far away in the desolate South Seas there lives a large and beautiful bird called the albatross, the giant member of the petrel family. The wandering albatross (*Diomedea exulans*) is the largest of its tribe. Specimens have been captured measuring four feet in length, and

with an expanse of wing from ten to fourteen feet. The body of this bird is very large, its neck is short and stout, and its head is armed with a powerful hooked beak from six to eight inches long. It is snowy, glistening white, its long wing-feathers tipped with black.

Its mighty strength of wing renders it the admiration of all navigators, who fitly name it the lord of the stormy seas. In the desolate regions where it lives the sailors hail its appearance with delight, as it comes sailing around the ship with majestic, careless flight, rising, sinking, now swooping down to seize some cast-off mouthful of food, now poising high above the mast-head, moving with the ship at the most rapid speed, and yet with scarcely a perceptible movement of its gigantic wings.

In storm or calm the albatross is master of the wind and waves. Sailors, straining every nerve to guide the laboring, struggling ship through tempestuous seas, look up, and see far above their heads the albatross calmly breasting the gale, its majesty unruffled, and its great out-stretched wings as motionless as on a still, sunny day. Its strength of flight is marvellous, and is said to be superior to that of any other bird. Sailors have captured these royal inhabitants of southern polar regions, and marked their glistening breasts with spots of tar, that they might distinguish them and determine their power of endurance; and in several instances the same bird has followed a ship under full sail, before the wind, for seven days and longer, circling round and round, and apparently taking no rest, its sharp eye always watchful for any refuse of food cast overboard by the sailors.



A SKIMMER OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

The albatross is very voracious, and easily caught, as it is neither cunning nor shy. As it lives in desolation, and has little to do with men, it knows nothing of trickery, nor dreams of the plots laid against its royal freedom. An interesting account is given of the capture of an albatross by an officer of a French ship. It was a sunny, windy day, and the vessel was speeding along near the dreary Tierra del Fuego, when a great shadow like a cloud passed over the deck. On looking up, the officer saw an immense albatross, its white breast glistening like snow, floating aloft with wide-spread wings. Wishing to examine the bird more closely, he gave orders for its capture. Fastening a piece of fat pork to a strong hook attached to a line, a sailor threw it overboard, and allowed full forty yards of cord to run out. The albatross soon descried the tempting morsel, and sweeping down in graceful circles to seize it, was soon securely hooked. The only show of resistance it made to being drawn on board was to extend its wings, and utter loud discordant cries. Once on deck, its grace and majesty vanished. It showed no fear, and the hook, still fastened in its beak, did not seem to annoy it; but no landsman could have been more awkward than was the albatross on the smooth rocking deck. It staggered and waddled clumsily, and tried in vain to lift itself with its wings. It showed considerable temper, and snapped furiously at all who approached, and the captain's dog, which came trotting up, full of curiosity over the strange visitor, received a terrible blow from the hooked beak, which sent him howling with pain to the most distant corner of the deck. As the officer was desirous to preserve the beak, breast, wings, and feet of this magnificent creature as souvenirs, he ordered the sailors to kill it, although he states that it impressed him as though he were commanding the execution of some royal personage.

The albatross is an expert swimmer, and floats on the waves like a piece of cork, riding in undisturbed serenity over the lofty foaming crests of stormy billows. It is not, however, a good diver, and is obliged to subsist on whatever food comes to the surface. It might be called the vulture of the seas, for dead fish, floating carcasses of whales, and other sea refuse form its main diet.

The habits of the albatross during the breeding season are still partially veiled in mystery, as the desolate mossy headlands of Tristan d'Acunha, Inaccessible Island, and other lands lying far to the southward, where the albatross makes its nest, are visited only at rare intervals. The island of Tristan is circular, and almost entirely volcanic, and on the summit of its cliffs, which rise a thousand feet above the sea, on broad dreary plains of dark gray lava, the albatrosses gather some time during November, and prepare themselves nests. Selecting some space free from tussock-grass, the bird scrapes together a circle of dried grass and clay, in which it lays one egg about the size of a swan's, white, with a band of small brick-red spots round one end. But few naturalists have been able to visit these great breeding warrens, and none have determined how the albatross lives and feeds its young during its absence from the ocean. It is certain that the great bird rarely leaves its nest, for there is a wicked little robber gull ever on the watch to break and eat the egg, should the mother-bird desert it for a moment.

[Pg 337]

The young, when hatched, are snow-white, and covered with a soft woolly down. A traveller once climbed up the dangerous precipice of Tristan d'Acunha, and saw these young helpless things lying in the nests, while several hundred pair of parent birds were stalking awkwardly about. They all snapped their beaks with a great noise, and ejected from them an offensive oil—their only means of defense. The same traveller visited the place five months later, when he found all the young albatrosses sitting in their nests as before, but the old birds had all disappeared. It is supposed that an albatross must be a year old before it can fly; and as the parents depart some time in April for their ocean hunting grounds, and are never seen to return until the breeding season again comes round, it is astonishing what feeds and supports the young until they are able to hunt for themselves. Naturalists wonder over this point, and advance many different theories, but as yet no facts have been discovered in regard to the diet of the young and helpless bird.

The albatross was formerly regarded with superstitious reverence by sailors, who considered this majestic companion which came around the ship in desolate icy seas as a bird of good omen; and to kill one was considered a crime that would surely be punished by disaster and shipwreck. Coleridge, the English poet, has written a wonderful poem on this superstition, called the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," to which Gustave Doré, a French artist, has drawn a series of illustrations picturing the lonely frozen ocean, and the majestic, lordly albatross which the unhappy sailor shot with his cross-bow, thereby bringing misfortune and death on the goody ship and its crew.



**"KITTY, YOU CAN'T HAVE MY APPLE."—Engraved
from a Picture by F. Dielman, by Permission of R. E.
Moore, American Art Gallery, New York.**

A BEAR STORY.

BY EMILY H. LELAND.

A good many years ago, when the century was young, there came to live in the big forests of Northern Vermont a man and his wife and their little boy. Partly because they liked to be high up out of the fogs and damp, and partly because there was little else but hilly land in that part of the country, they built their cabin at the top of a nice baby mountain, which was covered at the back with an immense orchard of maples and butternuts, but which was quite bare and steep at the east side, and had rocks cropping out which the farmer thought would be fine for building a good stone house with some day.

It was long, hard work starting a farm in a place where there was nothing but woods; but after a year or so had passed by, and enough trees had been cleared away to make room for a corn field and a potato patch, and a little chicken-house and cow-shed had been added to their log-cabin, the young farmer used to sit down before their rough stone fire-place, with its bright crackling fire, and trot his boy to sleep upon his knee, while he watched the pretty young mamma putting away the supper things, thinking all the time what a rich and happy man he was. And when at last a pig-pen was joined to the cow-shed, and two cunning little pink-nosed pigs had been bought of a neighbor five miles away, and placed in it, he felt richer and grander than many a man does nowadays who owns a railroad.

And how they grew, those pink-nosed pigs! They had a southern exposure, good drainage, plenty of dry leaves and moss for bedding, and an abundance of milk, with an occasional handful of cracked corn or a pint of mashed potatoes. How could they help growing? The farmer took great delight in feeding them, and his wife would sometimes ask him, with a laugh, "Now, Stephen, which do you love the most—the pigs or our little 'Lisha?'"

Elisha was the baby's name. They hadn't thought of such names as Carl and Claude and Clarence in those days.

One fine moon-lit night, late in the fall, after the corn had been husked and carried into the loft, and some of the big yellow pumpkins had been cut into strips and hung on long poles near the kitchen ceiling to dry, and others had been stored away for the cow's luncheons and the Thanksgiving pies, and the potatoes were safe in the cellar, and the onions hung in long strings above the mantel-shelf, this young farmer covered up the glowing coals in the fire-place with ashes, so they would keep bright and hot for the morning fire, and went to bed feeling quite well prepared for winter, for he had that day "banked" the house clear up to its queer little windows, and made the cow-shed and pig-pen and hen-house very cozy with loads of hemlock and spruce boughs.

[Pg 338]

He was just dozing off to sleep, when all at once there sounded through the still, frosty air a long and terrible squeal from the pig-pen.

The farmer did not wait for it to end, but bounced out of bed, tore away the clumsy fastening of the door, and rushed out with a war-whoop that could have been heard a mile away if there had been anybody to hear it. As he rushed he caught up a corn stalk that happened to lie in his way. A corn stalk was a foolish thing for him to pick up, but people seldom stop to think twice in such moments. He was around by the pig-

pen in no time, and there he saw a great burly *something* just lifting one of his dear little pigs over the top of the pen. He rushed upon him, and struck him over the head with the corn stalk. There was a joint in the corn stalk nearly as hard as a crust of bread, and the *something* seemed to almost feel it through his thick fur, for he turned about and looked at the farmer, as if saying,

"What do you want of *me*?"

And there he was—a great, black, full-grown bear!

"Drop him! drop him!" yelled the farmer; and he brought the corn stalk down upon the bear's nose. The bear dropped the pig very quickly, but he grabbed the man in place of it, and then commenced a grand wrestling match. The farmer was a strong man, and he was "fighting for the right." The bear was strong too, and being a little tired of wild honey and beech-nuts, he had made up his mind to have a little spring pig for his family's supper. As they pushed and pulled this way and that, the bear tripped against a stump, and down they came, bear and man, to the ground; and being near the steep hill-side, in about ten seconds they began rolling down, over and over, and faster and faster, bumping over rocks and hummocks, but never letting go, and never stopping until the bottom of the hill was reached.

And then—

Up got Mr. Bear, and made off down the valley at a slow trot, never stopping to say "good-night" or anything. And up got the farmer, and scrambled up the hill as fast as his bruised legs could carry him, and feeling of his ribs as he went, expecting to find half a dozen of them at least punching out through his night-gown. But they were not.

At the door he was met by his wife keeping guard with the birch broom over her sleeping boy.

"Oh, Stephen! what *was* it?" she said, in a shivering whisper.

"Oh! nothing but a bear, nothing but a bear," said the farmer.

But the little pigs slept in the hen-house for the rest of the night, and the next day they had a stout log roof built over their heads.

PROFESSIONAL DIVERS.

One of the diver's earliest experiences is a disagreeable "roaring" sensation in the ears for some time after his first descent; but this is little felt after he becomes accustomed to his work. It is caused by the air pressure, which increases with depth. From the same cause the diver often experiences a sensation amounting to earache, which any one may test for himself by descending in a diving-bell. With regard to the mode of working, it is noteworthy that, instead of moving gradually outward after reaching the bottom, the diver usually gropes at once to the full length of his tether in the required direction, and then works slowly back to the starting-point. He considers this the safer method, partly because it leaves him at the finish directly at the place whence he has to rise.

The length of time during which a diver can remain under water depends very much upon his own strength and experience, the steady care with which the air-pump is managed, and other circumstances. M. Frendenberg states that in the repair of the well in the Scharley zinc mines, in Silesia, two divers descended to a depth of eighty-five feet, remaining down for periods varying from fifteen minutes to two hours. Siebe, another authority on the subject, relates that in removing the cargo of the ship *Cape Horn*, wrecked off the coast of South America, a diver named Hooper made seven descents to a depth of no less than two hundred and one feet, and at one time remained down forty-two minutes—supposed to be the greatest diving feat ever achieved.

JOE.

BY MRS. MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

Bright brown eyes and tangled hair,
Rosy cheek beneath the tan,
Fearless head on shoulders square—
That is Joe, the little man,
Helping mother all he can.

Father is away at sea
(Oh, the vessel tarries long!):
Lonely would the cottage be,
Many a weary day go wrong,
But for Joe, with shout and song.

Rough the weather, fierce the gales,
Wild the nights upon the shore:
Oft the dear wife's courage fails,
When she hears the breakers roar,
Lest her sailor come no more.

Joe, with lion heart and leal,
Tells her it is safe outside;
That the deep sea does not feel
All the troubles of the tide;

That the good ship safe will ride.

Mother heeds her comforter:
He is only eight years old,
But his earnest words to her
Are as rubies set in gold—
Precious with a worth untold.

MR. THOMPSON AND THE BUMBLE-BEE.

BY ALLAN FORMAN.

"Buzz, buzz-z, buzz-z-z," scolded old Mr. Bumble-Bee, flying around Mr. Thompson's head. Mr. Thompson didn't understand him, however, and only brushed at him impatiently, and said, "Get out!" in a tone anything but sociable; but the old bee kept flying around just the same, and complained in his drowsy voice: "Buzz, buzz-z, buzz-z-z. I wish you would go away. I want to get into my house, and I don't want you to see me. My family are in there, and we are making bread to-day, and unless I get home with the flour, my wife will scold awfully. Buzz, buzz-z, buzz-z-z."

But in the mean time Mr. Thompson had fallen asleep, and the old bee sat down on the fence rail and watched him. "Hum, hum, hum," he murmured. "I guess that he has gone to sleep. I don't see what men want to stay awake for, anyway; they are not half so much trouble when they are asleep. And only listen how nicely he can buzz through his nose!—he really seems to be quite like a sensible bee."

Now Mr. Thompson says he did not go to sleep at all; he says that he only closed his eyes, and in a few minutes he could understand every word that the old bee said.

"He's a pleasant-looking man," buzzed the bee. "I wonder if he likes honey?"

[Pg 339]

Mr. Thompson answered through his nose that he was very fond of it.

"Sensible, too," said the bee, who thought (all bumble-bees do) that anybody who agreed with him must be sensible. Then, turning to Mr. Thompson, the bee murmured, in a more pleasant hum, "If you like honey, try some of this." As he said it he alit on Mr. Thompson's lips, and pressed some of the honey he had with him into his mouth.

Mr. Thompson began to grow smaller, and as he shrunk in size, his light alpaca duster became gauzy, and formed itself into wings. Just as he had begun to wonder how long it would take him to shrink into nothing, the bee said, "There, I guess that will do."

Mr. Thompson stretched himself, and found to his surprise that he was in reality nothing more than a large black bumble-bee. He shook his wings, arose, and, flying around for a few moments, settled on the fence rail. He has since told me that if it is true, as Mr. Darwin says, that men were evolved from the lower orders of animals, they made the greatest mistake of their lives when they left off their wings.

"Well," remarked the old bee, "you look quite presentable. Won't you drop in and take dinner with me? My wife would be delighted to see you."

Mr. Thompson thought how much he resembled a certain highly respectable old gentleman who was wont to invite his friends to his humdrum dinners, and buzz them unmercifully in the same drowsy way. But as he did not like to offend his new friend, he answered, politely, that he would be most happy, and followed him under the rail into a round hole that was the door of the bumble-bee's house.

They entered a long cylindrical corridor, or, as the old bee expressed it, "arched at the top, sides, and floor." It was lined with the fibres of the wood, and was as soft as velvet. After walking some distance along the hall, they reached a part where it widened into a sort of parlor. Here Mrs. Bumble-Bee was seated, resting from the labor of bread-making.

"Well, you are home at last," she buzzed, angrily. "I'll be bound you forgot the flour."

"Why, my dear, don't you see it? I have it here," answered Mr. Bee, soothingly, pointing to two little yellow bundles on his legs.

After greeting her guest, Mrs. Bee excused herself on the score of domestic duties, and busied herself in carrying the flour, or pollen, into the corridor above. Soon she returned, and after they had made a meal of bee-bread and honey, Mr. Bumble-Bee proposed to show his guest through his mansion. They passed through several long corridors, so constructed that the rain could not beat into the living-rooms, as Mr. Bee explained. One end of one of the upper galleries was securely walled up, and in another compartment lay three or four worm-like insects almost covered with bee-bread.

"What is this room used for?" inquired Mr. Thompson.

"This is the nursery," answered Mr. Bee, proudly.

"Ah, indeed! And what are those white, ugly-looking grubs?"

Mr. Bee looked aghast for a moment, but his surprise quickly turned into indignation, as he buzzed, angrily: "Grubs! grubs! ugly-looking grubs! Those, sir, are my children, sir, and I flatter myself that a more charming family does not exist. Grubs, forsooth! Out of my house, base insulter!" And before Mr. Thompson could apologize, Mr. Bee had pushed him out, and stung him on the end of his nose.

He fell, and as he dropped from the rail he began to grow larger, and when he reached the ground he had assumed his natural proportions. He found himself lying in the same place beside the fence that he had occupied when the bee first spoke to him.

When he related the story to his friends, some one suggested that he had dreamed the whole adventure. He

gently touched his inflamed and swelled nose, and answered, in a grieved tone, "I suppose I dreamed this too."

This argument was unanswerable, and Mr. Thompson is now engaged in writing a lecture on the habits and customs of the bumble-bee. Among other things he says, "Bumble-bees only consider those people sensible who agree with them"; and again, "Bumble-bees invariably think their own children the most beautiful and interesting creatures in existence."

Which facts, if they are true, show the great superiority of men over bumble-bees.

THE STORY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

BY EDWARD CARY.

CHAPTER II.

After the close of the French and Indian war, Washington, then in his twenty-seventh year, married Mrs. Martha Custis, and settled down to a Virginia planter's life at Mount Vernon. His neighbors elected him again and again to the House of Burgesses of the colony—a body much like one of our State Legislatures. Here he did not talk much, but he kept close watch of matters, and knew, as nearly as he could, all the facts that were needed to make up his mind, so that he had a good deal of weight with other members, and yet was very modest. When he first took his seat in the House, the Speaker was directed to thank him, in the name of the people, for his great services as an officer. This the Speaker did in glowing terms, quite unexpectedly to Washington. Washington rose to reply. His face flushed; he struggled to speak; but could only stammer, and stood speechless and trembling. "Sit down, Mr. Washington," said the Speaker, with a smile. "Your modesty equals your valor, and that surpasses the power of any language that I possess."

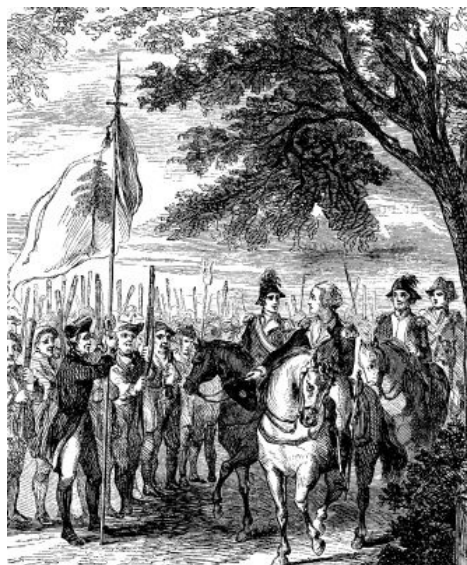
After Washington had been some ten years at Mount Vernon, looking forward to the peaceful and easy life of a wealthy farmer, certain things happened which seemed then of small account, but which were to lead to a great change in his career. The government of Great Britain undertook to raise money in America for use on the other side of the ocean. This government was made up of the King and the Parliament, and the Parliament was for the most part chosen by the people of England. The people of America were not allowed to choose any of its members, and when the British government declared that the Americans must raise money for it, the Americans had no one to vote for them or speak for them on that question. They thought that this was not fair. They were willing to pay the expenses of their own governments, because they had some voice in them, but they would not help pay the expenses of the British government, in which they had no voice.

The British government passed an act which said that every written promise to pay money must be upon stamped paper, which could only be got by buying it from British officers. If the promise was not on this kind of paper, the man who signed it need not pay. The British thought this would bring in a good deal of money. But the Americans would not use the stamped paper. They seized that which was sent over, and burned it. Other kinds of taxes were tried, but the Americans would pay none of them. Washington took the side of his countrymen with great zeal. He wrote to a friend: "I think the Parliament of Great Britain have no more right to put their hands into my pocket, without my consent, than I have to put my hands into yours." But the British government insisted, and sent over troops to Boston to try and force the people to submit.

Washington was one of a number who proposed that a Congress, or great meeting, should be called to arrange for resisting the taxes, and he was chosen to go to the Congress, which was held at Philadelphia in September, 1774. Meanwhile more soldiers were sent over. An attempt was made on the 19th of April, 1775, to seize some powder which the Americans had at Concord, near Boston, and the result was the battle of Lexington, where a good many Americans were killed, but where the British soldiers were finally driven back. Large numbers of men took their guns and gathered at Boston to watch the British troops, and keep them in the city. They came from Massachusetts and the other colonies called New England—from Connecticut and Rhode Island, and from New Hampshire and Maine.

The Congress came together again in May, 1775, and Washington was also there. The battle of Lexington had been heard of, and the people were everywhere angry and excited.

The Congress resolved to resist all attempts by the British to force the country to submit. It called for troops and guns and powder from the various colonies. It adopted the soldiers around Boston as a part of the "Continental Army," or the army of the whole country; it chose Washington as commander-in-chief, to have the direction of all the soldiers. When this was made known to him, he thanked Congress for the honor, but he added, "I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in this room that I this day declare with the utmost sincerity I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with." He also refused to take any pay for his services. "I will keep an exact account of my expenses," he said. "These, I doubt not, Congress will discharge, and that is all I desire." Washington hastened to Boston, learning of the battle of Bunker Hill on the way. He found some seventeen thousand men around Boston, and took command of them on the 3d of July, under a great elm-tree, on the common in the village of Cambridge. He was then forty-three years old, and a very tall and fine-looking man. His features were large, his eyes were of a pure blue, usually grave, but full of kindness, and at times very merry. His



WASHINGTON TAKES COMMAND OF THE ARMY.

manners were gentle, but full of dignity, and they often seemed very cold to those not well acquainted with him, though at heart he was not cold.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



PUCK AND BLOSSOM.

From the German of Marie von Olfers.

PART II.

"Ow!" sobbed Blossom, "that hurt."

"Never mind," said Puck, comfortingly, "things never go right the first time; it'll be better by-and-by."

Then they went and they went, till they came to a great big pond. "This is a horrid world," sighed Blossom. "Hope we've dot to the end of it now. Hope we'll soon det back to our dood old egg."

"But let's go see how it is over there first," said Puck. "Ducky, ducky, come and carry us across."

"Ow! but then my little white frock will det all dirty," said Blossom.

"What does that matter?" answered Puck; "we shall see how it is over there." Over there was very much the same as it was over here. The duck ducked them finely.

"So you'll know how it is down here too," he said.

Dripping, they stood upon the shore.



"Ow! ow!" sobbed Blossom, looking very miserable indeed; "if it doesn't det better soon, I don't want to see anything more at all, I don't."



"Of course it'll get better," said Puck; "the sun'll dry us." The sun looked out condescendingly from the clouds for a moment, and then disappeared. "Come, Blossom," said Puck, "who cares for the old sun! Just as though there wasn't fire anywhere but up there! There's some down here too. I know where it lives—down there in that little house."

Yes, down there in that little house.



"In the ashes, inside the stove," said the cat, who was looking after things while the cook was away.

"It's asleep," said Puck. "Wait; I'll soon wake it up." So he blew and he blew, but it would not wake up at all. The sparks looked out at him with grim and wrathful eyes, while Puck blew more and more madly on.



At last it did wake up. It sprang out of the stove, wild and raging; it grew bigger and bigger; the children fled, the fire behind them—Blossom ahead, terrified, shrieking, screaming.

The fire had caught Puck, had wrapped him round in a great sheet of flame!

But Blossom cried, and cried, and cried, so bitterly that the fire was all put out, and there was nothing left but a great black smoke.



Then Puck gathered together all there was left of him, and they went sorrowfully on their way to find their egg.



Ah me! it was broken in two, and gone. But the nest was still hanging on the tree. In great haste they climbed in, never venturing to leave it again, and if they are not dead, they are sitting there still.

THE END.

[Pg 342]



SOUTH WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT.

We live near the Connecticut River, and when I am out of school I hunt ducks and muskrats. I like to ride horseback when I can get a horse, which is not often, but I can row on the river. I have two kittens to play with. One of them climbs up on father's back when he is eating, and when he takes a bite Kitty will try to get half of it. We live near woods, and in the summer we ramble in them, and in the autumn we gather nuts. The land here is mostly cultivated for tobacco, and on the tobacco lots and on the river-bank we find a number of Indian relics. One of the boys here found a store of arrow-heads. There were about one hundred together. I am eleven years old.

B. D. Archer.

FORT CUSTER, MONTANA TERRITORY.

I am ten years old. My papa is captain in the army. I have never been to school, and can not write quite as nice a letter as some other little girls of my age. I have a big brother who is

thirteen, and a sister two years and four months. My brother's name is Willie. Last year he went off to school. Nannie, my sister, says very funny things. Sometimes she will come running in, and say, "I am so hunky dory I don't know what to do; want sonton to neat." Can any little girl tell what this means? I read a letter from an army girl who is older than I. I looked in the register to see if her papa's name was there, and I found it. My papa is in the Eleventh Infantry, and maybe Grace Henton and I will meet some day. I hope she will see my letter.

ETTA M. GILBREATH.

MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

I like YOUNG PEOPLE a great deal. Papa gets it, and puts a pin in and cuts it, and we look at it till dinner is ready. When I go to bed, mamma reads it to me, and lays it on the little table, so I can look at the pictures before I get up in the morning. On George Washington's Birthday night I went to the barn to get Sallie, my cat. I found her in an old barrel, and was going to tip it over, when I heard something squealing a little squeal. There were two little kittens there. Mamma named them George and Martha Washington. I shall be six in May. I told all this to mamma, and my name is

JOHN.

HARTFORD, OHIO.

Yesterday was Easter, and I and my little brother had twelve dozen eggs hid. For dinner we decorated some with decalcomanie pictures, and they were very pretty. I have thirteen little chickens, and a pet hen which I call Nellie Gray. My canary is named Hettie. Some of the young correspondents write of spring flowers, but I have not found any yet.

MAUDE K.

BISMARCK, DAKOTA TERRITORY.

We have plenty of Indians here, although there are not so many as there were five years ago. They come now mostly in scouting parties. The party is often as large as Custer's cavalry that was here in 1877. Are there many of the readers of YOUNG PEOPLE who are fond of house-plants? I would like to hear what kinds they have, and how they take care of them.

M. R. L.

We think, judging from their letters, that a large number of the readers of YOUNG PEOPLE are fond of those beautiful household ornaments. Mary L. S. wrote a short time since from Arkansas: "My house-plants are my 'pets,' and I assure you I derive as much pleasure from them as if they were animated." No doubt many others have the same feeling.

Clara Jaquith, in answer to Madison Cooper's question in YOUNG PEOPLE No. 21, says: "Somar Griffin, of Ohio, is a very old man. I do not know his exact age, but he is about one hundred and fifteen years old. He lost an arm about forty years ago by the falling of a tree."

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

The other day a gentleman took dinner with my father, and told us the following story: "A few years ago I spent several weeks with a friend who owned a sheep ranch near San Antonio, Texas. I had a very pleasant time hunting and fishing. One day my friend saw a large wild-cat trying to get into a sheep corral. He seized his rifle, and fired at the beast, and it ran off, pursued by the dogs. That night, when we were all asleep in the tent, I was awakened by a warm breath on my face. On opening my eyes I saw in the dim fire-light the form of a large animal. I was very much frightened, but I had sufficient presence of mind to close my eyes and keep still. Suddenly the animal left me; and turning my head slightly, I saw that it had gone to the other side of the tent, and was eating some of our stores. Very carefully I arose, and crept outside the tent, where was a pile of wood. Seizing a heavy stick, I returned softly, and creeping up behind the beast, dealt it a tremendous blow on the head with my club, which stunned it, and I soon beat it to death. My companions were awakened by the noise; and when we replenished the fire and examined the beast, we found it to be an immense wild-cat. It had a bullet-wound in its shoulder, and was no doubt the same one my friend had shot at in the morning."

J. BURNET R.

MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY.

I am so interested in the pets which other children write about that I thought I would tell

about Peggy, my gray kitten. She plays marbles with me; and when I spin my top, she makes believe it is a mouse, and you ought to see her go for it. When the kitchen door is shut, and she wants to come in, she springs up to the latch, holds on with three paws, and presses the latch down with the other paw, and so walks in. I could tell ever so many funny things she does, but I am afraid my letter would be too long.

HARRY A. (10 years).

FORT ASSINIBOINE, MONTANA TERRITORY.

The Indians I wrote you about have lived in their tepees all winter during the very, very cold weather—too cold for me to go coasting. It was often 49° below zero. These Indians have a large number of ugly dogs, and sometimes they hitch them to their travois. The names of the Indians here are Pegans, Gros Ventre, Crow, Assiniboines, Bloods, and Crees. The Sioux and Nez Percés do not come very near to us, as they are afraid our soldiers will fight them. They sent a knife and a pipe to make peace with the soldiers. All the Indians here are very poor, and are killing their dogs and horses to eat, as the buffalo have all gone away.

BERTIE BROWN.

WEST BERN, NEW YORK.

I am eleven years old. I liked the music which was published in *YOUNG PEOPLE* very much. My papa, who is teaching me music, taught me to sing the sailor boy's song in No. 19. We had snow fall day before yesterday to a depth of eight inches, and now (March 29) the sleighs are passing on the road, although the spring birds are hopping about on the trees in the orchard.

EUDORA S.

PINEY POINT, MARYLAND.

I live in the country, and have two sisters and one brother. We are all very much interested in the story, "Across the Ocean; or, a Boy's First Voyage." The United States training-ship *Saratoga* was lying in the Potomac River opposite our house last week. About two hundred and fifty young men were on board, and they were firing cannons almost all day. My cousin was on this ship a few years ago, and he said the rules were very strict. The *Saratoga* is a very large boat, and the sailors on board are both large and small boys.

J. E. M.

FRIOTOWN, TEXAS.

I am eight years old, and I live in Southwest Texas, which some people think a very wild country. I came from Georgia. I have never seen any Indians here, but I can look out the window and see wild rabbits running, and I can hear mocking-birds sing. There is a very odd bird here called chaparral. I went fishing last week on the Frio River, and I saw some turtles sunning themselves, and ever so many buffalo-fish swimming in the clear water. Mamma reads *YOUNG PEOPLE* to me every evening.

ALFRED H. C.

PINE RIVER, WISCONSIN.

We are so glad when Saturday comes, for then papa brings *YOUNG PEOPLE*. We each have a doll and a little wheelbarrow. We fill our wheelbarrows with sand, and wheel them round. We bring in wood sometimes. We want Santa Claus to come. We have some new hats, and are not going to wear hoods any more. We want to wear pants and not dresses, but mamma won't let us. Papa writes this, because we can't write yet, but we have read our primer through.

CHARLIE (6 years) and

FRANKIE (4 years).

EAST WATERTOWN, NEW YORK.

I like the story "Across the Ocean" very much. I have two cats, and a dog named Tip, and a canary named Ned. I am trying to study architecture, and I have made a plan of a house and a church. I like architecture very much, and mean to know all about it when I am a man. I was ten years old the 2d of April. I came pretty near being an April-Fool, didn't I? I have written this letter all by myself, for grandma does not know I am writing.

INGLEWOOD, CHISWICK, LONDON.

It was my birthday yesterday, and my brother gave me YOUNG PEOPLE for a present. My father and mother are in Italy, rejoicing in sunshine and flowers. I have no pets to tell you about. We live in a little village of red brick houses, and it is very pretty here. I thank you for making the paper larger than it was at first. It is lovely now.

MILDRED C. (12 years).

Mary B. L., a little six-year-old girl, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, sends the following in big capitals: "A fox went around where he knew there were some chickens. When he got there, he said, 'Come down, and I will show you something more beautiful than you ever saw.' 'You talk very nice, but I can not trust you,' said a hen, 'so we can not come down.'"

Daisy W., of Rochester, New York, reports having made a cake by Puss Hunter's recipe, and it was very nice.

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

We have two pet gold-fish which are turning black. Can any one tell me what is the trouble with them?

VIRGIE C.

OGDENSBURG, NEW YORK.

I am ten years old, and study geography, and I would like to know why Rhode Island is so called, when it is not an island. I live on the St. Lawrence River. Last winter more than two thousand teams crossed on the ice, and this season not even a man could cross on foot.

ABNER C. P.

The first settlement of Rhode Island was made on the island where Newport is now situated, and which contains about fifty square miles. The Indian name of the island was Aquetneck. There are various stories in regard to the origin of the present name, but the one generally accepted is that it was bestowed on account of a supposed resemblance to the Isle of Rhodes. The State was afterward named from the island.

H. W. SINGER.—Your question is answered in Post-office Box, YOUNG PEOPLE No. 7.

SALLIE R. E.—Read the answer to F. S. in Post-office Box, YOUNG PEOPLE No. 22.

J. H. KNOX.—March is considered the proper season.

BESSIE C.—The best way to prevent your bird from eating its eggs is to put its food in the cage at night, so that when the breakfast hour arrives there will be something fresh and tempting to distract its attention. If it still persists in this troublesome habit, we fear there is no remedy for it.

C. S.—Your inquiry about coloring Easter-eggs came too late to be answered for this season, but you can practice now, so that by next Easter you will be able to color eggs "nicely." The best way is to purchase the coloring matter, as it comes in little packages already prepared, and with full directions for use. The way you propose would also be very pretty.

WINNIE R.—Keyed musical instruments similar in form to the piano were in use several hundred years ago. The virginal, shaped like an old-fashioned square piano, was a favorite instrument at the time of Queen Elizabeth of England, and by some authorities is supposed to have been named in honor of the Virgin Queen, as she was called. The harpsichord, much in use during the last century, was shaped almost exactly

like a modern grand piano. The honor of having invented the hammer which plays upon the strings of the piano now in use is claimed by several nations, but the credit is probably due to Italy, although the first pianos are said to have been made in Germany, probably in the city of Freyburg. The piano was first called the hammer-harpsichord, afterward by the Italian name forte-piano, as it could give both loud and soft tones, while the harpsichord produced only loud ones. The name was changed later to piano-forte. Pianos are first mentioned as being in use about the middle of the eighteenth century.

Idella G. S., Edward L. H., and some other young readers in the far South inquire what are the willow "pussies" which Northern children gathered with so much glee in the earliest days of spring. They are the blossoms of the common low willow which grows in great abundance at the North, and as they are the first signs that winter is passing away, are always heartily welcomed. The buds form in the autumn on the brown twigs, and with the first warm spring sun, long before anything green has started, they swell, and burst open the brown scaly covering, disclosing a soft, downy white ament, or blossom, resembling the toe of a white kitty. This resemblance is perhaps the reason why children call these early flowers "pussies."

[Pg 343]

A. ENGEL.—Directions for feeding mocking-birds are given in Post-office Box of YOUNG PEOPLE No. 13.

LOUIE T.—Your rabbit-hutch should be in a dry place, and should have two apartments. The sleeping-room should be boarded in, only you must have a door which you can open to clean it and supply it with fresh straw. The other apartment should have grated sides, and there is where the food should be placed. You must feed your rabbits regularly two or three times a day. They should have oats or bran for dry food, and carrot tops, cabbage leaves, and fresh clover frequently. If you have a yard, let them run in the grass an hour or more every day during warm weather.

K. Post's request in YOUNG PEOPLE No. 22 for long English words, has been answered by Bertha F. H., H. P., Hattie N., Thomas J. F., Albert H. E., Kent K., Emily J. M., Fanny S., Bertie C., H. H. M., Edith C., Willie H. H., Herbert N. T., G. A. Page, and others. To print all the words sent would occupy too much space. We give only a few of the longest. Supervacaneousness, unconstitutionality, interchangeableness, incomprehensibleness, anticonstitutionalist, disproportionableness. *Smiles* and *beleaguered* have also been suggested, as one has a mile, the other a league, between the beginning and the end.

Favors are acknowledged from B. E. Mace, C. Hastings, Fred Burgess, William Winslow, A. H. Patterson, S. Brown, Jun., Lizzie C., Francis B., Olive Russell, I. H. M., John Moody, "Mark Marcy," Eddie S. P., Henry S. P., Henry K., Willie Trott, Alvan G. W., Anna Wierum, Herbie E. L., Lizzie M., Edwin Wilson, Addie Anderson, Lester O. B., Julius Weller, Royal, Effie Barker, Fanny Sumner, Altia Austin, Annie Carrier, D. J. Reinhart, Metz Hayes, Florence R. H., George Wing.

Correct answers to puzzles are received from Philip Cruger, T. H., George Kyte, Maude K., Laura B. W., F. Ozias, "Sunbeam," Leon M. F., Fanny S., Sallie Ely, George S. V., W. F. Bruns, E. B. Cooper, A. H. Ellard, "North Star," John Collins, Lillie MacCrea, Lily B., Annie C., Charles Slattery, Hattie Norris, M. K. S., S. G. Rosenbaum, H. L. B., H. K. Pryer, B. L. Townsend, Robert Davidson, M. O., Frank Paine, C. B. Howard, Allen Smith, George Schilling, Albert Hegeman.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

NUMERICAL CHARADE.

I am composed of 8 letters.
My 4, 2, 6 is a boy's name.
My 1, 2, 7, 6 is a metal.
My 8, 3, 5, 1 is to stain.
My whole was an ancient king.

A. H. E. (13 years).

No. 2.

ENIGMA.

My first is in hate, but not in love.

My second is in robin, but not in dove.
My third is in throw, but not in shove.
My fourth is in stare, but not in look.
My fifth is in line, but not in hook.
My sixth is in straight, but not in crook.
My seventh is in village, but not in town.
My whole is a fairy of much renown.

E. S. C. M.

No. 3.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

In blast. A girl's name. A reptile. To pinch. In blast.

A. L. B.

No. 4.

WORD SQUARE.

First, a multitude. Second, a musical instrument. Third, to ascend. Fourth, a portion of time.

BIRDIE.

No. 5.

NUMERICAL CHARADE.

My whole is a South American river of 9 letters.
My 5, 3, 7 is a period of time.
My 6, 2, 8, 4 is a portion of the earth.
My 9, 1, 7, 8, 4 is to correct.

K. L.

No. 6.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

A marsh. A tumult. Enormous. A State of the Union. To spread over. A rope used for a special purpose.
Surrounded by water. To assent. Answer—Two trees.

RIP VAN WINKLE.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 22.

No. 1.

Fifteen.

No. 2.

D roo P
A nn A
I n N
S treet S
Y earl Y

Daisy, Pansy.

No. 3.

S N O W
N A M E
O M E N
W E N T

No. 4.

Noli me tangere.

No. 5.

A
A N T
A N G E R
T E A
R

No. 6.

Whittier.

Charade on page 296—Caterpillar.

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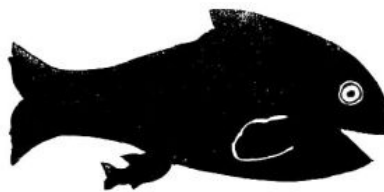
[Pg 344]



"SPRING, SPRING, BEAUTIFUL SPRING."

A Wonderful Clock.—The most astonishing thing ever heard of in the way of a time-piece is a clock described by a Hindoo Rajah as belonging to a native Prince of Upper India, and jealously guarded as the rarest treasure of his luxurious palace. In front of the clock's disk was a gong, swung upon poles, and near it was a pile of artificial human limbs. The pile was made up of the full number of parts of twelve perfect bodies, but all lay heaped together in seeming confusion. Whenever the hands of the clock indicated the hour of one, out from the pile crawled just the number of parts needed to form the frame of one man, part joining itself to part with quick metallic click; and when completed, the figure sprang up, seized a mallet, and walking up to the gong, struck one blow that sent the sound pealing through every room and corridor of that stately palace. This, done, he returned to the pile, and fell to pieces again. When two o'clock came, two men arose and did likewise; and so through all the hours, the number of figures being the same as the number of the hour, till at noon and midnight the entire heap sprang up, and marching to the gong, struck one after another each his blow, and then fell to pieces.

THE PENGUIN PUZZLE.



With two straight cuts of the scissors change this fish into an absurd penguin catching a herring.

CHARADE.

An Emperor kneels in sore dismay,
For his enemy cometh apace.
In this hour of need to whom shall he pray?
From which of his gods seek grace?
To his father's God, the One, the Alone,
He cried, and the answer burst
On his wondering eyes: a marvel shone,
Pledge of hope and help from the God unknown,
And that answering sign was my *first*.

Some voyagers weary of wooden walls
Are treading the land once more.
The father around him his children calls,
Their God, who had saved, to adore.
Seven angels all hasten God's answer to bring,
Of His promise the seal and the sign;
Arrayed is each one as the child of a King;
Together they rival the flowers of spring,
And together my *second* they shine.

King Henry hath crossed over into France
With his lords and his nobles gay.
He would teach the Frenchman quite a new dance,
And bid him the piper to pay.
Such his design; but the end who can tell?
Who the fortunes of battle control?
One thing I aver, and none will demur:
If King Henry succeeds, 'twill be by the deeds
Of his soldiers, who carry my *whole*.

An Ancient Castle.—The Czarowitz recently visited, with King Oscar II., the famous old castle of Gripshon, in Sweden. The old keeper showed the Czarowitz a heap of straw, and told him that his father, the present Czar, had used it as his bed in the year 1838. Alexander in that year accompanied his father, Czar Nicholas, to Sweden, and it was during their visit to the castle that that severe parent insisted upon making his son sleep on straw. It is popularly believed in Russia that the stern Nicholas never allowed his son and heir to sleep upon any more comfortable bed.



Anticipation. Consternation. Castigation.

LITTLE TOMMY'S FIRST (AND LAST) EXPERIMENT WITH HIS TOY SPIDER.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Most engravings of Gibraltar give a very imperfect idea of its position, which may be best conveyed by representing the Spanish coast as a door, and the Rock as the knob of its handle. The latter's seaward face is a pretty close copy of the Hudson Palisades.

[2] The Rock of Gibraltar is the only spot in Europe where monkeys are found running wild.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE, APRIL 20, 1880 ***

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