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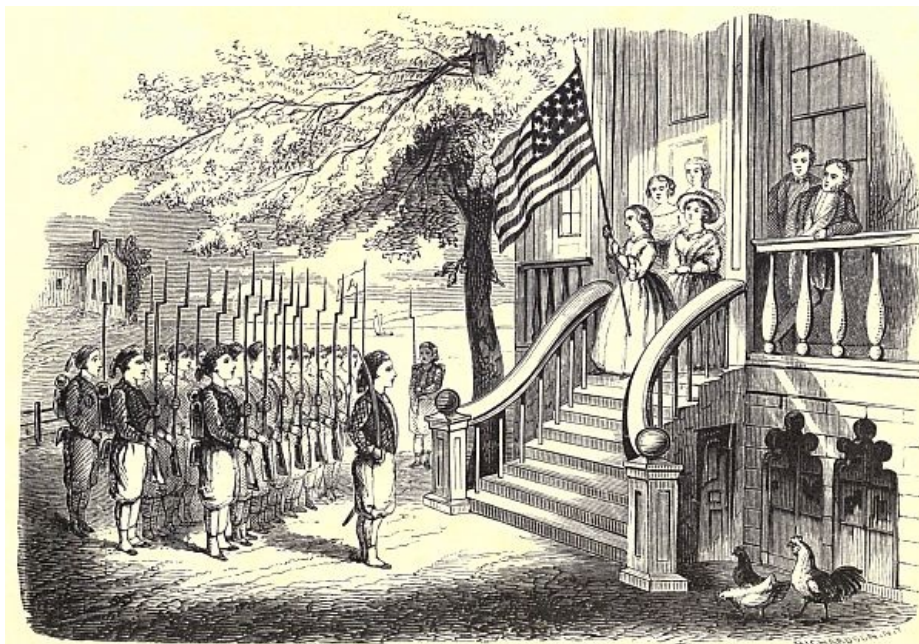
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK RED, WHITE, BLUE SOCKS, PART FIRST ***



"COLONEL TAKE YOUR COLORS!"

**THE SOCK STORIES,
BY "AUNT FANNY'S" DAUGHTER.
RED, WHITE, AND BLUE
SOCKS.**

Part First.

**BEING
THE FIRST BOOK OF THE SERIES.**

**BY
"AUNT FANNY'S" DAUGHTER,
THE AUTHOR OF "THE LITTLE WHITE ANGEL."**

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER,
BY "AUNT FANNY" HERSELF.

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DEDICATION.

MY DEAR LITTLE COOLEY AND GEORGIE:

WHEN you see that this book is dedicated to you, I hope your bright eyes will sparkle with pleasure; but I am afraid your pretty curly heads will hardly retain a recollection of a little personage who once lived close to your beautiful home on Staten Island. She remembers *you*, however, and sends you this soldier story with her very best love—the love she bears in her inmost heart for God and little children. And now she asks you to hunt in every corner of those same precious little heads for a kindly remembrance of your affectionate friend,

"AUNT FANNY'S" DAUGHTER.

THE STORY OF THE SOCKS.

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BY AUNT FANNY.

"Oh dear! what *shall* I do?" cried George, fretfully, one rainy afternoon. "Mamma, do tell me what to do."

"And I'm *so* tired!" echoed Helen, who was lazily playing with a kitten in her lap. "I don't see why it should rain on a Friday afternoon, when we have no lessons to learn. We can't go out, and no one can come to see us. It's too bad, there!"

"Helen, do *you* know better than *God?*" asked her mother, speaking very gravely. "You forget that He sends the rain." [8]

"I suppose I was thoughtless, mamma," answered the child; "I did not mean to be wicked, but, dear me, the time passes *so* slowly, with nothing to do."

"Have you and George read all your books?"

"Oh yes! two or three times over," they both answered; "and oh, mamma," continued Helen, "if the one who wrote 'Two Little Heaps,' or the 'Rollo' book writer, or the author of 'The Little White Angel,' would only write some more books, I, for one, would not care how hard it rained. If I was grown up and rich, I wouldn't mind giving a dollar a letter for those stories." [9]

"Nor I," shouted George in an animated tone, quite different from the discontented whine he had favored his mother with a few moments before; "the best thing is to have them read aloud to you; that makes you understand all about it so much better. I say, mamma, couldn't you write a letter to one of those delightful people and beg them to hurry up with more stories, especially some about bad children;—not exactly wicked, you know, but full of mischief. *Then I am sure that they are all true.* Only wait till I'm a man! I'll just write the history of some jolly fellows I know who are always getting into scrapes, but haven't a scrap of meanness about them. That's the kind of book I like! I'll write dozens of them, and give them to all the Sunday school libraries."

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His mother smiled at this speech, and then said quietly, "I know a gentleman who likes the story of 'The Little White Angel,' as much as you do, and he has written a letter to request the author to write six books for him."

"Six! hurrah!" shouted George, "how glad I am!" and he skipped up to Helen, caught her by the hands, and the two danced round the room, upsetting a chair, till Helen, catching her foot in the skirt of her mother's dress, they both tumbled down on the carpet together.

"If you cut up such violent capers," said the kind mother, laughing, "at the first part of my information, it may be dangerous to tell you what the author replied."

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"Oh no, do tell us!" cried the children. "We'll be as still as our shadows;" and while they made violent efforts to look grave and stand quiet, their mother told them that the author had consented, the six books were to be written, and she would buy them the very first day they were published. "Perhaps," she continued, "mind, only perhaps, I may get them for you *before* they are ever printed."

"Why, how, mamma?" they both asked.

"Well, suppose you make some very good resolutions—let me see," and she took a pencil out of her pocket, and drawing a sheet of paper toward her, began to write:

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"1st. To endeavor to say your prayers morning and evening without a *wandering thought.*

"2d. To try to keep faithfully 'the Golden Rule.'

"3d. To obey your parents immediately, without asking 'why?'

"4th. (A little rule, but very important.) To keep your teeth, nails, and hair scrupulously clean and neat.

"5th. To bear disappointments cheerfully.

"There, I think that will do. They are all hard rules except the fourth. I do not keep them well myself, my dear children. No one can, without constant watchfulness and prayer for help from above; but you can try, will you?"

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"I will, mamma," said Helen, in a low, earnest tone, her blue eyes filling with tears.

"And you, George, will you?"

"Yes, mamma, I will try. I can't be a very good boy, as you know. I get so tired of being good sometimes, that I feel like jumping over the house to get the badness out of me, instead of sitting down quietly and thinking about my duty, as papa says I must. When papa locked me up in his dressing room last summer, and I kicked the door as hard as ever I could, which made him call out that I should stay there two hours longer, I was mad enough, I tell you! but I did not cut my name with a knife on his rosewood bureau *because* I was angry. It was because I was almost crazy with doing nothing but think what a bad boy I was. That made me worse, you see. The best way to punish me is to see you crying about my conduct. I can't stand that," and the boy put his arms round his mother's neck, and kissed her fondly.

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"My dear boy," said his mother, returning the caress, "there is One whom you grieve more than me. I wish you would think oftener of that. I know that different children require different sorts of punishment, and as neither your father nor I approve of beating you like a dog, and you say that shutting you up with nothing to do only makes you worse, I shall advise him the next time you are naughty, to send immediately for a load of wood, and make you saw it all up into small pieces, or take you where some house is building and order you to run up and down a long ladder all day with a hod of bricks on your shoulder, or hire you out to blow the big bellows for a blacksmith. How do you think you would like that?"

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"I had a great deal rather run after the fire engines, to put the fire out. That's the kind of work I would like. Every body screaming, and pumping, and playing streams of water—twenty firemen rushing up ladders, pulling old women and cats out of the windows, and somebody inside pitching out the looking glasses and crockery to save them! I wish our house was on fire this very minute, so I could pull you and Helen out, and save all the furniture. That would be the greatest fun in the world!"

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"Please don't set fire to the house," cried his mother, laughing, "for the fun of saving our lives. I prefer to keep it just as it is, and walking quietly out at the door." As she spoke, the sun suddenly burst forth from the clouds, and his bright rays darting into the room, the children sprang joyfully up, and, with their mother's consent, were soon out of the house with jumping-rope and hoop, to join their little companions in a neighboring park.

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George and Helen were two charming, ingenuous children. George was full of frolic, mischief, and fun, with generous impulses and excellent intentions, which only required peculiar and careful training and encouragement to develop him into a steady, high-principled man. Locking him up with nothing to do, as he truly said, did him more harm than good; he required active punishment, and his mother wisely intended to take the hint for his future benefit. Her little Helen, though just as full of play and fun, was more easily managed. A present of a book so won upon her love and gratitude, that her mother had only to hold out the prospect of a new one, and a loving kiss (Helen prized the kiss even more than the book) as a reward for good behavior, to make her quite a pattern of a dear, amiable little girl.

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The next morning the kind mother called upon her friend Aunt Fanny, bringing George and Helen with her, as it was Saturday. First she told all the conversation of the afternoon before, which amused Aunt Fanny very much, and then she continued, "You told me the other day that your daughter was very busy writing six books for Mr. Leavitt the publisher. I know you love my children."

"Yes, indeed!" cried Aunt Fanny. "I love children from my heart, straight out to the ends of my fingers; and when a pen is in my hands, the love runs into it, and then out again, as fast as it can scratch all over ever so many sheets of paper. My thumb aches so sometimes with writing, that I often wish I had half a dozen extra ones, so I could take the tired one off and screw another on, and even then I am afraid I could never exhaust my love for my darlings;" and she looked at the children and held out her hand with such an affectionate smile, that Helen came timidly up and gave her a little winning kiss immediately, while George, blushing all over his face, showed two great dimples in his cheeks, but had not the courage to leave his chair.

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You may be sure that Aunt Fanny, after Helen's kiss, was quite ready to grant any favor the mother might ask for her children. She was perfectly willing to catch a comet for them to play with, or jump down a volcano to find out who lived in the bottom of it, if anybody would only show her how. Helen's mother knew this, but she hesitated a little before she made this strange request:

"My dear friend, my two children have made me the promises I have told you of, in regard to keeping my little rules and resolutions, and now I think it will be the most wonderful and delightful reward possible, if they were to be permitted to see and read your daughter's stories in manuscript."

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"Manuscript! what does that mean, mamma?"

"In her own handwriting, dear."

"Oh yes! yes! how very strange and delightful! And then to see the very same stories printed! that would be so astonishing! We should like that better than anything, Aunt Fanny!"

"Very well," continued their mamma; "now I have come to beg you to lend me the stories as fast as they are written. I will take the greatest care of them, and return them to your daughter quickly and punctually. I have a plan in my head which will make my children very happy, if you consent."

"To be sure I will," said Aunt Fanny, "but what is your plan?"

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Thereupon commenced a great whispering between the two ladies, while the children looked pleased, puzzled, and eagerly curious all at once; but they were not to know. Aunt Fanny and their mother, after a great deal of nodding of heads together, and laughing and whispering, got this mysterious affair settled to their satisfaction, and then took leave of each other. Aunt Fanny kissed Helen, and George, too, in spite of his blushes, and told them to bottle up their patience so that it would last for one whole week, observing that she was thankful that curiosity was not made of gunpowder, and there was no danger of their blowing up before the great secret came out.

[23]

It is very seldom that you hear of such remarkably good children as George and Helen were for the next few days. They were really something astonishing! George did not slam the door more than once or twice in a whole day; and one morning when he was going to ride on the bannisters as usual, he said "Oh, I forgot!" and immediately walked down stairs as slowly and gravely as a grandfather.

As for Helen, she was, if possible, still more wonderful, for she learned "six times" in the multiplication table, and said it straight on, and skipping, and even backward, in a way that surprised her teacher. Helen could say "twice one" up to "five times twelve," very glibly, but "six times" never would stay in her head, she said; especially "six times nine." She always said it was "seventy-two," or "sixty-three," or "eighty-one," at a desperate venture, and was always wrong. Now she knew, and meant to remember; and would pack away the fact that "six times nine are fifty-four," in a comfortable place in the very middle of her head, to be ready for any one that wanted to know it.

[24]

At last the next Friday came, and just before the children retired for the night, their mother said:

"Something came for you to-day. Guess what it is?"

Up they both sprang, exclaiming, "Something for us? Oh, that is so very delightful! What can it

[25]

be?"

"My instructions are, to put it either in George's sock or in Helen's stocking, after you are fast asleep. It is for both of you, and I leave you to decide where it shall be put."

"In my sock!" shouted George.

"In my stocking!" cried Helen.

"Oh certainly, I forgot!" exclaimed George, generously; "in Helen's stocking."

"No, mamma," said Helen, "in George's sock."

"Stocking!" cried George.

"Sock!" cried Helen.

They kept this up about a dozen times, laughing and jumping about the room like two crazy monkeys, their mamma and papa laughing too, till all their faces were in a perfect glow, which made them look like a very handsome family—for, let me tell you, that good humor and innocent merriment are very becoming to everybody, while ill-temper makes one look like a fright. [26]

But how was this difficult matter of sock and stocking to be settled? Why, by the children's papa, to be sure! for he was a lawyer, and did nothing all day long but settle difficulties, or make them worse, I don't know which.

He took two long slips of paper, and wrote "Socks" on one and "Stockings" on the other. These he put in his hat, which George brought out of the hall. Then he rang the bell, and told the waiter who answered it to request Mrs. Custard, the cook, to come up to the parlor for a moment. [27]

Mrs. Custard, who was very fat, and, besides, had the rheumatism, came into the room quite breathless, looking very much surprised and a little frightened. She had dropped her thimble that day, when she was sewing up the stuffing in the turkey, and had not had time to look for it; and she was panic struck lest her master had found it roasted in the very middle of the turkey, and was going to ask her if she thought she was cooking for an ostrich, which, as everybody knows, prefers a dinner of iron spikes, pebble stones, and oyster shells to roast beef. [28]

But nothing of the kind happened. The children's papa only said, "Good evening, Mrs. Custard, you gave us a very nice dinner to-day. I want you to put your hand in this hat and draw out one piece of paper."

"Laws me, sir!" exclaimed the cook, "I hopes you don't mean to play no trick on me; will it bite?"

The children fairly screamed with laughter at the idea of a piece of paper biting; and the cook made them laugh still harder, when she put her hand in very cautiously, and twitched it out three times, before she ventured to feel for the paper.

At last one piece was caught, and on it was written "SOCKS," which made George first jump up and down in an ecstasy of delight, and then run to Helen and tell her he was really sorry that it had not been the other. [29]

This decided the momentous question, and Mrs. Custard hobbled down stairs, and the children hopped, skipped, and jumped up stairs, both wondering what would come of this magical word "socks."

Helen had a pretty little room opening out of her mother's, but George's was in an upper story. When they were both asleep, the mother took out of her son's bureau a clean white sock, sewed a tape loop on the edge, put a small parcel inside, and hung it on a neat brass nail, which was driven in a door directly opposite his bed, where it would catch his eye as soon as he awoke. [30]

You may be sure both the children were up bright and early the next morning. Helen dressed herself quickly and ran down stairs into the dining-room to wait for her brother.

George opened his eyes upon the sock the very first thing. He sprang out of bed and made but two steps to the door, raised his hand eagerly, and then the generous little fellow stopped.

"No!" he cried aloud, "I will not even squeeze the outside to guess what it is, till I am with Helen."

He did not stop to count his toes or fingers, though he did manage to clean his teeth, wash his face, neck, and hands, and brush his hair in about five minutes, then taking hold of the precious sock by the loop at the top, he carried it down stairs very much as if he had hold of a mouse by the tail. He was met by Helen at the door with an "Oh, George, what is it?" [31]

They both stared with all their eyes, while George told Helen she might take the wonderful thing out. She gladly obeyed, and drew out a compact roll of letter paper neatly tied with sky-blue ribbon. Helen untied the little bow, her fingers trembling with eagerness, and unrolled the paper. It seemed to be a great many pages covered with writing, and they were all fastened together at the top with another bit of blue ribbon. The fair and clear handwriting was delightful to look at. [32]

"Oh, mamma! Oh papa! do come

and look!" cried George. "I do believe this is a story before it is printed. See! on the top of the page is written 'Colonel Freddy; or, the March and Encampment of the Dashahed Zouaves.'"

"Yes; Aunt Fanny sent it to me yesterday; and her daughter hopes her little story about soldiers will please you."

"Please us! I guess it will! I'd rather hear about soldiers than anybody else in the world, even giants! because, you know, mamma, Uncle Charley has gone to fight, and if the Southerners had only put off the war a few years longer, I would have gone to fight them too; so Hurrah for the Dashahed Zouaves!"

"Three cheers for the Dashahed Zouaves!" cried Helen, and they were given with a will.

The children could hardly eat their breakfast in their eagerness to hear the story which was sent to them before it was printed. This latter fact gave it an extraordinary interest which they could not explain. It seemed to be such a remarkable honor to be singled out in this way; particularly as their mother told them, before she began to read, that Aunt Fanny had requested them to be sure to let her know if they thought any part stupid or too long, and her daughter would improve and shorten it immediately.

How extremely complimentary! to be asked to sit and listen as critics and judges, and they only children! Really, it was almost too much to believe!

But it added tremendously to the charm, and George and Helen took their seats after breakfast, invested with this new and important dignity, with such an expression of solemn delight on their faces, that their mother had to run out of the room and have a good laugh by herself in the hall, after which she returned, and, with as serious a face as she could call up with those two little figures so stiff and stark before her, smoothed out the manuscript, and began as follows:



GEORGE AND HELEN READING "SOCKS"

[33]

[34]

COLONEL FREDDY;

OR,

THE MARCH AND ENCAMPMENT OF THE DASHAHED ZOUAVES.

[35]

CHAPTER I.

RAISING A REGIMENT.

ONE bright afternoon last summer, about two weeks after the dreadful battle of Bull Run, Freddy Jourdain burst open the door of his mother's room and rushed in, exclaiming: "Jolly, mother! such fun! What *do* you think the boys in our school are going to do?"

"Why what?" asked his mother.

"Yes, I should really like to know why you come tearing up stairs yelling like forty steam engines!" added his sister Bella, who was rather a particular young lady.

"Well," began Freddy, looking very important, "I'll *try* to explain, but I don't believe *you women* can understand about *us boys!*"

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"After that speech I think you had better explain," said Bella, "if you're not in want of a thimble pie on your knuckles."

"Well, then," cried Freddy, with sparkling eyes, "the boys at our school are all *square* against that old Jeff. Davis, and in recess yesterday, we concluded that we ought to go and help shoot the Southerners. So we've organized a regiment, and I'm chosen Colonel; and I'm going to take my regiment to camp on Monday, that is, if you'll let me. Mayn't I, mother? It's such fun, and Tom Pringle's given me such a jolly popgun! Hurrah for Jackson and the Stars and Stripes!" So saying, Freddy cut a caper in the air, that made about forty "chaney alleys," "stony alleys," "glass agates," and "middles," pop out of his satchel, which was slung over one shoulder, and roll into all the corners of the room. [37]

"Where is your encampment to be?" said his mother, as gravely as she could.

"Oh, down on Mr. Schermerhorn's place at Astoria. Peter Schermerhorn told us to-day that his father was willing we should have it there, and has invited us all to come and stay a whole week. We're to live in *real tents!*" (here Freddy couldn't help cutting another caper,) "and cook our own dinners, and—oh, mother, mayn't I go? say!" [38]

"I do not think of any objection at present," replied Mrs. Jourdain, "but you must wait until your father comes home, and hear what he has to say. It was very kind of Mr. Schermerhorn to invite you all, but I am afraid he will be driven distracted with such a number of harem-scarem boys running about his place."

At this moment Joseph, the black waiter, knocked at the door, and announced, with an air of high-flown elegance, that "Major Schermerhorn was in the *drawing salon* (which he considered the purest Parisian French for front parlor), and desired to see Col. Jourdain;" and our young friend was off like a shot, Joseph following at a dignified pace. [39]

Joseph, like most other colored servants in New York, was a person of the highest fashion, according to his own notions. No short words for *him*, I can tell you. I remember well the first time I called upon his mistress, I inquired, "Does Mrs. Jourdain live here?" and Joseph, drawing himself up with an air of superior refinement, replied, "Mrs. Jourdain *resides* here, madam." At dinner parties, when he waited upon table, he was the most dignified person present, and held his head up so high that he looked as if it would shortly go through the chandelier. He was always dressed in the finest broadcloth and patent leather, his black face and white necktie presenting an admirable contrast, while he used all the five cornered words in the dictionary in replying to any question, and always handed the dishes to the ladies with a flourish of the most astonishing character. [40]

Now, if I tell you a secret, you must promise not to let any one know it. Freddy's parents live in the Fifth avenue above Madison Square, in the city of New York. His father is a rich man, and Freddy, a bright, manly lad, between thirteen and fourteen at the time I am writing about, and the only son, is a good deal indulged. But don't think he ever abuses the kindness of his loving papa and mamma; no—although he is full of noise, fun, and innocent mischief, he is a good, obedient little fellow—and that is why they love to do all they can to make him happy. But you must not tell that I said where he lives. [41]

When Mr. Jourdain came home that evening, Freddy, of course, began to tell him the first thing, about the regiment and Mr. Schermerhorn's delightful invitation. You may be sure he gave a full-length description of the pleasures of camp life, as retailed by Peter to an enthusiastic audience at recess; and backed up his request to go by such powerful pleas of sparkling, eager eyes, flushed, happy face, and irresistible, dimpling smile, that the hardest-hearted papa in existence would have said "yes." Mr. Jourdain, being anything but hard-hearted, readily consented, as he was intimately acquainted with Mr. Schermerhorn and family, and knew there was no fear on a private place of their meeting with danger, or getting into trouble. [42]

Then his father went on to ask a great many questions about the regiment, how many boys belonged to it, what their sizes were, and where they lived; all of which Freddy delightedly answered, and kept up a continuous chattering until a quarter past nine, which, being his bed time, he was reluctantly obliged to trot up stairs. [43]

After he was fairly out of the room, his father and mother had a long consultation, which resulted next day in Mr. Jourdain's paying a visit to "Brooks Brothers," the tailors in Broadway, and afterward going to a certain store in Maiden Lane, which had all manner of toy knapsacks and guns in the window. What could he have gone there for, I wonder? and then betaken himself to the police station in B— street? Really, it seems very mysterious, but wait a little, and you'll see.

Meanwhile Freddy, with his satchel hanging down his back to look as much like a knapsack as possible, marched off to school bright and early; whistling the "Star-spangled Banner" as he went along, and looking with the utmost pity upon strange boys, who hadn't the honor of belonging to his glorious regiment, the "Dashahed Zouaves," as his father had advised him to name it. [44]

He reached Dr. Larned's academy just as Peter, Harry, and half a dozen others were going in. They greeted him directly with a shout of "Well, Fred, what does your father say?"

"Oh, I'm to go!" cried Freddy, "I say, fellows, what do you think of the Dashahed Zouaves for a name?"

"That's splendid! capital!" was the cry of the party. I am afraid I must add that Peter said "that's *gay!*"

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There was no time to talk now, however, for it was full nine o'clock; so the boys, hanging up their hats in the hall, entered the school room, and prayers over, the lessons began.

But who could be very attentive to his *ante*-cedents, or *uncle*-cedents either, when, in three days, the *se*-cedents were to be utterly routed by the Dashahed Zouaves? The boys were so full of chuckle and bounce, that, I'm afraid, poor Dr. Larned would have become cracked and crazy, if he hadn't reflected that the holidays and Fourth of July, or, as Peter called it, "the Fourth of Ju-New Year's" were coming, and that probably the state of things was owing to those important facts.

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The recitations on that memorable Friday, however, were something wonderful, sure enough. For instance, the lesson in geography was about China. The doctor asked a boy, "Where is Shanghai situated?" and he replied, "On Long Island, about two miles from Astoria landing!—that is," and there he stopped, looking as awkward and silly as a Shanghai chicken.

"Won't do, sir," said the doctor, in a grave tone, "you must study the lesson over again, and go down one;" and down he had to go, feeling rather flat.

Then the doctor asked Freddy what the principal manufactures were, and he answered, "Tea, porcelain, silk, and Zouave drill—no, no, the other kind of drill! dear me, what do I mean?"

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"I cannot imagine," returned Doctor Larned, in a severe tone, but with a little bit of a smile hiding in the corner of his mouth. "You appear to be thinking of anything but your lessons, young gentlemen—but as it is the last day of school, I excuse you. We will have recess earlier than usual, and see if we cannot do better afterward."

So saying, he opened the door leading from the school room to his private study, and went in; while the boys, luncheon in hand, ran to the playground.

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"The playground," as it was called, was the large yard attached to the house, which had been fitted up with a few simple gymnastic contrivances, and formed a capital place where the boys might amuse themselves in fine weather. Down they sat, and for a few moments were so busy trying who could take the biggest semicircular bite out of a slice of bread and butter that nobody spoke a word. At last Freddy commenced, by calling out,

"I say, fellows!"

"Silence in the guard tent! the Colonel's going to speak!" cried Peter, making a new version of the old school saying.

"Don't you know all the real Zouaves have their hair cut as short as anything? and just look at mine!" and Freddy tossed back his silky, golden curls in high disgust.

[49]

"Fellows, *it must be done!* We must have that hair off, short order!" continued the Colonel, solemnly.

"Well," exclaimed George Chadwick, who was the oldest of the party, and would certainly have been Colonel if Freddy had not been prime favorite with everybody, "Don't you see how we can manage that?"

"Why, how?" was the general question.

"Just you wait a moment," replied the inventor, and he put for the house in double quick time, whence he presently returned with an immense pair of scissors, which he had borrowed of the cook.

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"Now, then, who'll be scissorized first?"

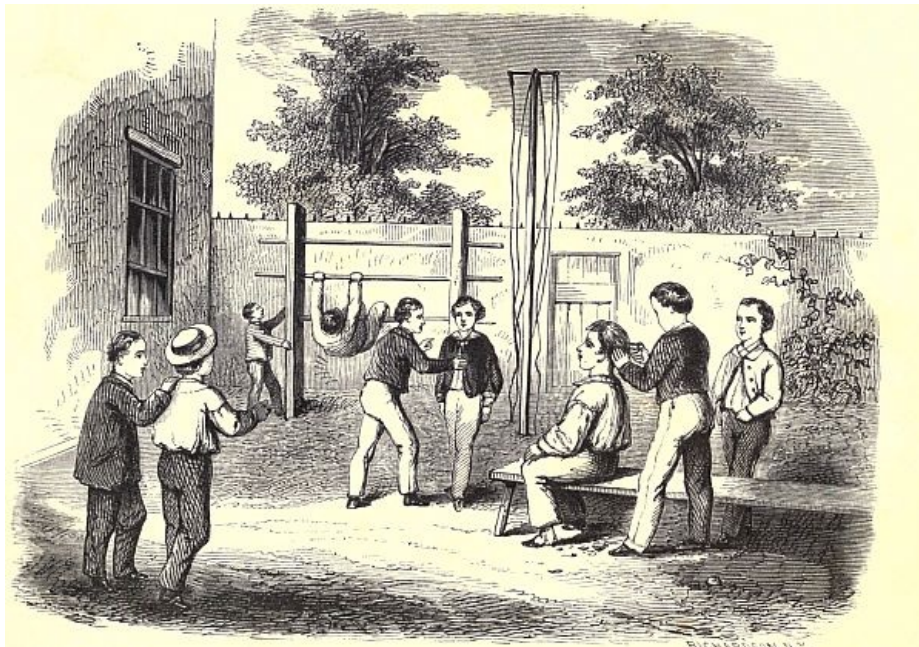
"I! I! I!" cried a chorus of voices.

"Can't do every one at once; come, Freddy, you're the commander-in-chief, suppose you set the example."

"Here goes, then!" exclaimed Freddy; and down he sat on the spring board.

Snip! went the long scissors, and off came a beautiful curl. Snap! more demolition on the other side, and in five minutes such a worn-out old scrubbing brush as his head looked like, never was seen anywhere, even on a Zouave; George, of course, running out his tongue so far at every snip of the scissors, that it was a mercy it didn't get cut off, too.

[51]



"FIRE AWAY OLD CHAP!"

"Jolly! what a fright you look!" shouted Peter. "I say Freddy, I expect you'll scare General Beauregard into the cholera the first time he sees you. Now, then, it's my turn; fire away old chap!"

My conscience! what hair cutting that was! Some parts were scratched nearly bald, while in others, little bunches of hair were left standing up like stubble in an autumn cornfield. Their heads looked as if they had been gnawed by the mice or dug up in spots by the roots; and I am sure their own mammas would scarcely have known them again.

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"Come, number three's turn now!" exclaimed George, flourishing his scissors.

"No, I don't know about that," put in Tom Pringle, who was the most thoughtful of the party, "I guess I'd rather see what my mother thinks before I have *my* hair cut off."

This speech caused the rest of the regiment to think of something which hadn't struck them before, namely what *their* mothers would say on the subject of Zouave hair dressing, and as George began to be a little frightened by this time, at the fearful and astonishing results of his patent plan, it was decided to defer the rest of the operation until another time.

[53]

But the amazement of Dr. Larned, when he beheld his pupils in such a condition, was beyond everything.

"Why, Peter! Freddy! what have you been doing?" he exclaimed, raising his hands, and pushing his spectacles to the top of his forehead, to look at them better.

"Oh, only getting our hair cut in the Zouave pattern," said Peter, as cool as a cucumber. "Don't you know, Doctor, that we've organized a regiment?"

"Organized a regiment!" repeated the doctor, his spectacles almost falling off with astonishment.

"Yes, sir, the Dashahed Zouaves; haven't you heard of them?"

"Is there any end to the mischief of boys?" exclaimed the doctor; "If such things had happened in my young days, our old master, Dr. Birchemwell, would have verified his name even oftener than he did. I do not know what your mothers will say when they see such a couple of scarecrows; but come, we have wasted quite time enough; lessons! lessons!"

[54]

And to the credit of the boys, be it said, they really did set to work like good fellows, recited the unlucky geography lesson without a single mistake, ciphered like perfect calculating machines, and had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Larned say, as they shook hands for good-bye, "Really, young gentlemen, you have done very well—very well, indeed; so now good-bye, and pleasant holidays!"

CHAPTER II.

[55]

"MARCHING ALONG."

MONDAY morning at last! and a bright, beautiful day. The sky was as blue as possible; the sun shone so brightly that it seemed as though it must have been polished up for the occasion, and Colonel Freddy, as soon as he awoke, could not help giving a little shout of joy.

But what was that right opposite his bed? A large wooden box, with "Colonel Jourdain, Dashahed Zouaves, First Regiment L. I. Volunteers," painted on the lid in great black letters. [56]

Up jumped the new Colonel quicker than any grasshopper, rushed to the mysterious box, and raised the lid. Lying on top was a letter at least six inches square, directed like the box, and closed with a great red seal. Underneath *that* was—what do you think? A splendid uniform for a Colonel of Zouaves! sword, cap, and epaulettes, complete!

Freddy's eyes and mouth opened to their widest compass, as he stared at the box, too much surprised to move. Presently his father came in, looking highly amused.

"Good morning, Colonel," he began. [57]

"Oh, father!" interrupted Freddy, finding his tongue at last, "do look here! Did you ever see anything so splendid in your life? Where *did* they come from?"

"Perhaps the letter will tell you," was all his father would say.

Freddy snatched up the big letter, broke the seal, and with sparkling eyes read the following.

NEW YORK, July —th, 1861.

MY DEAR SON:

In consideration of your heroic determination to enter the army in the service of your country, and seeing how nobly you have prepared to engage in the contest by making your hair look as if it had been driven in or pulled out, I have thought best to present you with this uniform to whip the Southerners in; a suit of which I have also sent to every *man* in your regiment. As I entertain scarcely a doubt that Old Abe will shortly summon you to start down South to Dixie, I hope that you will have a brave regiment, a pleasant encampment, and a first-rate time. And that, in later years, should it be necessary, you will *truly* distinguish yourself, through God's assistance, under the banner of our country, and stand up in the field in the cause of Truth and Justice, is the sincere wish of [58]

Your affectionate Father,
L. JOURDAIN.

Freddy was delighted at this letter, with its mingled playfulness and sincere patriotism. With all his fun, he was uncommonly intelligent, and understood and appreciated many things which far older boys might have failed to comprehend; and now his splendid blue eyes were raised to his father's face, flashing with real enthusiasm; he felt and looked at that moment, like his noble French ancestors, a born soldier. [59]

But the serious mood was soon displaced by a fresh access of glee.

"Oh, thank you, papa!" he cried, "how very kind of you! How surprised the boys will be! Hurrah! what a jolly time we shall have! and do you think the President will really send for us? He will be a perfect jay-bird of a President if he does!" [60]

"No doubt he will be highly desirous to secure the services of the gallant Dashahed Zouaves," replied his father, laughing; "but make haste now, Fred, it's nearly breakfast time." So saying, he left the room.

Of course, the new clothes had to go on directly; and first my young soldier donned a pair of remarkably baggy red trowsers, which looked as if they had a connection with the Manhattan Gas Company like a new sort of balloon, they were so puffy; and a pair of leather gaiters reaching from the calf of the leg to the ankle. Then came a most splendid bluejacket, covered in every direction with gold lace, a killing little ruffled shirt, and a flourishing blue sash. Perched on top of his head, where his hair had been the day before, was a red fez with a long blue tassel, and, to crown all, or, I might say, *cutting-out* everything else, was a splendid sword, as bright as silver, with a terribly sharp-looking edge, and an elegant gold handle. [61]

When he was all dressed, he ran down stairs and found, on entering the dining room, that he was the only one there. A large mirror was over the mantel, which reflected the handsome room, with its deep bay window, filled with flowers, its sideboard, loaded with massive plate, and the breakfast table, covered with its snowy cloth, and nice beefsteak, muffins, and coffee, looking so tempting to hungry folks. [62]

Freddy's eye fell on the mirror, and a new idea came into his head. "Hurrah! here's a capital chance to see how I look from head to foot," he thought; so, without remembering the long pier glasses in the parlor, he dragged his father's arm chair in front of the fireplace, and, jumping on the seat, stood turning and twisting about, staring at himself all the time, and quite put out at not being able to see the whole of his back at once. Finally he concluded his performance by striking a tremendous attitude, with his legs as far apart as the chair would permit, his sword in the air, and such a ferocious scowl on his face, that it was a mercy his brows didn't get tied up in a double bow knot then and there. [63]

All at once there was a little laugh in the direction of the door. Freddy wheeled round, and there were papa, mamma, and Bella looking on, and trying hard to keep in the laughter!

Down scrambled Colonel Freddy from his perch, blushing up to the very roots of his hair.

There wasn't much more than the roots left, to be sure; but his father laid his hand on the epauletted shoulder with a good-natured, "Never mind, old fellow, you look fine enough to justify a little personal reflection."

Hardly had Freddy taken his place at the table, and his father asked a blessing, than there came such a tremendous ring at the bell, that they thought the President must have come to town to see the regiment off on its travels; but, instead of Old Abe, Major Peter Schermerhorn (who passed the week with an aunt in town, and only went down to Astoria on Saturdays) popped into the room. He was dressed, like Freddy, in a bran new Zouave suit, and the very first thing he said was, "Oh, Fred! only see what I found in my room this morning;" and Peter stood on one leg, and twirled round to show off his new clothes. [64]

"So did I in mine!" said Freddy.

"Where could they have come from?" continued Peter. "I asked Aunt Edith, and all she would tell me was that the box was sent last night, from a friend. Have you any idea, Fred?" [65]

Freddy burst out laughing. "They came from a good fairy," he said, "and there he is!" and he pointed to his father, who pretended not to hear.

"Hurrah for Mr. Jourdain!" shouted Peter, tossing his cap in the air.

"Will you have some breakfast, Peter?" asked Mrs. Jourdain.

"Thank you, ma'am, I had my breakfast before I started, all alone by myself—but," looking at the nice beefsteak, "I think I *could* eat a little more."

"How many apples, by the way Peter?" asked Bella, mischievously.

"Only two," he answered, quite seriously, "and a piece of taffy, and two cents' worth of peanuts! that's all, I think; no, a cent's worth of ice cream!" [66]

"Of ice cream!" exclaimed Bella, "where can you get ice cream for a cent?"

"Why, on the street corners—real good ice cream, too—don't you know that?" and Peter put on an air of superior wisdom, as though he was a knowing young gentleman, who understood better than anybody where nice things were to be had.

"But come, Peter," said Mr. Jourdain, "I should like to hear something more about your encampment. How long is your father willing you should have it?" [67]

"Father says, sir," replied Peter, "that we can stay until he leaves for Niagara, which will be next week, I guess. We're to have our camp on the lawn, most a quarter of a mile from the house, and some of our men are fixing the tents this morning. There are to be eight of 'em—isn't that gay, Fred? and we've got the smoke house by way of a guard tent beside; but there—I forgot all this time that I have a letter from papa for you, sir—here it is."

Mr. Jourdain opened the letter, and read as follows:

MY DEAR JOURDAIN:

I send you three words, through my harum-scarum Peter, merely to beg that Mrs. Jourdain and yourself will feel no uneasiness concerning the military expedition which has been the principal subject of discussion in my household, and I presume in yours also, since Thursday last. The invincible Zouaves will be stationed too near the house to make any danger possible, and as my family are going to Niagara on Tuesday, and I shall be left a "lone lorn creetur," it will be as much an amusement as anything to make their safety and happiness my special care. [68]

Hoping that you will permit Fred to remain in my charge a few days, I am, with regards to Mrs. Jourdain,

Very sincerely yours,
H. SCHERMERHORN."

Ting-a-ling-ling went the front door bell, as if the bull in Cock Robin had hold of the handle. Tramp, tramp, shuffle, shuffle, in the hall, and then Joseph tapped at the door, and showed in a whole troop of merry, noisy boys, all costumed à la Zouave, and with their hair shaved so close that they had to frown very hard to keep their caps on. [69]

The famous Dashahed Zouaves were all mustered, sure enough; and turned out to consist of sixteen high privates, four captains, and a standard-bearer, master Tom Pringle, with a perfectly magnificent Star-spangled Banner in his hand, surmounted by an astonishing spread eagle. Then came Major Peter Schermerhorn, who was the prime spirit of mischief of the party, and last, though not least, the great Colonel Freddy; who was dancing about in a high state of glee; while the rest of the *men*, seeing that the *Colonel* didn't regard dignity in the least, had an impromptu Zouave drill (which consists principally in turning somersaults) all round the dining room, the grown people looking on, in agonies of suppressed laughter. [70]

While this novel entertainment was in full swing, the bell tingled again, and Joseph entered once more, to announce, "Master Frederic, the escort and the band have *arriven*, and desire me

to say that they are awaiting your pleasure."

The escort and the band! Was there any end to wonders this morning? At those magical words, the regiment couldn't resist giving three cheers that nearly took the top of the house off; followed by three for Mr. Jourdain, when Peter made a mock-heroic speech about the uniforms; and finished off with a dozen more for anybody and everybody. At last Mr. Jourdain glanced at his watch and said, "Come, Colonel, I'm afraid you'll miss the boat if you don't make haste. Remember, you have a long march before you, and it is almost ten o'clock now."

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"Ah, that's a fact!" exclaimed the commander. "Ahem! fall in, old chaps, that is, squad—battalion—what's his name; pshaw! and let's be off."

[72]

This mandate to "fall in" certainly appeared to be translated "poke in" by the greater part of the corps, for it was directly followed by such a treading upon everybody's toes, and a ramming of elbows into other people's stomachs and chests, and such imminent danger incurred of every eye in the company being put out with bayonets held upside down, straight out, wiggle-waggle, and "various," as rendered it highly likely that matters would be terminated by a fall *out*; but at last they were fairly in line, and marched down the steps into the street; feeling a little shamefaced, but excessively proud of their new and conspicuous position.

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All the neighbors were leaning out of windows, nearly petrified with astonishment at what was going on; while at least fifty little ragged boys stood staring at the door, their eyes almost popping out of their heads, as the glorious Dashahed Zouaves made their appearance; trying desperately to tuck in the broad grins that *would* show at the corners of their mouths, and disturb the proper gravity of a soldier.

But their good behavior was nearly put to flight altogether when they beheld, waiting to escort them, three of the tallest policemen in the city (to engage whom Mr. Jourdain had made that third call, you remember, in B— street), and Dodworth's splendid brass band, marshalled in full force.

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Oh! how their eyes did sparkle! They could hardly get into marching order, or wait until Freddy, who had lingered behind to say good-by, came out and took his place at the head of the regiment. Then, with one more tremendous cheer, rang out the command,

MARCH!

Out burst the band with the glorious "Star-spangled Banner;" brightly streamed the folds of the flag itself in the wind; proudly Colonel Freddy waved his sword in the air; and so, with steps that kept time to the music, and hearts that thrilled with a mixture of fun and patriotism, the gallant Dashahed Zouaves marched off for Camp McClellan.

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CHAPTER III.

[76]

CAMP LIFE.

TOOT-TOOO! went the whistle of the steamboat "Mattano." "All aboard!" yelled the captain, and all aboard it was for the Dashahed Zouaves, and ever so many people beside, who, you may be sure, were all eyes when they found out that such a *killin*g regiment was going down with them.

"Good-by, my boy," called Mr. Jourdain (who had followed the march in a stage) from the wharf.

[77]

"Good-by, father; I say, old Beaugard will have to keep his eyes open now the Dashahed Zouaves are in the field!" and Freddy waved his cap in one hand and his sword in the other to his father, as long as he could see him.

In a few moments the boat was fairly out from the wharf, and the whole regiment comfortably seated on the promenade deck; very proud of their new responsibilities as members of the army and society generally, and surrounded by a crowd of admirers.

"Jolly, ain't I hungry!" exclaimed Freddy, as he joined them; "I went off with hardly any breakfast, I declare! wasn't that noble?"

"Noble? I don't see it!" said Charley Spicer. "Nobody asked you to go without your breakfast!"

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"Why, wasn't I in a hurry to serve my country? When I was so full of glory, I couldn't stop to get full of beefsteak and coffee beside!"

"Never mind!" cried Harry Livingston, "I have some sandwiches in my knapsack, and you shall have some, Fred."

"Have you? there's six big apples in mine," said Charley.

"Here's a quart of peanuts and half a pound of taffy for my share," added Jimmy Boorman.

"And I've a pair of broiled spring chickens! high diddle-diddle!" shouted George.

"Good boy!" exclaimed Tom Pringle; "here, take my molasses and water bottle—canteen, I mean, and pass round the tin plate for the Colonel!"

[79]

Amid high glee, every one bestowed a part of his provisions on Freddy until a sufficiently motley meal was collected; half of which he immediately offered again to his companions, who, of course, were quite ready to feel hungry too, and they all munched together, like a company of gypsies.

"I say, Captin," said a tall Yankee in a fur hat, to Peter, "what may yew calculate dewing on Long Island?"

"Why, we're going into camp, to be sure."

"Lors-a-massy! them air boys all alone by theirselves!" exclaimed an old countrywoman, carrying a large market basket, and wearing a great pair of brass-rimmed spectacles. "It beats all natur!"

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"Yew ha'n't got no one to look arter you?" continued the tall Yankee.

"Certainly; here's our commanding officer, Col. Jourdain."

"Let me present Mr. —," added Freddy, full of laugh, and highly enjoying the fun.

"Captin George Washington Kosciusko Peter Bonaparte Solomon Hopkins!" said the countryman, with an awkward bow; while the boys hardly dared to look at each other, they were so afraid of bursting out laughing at his ridiculous name. Its fortunate possessor, nothing abashed, went on, "But dew tell, wha—at on airth *dew* you call yourselves?"

[81]

"These, sir," replied Freddy, as grave as a judge, though his eyes sparkled with fun, "are the famous Dashahed Zouaves, First Regiment Long Island Volunteers; I am the Colonel, this is Major Schermerhorn, Captains Spicer, Chadwick, Livingston, and Boorman, Sergeant Pringle, and Adjutant Costar."

"Oh, *light infantry* regiment, I calculate."

"No, sir, *heavy veterans!*" put in Will Costar.

"Wal I never!" exclaimed Captin George Washington Kosciusko Peter Bonaparte Solomon Hopkins (here the boat touched the pier of the Flushing Railroad); "Naow mind, Kurnel Jordan, if ever your regiment comes to Hempstead, yeou put for Captin Hopkins' farm, and if yeou don't get the biggest lot of red apples yeou ever *did* see, I'll be made into apple pie myself!" and off marched the Yankee, while the boys, as soon as he was fairly out of sight, indulged rather ungratefully in an explosion of laughter.

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Presently the boat stopped at Ravenswood, and here the old woman got off; but before she went, she took an immense shiny hunk of gingerbread out of the great market basket, and bestowed it on Freddy, saying, "Here, take this, sonny; you air a dear little fellow, so like my Sammy, too"—and the poor old woman's voice broke, and tears began to gather under the brass-bound spectacles, as she turned to leave the boat.

[83]

Freddy put down his cake, and ran after her, saying, "Thank you, ma'am, thank you very much; I am sorry you are distressed."

The old woman stopped, and saying softly, "Bless you, my son!" she kissed the bright, rosy cheek, and went away quite comforted.

Freddy wasn't ashamed either, not a bit, when they teased him afterward, but said, "I don't care, she's a real nice old thing; now, there!"

Soon the boat ran up to the wharf at Astoria. Delighted to arrive at their journey's end, the boys scampered off as soon as the plank touched the shore, and "formed" on the road in fine style.

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"Goodness, Peter!" exclaimed Freddy, "I hope it's not very far to your father's place; I'm afraid I shall be melted altogether if it is."

"Well, it *is* a good way," began Peter, with rather a rueful face.

"So far that I intend to take you there in comfort," said a pleasant voice close behind them.

"Oh, father," cried Peter (for it was Mr. Schermerhorn), "how kind of you! Only look, boys!" and he pointed to two double rockaways which were waiting on the pier.

In they all swarmed, managing to find places for everybody (and really, it is surprising how a rockaway can *stretch* on occasion), and after a rapid drive along a level sandy road, the ha-ha fences of Mr. Schermerhorn's splendid country seat, "Locust Grove," came in view. Soon the carriages entered the beautiful rustic gate, its pillars surmounted by vases, filled with trailing plants; and in a moment more were dashing over the gravelled drive toward the western side of the place.

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At one point, the road led directly over a deep ravine, spanned by a bridge of rough logs. Then they whirled past a tranquil lake, dotted with pond lilies, and shaded by drooping willows, through which might be caught a glimpse of the tall white chimneys of the house. At last, with a

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sudden bend, the drive came out on a wide velvet lawn, relieved by a fringe of the beautiful locusts, covered, at this season of the year, with the fragrant pinkish flowers. At some distance a quaint Chinese summer house served as an observatory; beds of brilliant scarlet verbena and many-colored petunias dotted the grass here and there, and right before them, most beautiful of all in their eyes, was the encampment itself, eight snowy white tents, four in a row, while in the midst rose a tall flagstaff, with the dear old Red, White, and Blue floating from the summit.

"Hurrah, boys, there's the tents!" shouted Peter, at the top of his voice "Come, let's see who'll get there first;" and, before the carriage could stop, Peter had hopped out, tumbled head over heels on the soft grass, jumped up, and scampered on in advance, followed a moment after by the rest. [87]

These wonderful tents were furnished just like real soldiers' dwellings; with a good warm blanket for each of the three occupants, a bright tin basin and tooth mug, a cedar bucket to draw water, a square looking glass, like a sticking plaster, and a couple of wooden lockers (which, between ourselves, were made of claret boxes) in each one; beside camp stools in abundance for everybody.

"Here's the officers' quarters!" cried George, as he flung open the door of the smoke house. [88]

"No, that's the guard house, Chadwick," said Harry, "where we put the refracti-rac-tic-tactories."

"Oh, is it? I go in for that!" shouted Will Costar, "whatever reractitactories may be."

"You're on the wrong tack now, old chap," added Tom Pringle. "But only see what I've discovered! such a high old battery, boys! six brass cannon nearly as big as boot-jacks. Hurrah for the Dashahed Zouaves!" and away scampered the boys to look at the guns, while Colonel Freddy, quite forgetting his dignity, fell to and executed a volunteer Jim Crow polka, and Peter sang the following ridiculous song, making up words as he went along: [89]

"Ain't I glad I'm out in the wilderness,
Out in the wilderness,
Out in the wilderness,
Ain't I glad I'm out in the wilderness,
Down in Astori-or?"

"Good-by, boys, I'm off for Dixie,
Off for Dixie,
Off for Dixie,
Good-by, boys, I'm off for Dixie,
And sha'n't come back no more!"

Meanwhile, Mr. Schermerhorn had been superintending certain arrangements for the provisioning of the camp, and presently a bugle call, sounded by one of the stable men, summoned the regiment to prepare for dinner. [90]

Peter took a bucket and went to draw some water; George and Harry made a fire in the smoke house, which, after all the guesses, turned out to be intended for the regimental kitchen; Jimmy and Tom were initiated into the mysteries of frying ham and potatoes by the cook, and the rest set the table (for the soldiers considered it a point of honor that they should wait on themselves).

Amid high glee the table, consisting of a broad smooth plank placed upon horses, was laid with the tin cup and plates, the pewter forks and spoons, and horn-handled knives, which the boys carried in their knapsacks just like real soldiers, after which the table was further embellished by the remains of the rations they had brought with them, disposed around wherever they thought the dishes would have the best effect. [91]

The grand feast of fried ham was ready at last, and the new cooks presented themselves and it at table, very hungry and happy. Mrs. Mince meat, the fat cook, had made the boys each put on one of her blue check aprons, tied under their chins, to save their uniforms; and when they appeared in this new array, their faces as red and shining as a stick of sealing wax, there was a general shout of laughter.

"Well, my precious babies," cried one.

"Don't soil your new bibs, my tiddy-ikle duckies!" called another. [92]

"There, don't tease them," said Freddy, the general peacemaker; "Come, fellows, let's have dinner; ham's good, I tell you!" and down they sat at table, in high, good humor.

Of course the cooking business was rather to amuse the boys than in earnest, for the fried ham formed only a small part of the abundant dinner set before the gallant Zouaves. There was lamb, and green peas, new potatoes, fresh tomatoes, custard pudding, and raspberries, all of which was pronounced "fine," although Jimmy declared there never was any dish at Delmonico's to equal or surpass his fried ham, and the others fully concurred in this opinion.

As soon as the dinner was fairly under way, Mr. Schermerhorn rose from his place at the table, where he had been carving, and said, with a pleased smile on his face, "Now, my brave soldiers, I must take my leave. Have the goodness not to do double-quick over the flower beds, leave a dish [93]

or so of cherries in the orchard, and, whatever you do, don't tumble into the lake, and I shall be satisfied."

"Three cheers for Mr. Schermerhorn!" shouted Colonel Freddy. In an instant every fellow was on his feet, every cap was in the air, and a tremendous "Hurrah! hurrah! ti-ga-a-ah!" made the echoes around Camp McClellan wake up in a hurry, and poke their heads out of the hills to see where the cannonading was. [94]

Of course, being boys, the regiment cleared the dishes in astonishing style, and polished their plates so thoroughly that you would hardly have thought they wanted the grand washing they had when dinner was over.

After stowing all the things away neatly in the smokehouse, and arranging their surplus luggage (which had been sent down the previous Saturday), in the lockers, they all had a grand game at fox and geese, which lasted until Freddy, perfectly worn out with laughing and scampering about, exclaimed, "Come, fellows, do let's sit down and be quiet; I'm as tired as if I had walked from here to China."

"Yes, let's be *solemn* a little while," said Peter. "In these *momentous* times, we *army men* ought to be thinking how to fix off the old secessionists and that sort of thing. I move we all sit down in a circle, and the first who laughs shall tell a story." [95]

The boys thought this was a grand idea. So they found a nice place, just beneath the sheltering boughs of the locusts, and, putting the camp stools in a ring, they sat down, to see how solemn they could be. But it was no use; though they pinched up their mouths, and frowned, and did their best to look like a company of highly respectable owls, in two minutes they all burst out laughing, so nearly together that nobody could tell who had begun. [96]

As soon as the broad faces had come back to their proper length, there was a general cry for a story; and as Peter had instituted the new regulation, he undertook to carry it out; so, drawing a long breath to start with, he commenced:

"Once upon a time, there lived a family of bears in a thick wood. Grumpy-growly, the father, was a jolly, cross old fellow—oh! I guess he was! and the little ones didn't dare so much as to snap at a fly without permission, when he was around.

"One day Grumpy-growly went out to take a walk, bidding the young ones to be very good while he was away; for he was a widower, poor fellow! and had to see after his family himself. [97]

"As soon as he was fairly gone, Longclawse, the eldest, said, 'Seems to me, brothers, we have stood this long enough. All the other cubs in the wood can run about as they please, and why should we be kept in this poky old cave? Suppose we try to get away the big log before the door?' for this was what Grumpy-growly put up to keep them at home.

"'Good! I go in for that!' cried Bushyball, Titehugge, and Stubtail, the other cubs.

"So first they tried to poke their noses under the log, but the plaguy old thing wouldn't stir. Then they turned their backs against it, and all kicked together with their hind legs, and presently away it went, to the great delight of the four bears, who didn't trouble themselves to put it back again, but just packed up their carpet bags, and cut stick, I tell you." [98]

Here Peter opened his eyes and mouth very wide, and ran out his tongue for a moment to get an airing, a proceeding which he frequently repeated during the story. Then he went on:

"They had a jolly time climbing trees, rolling on the soft grass, and playing with the other bears they met; but at last Titehugge and Stubtail, the youngest, declared they were too tired to go another step, and must take a little nap. Longclawse and Bushyball thought they would go off to see the election, which they had been told was to take place that very day, and the others, promising not to stir from the spot without them, curled themselves up into tight round balls, and went to sleep. [99]

"While they were dreaming away, a fox came along. He was a cunning old codger, and hated Grumpy-growly like mustard, because the old fellow had once treated him, in a fit of rage, to a hug that nearly put an end to him. When he saw the sons of his enemy asleep, he made up his mind to fool them in revenge; and after he had rummaged both their carpet bags, to see if there was anything worth taking, he went up to Titehugge and pulled his ear a little to waken him. Titehugge, who was as cross as two sticks, and always fighting his brothers, opened his eyes, and for a moment looked so very like giving the fox a gentle squeeze, that foxy was rather startled. However, he took courage, and laying his paw on his heart, he made the bear such an elegant bow that he nearly cracked his spine. 'Ah, my d-e-a-r Titehugge! so glad to see you. You know I have always been a great friend of your dear papa's, and now, I should be overjoyed to do you a little favor. Do you happen to know that there is a tree near here, which is hollow from root to branches, and filled with wild bees' combs and honey?' [100]

"'No! cried Titehugge, 'is there? Show it to me directly, master fox, and don't stand there gaping at me!' You see, bears were never celebrated for being polite, and Titehugge had no more manners than any of 'em. [101]

"'Come along, then,' said the fox, 'but take care to make no noise, or you will waken your brother, and then he'll be wanting to have half the honey.'

"Titehugge was a selfish little pig—bear, I mean—and though he felt rather shy of going off alone for the first time in his life, he was too greedy after the honey to let that trouble him much. However, he said, 'You had better be careful not to play any tricks, master fox, for if you do, I'll give you a hug that will settle *you*—if you are such a dear friend of mine.'

[102]

"My d-e-a-r friend!' exclaimed the fox, 'd-o-n't say so! How can you suppose I would do such a shabby thing? Come, we shall soon be at the tree.'

"Titehugge waited for nothing more, but started off with master fox, who kept on flattering him all the way until Titehugge thought him the first-*rate*st fellow in the whole world. Presently they came to the hollow tree, and Titehugge, without waiting to ask any questions, shinned up like a streak of lightning, and began smelling down the hole. 'But, it looks very dark down here,' cried he at last 'and I don't see any honey'.

"'Oh, you must poke your nose further in,' said the fox, 'and you'll soon come to it.'

[103]

"Titehugge accordingly rammed and jammed his head with great difficulty into the hole, which proved such an uncommonly tight fit, that, not finding any honey, he began trying to pull it back double quick; but lo and behold! pull and tug, scratch and swear as he might, he was caught in a mouse trap not intended for bears, while the fox stood below giggling. After he had amused himself enough with Titehugge's struggles, he scampered off to find Stubtail; bawling out, 'Good-by, my d-e-a-r friend, I hope you'll find the honey answer your expectations.'

"Meanwhile, master Stubtail was snoring away like a catamount, when the fox trotted up, and seating himself beside him, began to sing a popular fox ballad, beginning, 'Oh? don't I love to cheat 'em!'

[104]

"This soon awoke Stubtail, and opening his eyes, he saw the fox sitting, singing away, as if he never dreamed of such a person as Stubtail being near.

"'Well, master fox!' he said, in a dandified way, 'whawt business have you, I should like to know, in the—aw company of a bearah of fashion? Make your mannaahs, sir, and don't sit down before your bettaahs! How horrid vulgah you are—aw!'

"Up jumped the fox, and made such a beautiful bow this time, that he fell over on his nose, and nearly stuck his tail in the bear's face, as he exclaimed, 'Oh, my d-e-a-r friend! d-o-n't say that! I didn't mean to be uncivil. I only came to ask you to a little fox party that is coming off this afternoon, if your highness will favor us with your honorable company. Only ten of my cousins and seven of my brothers and sisters are coming—just a nice little family party; but then they are all such beauties! particularly my cousin, Miss Slygo Brighteyes! She is perfectly lovely; as slender as a bean pole, and smooth as a young rabbit; and then such sharp teeth, such a fine bushy tail! oh my! and *such* a dancer, too, as she is!'

[105]

"Now, Stubtail was as fond of dancing and flirting as his brother of eating, and tried to be a great dandy and beau; so when master fox gave such a glowing description of Miss Slygo Brighteyes, his charming cousin, Stubtail's whiskers curled up tighter than ever; and he could hardly manage to *draw* out, 'Aw—yaas, I think I *will* dwop in for harf an 'ouah!'

[106]

"When the fox heard that, he was ready to stand on his head for joy; and could scarcely wait while Stubtail opened his carpet bag, and took out his all-rounder collar, his lemon-colored kid gloves, and his pork pie hat, to wear at the fox's party.

"But what has become of Titehugge?' he asked, suddenly noticing that his brother was not there.

"'Oh, never mind *him*,' said the fox, 'I saw the selfish little wretch gobbling away at some honey as I came along, and you see he was too greedy to ask you to share it.'

[107]

"This was enough for Stubtail, who was too hard at work drawing on his tight gloves to think of anything else, and away he trotted with the fox; who took him to a lonely hollow in the wood, where, sure enough, there were about fifty other foxes clustered together, but who looked at Stubtail as he came among them, in anything but a pleasant manner.

"'Now, my friends!' exclaimed master fox himself, in a furious tone, 'you see before you the son of that old scoundrel Grumpy-growly, who nearly killed me last year. At him, my dear cousins! scratch his eyes out! ahaaa!' and with a long growl of rage the fox made a sudden jump at poor Stubtail before he had time to run away, followed by all the others.

[108]

"Stubtail fought like a perfect Zouave, hugging, scratching, and biting his enemies with might and main; but after all, one poor little cub could not do very much against a whole army of foxes, and Stubtail would have been killed outright before long, when suddenly a tremendous growling was heard! and up dashed Grumpy-growly himself, who most fortunately happened to be passing, and came to see what the row was, followed by Longclawse and Bushyball, full tilt! They didn't stop to inquire whether this was a free fight or not, but pitched in like a thousand of bricks, and demolished the foxes in a way which astonished them considerable.

[109]

"As to master fox, he was making off first of anybody, leaving his friends in the lurch; but Grumpy-growly saw him, and catching him by the ear, made him confess all the mischief he had been about that morning; and as soon as he had finished, Grumpy-growly gave him one good hug, which killed him as dead as a coffin nail.

"After the grand battle was over, Grumpy-growly marshalled the three cubs before him, hanging their heads, and looking perfectly miserable with shame and fatigue, and started off to find Titehugge; scolding and beating them all the way for their naughty conduct, though they were punished enough already; for Longclawse and Bushyball had gone to the election, where they had been well pummelled by a shoulder-hitting baboon, because they insisted on voting for Douglas as the bearliest fellow on the ticket, and afterward met by their father, who gave them another thrashing for daring to come out without leave, and dragged them howling away. Stubtails ears were torn into ribbons, his head bleeding in twenty places, and unfortunately no 'Balm of the Blooming Blossoms of Gilead' to put on it, and, in short, the whole party looked as if they had been at an Irish funeral and nearly been made 'cold corpses' themselves. After a long hunt, they at last found Titehugge stuck fast where the fox had left him, and now the puzzle was to get him out. The three brothers all tried in vain, and at last Grumpy-growly caught hold of Titehugge's tail, Longclawse of Grumpy-growly's, Stubtail of Longclawse's, and Bushyball of Stubtail's, and they all pulled and tugged together; ouf! ouf! altogether now! one, two, three, Pop! out came Titehugge, and out came his tail, too! and the five bears rolled head over heels together in such a hurley-burley, that it was a long time before they could get straight enough to start for home; and when they *did* get there, Grumpy-growly put up the big log again, and put a big stone on top of that, and a hundred pound weight on top of that, and *one* of those home-made pies we used to have at boarding school on top of *that*, which proved the heaviest of the lot, and if they ever happened to get out of prison again, it is more than I know."

Thus ended the wonderful story of the five bears, which gave great amusement to the hearers, and was pronounced "first rate." Pretty soon after, they had a scrambling sort of tea, not quite as orderly as dinner, for they were all tired out with the day's adventures; and about seven o'clock, George, who, as I told you, was the oldest of the party, sensibly proposed that the regiment should go "early to bed," on the principle of the old maxim, and in order to be "early to rise," after the example of real soldiers.

As they were not quite certain what were the usual ceremonies attendant upon soldiers' retiring, Freddy undertook to "do the thing up brown," as he said, in a novel and delightfully military manner. So, taking his place about a dozen yards in advance of the camp, and standing as stiff as a ramrod, just as he had seen the officers do at West Point, he called out "Battalion, attention!"

At these words, the regiment strung themselves in a long line, like so many kibobs on a straw, with their captains standing in front. "Now, Captain Livingston, dismiss your company to quarters," and off marched the first company, four "men" strong, toward the tents; then the next four, and so on, until all had gone, and then came posting back again without the smallest delay.

Colonel Freddy was obediently following his own orders by dismissing himself, with a sublime disregard of rank, when Peter suddenly called out, "I say, Fred, there's one thing you've forgotten!"

"What is that?" asked Freddy, stopping short.

"Why, we ought to have a guard. You know they always do in camps."

"To be sure! I never thought of that. Come, fellows, the safety of Camp McClellan must be looked out for."

"Very well, suppose you begin!" laughed Jimmy.

"Hum, I'm the Colonel; Colonels can't be sentinels."

"But I want to go to bed!" objected Will Costar.

"Well, I love my country, but I think the country had better turn in too!" said Harry. "What business has the country to be awake and getting into mischief in the middle of the night?"

"Voted," cried Peter, "that the guard be mounted, but that it shall go to bed as soon as it gets sleepy!"

"Good for you! that's the way to fix it!" said Colonel Freddy. "Now then, boys, who'll turn out?" and two of the gallant Zouaves being posted, one on each side of the camp, the others produced their nightgowns (which, by their special entreaty, had been crammed into the little knapsacks), and with several hair breadth escapes from having one or two of the tents pitched over, as the occupants incautiously ran against the poles, the regiment after, I am glad to say, a most sincere and earnest repetition of their prayers, fell into the sweet sound sleep of happy childhood; while the guard, after prancing up and down about ten minutes, concluded to follow their example, as there was nothing particular in the way of an enemy to look out for.

Ah! how charming looked now the little encampment, with the full radiance of the harvest moon streaming over the white tents, standing gleamingly out from the dark background of trees. No sound but the chirpings of insects could be heard; nothing moved about the spot but the flag, stirring dreamily in the summer breeze. And now the wind springs fresher up; it catches the bright folds, and they flash out in full view. God bless you, glorious old banner! floating there over as loyal, though boyish hearts, as ever beat in the midnight camp of the Army of Freedom.

Transcriber's Notes:

Obvious punctuation errors repaired.

The remaining correction made is indicated by a dotted line under the correction. Scroll the mouse over the word and the original text will appear.

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