

# The Project Gutenberg eBook of Little Aliens, by Myra Kelly

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

**Title:** Little Aliens

**Author:** Myra Kelly

**Release Date:** May 29, 2010 [EBook #32581]

**Language:** English

\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK LITTLE ALIENS \*\*\*

**E-text prepared by David Edwards, Carla Foust,  
and the Project Gutenberg Online Distributed Proofreading Team  
(<http://www.pgdp.net>)  
from page images generously made available by  
Internet Archive/American Libraries  
(<http://www.archive.org/details/americana>)**

Note: Images of the original pages are available through Internet  
Archive/American Libraries. See  
<http://www.archive.org/details/littlealiensmyra00kellrich>

## Transcriber's note

Minor changes have been made to punctuation. Printer's errors have been corrected, and they are indicated with a [mouse-hover](#) and listed at the [end of this book](#).

---



Together they retrieved it

---

# LITTLE ALIENS

BY

MYRA KELLY

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE CITIZENS," "WARDS OF LIBERTY,"  
"THE GOLDEN SEASON," ETC., ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK  
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS  
1910

---

COPYRIGHT, 1910, BY  
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

Published April, 1910



---

To

---

## CONTENTS

	Page
"EVERY GOOSE A SWAN"	<a href="#">1</a>
"GAMES IN GARDENS"	<a href="#">25</a>
"A BRAND FROM THE BURNING"	<a href="#">63</a>
FRIENDS	<a href="#">107</a>
THE MAGIC CAPE	<a href="#">143</a>
"BAILEY'S BABIES"	<a href="#">163</a>
"THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES"	<a href="#">195</a>
THE ETIQUETTE OF YETTA	<a href="#">227</a>
A BENT TWIG	<a href="#">261</a>

---

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Together they retrieved it	<a href="#"><i>Frontispiece</i></a>
	FACING PAGE
"I guess games in gardens ain't so awful healthy for somebody," said Yetta	<a href="#">32</a>
"I never in my world seen how they all makes"	<a href="#">60</a>
"I must refuse to translate it to you"	<a href="#">70</a>
She staggered back into a chair, fortunately of heavy architecture, and stared at the apparition	<a href="#">140</a>
Patrick was making discipline impossible	<a href="#">178</a>
"What you think we got to our house?"	<a href="#">198</a>
Rosie threw herself into a very ecstasy of her art	<a href="#">246</a>

[1]

[2]

---

## "EVERY GOOSE A SWAN"

[3]

An ideal is like a golden pheasant. As soon as the hunter comes up with one he kills it in more or less bloody fashion, tears its feathers off, absorbs what he can of it, and then sets out, refreshed, in pursuit of another. Or if, being a tender-hearted hunter, he tries to keep it in a cage to tame it, to teach it, to show it to his friends, it very soon loses its original character so that beholders disparagingly exclaim: "Why, it's only a little brown hen! Hardly worth the trouble of hunting."

But among the pheasant and the trout of the ideal hunting-fields the true relation between home and school flits ever along the horizon, a very sea-serpent. Every one has heard of it. Some have pursued it. Some even vow they have seen it. Almost any one is ready to describe it. Expeditions have gone forth in search of it, and have come back empty-handed or with the haziest of kodak films. And the most conservative of insurance companies would consider it a safe "risk."

[4]

In every-day and ordinary conditions this relation between home and school is really a question of mother and teacher, with the child as its stamping-ground. Two very busy women, indifferent, hostile, or strangers to each other, are engaged in the formulated and unformulated education of the child. To the mother this child is her own particular Mary or Peter. To the teacher it is the whole generation, of which Peter and Mary are such tiny parts.

The ideal teacher is as wise as Solomon, as impartial as the telephone directory, as untiring as a steam-engine, as tender as a sore throat, as patient as a glacier, as immovable as truth, as alert as a mongoose, and as rare as a hen's tooth. But her most important qualification is the power to combine her point of view with the parental one, and to recognize and provide for the varieties of character, temperament, mentality, and physical well-being of the children intrusted to her care.

[5]

The average teacher—nearly as elusive as the ideal—is, to a surprising and ever-increasing extent, learning to do this. It is, in fact, a very large part of the law and the prophets in modern

pedagogy. The teacher is expected to know, and she generally does know, what, in hospital parlance, is called the "history" of her pupils, and the newer schools are equipped with apparatus for making thorough physical examinations upon which the pupil's curriculum will largely depend.

As rare perhaps as the dodo-bird is the mother who takes an intelligent and helpful interest in the school life of her offspring. She generally regards the school as a safe house of detention, a sort of day nursery of larger growth. Mrs. O'Rourke will send Tim and Pat and Bidy and Jimmy and Mike and Delia, so that she may have leisure to take care of the twins and the baby, and to do the washing; while Mrs. Fitz-Jones will send Robert Albert Walter Fitz-John Fitz-Jones, so that she may be—to quote Browning, and since he's dead whatever he wrote must be considered proper—"safe in her corset lacing," ere she sallies out to bridge. Occasionally the two powers for good and evil in the child's world meet. A large mother will drag a reluctant boy to school, and loudly bewail herself for that she can do nothing with him. He has been dismissed as unteachable by another teacher. [6]

"He ain't, so to speak, bad, miss. He's just naturally ugly an' stoopid. Look at him now," and she directs the general attention to the writhings of her victim. "Would you think I just washed and combed him an' came around—leavin' my housework, too—to ask you to try him? He don't appreciate nothin' I do for him. Just naturally ugly and stoopid." [7]

It may take a week to undo the effects of this introduction and to gain the little chap's confidence. Then the teacher wheedles him through the physical examination and seeks further speech with the mother.

"Your little boy—" she will begin.

"He's been botherin' you, too, most likely. Him and me will have a settlin' this afternoon——"

"No, not that, please. I hardly know how to tell you. I'm afraid you have—we all have—been misjudging him. But have you ever had his eyes examined?" [8]

"What fur?"

"His sight. He is—I hope you will be strong and brave about it—very nearly blind in his left eye, and the right is affected, too."

It has, on several occasions, been my unhappy duty to make some such announcement, and never has it been received twice in the same way. Some ladies entirely disbelieve, and set it down to the natural officiousness of teachers—"buttin' in where they ain't got no call." Others will fall away into hysterics. Yet others will remark that their own eyes were unsatisfactory in earlier stages: "It's just growin', I guess. I outgrew the trouble before I was twelve." One mother accepted the facts frankly, took the child to an oculist, bought the glasses he prescribed, and applied the drops he recommended, until she inadvertently used the dropper to fill her fountain-pen. Soon the boy lost his glasses, and the incident was closed. [9]

Ears and teeth, tonsils and adenoids, frequently furnish stumbling-blocks to education, but the teacher who reports them to the home authorities does so at the risk of wasting her time, or of being accused of causing or inventing the conditions. Recently the boards of education in the larger cities have been legislating for appropriations to be applied to free glasses, free dentistry, free professional services of all kinds to the children of the public schools. And the gratitude of the parents—whose duties are being attended to—takes fearful and wonderful forms.

Philosophers, in their slow and doddering way, may question the exact part played by heredity in the formation of human character. Not so the mother. She has reduced the problem to a formula. All that is bad, hateful, and spiteful in the child is the direct contribution of his father or his father's house. All that is appealing, lovable, interesting, and most especially all that is "cute," is directly inherited from the female side. The only exception to this rule is the half-orphan. In his case one or two good qualities may be inherited from the deceased parent. [10]

Once I taught a Gwendolin. She was a peculiarly abominable individual, as, poets to the contrary notwithstanding, a child may sometimes be. The class was large, the school was a public one, and the curriculum prescribed from on high. There was no time for private instructions, and Gwendolin lagged far in the rear. She was late by habit; lazy by nature; and tearful by policy and experience. I spent hours which should have been devoted to the common good in setting down Gwendolin's tardiness, listening to her excuses, and drying her tears. Finally I sent for the mother, and a large, blonde, lackadaisical person responded to my call. She came, contrary to regulations, during class hours, and Gwendolin promptly began to howl at sight of her. It is, by the way, noted by most teachers and explained by few parents, that the sight of a face from home will generally produce hysterics. [11]

Well, I allowed Mrs. Marks to undo the effect of her appearance, and with Gwendolin almost buried in the exuberances of the maternal costume and figure, she proceeded to explain that dear Gwendolin was always deliberate. It was her nature. We all, she hoped, were entitled to our natures. Gwendolin's dear father was always late for breakfast, and they never did, by any chance, see the first act of a play. She thought she would step around and explain this to me, knowing that I would make allowances for the sweet child. "For I always tell her," she beamed on me, "that her dear teacher would rather have her late every day in the year than ruin her stomach by eating too quickly." And as to her crying, well, Mrs. Marks opined, it was a very [12]

strong commentary on the manners and natures of the other children in the class. Of course Gwendolin cried. Her mother cried. On the slightest provocation. Never could help it. Never hoped to be able to help it. Why, it was only that morning that Mr. Marks had remarked that any one who cried over the newspaper should wait until after breakfast to read it.

I controlled my true feelings sufficiently to ask her what effect an epidemic of Gwendolin's little characteristics would have upon my class. I urged her imagination to picture fifty children late every morning because their fifty fathers always missed the first act of a play, and fifty voices always raised in howls because fifty mothers wept upon one hundred poached eggs on toast. [13]

"Oh, but dear me," purred Mrs. Marks, as she heaved herself to the perpendicular, shedding Gwendolin, a pocket-book, a handkerchief, and a fan—"oh, but dear me, my sweet Gwendolin is such an exceptional child."

There is another class of parent from whom teachers suffer much. It generally has but one child, and that child is generally a pitiful, conscientious, earnest little creature in sombre hair ribbons and "Comfort" shoes. Very frequently this parent has been, in some prehistoric age, a teacher of mathematics in a high-school. Now, a spiritualistic seance at which Messrs. Froebel, Pestalozzi, Herbart, Locke, and Spencer should appear and explain their theories of education, and at which Professor James should come from Harvard to preside, while Professor John Dewey looked in to make a few remarks, would never persuade that parent that her child's progress was not to be gauged by an ability to spell obsolete words, and to worry her way through complicated problems in long division. [14]

"Why, she's been to school every day for seven months; rain, nor snow, nor sleet has daunted her. She has an umbrella, a mackintosh, and a pair of rubbers. And yet with all these aids to education she cannot spell 'parallel.'" If you are rash you will inform her that the rubbers, the mackintosh, and the umbrella may travel to school for yet another seven months, and the child may still remain unable to spell "parallel." If you are patient and "so disposed," you would deliver a little lecture on the new methods of teaching reading, in which first a whole sentence is used as a unit; later a phrase; later still a word; and last of all a letter; but do not hope for a favorable reception of this theory. The ex-teacher of high-school mathematics, who, in her own far-distant youth, excelled at spelling-bees, could name the capital of every State in the Union and every country in the world; who could recite the names and dates of the Presidents, "The Village Blacksmith," "The Old Oaken Bucket," "The Psalm of Life," and the Declaration of Independence, is not prepared to accept a method of teaching based upon the interests and the reason of the child, and never upon its mechanical memory. "Things," she will tell you, "are changed since my day," and she allows you very thoroughly to understand that they are changed most mournfully for the worse. [15]

Changed they emphatically are, whether for worse or better. Almost every scientific, medical, and sociological discovery of the century has influenced the school. The single theory of the microbe as the cause of disease has well-nigh revolutionized it. It does not require a very long memory to reach back to the days of slates and slate rags, with their attendant horrors of sliminess and sucked pencils. In those dark ages, too, a school-book was used by successive generations of children for as long as its print was legible to the keenest eye. Lead-pencils were collected at the end of the day and dealt out again promiscuously, and, marvellous to reflect upon, several children survived their schooling. [16]

In these days the well-equipped and well-managed school-room is as sanitary as a hospital ward; sterilizing and fumigating are part of the regular work, and every book and pencil undergoes such treatment before being transferred from one child to another. The number of cubic feet of air, per child, per hour, is calculated and provided for. The designing of seats for school children is a matter which occupies the attention of men whose reputation is international, and whole schools of philosophy busy themselves to determine the sequence in which the different formal studies shall be presented. [17]

In these halcyon days when Botany doffs her cap and gown and associates with ordinary mortals in the friendly guise of "How to Know the Wild Flowers," "Nature's Garden," and other enticing disguises; when ornithology takes such friendly shapes as "A Kentucky Cardinal" and "Bird Life"; when physiology becomes "How to Grow Young" and "What Ails the Baby"; when even political economy reaches the ordinary plane at the hands of Messrs. Lincoln Steffens, Ray Stannard Baker, and Charles Edward Russell—we soon expect psychology to burst its academic bonds. It has already made one or two tentative appearances, and it was moderately well received; but some day, and soon, a prophet will arise to preach it with a yet more popular voice. [18]

Then shall mother and teacher sweetly lisp of the "fringe of apperception," "the stream of consciousness," "inhibition," "ideal motor action," and "the tabula raza." Psychology has, I am aware, an unappealing sound. But let no one imagine that it is not or, rather, cannot be made interesting. We cannot always catch a bird, find a flower, or unearth a social evil; but every one, under all conditions and at all times, has a psychology in full working order concealed about him, and the art of teaching in its last analysis is applied psychology. [19]

How many mothers have heard of the theory, formulated and vouched for by most distinguished scientists, that the individual during the normal progress of his existence passes through the whole history of the development of his race? That he has, in turn, the instincts and the wants which animated all his ancestors, from the age of chaos to the day of the flying-machine? Upon this theory the whole scheme of education is based. Its essential principle is that if you can catch

the child at the stone-age point of its development, you can then most readily teach him the rather restricted sum of knowledge by which the stone man steered his daily course. The difficulty lies in catching what is then most literally "the psychologic moment," at which a raw root dug up with a stone hammer will strike the young learner as a square meal.

[20]

Any interested outsider will testify that the new baby confirms this theory. It is an absolute savage. No head-hunter of Borneo could be more destitute of the "self-knowledge, self-reverence, self-control" which characterize the civilized man. Observe the small boy taking care of his small sister, and you will see the spirit of the Inquisition reproduced in all its ingenuity for torture. Note the length of time which a boy will spend in a green-shaded swimming-hole on a summer day, and you will see him dating back to his jelly-fish ancestors. A little girl will lavish all the passion and absorption of motherhood upon a bath towel and a croquet-ball. Hundreds of Davids have gone forth against their Goliaths. Thousands of knights in short stockings have kept the law of the Table Round. The most pampered of lads and lassies, left to their own devices, will revert to the cuisine of the cave man and sustain themselves upon mud pies.

[21]

Whole volumes, learned, authoritative, but so far ponderous, have been devoted to determining the age at which the different impulses which prompt or qualify human action are added unto the individual. Reason, honor, self-control, knowledge, religion, the sense of right and wrong and of responsibility, hate, envy, love, joy—all the forces developed in the race through immemorial ages—are born and reach maturity in the individual during the little span of one short life.

Whether this theory be right or wrong, no one can question that it is interesting and suggestive. It is but one of dozens with which the teacher is supposed to be at least on speaking terms. There is another large field of experiment and accomplishment in what is known as the manual-training movement, the marvellous and so long unrecognized connection between the development of the hand and the development of the mind and morals. Any one craving greater marvels than are furnished in modern romance can find them in the reports of reformatories, prisons, lunatic asylums, or schools for the defective, in which manual training has been introduced.

[22]

The whole trend of education changed when the "three R's" ceased to be its war-cry, and it behooves the modern mother to realize this change and to adapt herself to it. For the school and the home are but two agencies in the training of the child, two powers which should work together for good; and the ideal relation between the two is that they should be as one. It was a very great Teacher who taught that "no man can serve two masters." Then let the mother conform her rule and her judgments to the laws of the sister kingdom.

[23]

Let her hold, for instance, that the principle of self-activity is stronger than blind obedience ever was; that emulation as a spur to effort is the abomination of desolation; that a sound mind in a sound body is more to be valued than riches; that a keen eye for color and form, a steady hand to guide a pencil or a tool, a mind alert, eager, and reasonable, a heart which feels its brotherhood with all living, growing things, a free, frank speech, a generous nature, and an honest tongue, are in themselves a Declaration of Independence and a Psalm of Life.

[24]

[25]

[26]

---

## "GAMES IN GARDENS"

[27]

Isaac Borrachsohn, Room 18's only example of the gilded youth, could never be described as a brilliant scholar, but on a morning in early April Miss Bailey found him more trying even than was his wont. He was plainly the centre of some sub-evident interest. First Readers nudged one another and whispered together, casting awed or envious looks upon him, and when the hour for recess came he formed the centre of an excited and gesticulating crowd. But Isaac Borrachsohn had never quite outgrown his distrust for his Krisht teacher. It was fostered by all his womankind at home, and was insisted upon almost as an article of faith by his grandfather the Rabbi. It was not to him, therefore, that Miss Bailey looked for an explanation of the general excitement, though she knew that before the day should pass she would hear several accounts of it.

[28]

It was after three o'clock; the prescribed school work was over and friendly converse was the order of the hour. The Board of Monitors, closing the door carefully upon the last unofficial First Reader, gathered solemnly round Teacher and proceeded to relate Isaac Borrachsohn's saga of his latest adventure.

"He says like that," said Eva Gonorowsky, Monitor of Pencil Points, in awed and envious tones. "He says he goes by his papa's side in a carriage on Games in Gardens."

"I guess maybe he lies," Nathan Spiderwitz, Monitor of Window Boxes, suggested with some disparagement. "I was to Gardens—Summer Gardens—mit my papa und no games stands in 'em. Stands bottles from beer und pretzels on'y. I ain't seen nothings like how Ikey says."

[29]

"And what does Ikey say?" asked Miss Bailey.

"Well," began Morris Mowgelewsky, Monitor of the Gold Fish Bowl, "Ikey says Gardens is a house mit thousens und thousens from mans und ladies. Und they all sets by side theirselves, und they

yells somethin' fierce. Und in Gardens there ain't no upstairs, on'y thousens und thousens from lights. Ikey says on the Bowery even he ain't never seen how there is lights in Gardens."

"Yes, dear, Ikey was quite right," said Miss Bailey, beginning to discern the outline of Madison Square Garden with inter-scholastic athletic games in progress. "The mans and ladies" were, of course, the proud parents, sweethearts, relations, and various colleagues, and the "yells" were their unconfined joy and triumph. [30]

"And flags," supplemented Patrick Brennan, Monitor of Blackboards and Leader of the Line. "I says to that show-off, Ikey Borrachsohn, 'Is there any flowers in that garden?' And he says he didn't see none 'cept what the ladies had on 'em. And all the rest was flags. Flags hangin' down out of the sky. Flags up in the lights, and everybody wavin' flags. Gee! It was pretty if it's true."

"It's quite true, dear," Miss Bailey assured him. "I was there one night last week, and it was just as Isaac says."

"You dun'no all what Ikey says," Morris intervened. "He says a man comes mit a great big hammer—a awful big hammer mit a long handle. Und he takes that hammer—Missis Bailey this is how Ikey says—und he makes it shall go round und round by his head. Und then he takes und he throws it where some mans stands, und Ikey says he had mad looks, he was red on the face even, over somethings." [31]

"If any one got fresh with hammers on my pop's beat," Patrick Brennan interrupted, "they'd get pinched so quick they wouldn't know what struck 'em, and Ikey says they was lots of police officers standin' around doin' nothin'. Ain't he the liar!"

"Not this time," said Miss Bailey; "he was telling you the truth."

Then Nathan Spiderwitz took up the tale.

"Und sooner that man makes, like Morris says, mit hammers, comes more mans mit more hammers, und they throws 'em. Und comes more mans mit from iron balls so big like Ikey's head, und they throws 'em, und the ladies und the mans they stands und yells, und music plays, und the ladies make go their flags und scups up und down on their seats. Und the mans mit those balls und hammers they has awful mads. They is red on the face, und they tries und they tries—Missis Bailey, Ikey says it's somethin' fierce how they tries—und they couldn't never to hit nobody." [32]

"They weren't trying to," Miss Bailey tried to explain, but Isaac's picturesque recital was not lightly to be effaced.



**"I guess games in gardens ain't so awful healthy for somebody," said Yetta**

"I guess games in gardens ain't so awful healthy for somebody," was Yetta Aaronsohn's pronouncement. "My mamma says you could to make yourself a sickness sooner you runs awful hard, on'y Ikey, he says a whole bunch from mans und boys they chases theirselves like an'thing. They runs und they runs, und all the times the mans und the ladies scups und yells und makes go their flags. Ikey says it looks like a awful fight is comin', on'y these boys und mans they couldn't never run to catch theirselves, und so there ain't no fight. Ikey had a awful sad over it." [33]

It was evident all through this recital that Eva Gonorowsky had a communication of a more important and confidential nature upon her conscientious little mind. When at last the other Monitors had scattered to their duties, and Room 18 was in a satisfactory stage midway 'twixt chaos and order, Eva drew Miss Bailey into the corner between the window and the bookcase.

"Nobody ain't told you *all* what Ikey says," she whispered, with much the same gusto as she had seen her elders display as they gathered close about the very heart of a scandal. "Everybody has fraids over telling you."

"Afraid!" repeated Miss Bailey in surprise, well knowing this to be the last feeling she inspired. [34]

"Afraid to tell me!"

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am. They has fraids. It's somethin' fierce what Ikey says. He says like that: all those mans what couldn't to catch nothings und couldn't to hit nothings. He says somethin' fierce over all those mans." And here Eva pressed her professionally soiled hand over her mouth and regarded Miss Bailey with scandalized eyes.

"Go on, dear," said Miss Bailey encouragingly. "If Isaac has told you and Morris and the others I might as well know it too."

Eva removed her hand. "Ikey Borrachsohn, he dun'no what is polite for him," she made reply. "He tells it on everybody—in the yard even, where the babies is—he tells it out. He needs he shall get hit off of somebody." [35]

"Now you tell me," said Miss Bailey, "and I'll see about Isaac."

"He says," whispered Eva, "how all those mans they don't puts them on *like* mans mit suits und hats und pants und coats—no, ma'am, that ain't how they makes—they puts them on like ladies und like little girls. On'y," and Miss Bailey had to stoop to catch this last overwhelming sentence—"on'y they don't puts them on so much."

"Why of course not, Eva," answered Miss Bailey, repressing with stern effort an inclination to wild laughter. This repression she knew to be the corner-stone of the First Reader's faith in her. She never, openly, laughed at their little confidences. She was a serious-minded person, always ready to discuss a serious problem seriously. Quite gravely now she pointed out to Eva the difficulty of violent exertion in street attire. [36]

"You yourself," she amplified, "take off your coat and hat when you come to school, and yet you only read and write a little, and do quiet things like that. Now these men and boys, dear, that Isaac Borrachsohn has been telling about were running and exercising just as hard as they could; you know how hot we sometimes get here when we only stand in our places and exercise our arms and legs."

Eva was impressed, but not yet quite convinced.

"It ain't," she insisted, a gentle last word, unanswerable, overwhelming, "it ain't hats und coats what Ikey Borrachsohn says them mens in Gardens takes off."

---

Misunderstandings of this sort are a natural part of the order of the day in class rooms such as Room 18, where children, alien to every American custom, and prejudiced by religion and precept against most of them, are undergoing their training in citizenship. Generations of muffling and swaddling were behind Eva's shocked little face. Her ancestors had not taken their recreation in running or rowing or swimming. And the scene at Madison Square Garden was as foreign to the First Readers' traditions as a warm afternoon in Athens during the age of Pericles would have been to a New England spinster. It was the sort of misunderstanding which must be faced instantly, and immediately after assembly on the next morning Miss Bailey faced it. [37]

"Isaac Borrachsohn has told you all," she commenced pleasantly, marshalling the wavering eyes before her with her own, steady and clear, "of how he went to Madison Square Garden with his father and saw the games."

Isaac squirmed in his place. [38]

"And he told you," she continued, "how he saw men and boys running races, and trying how far they could throw a big heavy hammer and a big iron ball. Isaac didn't quite understand what they were doing, but they were not trying to hit any one, and not trying to catch one another, and there was no thought at all of a fight. The boy who ran fastest got a prize, the boy who threw the hammer farthest got a prize. And there were a great many other prizes for jumping and all kinds of things. And," she continued, redoubling the concentration in her eyes, "did Isaac tell you how those boys were dressed?"

A gasp and a shiver swept through Room 18.

"Well, if he didn't, I will. They wore the very lightest clothes they could get. They wanted to be free and cool. They couldn't run fast or jump far with all their heavy every-day clothes on. Exercise makes people very warm, you know. It was a great help to those boys to be dressed in cool white clothes. [39]

"I was at the games," she continued, "as I was telling some of the boys yesterday afternoon, and I enjoyed them ever so much. I was just wishing that you were all there too. The girls could have sat with me, and the boys could have run in the ring. I've watched you all playing in the yard, and I know what good runners some of you are. And then when they gave you prizes we, the girls and I, would have waved our flags and cheered just like the ladies Isaac told you about. Now wouldn't that be grand?" she cried, and the First Readers vociferously agreed with her, though Yetta Aaronsohn, the hypochondriacal, was still of the opinion that "wind on the legs ain't healthy for nobody." [40]

Cold indeed would be the heart of any masculine First Reader who could see, unmoved, the



picture conjured up of Teacher's words. They were well accustomed to impromptu races, run on a course all thick beset with push-carts, ash cans, and humanity. Other tests of physical strength, with the exception by an occasional hand-to-hand conflict, neither determined, scientific, nor conclusive, were practically unknown. But to run on a prepared course surrounded by a stationary and admiring audience, of which Miss Bailey and the feminine First Readers formed an important part, was quite a different thing. Then, too, "prizes" was an alluring word. Teacher had shown it to mean articles of price and great attractiveness. The "clean-hands-for-a-week" prize, won by Sadie Gonorowsky, with Isidore Applebaum as a close second, had been a little clasp pin of the American flag in enamel, and the "cleanest-shoes-for-a-month" prize had been a pair of roller skates.

[41]

The masculine element of the Room 18's Board of Monitors met that afternoon in the cellar of a recently burned tenement to discuss the situation. If it would pleasure Miss Bailey to see her adherents racing round a garden in abbreviated costumes, there was, they decided, no very serious reason against giving her that pleasure. It was only a shade more unreasonable than other desires of hers to which they had bent their energies, and since there was question of reward, it became even more a duty and a pleasure to oblige her.

"But we ain't got no Gardens," Nathan Spiderwitz pointed out.

"We'll use my yard," said Patrick. "When me mother has company she always calls our yard a garden. It's got a tree in it, and we can get some flags to hang on the clothes line. I was askin' me big brother last night, and he knows all about them games. He'll tell us mor'n Ikey Borrachsohn can about how the thing goes, and when we get it fixed just right, we'll have Miss Bailey and the girls come round some Saturday morning and see us run and jump. Say, it'll be great! I can run faster than any feller in the class; an' I bet I can jump higher too, an' I bet I can throw things farther, too, an' I bet I can lick ye all pole-vaultin', too. Me brother was tellin' me about that."

[42]

"I don't know what is 'pole-vaultin' even," said Morris, and asked with some natural curiosity what parts he and other possible competitors were to take in these Games in Gardens.

"Oh, you," answered Patrick, with happy condescension, "you all is goin' to get licked. That's what you're goin' to do. Don't you worry."

[43]

But this rôle did not appeal strongly to either of his colleagues.

"I don't know do I likes gettin' licked," Morris objected with some reason.

"Und I don't know *will* I get licked," said Nathan Spiderwitz, the valorous. "I jumped once, und I run too. I jumped off of a wagon. A awful big grocery wagon, mit crackers on it. Und I jumped when it was goin'. Und I run like an'thin'."

"You was throwed off," taunted Patrick, "you was throwed off by the man when he seen you hookin' crackers."

"Ye lie," said Nathan frankly. "I jumped as soon as he seen me, und I guess I can jump some more. You ain't the only boy what can run und jump, you old-show-of-freshy Irisher."

It was with difficulty that the peaceful Monitor of the Gold Fish Bowl restored harmony, and time was added unto difficulty before the Games in Gardens were satisfactorily arranged.

[44]

Had it been possible to consult Miss Bailey, all would have been plain and simple sailing. She was the First Reader's home port, but she was now blockaded for her own benefit. The suggestions of Patrick's big brother were overwhelming and technical. And Isaac Borrachsohn, through constant questionings, grew at once so extravagant and so hazy in his recollections as to be practically useless. Patrick's mother, when applied to for a morning's use of her yard, was curt and kind.

"Use it if ye will," said she, "but don't clutter it, an' don't fall out of me pear tree."

It was at about the time of the densest discouragement that Miss Bailey, all unknowing, came to their relief. She brought to Room 18 and passed about among the First Readers a copy of an illustrated "Weekly" containing pictures of the later and more important contest than that which Isaac had witnessed. And Ignatius Aloysius Diamantstein, by that time admitted to the track team, appropriated it at the lunch hour, and thereafter it served as "The Complete Guide to Games in Gardens."

[45]

The day was set. A Saturday morning in late May. The guests in ordinary were invited. In other words the feminine First Readers had been told that they would be admitted to Patrick Brennan's yard at ten o'clock on that May morning, on condition that each would bring a flag and say nothing to the uninvited boys. The free-for-all spirit was not endorsed by Patrick, and the contestants were only seven, picked and chosen, be it said, with a nice adjustment to Patrick's own prowess, for "I ain't goin' to be licked in me own yard," had been his steadfast determination throughout.

[46]

Nathan Spiderwitz was given to inspirations always inconvenient and distressing. He experienced one at this eleventh hour when all the arrangements were completed, and it remained only to invite the guest of honor.

"Who gives the prizes?" he demanded, as he and Patrick were superintending the construction of a grand stand made of soap-boxes and a broken sofa. "Where is the prizes, and who gives 'em?" he repeated.

"Mind your own business," was Patrick's useful answer. It showed a bold front and left time for thought.

"Who gives 'em?" insisted Nathan.

"Don't *you* worry 'bout prizes," muttered Patrick darkly, "they ain't none of *your* business. You got a swell chanst to git any prizes in my yard. Not when I'm in it, ye don't." [47]

Thus with Nathan. But with Morris he was more frank.

"There's one thing," said he, when he found that crack long-jumper in the boys' yard at luncheon time, "what I'm going to let *you* do."

"Is it nice for me?" queried the Custodian of Gold Fish.

"Great!" answered Patrick. "I'm goin' to let ye ast Miss Bailey to the party."

Morris glowed with pride and importance. "I likes that," he breathed.

"Well, you can do it. Ye don't want to tell her what kind of a party it is. Just go up to her after school and say that 'we invites her to come to my yard at ten o'clock in the mornin', and bring seven prizes with her.'" [48]

"Oh—oh-h-h! I couldn't to say nothings like that," Morris remonstrated. "I guess you don't know what is polite. I don't know has Missis Bailey got seven prizes."

"She'll get 'em all right, all right," Patrick assured him; "ain't she always givin' 'em around? You just tell her 'ten o'clock and seven prizes.' It's all right, I tell you. I could'a showed ye the picture on that paper of a lady standin' up givin' out the prizes. An' Miss Bailey's the only lady goin' to be there."

"It ain't polite," Morris maintained. But he had during these last athletic weeks broken so many of his canons and his laws that he accepted this last command with more docility than Patrick had expected.

"A party!" cried Miss Bailey, "now isn't that nice? And for to-morrow morning. Of course I'll be there. And what kind of a party is it to be, dear?" [49]

"It's something you says you likes you shall see. Und on the party you shall see it. Und you shall have a s'prise over it."

"You grow more interesting every moment," said Teacher. "Tell me more. I love surprises."

"There ain't no more," Morris answered, "on'y," and he took his conversational running-jump, "on'y maybe you shall bring seven prizes mit. I says maybe you ain't got seven prizes. On'y Patrick says I shall say it out like that, 'you shall come on the party und bring seven prizes.'"

"Seven!" reflected Teacher. "That is rather a large order, but I think I can manage it. Have you any idea, Morris, of what kind they should be?"

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am," Morris answered, "'fer-boys' prizes." [50]

"I think I understand," and Miss Bailey smiled at him. "You may tell Patrick that I and 'seven fer-boys' prizes' will be at his house in the morning."

She regarded the subject as closed. Not so Morris. Through all the succeeding occupations of the afternoon an idea persisted with him, and when the Teacher left the building at last she found him waiting for her on the wide steps.

"You want me, dear?" she asked.

"I shall tell you somethings," Morris began in evident embarrassment.

"Yes, dear."

"It's over those prizes."

"Yes, Morris."

"Miss Bailey, it's like this. You don't need to care sooner you ain't got on'y *six* prizes. Seven prizes I guess costs bunches und bunches from money. So six prizes comes on Patrick's yard, that's all right. Stands one boy what don't needs no prize." [51]

"He must be a strange little boy," commented Teacher. "I never before heard of a boy who didn't like prizes."

"Oh, he likes 'em; *how* he likes 'em. I ain't said he ain't got feelin's over 'em. On'y it's like this: he don't needs you shall buy prizes for him the whiles you got to buy six prizes already."

"I think I understand, dear," Teacher answered, and she set out for the shopping district and bought six prizes of great glitter and little worth. But the seventh was such a watch as a boy might use and treasure through all the years of his boyhood.

The great day dawned bright and clear. Miss Bailey's entrance, punctual and parcel-laden, in a festive frilly frock and a flowery hat, caused something almost like silence to fall upon the scene

of the coming tournament. Eva Gonorowsky clasped Teacher's unoccupied hand, Sarah Schodsky and Yetta Aaronsohn relieved her of her bundles. Sadie Gonorowsky gesticulated madly from the place upon the sofa which she was reserving with all the expanse of her outspread skirt. [52]

Teacher approached the grand stand and took her place. The feminine First Readers swarmed upon the soap boxes. But neither leg nor arm nor even eye was moved by the seven masculine First Readers drawn up in the centre of the yard. Flags waved in such profusion and such uniformity that even Miss Bailey's obligation to her hosts could not blind her to the fact that she had at last found the fifty-two American flags pasted together by the First Reader Class when Washington's Birthday was in the air and the offing. Two weeks ago she had missed them out of the cupboard, and neither janitor nor Monitor could give her tidings of them. They looked very well, she was forced to admit, dangling from high fence and clothes line. And very bright and joyant was the whole scene. The little girls in their bright colors. The sky so blue. Mrs. Brennan's pear tree in sturdy bloom. All was brilliant with a sense of Spring save the seven dark-clothed figures in the centre of the yard. [53]

"Can you guess what kind from party it is?" shrieked Sadie Gonorowsky from the top of a tottering soap box to which she had withdrawn.

"Why, it's—" Teacher began, recognizing some elements of the scene, but made uncertain by the seven dark little figures, "of course it's——"

"It's 'Games in Gardens,'" shouted the little girls, waving their flags like mad and "scupping" so energetically that two disappeared, "it's Games in Gardens, und you're goin' to have a s'prise." [54]

One of the dark and silent figures found speech and motion.

"Set down an' shut up," commanded Patrick Brennan. "We're goin' to begin."

The shutting up would have been effected automatically by the next proceeding of the seven. They laid violent hands upon themselves and in an instant a flat little heap of dark clothes marked the centre of the yard, and Patrick Brennan, Ignatius Aloysius Diamantstein, Isidore Applebaum, Nathan Spiderwitz, Isidore Wishnewsy, Isaac Belchatosky, and Morris Mowgelewsky stood forth in costumes reported by Isaac Borrachsohn, sanctioned by Miss Bailey, and owned by members of the audience.

A moment of tense silence followed. Every eye sought Teacher, and Constance Bailey knew that upon her first word or look depended success or failure, pride or everlasting shame. There was no time to wonder how the mistake arose. No time to remember what she had said that could possibly have been interpreted to mean this. They were her gallant little knights doing her uncomprehended bidding, and trying—at what sacrifice she guessed—to pleasure their liege lady. [55]

Again she had blundered. Again she had failed to quite bridge the distance. The wrong word lay somewhere back in her effort to undo Isaac Borrachsohn's mischief. And she had wrought mischief ten times worse. The most devoted of her charges stood there in the clear May sunshine; the funniest, most pathetic, most ridiculous little figures, with their thin little arms and legs and their long little necks: proud, embarrassed, wistful.

"My dear boys," she cried suddenly, "how fine you look! How beautiful and—and—clean you are," she went on a little bit at random. "And now we are going to have games, and the girls and I will cheer the winners." [56]

"Be ye s'prised?" yelled Patrick in irrepressible pride.

"Dreadfully!" she answered. "Dreadfully, Patrick dear."

"Then we'll begin," answered the master of ceremonies. "*One*, git in yer places! *Two*, fer a show! *Three*, to make ready! And *four* to *GO*."

Upon his final word the "Games in Gardens" began. The two Isidores and Ignatius Aloysius Diamantstein rushed madly round the yard. Patrick tried to urge the others to follow, but Morris had elected the long jump—and the long jump he would perform, all protests to the contrary notwithstanding. Nathan Spiderwitz grasped the clothes pole and vaulted with great accuracy into the left wing of the grand stand. Isaac Belchatosky had secured a dilapidated ball from an abandoned bowling-alley, and he "put the shot" in all directions to his own satisfaction and the audience's terror until run into and overturned by Ignatius Aloysius Diamantstein. [57]

Shrill cries went up from the audience. The two boys arose unhurt, but the feelings of Bertha Binderwitz and Eva Kidansky were not thereby soothed.

"I guess I gets killed off of my mamma," wailed Bertha when she saw that one whole side of Isaac Belchatosky was smeared with mud. And when Nathan Spiderwitz was reclaimed from the soap boxes, with a long piece of cambric ruffle trailing behind him, Sadie Gonorowsky fell into such an agony of apprehension that Miss Bailey felt called upon for a promise to repair the damage ere another sun should set. Meantime Patrick was not idle. Disdaining competition, he went through all the "events," one after another until the perspiration was thick upon his forehead, and Eva Gonorowsky was trembling with excitement. [58]

"My mamma don't know," she informed Miss Bailey over and over again. But owing perhaps to her watchful care, perhaps to a natural aptitude for athletics, Patrick escaped unspotted and unscathed.

He turned hand-springs upon the heap of clothes. He stood upon his head upon the same rostrum until his eyes bulged, and Miss Bailey implored him to desist. He wrested the shot from Isidore Wishnewsy, a person of no spirit, and then he "put" it neatly into the waist line of its owner, who promptly sat back gasping.

"Don't you dast to set, Isidore Wishnewsy," shrilled Sarah Schodsky in a panic. "I guess you dunno what is polite for you. Sooner somebody lends you somethings it ain't polite you should set on it! Ain't it fierce how he makes, Missis Bailey?" [59]

"It is a little rude," Miss Bailey admitted in a voice as unsteady as Isidore Wishnewsy.

"I never in my world seen how they all makes," said Yetta Aaronsohn, that authority on Hygiene and the Care of the Body. "They could to make themselves awful sicknesses over it—home sicknesses, even, und lay-on-the-bed sicknesses, und comes-the-doctor sicknesses."

"Oh, I hope not!" Teacher rallied the pessimistic Yetta, "though they certainly do seem to be getting very tired."

By this time the track team of the First Reader Class had exhausted itself and its repertoire, and came forward, hot but confident, for its laurels. There was something for each one, and for each a little word of special commendation. And if Teacher's voice was more tender, her eyes more gentle when Morris's turn came, she still was gentle and tender enough with all of them. [60]



**"I never in my world seen how they all makes"**

At the end she made a short address to victors and audience alike. She thanked them for their great effort to give her pleasure, and for the great pleasure they had given her, and then added:

"When I brought your prizes this morning I had no idea what the party was to be like, and so of course I didn't get just what I would have given you if I had known. But now that I do know how wonderfully our boys can jump and run, I shall bring for each boy on Monday morning a regular running suit, and whenever you have 'Games in Gardens' again you won't have to borrow anything. Perhaps the Principal would like you to have 'Games in Gardens' on the roof some afternoon, and you could invite the other classes. I am sure they'd love it." [61]

"You liked it all right, all right, didn't you, Teacher?" demanded Patrick.

"Liked it!" she echoed. "Why, I was simply delighted."

"Und s'prised?" questioned Morris.

"I was never more so in all my long, long life," answered Constance Bailey with entire conviction. [62]

[62]

[63]

[64]

---

## **"A BRAND FROM THE BURNING"**

[65]

"Where did you get him?" said the Principal.

"In the back yard of one of those double-deckers down by the river," answered the Truant Officer. "Ain't he the bird!" he added in professional enthusiasm. "I've been chasing him for two or three days. He's just about as easy to handle as an eel, and to-day he bit me as we were coming along. He's a beauty, he is!"

"And you say he doesn't speak Yiddish?" queried the Principal.

"He don't speak the kind I do," the other answered. "I get on all right with the rest of the folks

around here, and I certainly never expected to have trouble rounding up a kid that ain't knee-high to a grasshopper. No, you don't, sonny!" he broke off as his charge was sliding toward the door. "You've got to stay here now and have a nice lady learn you how to read and write and cipher." [66]

The boy looked up at his captor with the wide, desperate eyes of an animal at bay, recognizing his helplessness, but determined to bite and fight to the very end.

"Will you look at that now?" the Truant Officer exclaimed; "he thinks every one's going to hurt him. That's the way some of those kids feel."

"Oh, he'll soon get over that here," the Principal laughed. "I've seen them much wilder on their first appearance. The teachers know how to handle them."

Left alone with his new charge, the Principal turned and studied him. The boy was in the corner, his eyes fixed on the closed door, his whole little body tense. His visible clothing consisted of a man's coat, cut short at the sleeves and pinned across the breast. The child was so small that this reached far below his knees, where it was supplemented by ragged stockings and shoes. He was unkempt and dirty, even according to the unexacting East Side's standard. But there was something about the poise of his head and the slow, lithe movements of his body that differentiated him from the ordinary street waif. There was no fear in him—no pleading, no snivelling, nothing but a harsh, almost mature, defiance. [67]

"Come here!" said the Principal. At the sound of his voice the child turned and looked at him, and the man found himself returning the cool regard of a pair of violet-blue eyes. Blue eyes picked up in the heart of that dusky neighborhood, where he had learned to expect all children's eyes to be either black or brown! [68]

"I wonder what he is, and where he comes from," he sighed, as he rang the bell and summoned the teacher who generally acted as his interpreter. "David Copperfield's poor old friend, Mr. Dick, would find plenty of use for his famous prescription, 'wash him,' if he were in my place."

Miss Rosen soon arrived and began her usual inquiries as to name, age, residence. The little stranger heard her through, and then he uttered a sharp three or four word sentence, clear cut, imperious; and Miss Rosen, a sweet and portly lady of fifteen years' faithful teaching, flushed to the edge of her hard black pompadour, and stared, incredulous, at the ragged form before her.

"Well," said the Principal, as she made no effort at translation. "What does he say?" [69]

"I do not speak his language," she answered.

"And yet you understand him?"

"I understand him—yes——"

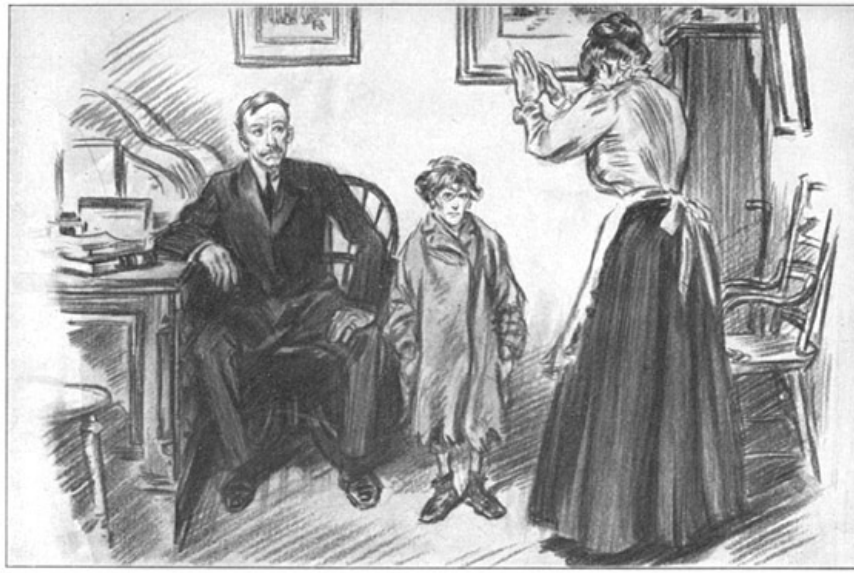
"Well," repeated the Principal, in no mind to allow one small boy to upset his morning's routine, "well, if you understand him, tell me what he said. What language was that he used?"

"Russian," she replied, "pure Russian, and what he said is the only Russian phrase which many of the Jewish people ever hear. I have not heard it since I escaped from Russia with my parents years and years ago. I had hoped never to hear it again. I must refuse to translate it to you."

When she had gone, all shaken, back to her class, the Principal shook a remonstrating head at his captive, who was by this time examining the book-case with a disparaging eye. Catching the man's glance, he made some remark in his liquid speech, and thumped his chest. [70]

"Perhaps so, my boy," Mr. Trevar agreed. "But I'm studying your case. No English, horrid temper, young wild animal, in fact. It's hard on the girl," he admitted to his own conscience; "but I guess it's a case for Room 18," and rang the bell again and sent word to Room 18 to summon Miss Bailey to his office.

"We've caught a tartar," he told her, "almost literally a Tartar. He seems to have strong racial prejudices, and I shall have to assign him to you until he learns a little English."



**"I must refuse to translate it to you"**

"But if he speaks no English at all," Miss Bailey remonstrated—for children of this kind were her greatest trial, and she was already laboring with three of them—"would he not be happier with one of the teachers who could understand him?" [71]

"Ah! but they wouldn't," he replied; "that's just the point. Miss Rosen tells me he's a Russian and not a Jew. He said something extremely rude to her just now. No, you'll have to take him, at least for a few days, until I can make some inquiries about him. We shall have to get the Truant Officer to give us the child's name and address. Will you take him with you now?"

Constance Bailey had a smile to which many a lonely frightened little novice had yielded a shy and sweet response, but there was no answering smile here. She stretched out a hand to take the boy's, but he eluded her, reached the door, opened it, and stood at stiff attention until she had preceded him into the hall. [72]

"Well, I'll be blamed!" reflected the Principal. "Manners, and princely ones at that!"

On the way to Room 18, Miss Bailey's newest responsibility walked beside her with a free and upright carriage strangely at variance with the shoes he walked in. Once or twice she spoke to him, and his answer was an uncomprehending but courteous inclination of the little head. Once he spoke to her. It was when they passed the platform in the Assembly Room. He pointed to the piano and said something eagerly, authoritatively, in that language whose like Miss Bailey had never heard. She nodded and smiled at him, and they fared on together.

Again, at the door of Room 18, he punctiliously allowed her to precede him. But as he entered after her and met the full regard of Room 18's dark eyes, he stopped and returned the glances bent upon him with a cool, insulting indifference. [73]

"This is a new little boy," announced Miss Bailey, "to whom I want you all to be very kind. He doesn't speak much English, but we shall teach him that. Morris, he will sit near you."

Morris Mowgelewsky, all timid friendliness, approached the stranger. Here surely was a queer new little boy in a "from man's" coat, and an exceeding dirty face; yet if Miss Bailey hailed him as a new little friend, then as a new little friend he must be made welcome.

"Talk to him a moment, Morris," Teacher commanded. "See if he won't tell you what his name is."

Morris obeyed, and the child answered him in the words that had so upset Miss Rosen. But Morris had left Russia when he was only two years old, and the phrase held no meaning for him, though the tone made him pause. [74]

"I don't know how he says," Morris reported to Miss Bailey. "I says out of Jewish, 'What is your name, little boy?' und I don't know what he says. On'y it ain't names, und it ain't lovin'."

"Very well, dear, you may go back to your place. I'll keep him here beside me for a while," answered Teacher, more than ever at a loss, for the winningness of Morris had never failed to charm a stranger.

At the recess hour, when all the other children filed down into the yard, Teacher sent Patrick Brennan with a little note to Mr. Eissler, the teacher of the biggest boys, those nearly ready for graduation. He was an elderly man wearing well in the service to which the noblest of his race have always devoted themselves. He and Miss Bailey were great friends, and much of the understanding of this alien race—its habits, its emotions, and its innate refinement—the understanding which made her reign in Room 18 so peaceful and beneficent, she had acquired from him, and from the books he lent her. [75]

"Dear Mr. Eissler," ran the note. "Will you come to Room 18 when you are at leisure? I have rather an interesting specimen of Child Life which I am keeping for your inspection."

During the short period which had elapsed between the stranger's arrival and the departure of First Readers, the new-comer had undergone an entire change of manner. Not that he had softened toward his little future companions. Rather he grew in hatred and vindictiveness as the busy morning progressed. It was his attitude toward Miss Bailey which changed. In the Principal's office and on the way through the halls he had seemed to waver on the brink of friendliness. But he had sat beside her desk and had seen her moving up and down through the narrow streets of her kingdom, encouraging here, laughing there, explaining with patient care and detail, laying a friendly hand on bent little shoulders and setting hair ribbons more jauntily erect—behaving, in fact, with a freedom and affection most evidently reflected and magnified by her subjects. And as he watched her his little mouth lost all its softness, and the hard, inscrutable look disfigured him again. [76]

When Mr. Eissler, in response to the summons, opened the door, the newcomer's back was toward it. He wheeled at the sound, and clear and quick he lashed out his single phrase.

Miss Bailey chanced to be looking at her old friend, and at the child's voice saw him cringe and shrink as if from a blow. [77]

"There it is again," she cried. "That's all we can get him to say. Tell me, Mr. Eissler, *what* does it mean?"

She got no answer.

The man, in all the dignity of his cutaway and his white linen, was glaring at the child, and the child, in his ridiculous rags, pitiful, starved, and dirty, was looking the man over from top to toe with contemptuous, careless eyes. They stood so for some space, and it was the man who turned away.

"I will not pretend not to understand," said he to Teacher; "but I must decline to translate those words. They bring back—they bring back! Ah, God! what they bring back!"

"Ah, yes, I know!" said Miss Bailey, in vague but ready sympathy. "I'm very, very sorry." [78]

While this conversation was in progress its object was wandering about Room 18, surveying its pictures, the canary, the gold-fish bowl, and the flowery window-boxes with a blasé air. Occasionally he glanced at Miss Bailey with unfriendly disillusionment. And upon one of these occasions Mr. Eissler, at Teacher's request, asked him his name.

The boy answered at greater length than before, but, judging by the man's face, in equally offensive language, and Mr. Eissler turned to Miss Bailey.

"The Principal will have some difficulty," said he, "in finding a teacher who could speak that child's language. It's Russian, pure Court Russian, and not spoken by our people except when they make a special study of it. I know it, a little."

"And do you care to tell me," asked Miss Bailey, "any part of what he said just now?" [79]

"He says," the man replied, "that he will not speak to Jews or to—and by this he means you—a seeming Christian, who makes the Jew her friend, and allows Jewish babies to touch her hands. You've read of the Russian autocratic spirit. Well! there you see it. Even in a little child. It's born in them."

"But how did it get here?" marvelled Miss Bailey. "Here, on the East Side of New York, where he must be just about as popular as a wolf cub?"

"Just about," answered Eissler. "Of course I'm not going to pretend to tell you how this particular specimen got here. We've had one or two cases where the Jews, driven out, kidnapped a Russian child in revenge. And sometimes Nihilism and other Socialistic societies draw Jew and Russian together. Perhaps the boy's mother is in Siberia digging sulphur. Perhaps she's in Petersburg, designing becoming mourning. But from the look of the boy and the Truant Officer's account of him, I feel pretty safe in saying she isn't about here." [80]

"Yes, I think you're safe in that. He hasn't been washed in a month."

"He'll be better after you've had him awhile," said Mr. Eissler gallantly. "I back you against Hagenbeck as a taming influence."

"You flatter me," laughed Miss Bailey. "But I'll try. Of course I'll try." But she had scant opportunity.

At luncheon time the new little boy departed with the others, and at afternoon session he was not among them, as by law prescribed.

Day after day passed and brought no sign of him. Teacher reported her bereavement to the authorities, and enjoined the First Readers to produce the boy or tidings of him, and although they failed to procure the boy, the tidings were not wanting. They rarely are in East Side affairs. Morris Mowgelewsky was the first to procure definite information. [81]

"I seen that boy," he announced with pride. "I seen him runnin' down Scannel Street, und I calls und says you likes you should see him in the school, on'y he runs by a cellar und don't says nothings. He puts him on just like he was here, und he had awful cold looks. Teacher, he ain't got no hat, and the snow was coming by his hair. I looks in the cellar und I had a 'fraid over it the

whiles nothings stand in it on'y push-carts und boxes."

"But do you think that he lives in the cellar?" queried Teacher.

"He don't *lives* at all," replied Morris. "He don't *boards* even. He runs all times."

"Runs?" queried Miss Bailey.

[82]

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am, runs. He lays in sleep by barrels; comes somebody, und he runs. He lays in sleep on sidewalks by bak'ry stores where heat and smell comes; comes somebody, und he runs. He lays in sleep by wagons, maybe, maybe by stables where horses is, und straw. *All* places what he could he lays in sleep, und *all* places where he lays comes somebody und he runs."

"What's he always running from, Morris?"

"Teacher, I dun'no. He ain't got no 'fraids. I guess maybe he don't likes nobody shall make nothings mit him. I tells him how you says he shall come on the school, und what you think? He hits me a hack in mine face, und runs on the cellar."

"I'd like to see him hit me," said Patrick Brennan, son of the Policeman on the Beat, a noble scion of a noble sire. "Me pop he wouldn't stand fer no funny play," and urged by Miss Bailey's friendly attitude toward Morris, he boasted, "I'll bring him to school if ye want me to; I ain't afraid of him." And one afternoon some days later he did appear with his "new little friend."

[83]

It had taken six big boys, Patrick, and the janitor to secure his attendance, and he hardly reaped the benefit which so much effort deserved, for, except that he was thinner and in a wildly blazing passion of indignation, his second attendance at Room 18 was much like his first.

Again his studies were interrupted for several days, and it was the Truant Officer who next restored him to the Halls of Learning. Between these two appearances Morris had procured further intelligence.

"That new boy," he began as always, "that new boy he is in bizzness."

[84]

"So that's the reason that he fights against school!" cried Teacher, well accustomed to the interference of the sweat shop. "I'm very glad to know his reason for staying away. I was beginning to fear he was not happy here—that he didn't like us."

"Teacher, he don't," said Morris, with the beautiful candor which adorned all his conversation. "He hates us."

"But why, why?" demanded Miss Bailey.

"He hates the childrens," the still candid Morris explained, "the whiles they is Sheenies. He hates you the whiles you is Krisht."

"Rather an unfriendly attitude altogether," commented Teacher. "And how do you know he hates me because I'm a Christian?"

"My mamma tells me how it is. She says he has mads the whiles you is Krisht und makes all things what is loving mit Sheenies. My mamma says he is Russians; und Russians they don't makes like that mit Sheenies. Teacher, no ma'am, loving ain't what Russians makes mit us. They makes all things what is fierce."

[85]

"I know, I know," said Constance Bailey, and then—"What is the little boy's business?"

"Teacher, he's a fire-lighter."

"A fire-lighter," echoed Miss Bailey, with visions of arson before her eyes. "A fire-lighter, did you say?"

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am, he is a fire-lighter, but sooner he wants he could to come on the school the whiles he ain't got no bizzness on'y Saturdays."

And then Miss Bailey understood. She had heard of certain stranded waifs left high and dry when the ebb of Christianity receded before the flood of Judaism, and New York's great East Side, once a fashionable district, then claimed by a thrifty Irish element, became a Ghetto. It was the Jewish Sabbatical Law which gave the derelicts an opportunity to earn a few pennies every Saturday, for no orthodox Jew may kindle fire on the Sabbath. And no frugal Jew, even in the impossible circumstance of being able to afford it, will keep the stove alight all through Friday night. Hence he employs a Christian to do the work he would not stoop to.

[86]

And this was the occupation of that amazing new boy! Miss Bailey clearly saw the path of her duty, and it led her, the lighter of fires in tow, straight to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. For some days, however, this path was closed to her conscientious feet. The boy was lost again, and Miss Bailey, who took the welfare of her charges very much to heart, was seriously distressed and uneasy. The First Readers were enlisted as a corps of detectives, but though they prowled in likely and unlikely spots, they brought no news of the stranger.

[87]

A week went by. The Principal, the Truant Officer, Patrick Brennan's father, were all informed and enlisted in the quest. But day followed day empty of news. Mr. Eissler could offer no suggestion, though he promised that if the child should reappear he would make further and more patient efforts to elicit some information from him. And then quite casually one afternoon



Sergeant Brennan appeared in Room 18, with a bundle of rags under his arm.

"Here he is for you, Miss," he announced, waving away her acknowledgments with a stout blue arm before he removed his helmet and dried his heated brow. "I seen him several times since you spoke about him, but never run him down until now." [88]

Again the child was thinner, and his likeness to a hunted animal was clearer, more heart-breaking. "And how should he be otherwise?" reflected Constance Bailey as she realized that, partly through her bidding, he actually had been persistently hunted throughout the past weeks.

After three o'clock when the First Readers, including the loudly objecting Board of Monitors, had been sent home, Miss Bailey secured every exit save the door into the hall, established the new boy in one of the front row of seats, locked the hall door upon her own retreat, and sought Mr. Eissler.

"The Russian child has turned up again," she told him. "I've had him in the class since lunch time, and I never knew of so disturbing an element. A band in the street, a piano organ, even the passing of a fire engine, would have left those babies calmer than his mere presence did. Did you ever see a poultry yard when a hawk was perched in a neighboring tree? Well, there you have my class as long as that boy is in the room. Brainless! Stupid! Huddled in their seats! I declare I hardly knew them. And he, he hardly looked at one of us." [89]

"He'll look at me," said Mr. Eissler, picking up a brass-bound ruler. "By-laws may be by-laws——"

"No, no," cried Teacher, "not that. I don't think I could bear it. And as for him, he would either kill or die. He's almost spent with rage and starvation. I think you'll find him more amenable than he was before."

Mr. Eissler did not find him at all. Room 18 awaited them, pleasant, orderly, and empty. Empty, too, was the whole great building and all the rooms they searched through, save for the sweeper women who met their queries blankly. They had noticed no boy. [90]

"Again!" exclaimed Miss Bailey, almost tearfully, as they returned. "What shall I ever do about him? I meant, you know, to take him now, this very afternoon, while I had him, up to the Society's rooms in Twenty-third Street."

"How often has he been here altogether?" asked Mr. Eissler. Teacher crossed to her desk, sat down at it, and commenced to turn the pages of the Roll Book with listless hand. Mr. Eissler stood beside her, and behind them both the door of the supply closet in which all class necessities were stored opened gently, noiselessly, inch by inch, until the Fire-lighter stood forth with a sheet of sulphur matches in his hand. The joy of coming vengeance made his little face look very old as he advanced upon the unsuspecting backs of his enemies. He struck one of his matches upon some inner surface of his rags, and as Teacher pointed and Mr. Eissler stopped to examine all the crosses which marked one section of the Roll Book, the Fire-lighter held the match to the hem of Miss Bailey's heavy walking skirt. It burned dully, and the child had shut himself into the closet again before the smell of fire was noticed and located. [91]

Then alarmed and excited was Mr. Eissler, but not reduced to panic. In a moment he had smothered the smoulder, and was beating off the sparks with his ruler.

Miss Bailey just then chanced to turn toward the closet door and saw a curl of smoke making its way stealthily through a crack in one of the panels. Mr. Eissler saw it too, threw the door open, and revealed the lost child—his rags all smoking and smouldering about him. They threw Miss Bailey's heavy ulster about him, and rolled him upon the floor, patting and pressing the bundle until they were quite sure that no fire remained. Then Teacher, kneeling down, turned back the ulster. Very quiet and relaxed lay her problem. [92]

"Dead?" she questioned in terror.

"Oh, hardly. Slip your hand in over his heart."

Teacher did so and breathed again. "Beating," said she, and withdrew her hand, and in her cuff-link was entangled a thin string.

"Gold," exclaimed Eissler instantly; "dirty, but gold."

Miss Bailey drew the chain out further and disclosed a flat locket.

"Cut it off and keep it for him," Eissler advised. "I'm going to ring for the ambulance, and I know that there would be precious little gold left on him by the time he reached the ward. I'll send one of the women to you as I go." And so Miss Bailey sat on the floor and regarded this bitter fruit of her striving. A child—a little child, hunted, wounded, as far as she could see even unto death. And for the thousandth time she let despair roll over her. What was the use? What was the use? [93]

Some time later up in the dressing-room she was removing as best she could the marks of her experience, when it occurred to her to examine the locket. It was a thin gold affair with a smudge of dirt upon each side of it, and she devoted her efforts to one of these smudges. She rubbed it with a towel, and stood incredulous, carried back to the Mystery Stories of her own youth, for a monogram in diamonds winked and twinkled at her. She tried the other side and unearthed a coronet. After much careful search she managed to open the locket. And the Mystery held. On one side a beautiful woman, on the other a coil of baby hair. All was as it should be. [94]

As she finished the transition from white linen to street attire, she pondered and marvelled, and by the time her veil was adjusted she had decided upon her course. This was a case for some one more learned in Russian ways than Mr. Eissler, and after consulting the nearest directory she set out for the Russian Consulate. There her demand for speech with the Consul General was met by the Vice-Consul's bland regrets that his principal was invisible. "Closeted," he reported, dropping his voice and nodding toward the closed door behind him, "with His Excellency, Prince Epifanoff." [95]

"Then," said Miss Bailey, "perhaps you can tell me something of your Russian charities. I want you to direct me to an institution where a sick little boy can find attention and understanding. He has sadly lacked both these many weeks, I fear."

The Vice-Consul, a man of heart, listened with kindly but restrained attention until Miss Bailey produced the locket on its severed chain. Then even that practised diplomat allowed amazement to overspread him.

"May I ask you to wait here for a moment?" said he, and it took him little more than the moment he appointed to disappear through the door of the inner room, and to reappear.

"And may I ask you now," said he, "to tell these very interesting facts to Prince Epifanoff and the Consul?"

Constance Bailey was slightly disconcerted by this sudden plunge into diplomatic waters, and by the extremely thorough, though always courteous, cross-examination to which she was promptly subjected. [96]

"May I ask," she demanded on her own part when she was growing weary of always answering, "whether you have identified the miniature?"

"We have indeed," answered the Ambassador, a large but otherwise unalarming personage, with stiff hair arranged *à la* door-mat. "And not only so: we have been searching for the miniature for almost a year. Almost a year ago a boy was stolen from a castle in the northern part of Russia. He was five years old, and the owner—since the assassination of his father—of what would make a whole state in this country of yours. The Nihilists were suspected, this time with some reason, as it transpired that one of their important members—a woman—had obtained employment in the castle. She and the child vanished together. There was little hope that the young Prince would escape his father's fate, but in the absence of any proof of his death the whole Russian secret service and the Consular Service were notified. It was just possible, you see, that his captors would try to use him as a hostage or as the price of some concession. The woman was stopped at the frontier. Unfortunately she was—accidentally, you understand—killed before she had accounted for the boy, who was not then with her. As I have said, all this occurred a year ago, and nothing has been heard of the child. You can imagine the distracted grief of this fair lady, his mother, touching the miniature." [97]

"And you think," cried Miss Bailey, "that my little Fire-lighter—" [98]

"Is the owner of one of the most exalted titles in Russia, and one of the richest estates. He wore this locket when he was abducted. But we are letting time pass. May I ask you"—this to the Consul—"to order my car? His Highness must be removed at once into suitable surroundings."

"Then my mission is accomplished," said Miss Bailey, and rose to take her leave. But never had she encountered cordiality so insistent as these courteous gentlemen then exhibited. She must, she really must, go to the hospital with them and see the end of the affair. In vain she pleaded other engagements, and promised to telephone later in the evening to hear whether the Prince's interview with the waif had corroborated the evidence of the locket. She was offered the use of the official telephone for the breaking of her engagements, and when her hosts left her alone to achieve this purpose, they quite calmly locked her in. [99]

She telephoned some trivial sounding excuse to her long-suffering friend. Every one who knew her well was accustomed to interruptions by her school interests. And as she listened to that friend's wailing remonstrance she was tempted to tell the truth. "Locked up in the Russian Consulate! Prisoner! Involved in Court mystery. Obligated to produce a Prince of the blood royal or take the consequences." Truly, she told herself as she hung the receiver on its hook, things were getting rather uncommon and going rather quickly. And in that moment of apprehension she strangely drew comfort from the undeniable fit and texture of her new tailor-made suit, as shown forth in a large mirror between the window and the door. The contemplation of these encouragements fortified her until the return of her jailors, and during the ordeal of being swept through congested traffic by the side of a Nicolai Sergieevitch Epifanoff, in a bright red motor car. [100]

Arriving at Gouverneur Hospital, she left her companions in consultation with the Matron and the House Surgeon, while she went up to the Children's Ward to prepare the mind of her friend and sometime co-laborer, Miss McCarthy, the Nurse-in-Charge. There was generally a First Reader or so under Miss McCarthy's care, and the two young women were great friends.

"I was going to send for you," Miss McCarthy began when they had moved a little away from the door. "You've sent us a good many queer cases, but *what* do you call your latest?"

"That's a Russian Prince of high degree," said Teacher. [101]

"Yes, he looked like one," laughed the nurse. "But you should see him now that he's washed. He's

really not burned at all," she amplified. "Shock, a little; hunger, more; dirt, most."

"But do you realize what I tell you? He's a Russian Prince. An Ambassador and a Consul or two have come to fetch him. They're down in the reception room, and I came up to make sure that you had him. I don't know what they would have done to me if I had lost him again."

"Oh! we have him," Miss McCarthy assured her when she had heard a few more details of Miss Bailey's story, and had been properly impressed thereby. "He's there in the third bed on the left. You go right on in. I'll go down-stairs. They'll want me if he's going to be transferred."

Upon the smooth pillow of the third bed there lay a mass of bright gold hair, gleaming even in the faint light of the shaded electric lamp. And the hair surrounded a little face whose every line and contour was beautified, exalted. Teacher turned, incredulous, to make sure that she was right, but the neighboring beds were empty. Only up at the far end of the ward were there other shaded lights and a gently watchful nurse. [102]

Teacher sat upon the chair by the bedside and watched the sleeping Fire-lighter. He moaned a little moan. Such a tired little moan! Ah, this everlasting barrier of speech! Oh, to have been able, now at the very last, to explain that she was not a demon actuated by cruelty! But she did not dare to wake him. She knew the effect which the mere sight of her would produce. And so the little Prince slept on until the big Prince came softly to his bedside. [103]

Miss Bailey rose and relinquished her chair. The big man noiselessly took her place, and she stood at the bed's foot. The man looked long and earnestly at the little sleeping face, then laid his hand on the soft hair and uttered a short name.

Still asleep, the child answered. And very gently the man asked a question. Then the baby turned and opened his eyes. The man spoke again. The little voice answered him, and Miss Bailey left them alone together.

She waited in the hall, and presently Prince Nicolai Sergieevitch Epifanoff joined her there.

"You have been instrumental, under God," said he, "in preserving the succession of one of our noblest houses. That is the boy. From what he tells me I judge that the woman who stole him was of the Jewish race. That she intrusted him to the care of a friend who, with children of her own, was coming to America. I suppose she was to have reclaimed him here. We know why she did not. And we can only surmise that the other woman, not knowing the value of her hostage, either lost or deserted him. Of course he spent all his time and his baby ingenuity in trying to get away from her. We shall never know quite definitely. However, my dear young lady, we have him! And in the name of the great country for which I am authorized to speak, I thank you. Russia will remember your name and your great service when other gratitude which now protests itself to you more vehemently has quite died away." [104]

"But," said Constance Bailey, "I have not yet heard the true name of my little Fire-lighter."

"Ah! that," said suave Prince Sergieevitch, "is a thing of which even I am not authorized to speak. Your service was to the Nation." [105]

Some months later Miss Bailey visited the Russian Consulate again. Her presence had been formally requested, and the Consul was formally awaiting her. The friendly Vice-Consul was in attendance, and Madame Consul lent her genial presence to the occasion.

They purred congratulations; the whole staff was summoned, and the Consul made a short address, which produced great enthusiasm in the audience. He then pinned a scrap of red ribbon into the button-hole of Miss Bailey's jacket, and handed her a small white leather box. Inside was a gem-encircled miniature—gorgeous and blazing as the sunshine broke upon it. The gentle-faced Empress of all the Russias smiled sadly out at Constance Bailey, and on the reverse, still in diamonds, was the inscription: "For Service."

[106]

[107]

[108]

---

## FRIENDS

[109]

"My mamma," reported Morris Mowgelewsky, choosing a quiet moment during a writing period to engage his teacher's attention, "my mamma likes you shall come on mine house for see her."

"Very well, dear," answered Miss Bailey with a patience born of many such messages from the parents of her small charges. "I think I shall have time to go this afternoon."

"My mamma," Morris began again, "she says I shall tell you 'scuse how she don't sends you no letter. She couldn't to send no letter the while her eyes ain't healthy."

"I am sorry to hear that," said Teacher, with a little stab of regret for her prompt acceptance of Mrs. Mowgelewsky's invitation; for of all the ailments which the children shared so generously with their teacher, Miss Bailey had learned to dread most the many and painful disorders of the eye. She knew, however, that Mrs. Mowgelewsky was not one of those who utter unnecessary [110]

cries for help, being in this regard, as in many others, a striking contrast to the majority of parents with whom Miss Bailey came in contact.

To begin with, Mrs. Mowgelewsky had but one child—her precious, only Morris. In addition to this singularity she was thrifty and neat, intensely self-respecting and independent of spirit, and astonishingly outspoken of mind. She neither shared nor understood the gregarious spirit which bound her neighbors together and is the lubricant which makes East Side crowding possible without bloodshed. No groups of chattering, gesticulating matrons ever congregated in her Monroe Street apartment. No love of gossip ever held her on street corners or on steps. She nourished few friendships and fewer acquaintanceships, and she welcomed no haphazard visitor. Her hospitalities were as serious as her manner; her invitations as deliberate as her slow English speech. [111]

And Miss Bailey, as she and the First Readers followed the order of studies laid down for them, found herself, again and again, trying to imagine what the days would be to Mrs. Mowgelewsky if her keen, shrewd eyes were to be darkened and useless.

At three o'clock she set out with Morris, leaving the Board of Monitors to set Room 18 to rights with no more direct supervision than an occasional look and word from the stout Miss Blake, whose kingdom lay just across the hall. And as she hurried through the early cold of a November afternoon, her forebodings grew so lugubrious that she was almost relieved at last to learn that Mrs. Mowgelewsky's complaint was a slow-forming cataract, and her supplication, that Miss Bailey would keep a watchful eye upon Morris while his mother was at the hospital undergoing treatment and operation. [112]

"But of course," Miss Bailey agreed, "I shall be delighted to do what I can, Mrs. Mowgelewsky, though it seems to me that one of the neighbors——"

"Neighbors!" snorted the matron; "what you think the neighbors make mit mine little boy? They got four, five dozens childrens theirselves. They ain't got no time for look on Morris. They come maybe in mine house und break mine dishes, und rubber on what is here, und set by mine furniture und talks. What do they know over takin' care on mine house? They ain't ladies. They is educated only on the front. Me, I was raised private and expensive in Russia. I was ladies. Und you ist ladies. You ist Krisht—that is too bad—but that makes mit me nothings. I wants *you* shall look on Morris." [113]

"But I can't come here and take care of him," Miss Bailey pointed out. "You see that yourself, don't you, Mrs. Mowgelewsky? I am sorry as I can be about your eyes, and I hope with all my heart that the operation will be successful. But I shouldn't have time to come here and take care of things."

"That ain't how mine mamma means," Morris explained. He was leaning against Teacher and stroking her muff as he spoke. "Mine mamma means the money."

"That ist what I means," said Mrs. Mowgelewsky, nodding her ponderous head until her quite incredible wig slipped back and forth up on it. "Morris needs he shall have money. He could to fix the house so good like I can. He don't needs no neighbors rubberin'. He could to buy what he needs on the store. But ten cents a day he needs. His papa works by Harlem. He is got fine jobs, und he gets fine moneys, but he couldn't to come down here for take care of Morris. Und the doctor he says I shall go *now* on the hospital. Und any way," she added sadly, "I ain't no good; I couldn't to see things. He says I shall lay in the hospital three weeks, maybe—that is twenty-one days—und for Morris it is two dollars und ten cents. I got the money." And she fumbled for her purse in various hiding-places about her ample person. [114]

"And you want me to be banker," cried Miss Bailey; "to keep the money and give Morris ten cents a day—is that it?" [115]

"Sure," answered Mrs. Mowgelewsky.

"It's a awful lot of money," grieved Morris. "Ten cents a day is a awful lot of money for one boy."

"No, no, my golden one," cried his mother. "It is but right that thou shouldst have plenty of money, und thy teacher, a Christian lady, though honest—und what neighbor is honest?—will give thee ten cents every morning. Behold, I pay the rent before I go, und with the rent paid und with ten cents a day thou wilt live like a landlord."

"Yes, yes," Morris broke in, evidently repeating some familiar warning, "und every day I will say mine prayers und wash me the face, und keep the neighbors out, und on Thursdays und on Sundays I shall go on the hospital for see you."

"And on Saturdays," broke in Miss Bailey, "you will come to my house and spend the day with me. He's too little, Mrs. Mowgelewsky, to go to the synagogue alone." [116]

"That could be awful nice," breathed Morris. "I likes I shall go on your house. I am lovin' much mit your dog."

"How?" snorted his mother. "Dogs! Dogs ain't nothing only foolishness. They eats something fierce, und they don't works."

"That iss how mine mamma thinks," Morris hastened to explain, lest the sensitive feelings of his Lady Paramount should suffer. "But mine mamma she never seen *your* dog. He iss a awful nice

dog; I am lovin' much mit him."

"I don't needs I shall see him," said Mrs. Mowgelewsky, somewhat tartly. "I seen, already, lots from dogs. Don't you go make no foolishness mit him. Don't you go und get chawed off of him."

"Of course not, of course not," Miss Bailey hastened to assure her; "he will only play with Rover if I should be busy or unable to take him out with me. He'll be safer at my house than he would be on the streets, and you wouldn't expect him to stay in the house all day." [117]

After more parley and many warnings the arrangement was completed. Miss Bailey was intrusted with two dollars and ten cents, and the censorship of Morris. A day or so later Mrs. Mowgelewsky retired, indomitable, to her darkened room in the hospital, and the neighbors were inexorably shut out of her apartment. All their offers of help, all their proffers of advice were politely refused by Morris, all their questions and visits politely dodged. And every morning Miss Bailey handed her Monitor of the Gold Fish Bowl his princely stipend, adding to it from time to time some fruit or other uncontaminated food, for Morris was religiously the strictest of the strict, and could have given cards and spades to many a minor rabbi on the intricacies of Kosher law. [118]

The Saturday after his mother's departure Morris spent in the enlivening companionship of the antiquated Rover, a collie who no longer roved farther than his own back yard, and who accepted Morris's frank admiration with a noble condescension and a few rheumatic gambols. Miss Bailey's mother was also hospitable, and her sister did what she could to amuse the quaint little child with the big eyes, the soft voice, and the pretty foreign manners. But Morris preferred Rover to any of them, except perhaps the cook, who allowed him to prepare a luncheon for himself after his own little rites.

Everything had seemed so pleasant and so successful that Miss Bailey looked upon a repetition of this visit as a matter of course, and was greatly surprised on the succeeding Friday afternoon when the Monitor of the Gold Fish Bowl said that he intended to spend the next day at home. [119]

"Oh, no!" she remonstrated, "you mustn't stay at home. I'm going to take you out to the Park and we are going to have all kinds of fun. Wouldn't you rather go and see the lions and the elephants with me than stay at home all by yourself?"

For some space Morris was a prey to silence, then he managed by a consuming effort:

"I ain't by mineself."

"Has your father come home?" said Teacher.

"No, ma'am."

"And surely it's not a neighbor. You remember what your mother said about the neighbors, how you were not to let them in." [120]

"It ain't neighbors," said Morris.

"Then who—?" began Miss Bailey.

Morris raised his eyes to hers, his beautiful, black, pleading eyes, praying for the understanding and the sympathy which had never failed him yet. "It's a friend," he answered.

"Nathan Spiderwitz?" she asked.

Morris shook his head, and gave Teacher to understand that the Monitor of the Window Boxes came under the ban of neighbor.

"Well, who is it, dearest?" she asked again. "Is it any one that I know?"

"No, ma'am."

"None of the boys in the school?"

"No, ma'am."

"Have you known him long?"

"No, ma'am."

"Does your mother know him?"

"Oh, Teacher, *no*, ma'am! mine mamma don't know him." [121]

"Well, where did you meet him?"

"Teacher, on the curb. Over yesterday on the night," Morris began, seeing that explanation was inevitable. "I lays on mine bed, und I thinks how mine mamma has got a sickness, und how mine papa is by Harlem, und how I ain't got nobody beside of me. Und, Teacher, it makes me cold in mine heart. So I couldn't to lay no more, so I puts me on mit mine clothes some more, und I goes by the street the while peoples is there, und I needs I shall see peoples. So I sets by the curb, und mine heart it go und it go so I couldn't to feel how it go in mine inside. Und I thinks on my mamma, how I seen her mit bangages on the face, und mine heart it goes some more. Und, Teacher, Missis Bailey, I cries over it."

"Of course you did, honey," said Teacher, putting her arm about him. "Poor, little, lonely chap! Of [122]

course you cried."

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am; it ain't fer boys they shall cry, but I cries over it. Und soon something touches me by mine side, und I turns und mine friend he was sittin' by side of me. Und he don't say *nothings*, Teacher; no, ma'am; he don't say nothings, only he looks on me, und in his eyes stands tears. So that makes me better in mine heart, und I don't cries no more. I sets und looks on mine friend, und mine friend he sets und looks on me mit smilin' looks. So I goes by mine house, und mine friend he comes by mine house, too, und I lays by mine bed, und mine friend he lays by mine side. Und all times in that night sooner I open mine eyes und thinks on how mine mamma is got a sickness, und mine papa is by Harlem, mine friend he is by mine side, und I don't cries. I don't cries never no more the whiles mine friend is by me. Und I couldn't to go on your house to-morrow the whiles I don't know if mine friend likes Rover." [123]

"Of course he'd like him," cried Miss Bailey. "Rover would play with him just as he plays with you."

"No, ma'am," Morris maintained; "mine friend is too little for play mit Rover."

"Is he such a little fellow?"

"Yiss, ma'am; awful little."

"And has he been with you ever since the day before yesterday?"

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am."

"Does he seem to be happy and all right?"

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am."

"But," asked Miss Bailey, suddenly practical, "what does the poor little fellow eat? Of course ten cents would buy a *lot* of food for one boy, but not so very much for two." [124]

"Teacher, no, ma'am," says Morris; "it ain't so very much."

"Well, then," said Miss Bailey, "suppose I give you twenty cents a day as long as a little strange friend is with you."

"That could to be awful nice," Morris agreed; "und, Missis Bailey," he went on, "sooner you don't needs all yours lunch mine friend could eat it, maybe."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," she cried; "it's ham to-day."

"That don't make nothings mit mine friend," said Morris; "he likes ham."

"Now, Morris," said Miss Bailey very gravely, as all the meanings of this announcement spread themselves before her, "this is a very serious thing. You know how your mother feels about strangers, and you know how she feels about Christians, and what will she say to you—and what will she say to me—when she hears that a strange little Christian is living with you? Of course, dearie, I know it's nice for you to have company, and I know that you must be dreadfully lonely in the long evenings, but I'm afraid your mother will not be pleased to think of your having somebody to stay with you. Wouldn't you rather come to my house and live there all the time until your mother is better? You know," she added as a crowning inducement, "Rover is there." [125]

But Morris betrayed no enthusiasm. "I guess," said he, "I ain't lovin' so awful much mit Rover. He iss too big. I am likin' little dogs mit brown eyes, what walks by their legs und carries things by their mouths. Did you ever see dogs like that?"

"In the circus," answered Teacher. "Where did you see them?"

"A boy by our block," answered Morris, "is got one. He is lovin' much mit that dog und that dog is lovin' much mit him." [126]

"Well, now, perhaps you could teach Rover to walk on his hind legs, and carry things in his mouth," suggested Teacher; "and as for this new little Christian friend of yours——"

"I don't know *be* he a Krisht," Morris admitted with reluctant candor; "he ain't said nothin' over it to me. On'y a Irisher lady what lives by our house, she says mine friend is a Irisher."

"Very well, dear; then of course he's a Christian," Miss Bailey assured him, "and I shan't interfere with you to-morrow—you may stay at home and play with him. But we can't let it go on, you know. This kind of thing never would do when your mother comes back from the hospital. She might not want your friend in the house. Have you thought of that at all, Morris? You must make your friend understand it."

"I tells him," Morris promised; "I don't know can he understand. He's pretty little, only that's how I tells him all times." [127]

"Then tell him once again, honey," Miss Bailey advised, "and make him understand that he must go back to his own people as soon as your mother is well. Where are his own people? I can't understand how any one so little could be wandering about with no one to take care of him."

"Teacher, I'm takin' care of him," Morris pointed out.

All that night and all the succeeding day Miss Bailey's imagination reverted again and again to the two little ones keeping house in Mrs. Mowgelewsky's immaculate apartment. Even increasing blindness had not been allowed to interfere with sweeping and scrubbing and dusting, and when Teacher thought of that patient matron, as she lay in her hospital cot trusting so securely to her Christian friend's guardianship of her son and home, she fretted herself into feeling that it was her duty to go down to Monroe Street and investigate. [128]

There was at first no sound when, after climbing endless stairs, she came to Mrs. Mowgelewsky's door. But as the thumping of the heart and the singing in her ears abated somewhat, she detected Morris's familiar treble.

"Bread," it said, "iss awful healthy for you, only you dasn't eat it 'out chewin'. I never in my world seen how you eats."

Although the words were admonitory, they lost all didactic effect by the wealth of love and tenderness which sang in the voice. There was a note of happiness in it, too, a throb of pure enjoyment quite foreign to Teacher's knowledge of this sad-eyed little charge of hers. She rested against the door frame, and Morris went on: [129]

"I guess you don't know what iss polite. You shall better come on the school, und Miss Bailey could to learn you what iss polite and healthy fer you. No, you couldn't to have no meat! No, *sir!* No, *ma'am!* You couldn't to have no meat 'til I cuts it fer you. You could to, maybe, make yourself a sickness und a bashfulness."

Miss Bailey put her hand on the door and it yielded noiselessly to her touch, and revealed to her guardian eyes her ward and his little friend. They were seated *vis-à-vis* at the table; everything was very neat and clean and most properly set out. A little lamp was burning clearly. Morris's hair was parted for about an inch back from his forehead and sleeked wetly down upon his brow. The guest had evidently undergone similar preparation for the meal. Each had a napkin tied around his neck, and as Teacher watched them, Morris carefully prepared his guest's dinner, while the guest, an Irish terrier, with quick eyes and one down-flopped ear, accepted his admonishings with a good-natured grace, and watched him with an adoring and confiding eye. [130]

The guest was first to detect the stranger's presence. He seized a piece of bread in his teeth, jumped to the ground, and walking up to Teacher on his hind legs, hospitably dropped the refreshment at her feet.

"Oh! Teacher! Teacher!" cried Morris, half in dismay at discovery, and half in joy that this so sure confidant should share his secret and appreciate his friend. "Oh! Teacher! Missis Bailey! this is the friend what I was telling you over. See how he walks on his feet! See how he has got smilin' looks! See how he carries somethings by his teeth! All times he makes like that. Rover, he don't carries nothin's, und gold fishes, they ain't got no feet even. On'y Izzie could to make them things." [131]

"Oh, is his name Izzie?" asked Miss Bailey, grasping at this conversational straw and shaking the paw which the stranger was presenting to her. "And this is the friend you told me about? You let me think," she chided, with as much severity as Morris had shown to his Izzie, "that he was a boy."

"I had a 'fraid," said the Monitor of the Gold Fish Bowl frankly.

So had Teacher as she reviewed the situation from Mrs. Mowgelewsky's chair of state, and watched the friends at supper. It was a revelation of solicitude on one side, and patient gratitude on the other. Morris ate hardly anything, and was soon at Teacher's knee—Izzie was in her lap—discussing ways and means. [132]

He refused to entertain any plan which would separate him immediately from Izzie, but he was at last brought to see the sweet reasonableness of preparing his mother's mind by degrees to accept another member to the family.

"Und he eats," his protector was forced to admit—"he eats somethin' fierce, Missis Bailey; as much like a man he eats. Und my mamma, I don't know what will she say. She won't leave me I shall keep him; from long I had a little bit of a dog, und she wouldn't to leave me I should keep *him*, und he didn't eat so much like Izzie eats, neither."

"And *I* can't very well keep him," said Miss Bailey sadly, "because, you see, there is Rover. Rover mightn't like it. But there is one thing I can do: I'll keep him for a few days when your mother comes back, and then we'll see, you and I, if we can persuade her to let you have him always." [133]

"She wouldn't never to do it," said Morris sadly. "That other dog, didn't I told you how he didn't eat so much like Izzie, and she wouldn't to leave me have him. That's a cinch."

"Oh! don't say that word, dear," cried Teacher. "And we can only try. We'll do our very, very best."

This guilty secret had a very dampening effect upon the joy with which Morris watched for his mother's recovery. Upon the day set for her return, he was a miserable battle-field of love and duty. Early in the morning Izzie had been transferred to Miss Bailey's yard. Rover was chained to his house, Izzie was tied to the wall at a safe distance from him, and they proceeded to make the day hideous for the whole neighborhood. [134]

Morris remained at home to greet his mother, received her encomiums, cooked the dinner, and set out for afternoon school with a heavy heart and a heavier conscience. Nothing had occurred in those first hours to show any change in Mrs. Mowgelewsky's opinion of home pets; rather she seemed, in contrast to the mild and sympathetic Miss Bailey, more than ever dictatorial and dogmatic.

At a quarter after three, the gold fish having received perfunctory attention, and the Board of Monitors being left again to do their worst, unguarded, Morris and Teacher set out to prepare Mrs. Mowgelewsky's mind for the adoption of Izzie. They found it very difficult. Mrs. Mowgelewsky, restored of vision, was so hospitable, so festive in her elephantine manner, so loquacious and so self-congratulatory, that it was difficult to insert even the tiniest conversational wedge into the structure of her monologue. [135]

Finally Miss Bailey managed to catch her attention upon financial matters. "You gave me," she said, "two dollars and ten cents, and Morris has managed so beautifully that he has not used it all, and has five cents to return to you. He's a very wonderful little boy, Mrs. Mowgelewsky," she added, smiling at her favorite to give him courage.

"He iss a good boy," Mrs. Mowgelewsky admitted. "Don't you get lonesome sometimes by yourself here, huh?"

"Well," said Miss Bailey, "he wasn't always alone."

"No?" queried the matron with a divided attention. She was looking for her purse, in which she wished to stow Morris's surplus.

"No," said Teacher; "I was here once or twice. And then a little friend of his——" [136]

"Friend!" the mother repeated with a glare; "was friends here in mine house?"

Miss Bailey began a purposely vague reply, but Mrs. Mowgelewsky was not listening to her. She had searched the pockets of the gown she wore, then various other hiding-places in the region of its waist line, then a large bag of mattress covering which she wore under her skirt. Ever hurriedly and more hurriedly she repeated this performance two or three times, and then proceeded to shake and wring the out-door clothing which she had worn that morning.

"Gott!" she broke out at last, "mine Gott! mine Gott! it don't stands." And she began to peer about the floor with eyes not yet quite adjusted. Morris easily recognized the symptoms.

"She's lost her pocket-book," he told Miss Bailey.

"Yes, I lost it," wailed Mrs. Mowgelewsky, and then the whole party participated in the search. [137] Over and under the furniture, the carpets, the bed, the stove, over and under everything in the apartment went Mrs. Mowgelewsky and Morris. All the joy of home-coming and of well-being was darkened and blotted out by this new calamity. And Mrs. Mowgelewsky beat her breast and tore her hair, and Constance Bailey almost wept in sympathy. But the pocket-book was gone, absolutely gone, though Mrs. Mowgelewsky called Heaven and earth to witness that she had had it in her hand when she came in.

Another month's rent was due; the money to pay it was in the pocket-book. Mr. Mowgelewsky had visited his wife on Sunday, and had given her all his earnings as some salve to the pain of her eyes. Eviction, starvation, every kind of terror and disaster were thrown into Mrs. [138] Mowgelewsky's wailing, and Morris proved an able second to his mother.

Miss Bailey was doing frantic bookkeeping in her charitable mind, and was wondering how much of the loss she might replace. She was about to suggest as a last resort that a search should be made of the dark and crannied stairs, where a purse, if the Fates were very, very kind, might lie undiscovered for hours when a dull scratching made itself heard through the general lamentation. It came from a point far down on the panel of the door, and the same horrible conviction seized upon Morris and upon Miss Bailey at the same moment.

Mrs. Mowgelewsky in her frantic round had approached the door for the one-hundredth time, and with eyes and mind far removed from what she was doing, she turned the handle. And entered Izzie, beautifully erect upon his hind legs, with a yard or two of rope trailing behind him, and a [139] pocket-book fast in his teeth.

Blank, pure surprise took Mrs. Mowgelewsky for its own. She staggered back into a chair, fortunately of heavy architecture, and stared at the apparition before her. Izzie came daintily in, sniffed at Morris, sniffed at Miss Bailey, sniffed at Mrs. Mowgelewsky's ample skirts, identified her as the owner of the pocket-book, laid it at her feet, and extended a paw to be shaken.

"Mine Gott!" said Mrs. Mowgelewsky, "what for a dog iss that?" She counted her wealth, shook Izzie's paw, and then stooped forward, gathered him into her large embrace, and cried like a baby. "Mine Gott! Mine Gott!" she wailed again, and although she spent five minutes in apparent effort to evolve another and more suitable remark, her research met with no greater success than [140] the addition:

"He ain't a dog at all; he iss friends."

Miss Bailey had been sent to an eminently good college, and had been instructed long and hard in psychology, so that she knew the psychologic moment when she met it. She now arose with



congratulations and farewells. Mrs. Mowgelewsky arose also with Izzie still in her arms. She lavished endearments upon him and caresses upon his short black nose, and Izzie received them all with enthusiastic gratitude.

"And I think," said Miss Bailey in parting, "that you had better let that dog come with me. He seems a nice enough little thing, quiet, gentle, and very intelligent. He can live in the yard with Rover."



**She staggered back into a chair, fortunately of heavy architecture, and stared at the apparition before her**

Morris turned his large eyes from one to another of his rulers, and Izzie, also good at psychologic moments, stretched out a pointed pink tongue and licked Mrs. Mowgelewsky's cheek. "This dog," said that lady majestically, "iss mine. Nobody couldn't never to have him. When I was in mine trouble, was it mans or was it ladies what takes und gives me mine money back? No! Was it neighbors? No! Was it you, Miss Teacher, mine friend? No! It was that dog. Here he stays mit me. Morris, my golden one, you wouldn't to have no feelin's 'bout mamma havin' dogs? You wouldn't to have mads?" [141]

"No, ma'am," responded her obedient son; "Missis Bailey she says it's *fer* boys they should make all things what is lovin' mit cats und dogs und horses."

"Goot," said his mother; "I guess, maybe, that ain't such a foolishness."

It was not until nearly bedtime that Mrs. Mowgelewsky reverted to that part of Miss Bailey's conversation immediately preceding the discovery of the loss of the purse. [142]

"So-o-oh, my golden one," she began, lying back in her chair with Izzie on her lap—"so-o-oh, you had friends by the house when mamma was by hospital."

"On'y one," Morris answered faintly.

"Well, I ain't scoldin'," said his mother. "Where iss your friend? I likes I shall look on him. Ain't he comin' round to-night?"

"No, ma'am," answered Morris, settling himself at her side, and laying his head close to his friend. "He couldn't to go out by nights the while he gets adopted off of a lady."

[143]

[144]

---

## THE MAGIC CAPE

[145]

The heart of the janitor of an East Side school is not commonly supposed to be a tender organ. And yet to Miss Bailey, busy with roll-books and the average attendance of First Readers, there entered the janitor with an air half apologetic, half defiant. There was snow upon the janitor's cap and little icicles upon his red mustache, for a premature blizzard had closed down upon New York during the last days of November.

"Well, Mr. McGrath, what can I do for you?" asked Miss Bailey pleasantly, for McGrath was the true despot of the school, controlling light and air and heat and cold, and his good-will was a thing worth having.

[146]

"I just stepped in," answered this kindly god of the machine, "to pass the remark that there's one of your children, a girl what oughtn't to be left down in the yard with the others, waiting for the

bell to ring and let them up. She ain't dressed for it."

"So few of them are," said Miss Bailey sadly. "I wish you could send them all straight up here instead of lining them up in the cold. Some of them are so determined to be in time that they have to wait down there for ten or fifteen minutes."

"I know they do," the janitor acquiesced. "But I can't let them all up. But this little girl I'm telling you about—you know her—she wears a blue gingham dress, and"—he dropped his voice to confidential pitch—"and mighty little else as I can see."

"Yes, yes," said Miss Bailey, "that is Becky Zabrowsky."

[147]

"Well, I could pass *her* right straight up to you here where it's warm. I'm a married man myself, and I've got kids of my own, so I guess you'll excuse me butting in on this."

"But I shall be very grateful to you," cried Teacher. "It breaks my heart to see her. And she comes dressed just as you say, whatever the weather may be."

After a few professional questions as to heating and sweeping, after taking the temperature of the radiators with a thermometric hand, and examining their valves, the janitor withdrew, and when Miss Bailey reached Room 18 on the next morning, Becky Zabrowsky, as blue of lips and fingers as of vesture, was waiting for her. And indeed her costume gave cause for pity, even as her smile and her bravery gave cause for tears. Besides the gingham dress referred to by the janitor, she wore a pair of black and pink stockings, of mature growth and many holes, flapping adult shoes with all the buttons gone, and a hair ribbon which had begun life as a bandage. That was all. But she was clean. And her self-respect made her seven years as high a barrier against patronage as though they had been seventy. She was as proudly and as sensitively on her guard as though she were an old marquise fallen upon evil days, and obliged to give lessons in French or die, and who was restrained from the bitter and pleasanter alternative only by religion.

[148]

Miss Bailey was accustomed to more normal children. As a rule her little First Readers took all that was offered to them, and a good deal that was not. Their consumption of Kindergarten materials—colored paper, colored sticks, chalks, pencils, books—anything which could be cached upon the human body—was colossal, and only an eagle eye and a large corps of subsidized monitors kept the balance true between the number of "young learners" and the number of readers. But this particular little Becky had none of these taking ways. Had she been like other Beckies and Rachels, Miss Bailey would have bought her a little shawl and a few suits of underwear. With this particular Becky such a liberty was out of the question. Teacher had encountered the Zabrowsky spirit once, and had been defeated by it.

[149]

That had been upon the question of lunch. Teacher had noticed that Becky frequently remained at school during the luncheon hour, but that she never ate anything. Other little girls sometimes urged refreshment upon her in vain. Miss Bailey, wise by this time in the laws of kosher and of traff, the clean and the unclean, according to Mosaic dietary laws, suggested a glass of milk at a neighboring dairy, or a roll from the delicatessen shop across the street. Any one of her charges would starve cheerfully to death or or at the hospital ward before they would touch any of her food. She was a Christian, and though they loved her, learned from her, and honored her, they, like Shylock of old, would not eat with her. And Becky Zabrowsky, adding pride unto faith, and manners unto both, would smile her heart-breaking smile, shake her bandage-bowed head, and go on starving.

[150]

"Teacher, I tells you s'cuse, I don't needs I shall eat," was her always courteous answer. And not all Miss Bailey's tact or wiles could prevail against it.

It was at about this time that Miss Bailey in her unofficial capacity accepted an invitation to a costume dance. Looking through old trunks and long-neglected shelves, she came upon a little tight-fitting shoulder cape of prehistoric date and fashion. It was such a cape as you can find in some of Du Maurier's drawings. It pinned the wearer's arms to her side, it gagged her tightly around the throat, it was of velvet, and its color was royal blue.

[151]

Constance Bailey, peering back into the dim vista of the years, could remember the pride and happiness which she had felt when her over-indulgent grandmother had given her, then a child of about twelve, this gorgeous garment. She could remember how it had dwarfed and faded the rest of her wardrobe, how she had wept to wear it upon all possible and impossible occasions, and how tragic had been the moment when it refused to meet across her loving breast.

Here, she thought triumphantly, was something before which the Zabrowsky spirit would break down. It did not in any way suggest the useful, serviceable, humiliating, charitable devotion. It was gay and festive, palpably a gift, and Teacher, with many misgivings but some hope, submitted it to Becky's consideration. She represented that she had herself outgrown it, that she had no costume with which it could appropriately be worn, that it was menaced by moths, a prey to creases, and a responsibility under which she could no longer find peace or security. Under the circumstances, she pleaded, would Becky relieve her of it? And Becky was delighted, translated, enchanted. She would never allow that cape to hang with the ordinary outdoor apparel of the other members of the class. It rested in her desk when she was busy, and she lulled it in her arms when she was not. Before coming into this shining fortune she had been rather looked down upon by other members of the class, and had avoided publicity in every possible way. She had with chattering teeth and livid lips assured her more warmly clad classmates that she was "all times too hot on the skin," and that her mamma considered her

[152]

[153]

Sunday coat too stylish to wear at school. But, girded in blue velvet, she was another child. Once the most retiring of the class, she now became the least so. Once the most studious, she now yearned to be sent on outpost duty, on small shopping expeditions for her teacher, to the Principal's office, or to other class rooms with notes or with new students. And upon all these expeditions she wore an air of conscious correctness and the royal-blue velvet cape. She had once been the most truthful of small persons, but the glory of the cape tinged everything, and she allowed the other children to infer—nay, she even definitely stated—that this was the Sunday coat earlier referred to, and that she was wearing it to school because it had been superseded by another even more wonderful. Her auditors were too impressed to be unconvinced, and, to cover her very literal nakedness in every other respect, she invented for herself an entirely new disease. [154]

"Say, Becky," one of the little girls in her class asked her, "don't you never put yourself on mit underwear nor underclothes? Ain't you scared you should to get cold in your bones? My mamma, she puts me on mit all from wool underwear—costs twenty-seven cents a suit by Grand Street—and I puts them on when the school opens, and I don't takes them off to the fourth of July."

"Oh," retorted Becky, with more truth than she knew, "it ain't so awful healthy you should make like that. My mamma says it is healthy for me the wind shall come on my skin. She says sooner no wind comes outside of your skin, no blood could go inside of your skin. And don't you know how teacher says what somebody what ain't got blood going in them is dead ones?" [155]

"Und you *likes*," marvelled her friend, "you *likes* the wind shall blow on you?"

"Sure," lied Becky, with a shiver, and she certainly had her wish.

But these appearances were only kept up for the eyes of the common herd. In the sanctuary of Teacher's confidence she was more unreserved, and whenever she could secure that young lady's kind ear, she bombarded it with gratitude and with reports of the impression made in the neighborhood of her one-roomed home by the shining splendor of that precious gift.

"Sooner I comes on mine house," she reported, "sooner all the ladies opens the doors and rubbers on mine cape. Sooner I walks by my block all the children wants I shall let them wear it. Only I won't let nobody wear it the while it is a present off of you." [156]

"That's very nice of you," smiled Miss Bailey, not surprised at this new delicacy of feeling in so small and unfortunate and sorely tried a heart. "Very nice of you indeed."

"Sure I won't let anybody wear it," reiterated Becky, "not 'out they pays me a penny for walkin' up and down the block, and two cents for walkin' all round the block mit mine stylish from-plush cape."

"Of course not," Teacher agreed, hastily adjusting herself to this standard of right dealing.

"No, ma'am," said Becky. "I should never leave nobody have nothings what you gives me 'out they pays me good. The lady of our floor, she goes on a dancing-ball over yesterday, and she wants I shall leave her put her on mit mine cape—she's a awful little lady—only she don't wants she shall pay me. Und so I ain't let her take it, the while you gives it to me, and I am loving much mit you." [157]

A teacher who gains the confidence of her small charges, even to a slight degree, is sure to be made familiar with their family history unto the third or fourth generation. And so Teacher knew that the poverty of Becky's home life was embittered and made even harder to bear by the contrasting elegance of an aunt, who lived, amid rank and fashion, in the "tony" purlieus of Cherry Street. Her abode consisted, according to her smarting small relative, of "a room and a closet," a lavish and extravagant area for a household as small as hers.

"Why," Becky informed Miss Bailey, with upturned palms, upscrewed shoulders, and upturned eyes, "my aunt, she ain't got only five children and three boarders!" [158]

It had been the habit of this rich and fashionable dame to pay visits of state and ceremony to her less fortunate sister-in-law, whose abode differed from hers only by the subtraction of the room. There, in the chaste consciousness of an incredible wig and an impenetrable shawl, she would monopolize many hundreds of cubic feet of space and air; indulge in conversations of the elegant and fashionable kind, which, so Becky reported to her teacher, "makes the tears in my mamma's eyes, and gives my papa shamed feelings," and caused an epidemic of ill-temper, with resulting slaps and kicks and yelling among her nephews and nieces.

"And what you think?" Becky had sadly added; "she says like that all times on my mamma, out of Jewish, she says: 'Why don't you never come over for see me?' Und my mamma, she says all times, mit more tears in the eyes—bend down your head, Teacher. I likes I shall whisper mit you in your ear—she couldn't come the whiles she ain't got nothing she could wear on the block. My papa has fierce feelings over it. He says like that, his sister—that's my aunt—is awful nosy." [159]

Teacher often pondered as to whether it were possible, or even desirable, to provide the means to more frequent intercourse between the two families. She knew that this would mean shopping; that any article of her own apparel, or that of any of her friends, would be inadequate to enshroud the matronly form of Becky's mother, for years of confinement to the house, years of sedentary occupation, and years of ill-considered and ill-adapted diet had co-operated to produce almost geographical outlines in Mrs. Zabrowsky. Mountains, valleys, promontories, and plains seemed the terms most suitable to describe her, and she looked about as movable as these [160]

natural formations. Teacher thought of waiting until Christmas time, and of then doing something anonymously. Meanwhile the episode of the cape occurred, and some weeks later Becky reported with triumph:

"Teacher, what you think?" this was always her opening phrase; "my stylish aunt by Cherry Street, she goes and has a party, und my papa he goes on the party, und my mamma, she goes by my papa's side."

"Then she bought a shawl," cried Teacher. "I am ever and ever so glad."

Becky shook her head.

"No, ma'am, she don't needs she shall buy no shawl. She puts her on mit mine blue from-plush cape." [161]

A vision of Becky's mother rose before Teacher's eyes, flanked by another of the tiny cape, and she laughed.

"But that is impossible, my dear. She couldn't."

"Teacher, she does."

"But, Becky," cried Teacher, "how could she? You know that the cape is too small for me, and it is only the right size for you, and you know your mamma is twice as big as both of us. So how could she wear it, dear? It never could have hooked up the front."

"No, ma'am, it didn't hook," Becky admitted. "My mamma's back needs the most of it, und in front it don't fits very good, only that makes mit my mamma nothings. She goes on my nosy auntie's party mit proud feelings, the while she knows how her back is stylish. Und in the front where the cape don't goes, my mamma, she wears my little sister." [162]

"What!" gasped my friend. "What did you say she wore in the front?"

"She wears the baby," Becky repeated. "Und my nosy auntie's awful fresh. She says like that on my mamma: 'Don't you likes you shall lay the baby down by the bed?' She says like that, the while she knows my mamma ain't got capes only in back, und she wants my mamma shall have shamed feelings before all the peoples what is on the party. Und my mamma, she says like that, just as smart, she says: 'No, I guess I don't likes I shall lay my baby on no strange beds. It ain't healthy, maybe.' And she holds the baby, and nobody knows how the front from that cape is, und my mamma enjoyed a pleasant time, and my papa had a proud."

[163]

[164]

---

## "BAILEY'S BABIES"

[165]

"Miss Bailey," said Miss Blake, entering Room 18 during the lunch hour of a day in January, shortly after school had recovered from the Christmas holidays, "might I come in for a few moments this afternoon to observe your children? I suppose I shall be having them next term. Too bad you first-grade teachers never know what you are going to get down here! It's different up town, where the kids nearly all go to kindergarten. Down here they sweep them right in off the street."

Miss Bailey extended a cordial invitation to her colleague and neighbor to visit Room 18 at any convenient hour. And as she proceeded with her solitary luncheon, she was conscious of a heaviness in the region of her heart not due to indigestion. She had committed the folly of growing fond of that term's crop of little First Readers. Room 18 without Patrick Brennan, Morris Mowgelewsky, Eva Gonorowsky, and all her other aide-de-camps and monitors would be a desolate place. And Miss Bailey, as she munched a chicken sandwich, objected strongly to Miss Blake's expressive phrase, "sweep them right in off the street." Yet it was quite true. The children of whom she was now so fond had been swept in to her in September, and she remembered that a considerable portion of the street would seem to have been swept in with them. They had since learned the art of scraping their small shoes on intervening stairs and through intervening halls, but as recruits they had been all that she dreaded in their successors. Miss Blake would now reap the benefit of this and other improvements, while Miss Bailey devoted her energies to a new invoice of seedlings. [166]

Such, of course, was life. Especially a teacher's life. But Miss Bailey was new to her trade and had not yet learned the philosophic, impersonal view-point of the gardener. She loved her little plants individually, and she shrank from the idea of pulling them out of their places under the protecting glass of her care, and handing them over to the ministrations of another.

The promise of new seedlings did not comfort her. She felt outraged by it, as a man bereaved of a fox terrier may feel toward the friend to whom a dog is a dog, and who boasts that he knows where he can get another worth two of the dear departed.

In the afternoon Miss Blake appeared, and the unsuspecting First Readers were put through their paces. They sang, they marched, they read, and they wrote. They would have gone gallantly [168]

on through all the other subjects in their curriculum if she had found time to stay, but she had left Room 19 in charge of a monitor, and that monitor's inability to preserve order made itself heard through door and wall, so that presently she declared herself quite satisfied, and retired to her own kingdom. A deadly silence followed upon her arrival there.

"They has awful 'fraids over her," Sarah Schodsky remarked. "A girl by her class tells me how she throws rulers once on a boy."

"I'd have a 'fraid over her too," cried Yetta Aaronsohn. "I don't like I shall have no teachers what is big like that. I have all times 'fraids over big teachers."

"You've never had one," laughed Miss Bailey, "so don't talk nonsense. Big teachers are much nicer than little ones." [169]

"They ain't fer me," Yetta maintained. "I ain't never had no teacher on'y you, and I don't needs I shall never have no teacher on'y you."

From these conversational straws Miss Bailey gathered that it would be unwise to insist too strongly upon the personal element in "developing the promotion thought." Promotion had formed no part in the experience or the vocabulary of the First Readers Class before Miss Bailey somewhat guilefully introduced it.

The children were delighted. They always loved things vague and looming, and Miss Bailey—animated by duty—spoke so enthusiastically of promotion that they all thrilled to experience it. The phrase, "when I'm 'moted," grew very fashionable. No one knew exactly what it meant, but it was something more imminent than the "when I'm big" of the boys, and the "when I git married" of the girls. It was something, too, in which one's prowess as a reader and writer was to count for righteousness; "For of course," Miss Bailey explained, "we can't expect to be promoted if we don't know how to read: 'see the leaves fall from the tree.'" (It was easier to read than to do in January on the lower East Side.) [170]

The First Readers were hardly daunted when they learned that a barrier, known as "zamination," was to be stretched between them and the "moted" state. "Zamination," when first Miss Bailey pronounced it, caused something akin to panic in Room 18. It differed in no perceptible degree from a word which they all understood to be *taboo* ever since Ikey Borrachsohn had addressed it, in the heat of argument, to a classmate. In the lower grades an examination does not greatly differ from an ordinary recitation, and so the First Readers, protected from stage fright by complete ignorance of what they were undergoing, passed the ordeal in triumph, and fell out at the other side victorious almost to a man, and First Readers never more. [171]

There came an afternoon when Miss Bailey, somewhat huskily, explained this to them. "Zamination" was over. The fair pages of the Second Readers lay before them. In the morning they would be promoted. She was very proud of them. One or two children had not worked quite hard enough. They would have to try again, but the rank and file had achieved promotion, and she hoped they would be very happy, and they were to remember that she would always and ever be glad to see them, and glad to hear that they were good. [172]

The children who had taken their examinations so blandly, took their promotion in quite a different spirit. Miss Bailey, laboring as best she could with fifty little new-comers, could not be unaware of the disturbance—almost the tumult—on the other side of the wall. When ten-thirty brought the recess hour and she went down to the yard with her new responsibilities, the tumult met her there.

"I don't likes it, und I don't needs that 'motion," cried Sarah Schodsky; "I likes I shall be by your room."

"But you can't, honey. You're too big," said Miss Bailey. "You just stop crying for your lost youth and try to make the best of Room 19."

"But we don't likes that room," cried Morris Mowgelewsky, ex-monitor of Miss Bailey's Gold Fish Bowl. "It don't stands no fish theaytre in it nor no flowers. Nathan Spiderwitz, he has awful mads over it" (Nathan Spiderwitz had been Monitor of Miss Bailey's window-boxes), "und Patrick Brennan says maybe his papa could to arrest Missis Blake. She says cheek on him. She calls him Irisher." [173]

"Oh, no!" remonstrated Miss Bailey.

"Teacher, yiss ma'am, she says cheek," Morris maintained. "She says cheek on all of us; she says we is Bailey's Babies. She says it on Miss Rosen. Me und Nathan, we hears how she says on her. 'What you think I got?' she says on Miss Rosen, und Miss Rosen, she says, 'she don't knows,' und Missis Blake, she says, 'I got a bunch of Bailey's Babies.'" [174]

"Then you *must* have been bad, Morris," Miss Bailey reproved him; "you must have been behaving like babies."

"Teacher, no ma'am," Morris answered. "We don't make nothings like that. She makes Eva Gonorowsky und Yetta Aaronsohn shall stand in corners the whiles they cries. She says, 'What is mit them?' und they says, 'They likes they shall look upon your face,' und extra she stands them in corners. She is awful cross teachers! Und anyway, she's too big." [174]

Although Miss Bailey appreciated this tribute she could understand Miss Blake's failure to do so,

and she explained to Morris that, upon pain of being instantly cast out from her heart of hearts, he must learn to love Miss Blake.

But Morris had had a severe lesson in the perils of unrequited affection, and at the age of seven had formulated the axiom, "It's a foolishness you shall make what is lovin' mit somebody sooner somebody don't makes what is lovin' mit you," and Miss Bailey found it difficult to induce him to regard Miss Blake with affection.

[175]

Other members of the former cabinet and staff were equally refractory, and at three o'clock every afternoon, save on the regrettably frequent occasions when Miss Blake was obliged to require their continued presence in Room 19, they flocked back to their old posts of duty. They fell upon the window-boxes, the aquarium, the pencils, and the blackboards with endearments and caresses, and they utterly swept away and annihilated the slow-footed new-comers whom Miss Bailey was trying to initiate in their duties. A clumsy boy named David Boskowitz had succeeded to the portfolio of Gold Fishes. Now a gold fish, even of eighteen-carat quality, is not warranted to endure the endearments and refreshments lavished upon it by fifty emotional members of a race whose ancestors once wandered to adoration of a Golden Calf. During Morris's tenure of office Miss Bailey had frequently been obliged to renew his charges. And some mysterious tragedy was played in the fish theatre one night shortly after David Boskowitz took office. Morris, slipping into Room 18 before school hours, to bestow a defunct carnation upon Teacher, found a gold fish floating, wrong side up, among the seaweed in the shining bowl.

[176]

With howls he pointed it out to Miss Bailey. Together they retrieved it. Then Teacher wrapped it reverently in tissue paper and commissioned Morris to go forth and give it decent burial in the nearest ash barrel.

But Morris did nothing of the kind. He carried it about with him for days, and stirred up sentiments of wildest revolution in the hot hearts of his contemporaries by showing them the limp body of their pet, foully done to death by "them new kids what Teacher had."

[177]

Miss Blake found "Bailey's Babies" astonishingly unmanageable. The difficulty lay in the different conception of the art of teaching held by these two exponents. Miss Bailey, as has been said, was of the garden school. She regarded the children as plants, knowledge as water; her part in the scheme of things to understudy the sunshine, and to coax the plants to absorb the water. Miss Blake was of the carpenter school. She held that facts were hard and straight; minds not quite so hard, and never straight; her duty to saw and bore, sand-paper and file the minds until the facts could be smoothly glued upon them.

"Bailey's Babies" felt this difference though they did not understand it. In fact life was getting generally incomprehensible. For were not Hymie Solomon, the greenhorn, who had not yet learned English, Jakey Fishandler, who was so bad that no teacher except Miss Bailey would have him in her class, and Becky Zalmanowsky, who—though the First Readers did not appreciate it—was a perfect type of the criminal idiot, were not these allowed to bask in Miss Bailey's presence, while self-respecting, hard-working First Readers were thrown into outer darkness?

[178]

There was, indeed, weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, and, contributed by Patrick Brennan, an uninterrupted flow of minor disturbances and insubordinations, culminating in a heated interview between Miss Blake and the Principal, in which the lady insisted that Patrick was making discipline impossible, that his writing was a blot upon civilization, and that he should be returned whence he came.



### Patrick was making discipline impossible

The beginning of every term is marked by several such falls from grace on the part of erstwhile model pupils, who do not easily adjust themselves to their new environment. The Principal was surprised but complacent, and very formally on the next morning Miss Blake delivered her ultimatum to that unruly son of the Kings of Ulster and the policeman on the beat. Its immediate cause was the unoffending but offensive gold fish. For three days it had preached its silent sermon of sedition and puzzled the olfactory nerves of Miss Blake, who after ten years of East Side teaching had flattered herself that she was beyond any new sensation of that nature. After a heated interview which led to the disintegration of the venerable corse, Miss Blake gathered her black serge draperies closely about her and issued her command. [179]

"Take your things," said she; "I won't have you in this room another minute." Patrick's eyes grew large, he hesitated about returning to the paternal and official roof-tree with the tidings that he had been expelled. "Take your hat and everything you own and come with me." [180]

Patrick gathered together a miscellaneous collection, consisting of a wad of chewing-gum, the soul of a mouth-organ, a cap, and one rubber overshoe, and prepared to march upon East Broadway.

"You are a disgrace to the school," said Miss Blake loftily, "and I am going to take you to the only place you are fit for—back to the First Reader Class. We'll see what Miss Bailey will say to you, young man."

Well, Patrick followed her. It was the first command of hers to which he had given favorable ear. He even went with alacrity—and the novices in the Second Reader gazed wildly upon one another. They may not have been quick to memorize incomprehensible and unexplained "memory gems," or to carry in their heads long strings of figures unconnected with anything in sea or sky. But Miss Bailey's training had made them experts in recognizing cause and effect, and such an epidemic of lawlessness and mischief swept over Room 19 as even Miss Blake's ten years' experience had never paralleled. "Bailey's Babies" went suddenly and unanimously to the dogs. The energy which they had expended in being "moted" was as nothing to the delirious determination with which they fought for retrogradation. They dutifully called to mind all Miss Bailey's precepts, and then crashed through them, one by one. They fell from grace, from truth, from cleanliness, from all the moral heights upon which Teacher had perched them, and, as they fell, they set in motion the machinery provided by the Board of Education. Mesdames [181] Gonorowsky, Mowgelewsky and Borrachsohn, and other matrons began to find the tenor of their days interrupted by incomprehensible post-cards, and a regrettably comprehensible Truant Officer. "Bailey's Babies" were running amuck, and their cries as they committed moral hara-kiri echoed as far as the marble halls of the Board of Education on remote Park Avenue. [182]

Mrs. Gonorowsky paid the exorbitant price of a cent to have her official postcard read by an interpreter. Neighbors volunteered for this service, but she would have none of them. She wanted an authoritative reading, and having got it, she sat down to await the return of Eva.

"So-o-oh," ran the maternal greeting, "you comes three times late on the school mit dirty faces." Eva hung her guilty head. "And I wash you every day the face, und send you on the block plenty [183]

time? Hein?" Eva nodded the guilty head. "Und now comes such a card from off the school sayin' how you comes late und dirty, und the Principal, he wants he shall see me to-morrow, quarter after three." A silence followed these thunderous words. Eva's guilt engulfed her, although hers was the clearest conscience among all the candidates for return tickets. Her gentle spirit had been unequal to the orgy in which braver souls were wallowing.

"I wants," she whispered now, "I wants I shall be put back. I don't likes it by Miss Blakeses room. I ain't monitors off of nothings, und Miss Blake she hollers on me, und Patrick he is put back. I likes I shall be put back too."

"Sooner you feels like that," said Mrs. Gonorowsky with sound logic, "why aind you stayed back by Miss Bailey's room? Aind you told me how you wants you shall be 'moted, and learn off a new book?" [184]

"Not 'out Miss Bailey," Eva protested. "I couldn't to learn 'out Miss Bailey. I want Miss Bailey shall be 'moted too."

"Und why ain't she 'moted?" demanded the voice of reason.

At this question—its answer had long been torture to her loyal little heart—Eva broke into wild tears. Changing over to the voice of love, Mrs. Gonorowsky soothed and cuddled and petted her until Eva found speech again.

"It's somethin' fierce," she whispered. "In all my world I ain't never seen how it is fierce. I shall better, maybe, whisper mit you in the ear. It's like this: She ain't smart enough. Becky Zalmanowsky, she ain't smart enough, und Hymie Solomon, he ain't smart enough, und Jakey Fishandler, he is a greeney, und Teacher, she gets left back mit them." [185]

"Gott!" cried Mrs. Gonorowsky, "who says she ain't smart enough?"

"The Principal, maybe," wailed Eva.

"All right," said her mother, whose admiration for Miss Bailey was great and of long standing. "I goes on the school to-morrow for see him at quarter after three."

When Mrs. Gonorowsky reached the big school-house, she found that her audience with the Principal was not to be a private one, for a dozen or more mothers were gathered in the yard. A regular investigation was on foot. Every one concerned had recognized that there was some organization about Room 19's sedition, and Miss Blake had first repudiated the acquaintance and friendship of Miss Bailey, and had then gone on to repudiate all responsibility for what she now termed "Bailey's Brats."

"I refuse—I must refuse—to teach that class," said she to the harassed Principal. "If you can't arrange to exchange me with some other teacher, I shall apply for a transfer to an up-town school. If that Miss Bailey is so crazy about these children, why don't you let her keep them for another term? Every one seems to think she's a crackerjack teacher, so I guess she can get along in second term work, and I can take that new class of hers." [186]

"I'll think of it," said the Principal, as the janitor came to tell him that the mothers were overflowing his office.

Before his interview with them, he turned into Room 18, and there he found the ringleaders of Room 19's rebellion. Though beatified they wore a chastened, propitiatory air, for Miss Bailey had just been lecturing them. She looked as distressed as she was by the whole situation. [187]

"I just stepped in," the Principal explained, "to see how many of them were still chained to their oars. Rather a luxurious galley this, don't you think?"

"I can't think at all," answered Constance Bailey. "They were a fine class, and Miss Blake is a fine teacher."

"These misunderstandings happen," said the Principal, "in schools just as they do in marriages. I'm going down now to interview the mothers of most of these young people here. Do you mind staying and keeping the children for a few moments? I must get this thing straightened out."

"We shall all be here when you come back," Miss Bailey promised.

Eva Gonorowsky had but reflected the general opinion when she told her mother that Miss Bailey had been left back "because she wasn't smart enough," and the Principal found himself in the midst of an indignation meeting. In Yiddish, in English, in all grades and dialects between the two, the mothers protested against this ruling. [188]

There was hardly one of them who did not owe Miss Bailey some meed of gratitude—and they were of a race which still practises that virtue.

So they made ovation, fervid, gesticulatory, and obscure. But through much harping on one theme they made their meaning clear.

"So you think," said the Principal, "that Miss Bailey is still teaching the smallest children because she is not as clever as the other teachers. You never were more mistaken in your lives. The hardest child to teach and manage, as all of you very well know, is the smallest child. The very best teaching should come at the very beginning."



This statement, when it was translated by those who understood it to those who did not, met with a cordial rumble of approval. [189]

"Your children," he went on, "are old enough now to be taught by an ordinary teacher. Miss Blake is much more than that."

This translated was not very well received. Stout inarticulate mothers drew their shawls more closely about them and grunted dissent.

"But although they are old enough they haven't been proving themselves good enough, and so I have decided—as you express it—to promote Miss Bailey too, and to let her have charge of them until the end of the year. I shall notify Miss Blake to-morrow. Meanwhile, if you ladies will go up to Room 18 I think you will find your children there, and I know you will find Miss Bailey. Perhaps," he added with a smile, "she would be glad to receive your congratulations upon her promotion." [190]

The mothers steamed and streamed away, led by Mrs. Mowgelewsky whose wig was very much awry, and by Mrs. Gonorowsky, whose mind was in a triumphant flame, while far in the rear there pattered the grandmother of Isidore Applebaum, whose mind was quite unchanged by the events of the afternoon.

Isidore had managed to explain Miss Bailey's disabilities to her, but her almost complete deafness left her quite unmoved by the Principal's eloquence in either original or translated form. She only knew that Miss Bailey had been at last allowed to retain the guardianship of Isidore.

Fifteen unintelligible congratulations are rather overwhelming, and Miss Bailey was accordingly overwhelmed by the inrush. [191]

The mothers fell upon her bodily and pinned her to her chair. They kissed her hands. They kissed her gown. They patted her back. They embraced or chastised their offspring with equal violence. They admired the pictures, stood enraptured before the aquarium, touched the flowers with hungry appreciation, and enjoyed themselves immensely.

Mrs. Gonorowsky was a very champion among the hosts. She put Eva's misconduct upon the basis of etiquette. Surely it was not polite, she pointed out, that Eva should allow herself to be exalted over her teacher. As Mrs. Gonorowsky lucidly phrased it:

"Eva, she gets put back the whiles she don't wants you shall think she shows off that she iss smarter als Teacher—somethin's like that aind polite. Und anyway now the Pincipal says Eva aind smarter." [192]

"That's very kind of him," remarked Miss Bailey, trying to understand for the third time a whispered communication from Isidore Applebaum's grandmother. The speech, whatever it meant, was clearly of a cheerful and encouraging nature, and at the close of each repetition the old lady patted Teacher encouragingly upon the shoulder, and winked and nodded to an amazing extent.

Isidore was dragged from his lair and pressed into service as interpreter.

"She says like this out of Jewish," he began, "she says you don't have to care what nobody says over how you is smart or how you ain't smart. She says that don't makes nothings mit her the whiles you is lovin' mit childrens."

Again the old lady patted Teacher's shoulder, nodding and smiling the while with a knowing and encouraging air.

"Und she says," Isidore went on translating the hint with some delicacy, "she says we got a boarder by our house what ain't so awful smart, und"—here Isidore whispered—"he studies nights." [193]

Miss Bailey took the old lady's hand and shook it gratefully.

[194]

[195]

[196]

---

## "THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES"

[197]

"Say! What you think!" cried Rebecca Einstein to her friend and neighbor Esther Nolan. "What you think we got to our house?"

Esther confessed ignorance.

"A baby," cried the triumphant Rebecca.

"It's mine," said Esther promptly. "I writes such a letter on the Central Park Stork he shall bring me a baby. I tells him I got a crib even. It's too little fer me. I likes I shall lay all longed out on the sofa. Und extra he goes and makes mistakes and leaves it by your house. It's boys, ain't it?"

Rebecca admitted it was a boy.

"And did you write such letters on Storks?"

[198]

Again Rebecca admitted that she had not. "We don't got to write no letters over babies," said she with pride. "We gets 'em anyways. My mamma is got thirteen childrens. We ain't all babies now, but we was."

Esther returned crestfallen to her second-floor home, and sought the comforting arms of Mrs. Moriarty, her chaperon and guardian.

"But whatever made you write for a baby?" demanded Mrs. Moriarty, when the Stork's carelessness had been explained to her. "Aren't you and your father and me happy enough in this grand new house without a baby to be botherin' us?"

Unconsciously she had touched the root of Esther's trouble.

"I needs a baby," she wailed, "the whiles my papa he ain't lovin' no more mit me. And I wants somebody shall love me."



**"What you think we got to our house?"**

"Tut, tut, now!" admonished Mrs. Moriarty, and then again, "Tut, tut! Now Esther, dear," said she, after a pause, "you're getting to be a big girl." [199]

"I'm eight. I will become nine."

"Please God you will. But, anyway, you're big enough to know that your father loves you as much as ever he did, but hasn't time to show it, bein' in heavy trouble, God help him. You know about your auntie, her that was to have the bringing up of you as your father often tells ye."

"She don't never comes," Esther complained. "I waits und I waits und my auntie don't comes, und mine papa ain't lovin', und I needs I shall have a baby out of that Central Park."

The heart loneliness of which Esther complained was real enough. The material prosperity which had recently fallen upon her had deprived her of all the old comfortable joys which had brightened less prosperous days. Chief among these had been her father's light-hearted companionship. Mrs. Moriarty, the brightest feature of the new conditions, did her best to cheer and comfort the motherless child, but she could not hope to take the place of Jacob Morowsky, who had changed in so much more than name since he became John Nolan. Esther had dutifully tried—and failed—to understand why she, who had for so long been Esther Morowsky, was now Esther Nolan. And yet the explanation was sufficiently ordinary, and was the cause of her improved surroundings and the result of her father's preoccupation. [200]

Jacob Morowsky had, upon his first coming to America, found employment with old John Nolan, whose little shop of sacred statues, crucifixes, and holy pictures was the survival of the Irish Catholic era in Henry Street's history. There are not many traces of this era now remaining, but John Nolan's little shop was one of them, and economy overcame racial prejudice on the day he engaged Jacob Morowsky as his assistant. Later he congratulated himself upon this apostasy, calling it interchangeably "an act of charity, no more than that," or "the best bit of business ever I done," for Morowsky was an artist, and the heavenly choir, as represented by John Nolan, soon became separate dainty works of art more like Tanagra figurines than like the stiff and stereotyped figures which John Nolan's six or seven moulds had formerly produced. [201]

Later still, when John Nolan was gathered to his fathers, and afforded, one must presume, the opportunity of judging the accuracy of his portraits, he left his business and his name to Jacob. [202]

"For without the name," said he, "what good would the business be to ye? Who could believe that the likes of a Jacob Morowsky would know the truth about the blessed saints? And you're not to

forget what I've taught you. Arrows for Saint Sebastian, flames and a gridiron for Saint Lawrence, a big book for Saint Luke (he was a scholar, you know), and the rosary for Saint Dominick. There's not the call there used to be for Saint Aloysius, but when you're doing him, don't forget to put a skull in his hand. You have your 'Lives of the Saints,' haven't you?"

"I have, dear master," answered Jacob.

"Then keep on studyin' it. And ye'll do what ye can for old Biddy Moriarty, that's took care of me ever since me poor wife died."

"She shall be of my household," answered Jacob. And so Esther succeeded to the old man's name and the old woman's care. [203]

Jacob Morowsky left his old quarters, and John Nolan took up his residence in the front room of the second floor of a house that had been the residence of an English official when New York was a Colony of the Crown. The house had endured many vicissitudes and degradations. It was, when Esther knew it, a tenement unpopular with the authorities because it could not quite condescend to the laws of the Tenement House Commission; and not too popular with its landlord because its rooms, in proportion to its ground area, were extravagantly few. Its spacious halls and staircase, its high ceilings and wide chimneys were all so many waste spaces according to modern tenement architecture.

Esther and her father slept in the drawing-room behind a red curtain, Esther in her babyhood's crib which, as she had written to the Stork, she had quite outgrown. But no one seemed to notice that. No one, in fact, noticed her very much. She was a good little girl. She was never late or troublesome at school. Every Friday afternoon she brought home a blue ticket, testifying that her application, her deportment, and her progress were satisfactory. From time to time, as she reached new altitudes in the course of study, the teacher's name on these tickets varied. But the tickets were the only link between Esther's two lives of home and school. No reproachful teacher, no truant officer threatening arrest and the Juvenile Court, ever darkened her horizon. No outraged Principal ever summoned her father to an uncomfortable quarter of an hour. She was, as successive teachers noted with amazement, that rara avis in the human family, a normal child. Even her clear dark eyes and her dainty little features were as her ancestry decreed that they should be. And the clear pallor of her skin—which Mrs. Moriarty tried to combat by dressing her much in red—was the normal accompaniment to the fine soft blackness of her hair. [204]

She adored her father. His society was her sunshine, and since he had become John Nolan, Esther's days had been very cloudy. He was always away from home. There was only one little patch of the morning of Saturday, the Sabbath, which Esther could call her own, and even that was broken into by the service at the Synagogue, when he sat upon one side of the aisle, magnificent in black broadcloth and silk hat, and she sat upon the other side among the maids and matrons. In the afternoon he was at work again. She was in my Lady's drawing-room, or marketing with Mrs. Moriarty. [205]

"You're to bide by yourself or along with me," Mrs. Moriarty had often admonished her. "You're to bide by yourself till your auntie comes."

And always to Esther's eager question, "When is she coming?" Mrs. Moriarty's cryptic answer had been, "God knows."

But when she understood that the gloom of the drawing-room had forced Esther into the writing of unsuspected letters, she deemed it wise to go further in enlightenment.

"You're to say naught of this to your poor father. But I'll tell you the meaning of his trouble. Your auntie is lost, my dear."

"Lost!" cried Esther.

"Ay, lost in this cruel hard city. Lost among strangers in her sorrow. She was comin' over to live with the two of ye. I'll never forget the night your father got her letter sayin' she was comin', and for him to meet her at Ellis Island. I went in an' found him sitting with it in his hand, with the look of death on his face. For the letter was two months old when he got it. Some mistake about his two names there was, and the date she set down for him to meet her was six weeks gone when her letter came. Glory be to God, but it's a cruel world! An' her husband just dead on her, and her so lonely, the creature! If she was poor itself we'd have a better chance of finding her, through some of the charities or the hospitals, maybe. But she had money enough to last her a while, and she's gone the same as if the ground had swallied her up." [207]

"Mine papa," commented Esther, "he's got it pretty hard," and she folded her hands in her lap and shook her head in unconscious but triumphant imitation of Mrs. Moriarty.

"Hear you me," Mrs. Moriarty acquiesced. "He has the hardest luck ever I heard of. His sister's husband's name was Cohen, and her Christian name"—Esther looked puzzled, and Mrs. Moriarty politely substituted—"her *first* name was Esther, the same as yours. And when your poor distracted father went to find out did e'er an Esther Cohen land the day she mentioned in the letter, they told him that twenty-five did, and for him to go away with his jokes. You know the world is full of Cohens." [208]

Esther knew more than that. She knew that there was a Cohen in the house. She was not supposed to form friendships, but she cherished two or three in secret, and one of them bore the

name of Cohen.

To Esther she was always "the lady mit the from-gold hair," but she had heard a neighbor once address her as Mrs. Cohen. She lived in what must have been, in the days of the house's grandeur, the "'tweeny's" room in the servants' quarters, on the top floor. A tiny little room it was, whose one window opened now upon a blank wall, though the 'tweeny may have sat at it and watched the locks and the slow canal-boats where now Canal Street runs. There in the dimness Esther, on her surreptitious way back from a surreptitious visit to the friendly Top Floor Front, had discovered the lady mit the from-gold hair, and the lady was crying. [209]

Esther's heart swelled and almost burst beneath the square breastplate of her apron, and presently the lady, looking up, met two deep wells of sorrow and admiration fixed upon her. And so their friendship began. It persisted, despite Mrs. Moriarty's warnings, and despite, too, the barrier of alien tongue, for the speech of this stranger was greatly different from the Yiddish spoken in that Polish and Russian quarter. In the other wordless ways of love, however, she threw her lonely little heart at the feet of the lonely lady, and knew that another secret must lie between her and the home circle in the drawing-room. [210]

The load of such deceptions upon her conscience was not heavy. There was only the kindly Top Floor Front, the janitor, and Rebecca Einstein, who lived next door, and who was in Esther's class at school, when she was not nursing old and new babies at home.

Mrs. Moriarty disapproved of the Einsteins. Her complaint was that there were too many of them, and that thirteen was an unlucky number for a party, whether family or otherwise. But to Esther their number was their greatest charm, and after a visit to their crowded and uproarious circle, the quiet drawing-room seemed very chill and empty.

When Jacob came home that night, Esther was awake and waiting for him with a proposition. [211]

The Einsteins, she announced, had a superfluous baby. Would not he, out of his loving bounty, buy it for her? It was a boy, and she, Esther, desired beyond all things else a baby brother. She had reason to believe that this one was really hers. She had forwarded an application to the proper quarters.

Jacob took his little girl on his knee and explained the situation to her.

Purchase, so his instructions ran, was not the usual method of acquiring infants. One took them, or did without them, as the big Stork pleased. It is true that babies sometimes were adopted. If, when she grew a little older and he a little richer, she still desired a brother, they might manage to adopt one, but not, as he told her when he restored her to her crib, not until he had found her Aunt Esther. [212]

And when he had eaten his supper he came again to Esther's little bed and told her, as he sometimes did, stories of another little brother and sister who had loved and played together in the long ago. And he told her, too, more graphically than Mrs. Moriarty could, of that brother's desperate search for his sister. Of all the promising clues which led nowhere; of all the high hopes which ended in despair. For two months he had neglected his business and his daughter for this search, and he was beginning to believe that his sister was dead.

Esther caressed and comforted him as best she might, and after holding her silently for a few moments, he carefully tucked her into bed again, and went out into the crowded, sordid streets, to search—hopelessly and doggedly—for the little sister of his childhood. [213]

As the days passed and her father confided more and more in her great love and sympathy, Esther became reconciled to the Stork's mistake, and decided that she could wait until he brought a baby without urging or request. She was very busy. Her lady mit the from-gold hair was ill—very ill, indeed. She lay upon her bed very white and quiet, and the First Floor Front took care of her. There was also occasionally a doctor, and there were always the garrulous, if not over-helpful neighbors. In any other case it is possible that Mrs. Moriarty's known generosity and surmised skill would have been called into requisition, but the lady mit the from-gold hair spoke no English, and Esther entreated that Mrs. Moriarty should not be consulted, as that would mean her own instant banishment to the lonely drawing-room. And so Mrs. Moriarty was allowed to form her own explanation for Esther's long absences, while Esther, light of hand and step, served her golden-haired lady friend. [214]

Mrs. Moriarty's natural supposition had been that Esther was with the baby so carelessly turned over to the Einsteins; and occasionally, of course, she did visit that official error. But as its novelty diminished and its lung power increased Esther became reconciled to the mistake.

"He cried, awful," Rebecca would explain, "und we didn't really need him. We had lots. The old baby ain't yet so big. She couldn't to stand even. Und she needs all her clothes. My poor mamma has it pretty hard."

"Ain't it funny?" mused Esther, all unconscious that she was grappling with a world problem. "Ain't it funny, Becky? You got too many families, und so you gets some more. I ain't got no families, und I loses mine auntie. Ain't it fierce?" [215]

"It sure is fierce," her friend admitted through the howls of the youngest Einstein. "But don't you care, Esther. I guess, maybe, that Stork will get round to your order soon. *One* baby," she spoke from experience and with conviction, "is lots of family."

"I don't know do I needs that kind from baby what you got," Esther objected. "It's an awful loud baby, ain't it?"

"It is," Rebecca admitted. And any one of the fifteen Einsteins or even any neighbor to the fourth or fifth house removed would have corroborated her.

"Und it's got black hair," Esther further objected.

"They all do when they ain't redheaded," retorted the now ruffled Rebecca. "Ain't you got nothin' to do on'y knockin' other people's babies? First off you says he's yours, und now you says he's too loud und too black. Well, he ain't too loud or too black fer me. You wait till your own baby comes. Maybe you'll get somethin' worster, with fish's faces, maybe. How will you like that? You can't never tell what kind they're goin' to be, an' you've *got* to keep 'em." [216]

This haphazard system—or the lack of it—rather alarmed Esther, though the desire for a baby of her own design and choosing was growing stronger every day. For her loneliness was growing, too. Jacob was hardly ever at home. He spent many of his days and all of his evenings in his fruitless, endless search. And Mrs. Moriarty had begun to help him through some subterranean first-cousin-twice-removed channel which connected her with a member of the police force. She was making a canvass of the women's lodging-houses near the Bowery. [217]

So Esther, having much time upon her hands, turned her thoughts again to the upbringing of a brother, and wrote again to the headquarters in Central Park, and impressed upon the authorities—in large round writing upon a sheet of pink paper with two turtle doves embossed upon it—that she was not in a hurry for her baby, and would prefer to wait until they found a really acceptable article. If possible, she would prefer from-gold hair, blue eyes, and a silent tongue. For such an infant her outgrown crib, a warm welcome, and comfortable home were waiting. No others need apply.

When this letter was despatched she felt greatly relieved, and set about the nursing of the lady mit the from-gold hair with renewed energy. And the lady needed her little friend and welcomed her always with a gentle smile, though a large and unwonted female was now regularly established in the room, from which she relentlessly barred more disturbing and autobiographical visitors. [218]

All through her illness, indeed ever since her first coming into that house, she had kept the door open, and she lay so that she could watch the stairs. Whom she was waiting for she never told, but she was always listening. She knew the step of every fellow lodger, of the doctor, of any one who had ever once climbed those stairs. And at the approach of any new footstep she would sit up rigidly among her pillows, staring and listening so intently that when the new-comer appeared and brought disappointment, she would sink back gasping and exhausted.

"What does she says?" Esther once asked the imposing nurse, when a visitor for the Top Floor Front had precipitated one of these attacks. "What does she says when she cries?" [219]

"She says," interpreted the nurse, "'He is dead. It must be that he is dead.' Yet we *know* that her husband is dead. She still expects some one."

"Maybe," said Esther, arguing from her own state of mind to that of her friend, "maybe she expects a Stork mit babies."

The woman caught Esther by the shoulders and peered down into her eyes. "So they have been talking to you," she said with immense scorn. "Oh, those women!"

"Nobody ain't told me nothings," Esther answered. "I don't *know* nothings. Only I thinks it in mine heart. And anyway, the first baby what comes here is mine. I writes on the Central Park a letter over it. It's going to be a boy mit from-gold hair."

"Well," snorted the nurse with some professional pique, "it's good you got *that* settled." [220]

Late that night Esther awoke in her little outgrown crib. A familiar series of sounds had disturbed her: the arrival of the doctor. So the lady mit the from-gold hair was presumably worse. The doctor's steps mounted into the darkness and silence of the sleeping house, and the clock in Mrs. Moriarty's room struck two. Esther lay wide-eyed in the dark and waited for the sound of the doctor's return, but she heard nothing except the far-away clang and shriek of an occasional cable-car and the sound of stealthy, hurrying feet upon the sidewalk. She sat up, and in the dim reflection from the electric light on the street corner she distinguished the shapeless bulk that was her sleeping father. Jacob had only recently come in from his quest, and he slept the sleep of exhaustion. [221]

Cold had no terrors for her; she was clad, feet and all, in an Esquimaux garment of brilliant pink flannel of Mrs. Moriarty's contriving.

And still the doctor did not come down. Esther climbed to the floor and noiselessly unlocked the door. In the hall a deadly quiet served as a background for Mr. Finkelstein's snoring. And then Esther's summons came. Shrill and clear from the darkness above dropped the cry of a new-born child. Hers! The Stork had blundered again.

"Oh, my!" wailed Esther, "ain't Storks the fools? In all my world I ain't never seen how he makes mistakes. I told him just as plain: Second Floor Front. Und extra he goes und maybe wakes up the lady mit the from-gold hair over it. She's got it hard enough 'out no babies yelling."

As Esther toiled toward the sound, she realized that yet another mistake had been made, it was 'a loud one.' Now what would her father say—and Mrs. Moriarty? But this was no time for such questioning. Her plain duty was to collect her property and prevent its disturbing the whole house. [222]

When she reached her friend's room she found that the disturbance had taken place and was still in progress. The nurse, the doctor, and the Top Floor Front were gathered about the bed, presumably reassuring their patient, and upon a pillow thrown into a rocking-chair the Stork had left Esther's gold-haired brother.

Oh! it was easy, fatally easy, to recognize the answer to her petition! The noise subsided as Esther noiselessly pattered over to it, and from an end of its roll of flannel a bright head projected. Esther picked it up and beat a hasty retreat unobserved by the workers at the bedside. Down the dark stairs she passed with her burden, and into the drawing-room again. She snuggled down beside it in her crib and for a few ecstatic moments held it in her arms. The clock struck four, and, as Esther quivered and listened still for the descent of the doctor, the baby raised up its voice again in one prolonged and breathless yell. Jacob was beside the crib in an instant and had his daughter in his arms. [223]

"What is it?" he questioned wildly. "Where is it? What hurt thee?" And then his heart too skipped a beat, for he found that though he had Esther in his arms he had left her voice in the crib.

"It ain't me," she finally managed to assure him. "It's mine little brother what I gets out of the Central Park." [224]

Lights, Mrs. Moriarty, explanations, and expostulations followed.

"I tells that Stork," Esther ended, "I tells him I ain't got no families und no aunties, und I needs a baby, und I has a bed ready. It *is* mine baby. Storks is crazy fools!"

But the inexorable John Nolan set out upon his mission of restitution. Esther, puzzled, heart-broken, argumentative, sped on before, and reached, not without some skirmishing, the side of the golden-haired lady, while her father was still struggling with the darkness and his unaccustomed burden.

And then the miracles began. The lady heard a step upon the stairs and a great radiance fell upon her. Wonder, incredulity, and joy shone in her lovely eyes. The doctor's hand was on her wrist. The nurse's admonitions were in her ears. But she raised herself among her pillows and watched the turn of the stairs where a shaft of light streamed through the open door. [225]

Esther's father came out of the darkness, and the lady wrenched her hand from the doctor and stretched both her arms toward the oncoming figure, and "Jacob," said she, and quite gently fainted into the doctor's arms.

"No excitement, no fuss," commanded that authority. "She's all right, coming round in a minute. Here, stand there. Speak naturally to her. There, she's coming now."

"Why, Esther," said Jacob quietly in soft Hungarian, "I've been wondering where you were."

The lady mit the from-gold hair laid her other hand on his, smiled a little wearily, and instantly dropped asleep.

"You ain't asked her whose is that baby," his daughter whispered to him. "You ain't asked her did she write letters on that Stork?" [226]

"I guess it's our baby all right," her father answered. "You just carry it down and put it in the bed that's been waiting for it. Tell Mrs. Moriarty that your auntie was living here all the time."

"Mine auntie!" cried Esther. "Mine auntie! My, but Storks is smart!" she gasped repentantly

.

[227]

[228]

---

## THE ETIQUETTE OF YETTA

"Stands a girl by our block," Eva Gonorowsky began, as she and her friend Yetta Aaronsohn wended their homeward way through the crowded purlieus of Gouverneur and Monroe Streets, "stands a girl by our block what don't never goes on the school." [229]

Yetta was obediently shocked. She had but recently been rescued from a like benightment, but both she and her friend tactfully ignored this fact.

"Don't the Truant Officer gets her?" the convert questioned, remembering her own means to grace, and the long struggle she had made against it. "Don't the Truant Officer comes on her house und says cheek on her mamma, und brings her—by the hair, maybe—on the school?" [230]

"He don't comes yet," Eva replied.

"Well, he's comin'," Yetta predicted. "He comes all times."

"I guess," commented Eva, "I guess Rosie Rashnowsky needs somebody shall make somethings like that mit her. In all my world I ain't never see how she makes. She don't know what is polite. She puts her on mit funny clothes und 'fer-ladies-shoes.' She is awful fresh, und"—here Eva dropped her voice to a tone proper to a climax—"she dances on organs even."

Now Yetta Aaronsohn, in the days before the Truant Officer and the Renaissance, would have run breathless blocks at the distant lure of a street organ, and would have footed it merrily up and down the sidewalk in all the apparently spontaneous intricacies which make this kind of dancing so absorbing to the performer, and so charming to the audience. Now, however, she shuddered under the shock of such depravity. School had taught her many things not laid down in the official course of study. [231]

"Ain't that fierce?" she murmured.

Not all subjects of gossip are as confirmative as Rosie Rashnowsky that day proved herself to be. For as Yetta and Eva turned into Clinton Street, Rosie was discovered dancing madly to the strains of a one-legged hurdy-gurdy, in the midst of an envious but not emulating crowd.

"That's her," said Eva briefly. "Sooner you stands on the stoop you shall see her better."

And when the two friends carried out this suggestion and mounted the nearest steps, Eva pointed to what seemed a bundle of inanimate rags.

"It's her baby," she disapprovingly remarked. "She lays it all times on steps. Somebody could to set on it sometimes." [232]

"It's fierce," repeated Yetta, this time with more conviction. She was herself the guardian of three small and ailing sisters, and she knew that they should not be deposited on cold doorsteps. So she picked up Rosie's abandoned responsibility, and turned to survey that conscienceless Salome.

Rosie was, as a dancer should be, startlingly arrayed. Her long black-stockinged little legs ended in "fer-ladies-shoes" described by Eva. Her hair bobbed wildly in four tight little braids, each tied with a ribbon or a strip of cloth of a different color, and the rest of her visible attire consisted of a dirty kimona dressing-jacket, red with yellow flowers, and outlined with bands of green. The "fer-ladies-shoes" poised and pointed and twinkled in time to the wheezing of the one-legged hurdy-gurdy. The parti-colored braids waved free. The kimona flapped and fluttered and permitted indiscreet glimpses of a less gorgeous substructure. [233]

Miss Gonorowsky regarded these excesses with a cold and disapproving eye. "She don't know what is *fer* her," she remarked. "My mamma, she wouldn't to leave me dance by no organs. It ain't fer ladies."

"It's fierce," agreed Miss Aaronsohn, with a gulp, "it's something fierce."

The hurdy-gurdy coughed its way to the end of one tune, held its breath for an asthmatic moment, and then wailed into "The Sidewalks of New York." Fresh and amazing energy possessed the hair ribbons, the kimona, and the "fer-ladies-shoes." Fresh disdain possessed Miss Gonorowsky. The tune would have seemed also to work havoc upon the new propriety of Miss Aaronsohn.

"It's something fierce," she once more remarked, and then casting decorum to the winds, and the abandoned young Rashnowsky to Miss Gonorowsky's care, she sped down the steps, through the crowd and out into the ring. [234]

Rosie, though she had never seen Miss Aaronsohn before, recognized her talent instantly, and welcomed her partnership with an ecstatic combination of the Cake Walk and the Highland Fling. Yetta returned the compliment in a few steps of the Barn Dance flavored with a dash of the Irish Jig. Then eye to eye, and hands on one another's shoulders, they fell to "spieling," with occasional Polka divertissements.

A passing stranger stopped to watch them and gave the organ-man largesse, so that still he played, and still they danced until called back to duty and reality by the uproar of the baby, now thrice abandoned. For Eva Gonorowsky had gone virtuously home, feeling that her traditions had been outraged, her friendship despised, and that her disciple had disgraced her. [235]

Yetta and Rosie with the heavy-headed baby followed the organ for several blocks. They might have gone on forever like the Pied Piper's rats, had not the howls of the youngest Rashnowsky anchored and steadied them. When at last they had recovered breath and the proprieties, they sat amicably down upon an alien doorstep, and went back to the early—and in their case neglected—preliminaries of friendship.

They exchanged names, ages, addresses, the numbers of their family, and their own places in the scale. The baby had obligingly gone to sleep, and these amenities were carried out in due form. It seemed that they were bound by many similarities of circumstance and fate: each was the eldest of a family, but whereas Rosie could boast but one baby, Yetta's mother had three. Both mothers worked at low and ill-paid branches of the tailor's art. And both children were fatherless to all daily intents and purposes. [236]

"Mine papa," Yetta told her new little friend, "is pedlar-mans on the country. Me und mine mamma don't know where he is even. From long we ain't got no letters off of him, und no money. My mamma, she has awful sads over it."

"Does she cry?" questioned the sympathetic Rosie, drawing her kimona closely about her in the enjoyment of this new and promising gossip.

Yetta shook her head. "She ain't got no time she shall cry. So my papa don't comes, und letters mit money off of him don't comes. My mamma, she ain't got time for nothings on'y sewing. She has it pretty hard." [237]

"My mamma is got it hard too," cried Rosie, not to be outdone. "She don't know where my papa is neither. She don't know is he on the country even. She don't know *nothings* over him. Me und my mamma we looks all times on blocks und streets und stores. On'y we couldn't to find him. Und my mamma, she works all day by factories, und by night she comes on the house und brings more work. She ain't got time for nothings neither, on'y sewing und looking fer my poor papa."

"Then your papa ain't dead?" queried Yetta.

"No, he ain't dead; on'y he loses him the job." Rosie's voice as she made this statement, and Yetta's manner as she received it, would seem to say that if this were not death, it was very little better.

To Isidore Rashnowsky it had been the "sudden and unprovided death" of which the Prayer Book speaks. It had meant the destruction of the very delicate equilibrium by which he and his wife maintained their tiny but peaceful household. It threw the whole burden of four lives upon Mrs. Rashnowsky's thin and twisted shoulders. It drove him, after three weeks of unsuccessful quest for work, to cut himself off from all he cared for. Starvation was very close to them. He could contribute nothing, and he determined to take nothing: to increase the niggardly supply by diminishing the hungry demand. Mrs. Rashnowsky's earnings—even when augmented by the home work which the law forbids but life demands—was scant indeed for the maintenance of the mother and the two children. All these things Isidore explained to her patiently, resignedly, and with what bravery he could muster. And she agreed, nodding wearily over her sewing. But from his conclusion, from his determination to remove himself and his hunger from her charge, she persistently dissented. Rather, she insisted, would she take the babies to the Children's Court and get them committed to some institution. Then he and she could face the world together. She could find courage for that. But not to live without him. Never for that. [238]

"It is but for a time," he hopefully remonstrated, "and if we give the children we cannot easily get them back. Children such as ours are not often found. They would be adopted by some rich man before, maybe, I could find a job." [239]

This consideration had not occurred to Mrs. Rashnowsky, but when it was pointed out to her she was forced to admit its weight. The physical charm of Rosie, kimona clad and dirty, might not have appealed as insistently as her father feared to the rich adopter, and the rag-wrapped baby would have been equally safe. But to Mrs. Rashnowsky's fear and pride, to see these infants was to covet them. [240]

And so, tearfully, fearfully, she promised to think again of Isidore's proposal. She thought all night, and all through the hurried, steaming, driven day at the factory. When at last she was free she toiled home to tell him that she could not do without him, and found that he had gone.

All these things had happened, as Rosie told her new friend, three months before. The mother had been forced into smaller, darker, cheaper quarters, and it was this transition which had so far saved Rosie from the Truant Officer. They had moved from one school district to another, and the authorities of their new habitat had not yet tracked the light-falling "fer-ladies-shoes." [241]

"But that Truant Officer will get you sure," warned Yetta. "He comes in my house and he gets me, und makes me I shall go on the school."

"He can go on mine house all he likes," responded the lawless Rosie, making careful inventory of her hair ribbons the while, "all he likes he can go. There ain't never nobody there. My mamma she is all times on factories, und me und the baby is all times by the street. I don't needs I shall go on no school. I ain't got time."

"He'll get you on a rainy day," maintained Cassandra.

But the dread official never did discover Rosie. She was sufficiently wise to avoid any public display of her red and yellow charms until after school hours, unless she were well out of her own district. She would follow street organs and behave like any other member of a decorous audience until she was well out of the path of the ravening Truant Officer. Then she would abandon the baby to the cold stones, and herself to the enchantment of the music. Thus she achieved that freedom of which her adopted country boasts, and for which Yetta Aaronsohn—though basking in the rays of a free education, with lunches, medical attendance, and spectacles thrown in—still yearned. [242]

There had been a time when life had been to Yetta, even as it now was to Rosie, a simple matter of loving and helping her mother, taking care of the babies, and dancing to the organs in the street. Then entered the Truant Officer, and life became a complicated affair of manners, dress, books, washing, and friendships, with every day new laws to be met, new ideas to be assimilated, old pleasures and employments to be thrown aside. [243]

That the end of his three months of wandering found Isidore alive bordered on the miraculous; that the end of these three months found him in congenial employment was altogether a miracle.



Yet these things had occurred, and Isidore's long loneliness and self-imposed exile were nearly over, when his daughter and Miss Aaronsohn melted their souls together in the languorous solvent of "Silver Threads Among the Gold." On the ensuing Saturday he was to receive his first week's wages as janitor's assistant in a combination of restaurant, hall, and Masonic lodge, much patronized by small and earnest clubs or societies, having no permanent stamping ground of their own. On the Friday afternoon the large hall was occupied by "The Cornelia Aid Society for the Instruction of Ignorant Parents Among the Poor." It had been the happy idea of one of the vice-presidents to hold the meeting within the citadel as it were of poor and ignorant parenthood, so that the members coming gingerly through unimagined streets and evidences of parenthood appallingly ignorant, might derive—the vice-president was fond of the vernacular—some idea of what the society was "up against." Automobiles, victorias, disgusted footmen, and blasphemous chauffeurs thronged the unaccustomed street, and the children of Israel thronged about them. [244]

A genius for opportunity drew Giusseppe Pagamini and his new piano organ to this sensational business opening, and the sweet strains of the piano organ drew Rosie Rashnowsky after him. They had drawn her for many blocks, and the meeting of the Cornelias was in full swing when her kimona and hair ribbons came into play upon the sidewalk. She laid the baby upon the steps, swept clean for her reception by Isidore the conscientious, who had little idea—as he plied his broom and scrubbing-brush earlier in the day—that he was strewing the couch of his own small daughter's siesta. [245]

Then to an audience composed of glorified gentlemen in silk hats and top-boots, and the quieter but still sumptuous chauffeur livery, Rosie threw herself into a very ecstasy of her art. Louder thrilled Giusseppe, quicker flew the "fer-ladies-shoes," wilder waved ribbons and dressing jacket. "Out o' sight," commented the footmen. "Bravissimo," ejaculated the chauffeurs, and Rosie reached the climax of her career in a pirouette which brought her, madly whirring, under the aristocratic noses of a pair of chestnut cobs, whose terrified plunges would have ended her gyrations forever and a day if a footman had not interfered. Then Giusseppe passed his battered hat, and the audience, naturally inferring that the black-eyed child belonged to the black-eyed musician, threw him such encouragement as a week of ordinary days would not have brought him. [246]



### **Rosie threw herself into a very ecstasy of her art.**

In a reckless moment he gave Rosie a nickel, and this wealth, combined with her recent danger and escape, and with the intoxicating quality of her audience, made Rosie follow Giusseppe to the other end of the line of carriages which trailed round the corner and half-way down the next block. Here fresh triumphs awaited her, while from the steps of Fraternity Hall her infant sister called aloud for instant speech with her. The infant was still making these inarticulate demands, when Mrs. Ponsonby-Brown, holding her skirts well above her shoe tops with one hand, while with the other she applied a bottle of lavender salts to her nose, approached the meeting. She was late but unflurried. Her horses, somewhat racked by the elevated trains in Allen Street, had been entirely unnerved by the children, the push-carts, the dogs, and the flying papers, which beset them from all sides and sprang up under their nervous feet. So the philanthropic Mrs. Ponsonby-Brown had alighted from her carriage, secured a small though knowing-looking guide, and walked to her destination. Presently she reached the hall, rewarded her guide, and stopped in her surge up the steps by the yells of the youngest Rashnowsky, which had broken free of its mummy clothes, and was battling for breath with two arms like slate-pencils—as cold, as thin, as gray, and seemingly as brittle. [247]

"Whose child is this?" she demanded of a near and large chauffeur. It was not the lady's fault that much philanthropic activity had so formed her manner that these simple words, as she said them, seemed to infer that the large green-clad chauffeur was a Rousseau among parents, that the child was his, starved that he might grow fat, and abandoned that he might go free. His reply was all that her manner demanded. And when she repeated the question to other waiting men, she was hardly answered at all. [248]

Meanwhile the youngest Rashnowsky banged its hairless head upon the cold stone, and reiterated its demands for its guardian sister. Mrs. Ponsonby-Brown was puzzled, and she did not enjoy the sensation. She picked up the child before she had planned any further step for its disposition. She could not well drop it on the stone again, and there was no one to whom she could give it. Realizing with a sudden sense of outrage that she was affording amusement to the well-trained servants of her Cornelia associates, she retreated into the building and into the hall with the screaming Gracchus in her arms. [249]

Her advent and the clamor of her burden interrupted the reading of a paper upon "Nursery Emergencies, and How to Meet Them," by a young lady who had exhausted the family physician, and such books as he could be persuaded to lend her. Her remarks, though interesting and authoritative, could not prevail against the howling presence of a real nursery emergency, and the attention of the audience stampeded to Mrs. Ponsonby-Brown and her contribution to the meeting. That practised and disgusted philanthropist relinquished the youngest Rashnowsky to the first pair of pitying arms extended in its direction. But pity was not what the sufferer craved, and she repudiated it eloquently. [250]

"What shall I do with it?" cried this young Cornelia, looking helplessly around upon her fellows. "Whenever my Jimmie behaved like this I used simply to ring for Louise. I never knew what she used to do with him."

Mrs. Ponsonby-Brown snorted. "A nurse!" said she, "a hireling! You relegate a mother's sacred responsibilities to a servant." Mrs. Ponsonby-Brown had never enjoyed these responsibilities, and so was eloquent and authoritative upon them.

Other Cornelias fluttered about suggesting that the Gracchus was suffering from hunger, colic, or misdirected pins. The expert upon emergencies snatched this one from its embarrassed guardian, inverted it across her knee, and patted it manfully upon the back. The dirtiness of it, the thinness, the squalled wrappings, and the blue little hands and feet touched and quickened the Cornelias as no lecture could have done, and the resourceful vice-president found cause to congratulate herself on the *milieu* of the meeting. [251]

"If we knew," said a bespectacled Cornelia sensibly and practically, "what food they were giving it, we could easily send out and get a meal for it."

"It hardly looks," interrupted another, "like the Mellin's Food and Nestle's Milk Babies one sees in the advertisements."

"And yet," said the practical member, "we can't do anything until we know what it's accustomed to. With so young a child——"

Here the door opened and an unenrolled Cornelia was added to the gathering. Her red and yellow kimona rose and fell with her quick breathing. Defiance shone in her black eyes.

"You got mine baby," declared Rosie Rashnowsky. "Why couldn't you leave her be where I put her, you old Miss Fix-its? You scared me most to death until I heard her yellin'." [252]

With these ungrateful remarks she advanced upon the ministering group and snatched the inverted infant from the colic theorist.

"This is the top of her," she pointed out. "I guess you didn't look very hard."

Before the discredited practitioner had formed a reply the Cornelia in spectacles was ready to remark:

"We think your baby is hungry."

"Sure is she," Rosie concurred; "ain't babies always hungry?"

"And if you will tell us what you feed her on," the lady continued, "we will send out for some of it before you take her home."

Rosie was by this time established in a chair with the now only whimpering baby upon her lap. [253]

"Don't you bother," she genially remonstrated. "I just bought her something."

And then with many contortions she produced from some inner recess of her kimona a large dill pickle, imperfectly wrapped in moist newspaper. She dissevered a section of this with her own sharp teeth, and put it into the baby's waiting mouth. The cries of the youngest Rashnowsky were supplanted by a chorus of remonstrating Cornelias. "Pickles!" they cried, and shuddered. "Do you often give that baby pickles?"

"I do when I can get 'em," Rosie answered, "but that ain't often."

And then this injudicious but warm-hearted audience drew from her the sordid little story which seemed such a matter of course to her, and such a tragedy to them.

"Und I looks," said Rosie, "all times I looks on cellars und push-carts und fire 'scapes und stores und sidewalks. Und I walks und I walks—all times I walks—mit that baby in mine hand, und I couldn't to find me the papa. Mine poor mamma, she looks too, sooner she goes und comes on the factory, und by night me und mine mamma, we comes by our house und we looks on ourselves und we don't says nothings, on'y makes so"—and Rosie shook a hopeless head—"und so we knows [254]

we ain't find him. Sometimes mine mamma cries over it. She is got all times awful sad looks."

By this time the more sentimental among the Cornelias were reduced to tears, and the more practical were surveying such finances as they carried with them, and in a very short time an endowment fund of nearly fifty dollars had been collected. The *sang-froid* which had throughout the proceedings distinguished Rosie was a little shaken when this extraordinary shower of manna was made clear to her, but it vanished altogether when, upon the suggestion of the practical and bespectacled Cornelia, the assistant janitor was sent for to give safe-conduct to the children and their bequest. And the amazement of Isidore Rashnowsky—summoned from the furnace room for some uncomprehended reason—was hardly less ecstatic when he found himself in the close embrace of his frenzied daughter. For Rosie's joy was nothing less than frenzy. [255]

"It's mine papa! Oh, it's mine papa!" she informed the now jubilant and sympathetic Cornelias, who were quite ready to pass a vote of thanks to their pioneering vice-president, whose plan had afforded them more emotion and more true human sensation than they had experienced for many a day. [256]

Isidore floated toward Clinton Street through clouds and seas of gold. The endowment together with his own first week's wages made a larger sum than he had ever hoped to gather. He wafted the baby through this golden atmosphere, the baby wafted a second section of dill pickle, and Rosie, in her red and golden draperies gyrated around them.

"You shall go on the factory right away," babbled Isidore, "und bring the mamma on the house. She shall never no more work on no factories. She shall stay on the house und take care of the baby und be Jewish ladies."

"She don't needs she shall take care of no baby," Rosie, thus lightly deposed, remonstrated; "ain't I takin' care of her all right?"

"Sure, sure," the placating Isidore made answer; "on'y you won't have no time. You shall go on the school." [257]

This last sinister word broke through all Rosie's golden dreams. "School?" she repeated in dismay. "*Me* on the school?"

"For learn," Isidore happily acquiesced, "all them things what makes American ladies."

Rosie's sentiments almost detached her from the triumphal procession, so rebellious were they, so helpless, so baffled and outraged. And in that moment of brainstorm they turned into Grand Street, and came upon a piano organ, and Yetta Aaronsohn, the erstwhile censorious Yetta, in the enjoyment of a complicated *pas-seul*.

"For von things," Isidore ambled on, "American ladies they don't never dance by streets on organs. You shall that on the school learn, und the reading, und the writing, und all things what is fer ladies. Monday you shall go on the school. Your mamma shall go by your side. She won't," he broke out ecstatically, "have nothings else to do. You shall go now on the factory for tell her." [258]

Rosie paused but an instant on this mission of joy. She overtook Yetta Aaronsohn homeward bound.

"I guess," said Rosie with fashionable langour, "I guess maybe I goes on the school Monday."

Yetta stared, then smiled. "Ain't I told you from long," said she, "that that Truant Officer could to make like that mit you?"

"I ain't never seen no Truant Officer," retorted Rosie. "In all my world I ain't never seen one. I don't know what are they even. On'y I finds me the papa mit bunches from money, und a hall, und he says I shall go on the school so somebody can learn me all things what American ladies makes." [259]

"Come on my school," entreated Yetta. "You und me could to set beside ourselves."

Rosie pondered. She counted her four hair ribbons. She wrapped her kimona toga wise about her and pondered.

"I don't know," she finally answered, "do I needs I shall set by side somebody what dances on streets mit organs," and added, as Yetta's expression seemed to hint at instant parting:

"Well, *good* afternoon, I *must* be going."

Her evolution into "American Ladies" had already begun. The manners of the Cornelias had not been lost upon her. [260]

[260]

[261]

[262]

[263]

In season and out of season Constance Bailey, that earnest young educator, preached of the value of honesty. And fifty little children of Israel who formed the First Reader class, and the one little son of Erin who led it, hearkened to her: always with politeness, and sometimes with surprise.

To some of the boys it seemed incredible that a person of mature years, and—upon other subjects—common sense, should cling to a theory which the most simple experiment must prove both mischievous and false. Had not Abraham Wishnewsy, a spineless person, misled by her heresies, but narrowly escaped the Children's Court and the Reformatory?

[264]

Strolling through Gouverneur Street upon a Friday afternoon when the whole East Side is in a panic of shopping, he had seen a bewigged and beshawled matron shed a purse and pass on her way unheeding. Promptly Abraham set his foot upon it, carefully and casually he picked it up, and then, all inconveniently, he remembered Miss Bailey and her admonitions! Miss Bailey and her anecdotes of boys who, in circumstances identical with his, had chosen the path of honor, and had found it to lead to riches, approbation, glory, and self-righteousness.

Abraham opened the purse. It contained fifteen cents. He appropriated the nickel as a first instalment of the reward so soon to be his, and then sped fleetly—as Miss Bailey's heroes had ever done—after the brown-shawled matron and glory. But the matron had evidently not been trained in the school of high honor. She regarded Abraham with suspicion rather than with gratitude. She examined the purse in the same spirit, and her investigations led to loud outcries upon her part, and to swift flight upon Abraham's.

[265]

Abraham Wishnewsy was so ill-advised as to confide the details of this adventure to a young gentleman who rejoiced in a rabbit face, close-set lashless eyes, and the name of Isidore Cohen. Isidore was new to Room 18, and new to his place beside the gentle Abraham. Miss Bailey and her applied ethics were startlingly new to him. And he never reported to Abraham any effort to experiment in revolutionary doctrines.

Some of the more credulous among the feminine First Readers also weighed these precepts in the balance and found them wanting.

"You know how Teacher says," Sarah Schodsky remarked to Bertha Binderwitz, as the two friends, arms intertwined, heads close together, walked and talked in the yard at the recess hour. "You know how she says we dasen't never to tell no lies."

[266]

Bertha nodded. "That's how she *says*," she agreed.

"Well," resumed Sarah, "you see how Mamie Untermeyer don't comes no more on the school?"

Bertha had remarked this absence.

"Well, Mamie she lives by her auntie. She is got a awful auntie. Und she asks her auntie for a penny for buy hokey pokey. Und her auntie makes a mean laugh und says, 'What you think I am, anyway?' und Mamie, she tells it right out what she thinks over her auntie, like Teacher says, 'We shall all times tell what we thinks.' She lays on the bed now mit bangages on the head. It ain't so awful healthy you shall tell truths on aunties."

[267]

This report also reached the rabbit ears of Isidore Cohen. And again he wondered that Miss Bailey should waste her time—and his—in folly.

And then he made an amazing discovery. Teacher actually believed what she taught. She was ready to meet confidence with trust, and to practise what she preached.

"I never seen nothing like it," he reported to his friend, Hymie Solomon. "She looks like she knew a awful lot, but she don't know nothings 'tall."

"What do you suppose is the matter with her?" demanded Hymie. "Miss Blake, she don't act crazy. She don't give us no talk 'out no sense."

Now Hymie and Isidore were old friends and cronies. In the days before a Truant Officer and their distracted fathers had consigned them to school, Hymie and he had trod the ways which might have led them to the Children's Court and the Reformatory; but the Board of Education chanced to be the first power that laid hands upon them, and Hymie, who was a year older than his friend, and who had once undergone some intermittent education, was put in Miss Blake's class, while Isidore, virgin soil where prescribed learning was concerned, joined the First Readers. Miss Bailey's teachings as reported by Isidore formed amazing subjects for conversation.

[268]

"Und she says," he would report, "that nobody dasn't to steal nothings off of somebody."

"Then how does she think we shall ever get anything?"

"Somebody shall give it to us."

"Who?"

"Teacher ain't said."

[269]

"No, I guess she ain't. I'd like to see her gettin' along on just what was give to her."

"Well," Isidore remembered, "she says we shall 'work-un-strive."

"She does, does she? An' git pinched by the Gerry Society? She knows as good as you do that nobody would let you work. An' she knows as good as you do, too, that craps ain't safe round here no more; an' that you just can't git nothin' unless you take it. She's actin' crazy just to fool you."

"No, she ain't," Isidore maintained, "she don't know nothings over them things."

"An' her grown up," sneered Hymie; "say, but you're easy!"

This faith in and affection for Miss Bailey were not confined to the little First Readers who inhabited Room 18 from nine until twelve, and again from one until three. These were Miss Bailey's official responsibilities, but Gertie Armusheffsky's education was a private affair, though her devotion was no less wholehearted. Her instruction was carried on sometimes amid the canaries and fern baskets of Room 18, and sometimes at Miss Bailey's home. [270]

For Gertie, though nearly fifteen years old, was allowed but rare and scanty freedom for the pursuit of learning. The grandfather with whom she lived had imported her from Poland to assist him in the conduct of his little shop in Goerck Street.

He was a miserly old man. The shop was little and mean, and Gertie's life in it was little and miserly and mean. These things she bore with the wonderful patience or stoicism of her race. She bore, too, bad air, long hours, and uncongenial toil, but she could not bring any resignation to bear on the lovelessness of her life, the squalor, the ugliness. [271]

"I ain't puttin' up no kick," she would assure Miss Bailey, in her newly acquired and strictly modern vernacular, "about doin' all the woik in the store, an' in the back room too. Didn't I know I was comin' over to cook an' sew an' see to everything for him? What gits on my noives is his everlasting grouch."

"It must be hard," Miss Bailey acquiesced, "especially as you have no one else, no friends."

Gertie shook her head. "Ain't got a friend in the world only you," said she. "How could I have any one come to see me with him carryin' on like he does? An' I can't get away from him. He paid my way over, an' if I did git a job the Gerry Society would give me back to him."

"But you're nearly old enough now," Miss Bailey encouraged her, "to do as you please, and you're getting on so nicely with your reading and writing that you will be able to get a very good position." [272]

"Not 'til he's dead," the girl answered. "I guess you wouldn't learn me no more if you knew how often I wish he'd choke himself, or fall down cellar, or go out an' git run over. But he don't never go out. He says he's afraid something would happen to the store. But that's a pipe! What bothers him is the cash he's got tucked around in crazy places. Every once in a while I fall into some of it, and then he 'most has a fit explaining how it's change a customer is comin' back for. Last year it wasn't quite so bad. He went to night school one term. You would have died laughing to see him all folded up at a kid's desk tryin' to write in a copy book. They learned him to write three words that term, but when he found out that he couldn't read them in print, it sort of discouraged him, and he stayed home." [273]

"It's awfully hard for you," Miss Bailey repeated, "but you mustn't let yourself say such things or think such things—about his getting killed, I mean—it's not"—she found herself on the verge of saying "Christian," but remembered that Gertie made no pretence to the Christian virtues—"not loving," she ended, and felt that the meaning of the two words was very much the same.

"Well, I don't love him," said Gertie shortly, "I hate him!"

"That's another thing you mustn't say."

"All right, I won't say it. I do it all the time."

"What's the capital of Massachusetts?" demanded Miss Bailey, changing the subject with a jerk. [274]

"It's Grandpa's capital that's bothering me," laughed Gertie, but she allowed herself to be led away from the trials and problems of Goerck Street into the cool groves of learning.

---

A few mornings later Miss Blake, whose kingdom, Room 17, bordered upon Miss Bailey's territory, bustled into Room 18 with a fat and elaborate purse in her hand.

"You know that wicked little Hymie Abrahams who seems to be always getting into trouble," she began, when the First Readers had stiffened to straight "attention" and sat, each in his little place, like some extraordinary form of tin soldiers.

Miss Bailey nodded. She had indeed for many days been haunted by the fear that Hymie Abrahams would perpetrate some too flagrant breach of discipline, and be degraded to the First Reader class, and she naturally dreaded the advent of such a wolf among her little lambs. [275]

"Well," said Miss Blake, "he can't be all bad. I guess he has some human feelings. He brought me this bag this morning. Says his mother doesn't need it any more, and wants me to have it. It's almost new, you see, and really very handsome. Just let me show you the fittings. I guess his mother wouldn't find much use for powder puffs and mirrors and smelling-salts. Not if I know

anything about the women of the East Side, she wouldn't."

She spread the glittering useless things upon Miss Bailey's desk, and the force with which this bribe carried away her earlier dislike showed that Hymie Solomon had mastered the art of character reading. And Miss Bailey, as she reviewed the dainty paraphernalia spread before her, found herself wondering how soon Madame Solomon would miss her treasures and come storming in pursuit of them. And beside Miss Bailey's desk sat Isidore Cohen in an agony of doubt and disillusionment. His one childish attribute was that of believing that all he knew must be common knowledge. Therefore he argued that the powers before him knew as well as he did that Hymie Solomon was motherless, and that Miss Blake would be most unwise to look her gift purse in the pedigree. And so, as Miss Blake exhibited and Miss Bailey admired, the work of weeks was undone. One teacher was acting as a "fence," and another was cheering and encouraging her. He had doubted this "honesty the best policy" propaganda from the first. But he had believed in the sincerity of its prophet. [276]

Yet he might have been prepared. Had not his father, wise and experienced in the ways of the world, armed him with the formula: "Krists is fakes"? His own adventures had corroborated this, and Miss Bailey from the very first had made no attempt to conceal her connection with that despised sect. Of course she was a fake. No more than half an hour ago she had thrilled her audience with misinformation, and manufactured biography all going to prove the nobleness—even the expediency—of honesty; and now she was purring delightedly over the fruits of Hymie's sleight-of-hand. [277]

Isidore's was not a sentimental nature. Idealism was not his forte. And yet he could not help wishing that, if only for the confusion of Hymie and his father, Miss Bailey had proved to be "on the level."

Mr. Cohen *père* believed in nothing but the rights of man, though his opinion of man was so low as to preclude his having any rights at all. He was especially opprobrious toward all those in authority, and he made no exception in the case of his son's teacher. "She belongs to the machine," he would asseverate with warmth. "Run by the machine, paid by the machine, a part of the machine. Policemen, firemen, teachers, inspectors, they are all the same. All parts of the big machine. And what is it chewing? Us. What does it live on? Us again. Don't you try to fool me about that teacher of yours." [278]

Isidore had been making no such attempt, and he repudiated the idea with scorn. He was accustomed to vehement paternal outbreaks, for Mr. Cohen was a popular orator in his social club, and he often rehearsed his eloquence in the home circle. Not often, however, did Isidore understand or remember the fervid periods. This attack upon Miss Bailey he did remember, though he did not understand. To him a machine was a sewing-machine, and his father, though he evidently meant something, could not have meant to associate her with that most useful member of the family. [279]

"Just like all the rest of them," his father had said. "A grafter," and now that Miss Blake had fallen from honesty, what proof was there that Miss Bailey was not equally approachable?

And certainly Miss Blake played the game with the promptness and surety of an old understanding. Influence or income are the counters in the game, and she dealt both cheerily. Three days after the presentation of the purse the post of Monitor of Supplies in Room 17 fell vacant, and Hymie Solomon received it. That was the influence, he was "holding down a job." Two days later he discovered a market for surplus textbooks and other school supplies. Thus was the income assured. No one could doubt Miss Blake was familiar with the rules. [280]

"You'd never believe," said she to her neighbor in fond and unfounded pride, "what a little responsibility will do for an almost incorrigible boy. You wouldn't know Hymie. He stays behind almost every afternoon when I go home, getting things straightened out."

"They all have their good points," said Constance Bailey. "I am thinking of doing something of the same kind about Isidore Cohen. We must hold their interest, you know."

It was about a week later. Miss Bailey and her monitors were putting Room 18 to rights after the stress and storm of the day. Gold-fish, window-boxes, canaries, and pencil points were all being ministered to by their respective supervisors, and the door opened and Gertie Armusheffsky appeared. Such a distracted, tear-stained, white-lipped Gertie that Miss Bailey swept her monitors into their weird wrappings and dismissed them with all speed. [281]

"I can't go home," cried Gertie in desperation. "Honest, Miss Bailey, he'd kill me if I did."

And after listening to the girl's story, Miss Bailey congratulated herself that she had no other charges old enough to be caught in trouble as difficult.

Old Mr. Armusheffsky had read of a fire in a Brooklyn glove factory: hundreds of pairs of damaged gloves were spoken of. Now Mr. Armusheffsky kept his store very dark, and only the most fatal damages could be detected in its dim light. Catastrophes such as this of the glove factory were his opportunities. He always—he never left the store—sent Gertie to negotiate with the bereaved manufacturers, the insurance agents, or whoever chanced to be in authority over the *débris*. Upon this day there chanced to be no *débris*: the fire and the firemen had done their work. There was no one even to interview. And Gertie, somewhat apprehensive as to her grandfather's displeasure and disappointment, set out for home. She enlivened her homeward [282]

way by a visit to a big department store, where she envied the be-pompadoured damsels behind the counters; plunged into the squirming crowd around a bargain table and secured a jabot of real German Mechlin lace for thirteen cents. After this transaction she had in her purse the twelve cents left of her quarter dollar, and the jabot, the check showing its cost and the date, an unused trolley transfer, and the five dollars deposit which she was to have paid on the purchase of gloves. The purse was of the hand-bag variety, showy yet strong. It had been given to her as a reward and an encouragement by Miss Bailey. [283]

"An' when I got off the car at the 'loop'," she ended, "an' changed into the Second Avenue cable, somebody in the crowd swiped me bag. I didn't have even a transfer left, an' I had to walk here. I was pushing along in the crowd lookin' at the signs 'Beware of pickpockets', an' thinkin' it was good I had no pockets to pick, when it come over me that my bag was gone. Just that easy! Me what ought to have known better. Say, you know it would be just as good as suicide to go an' give that 'pipe' to Grandpa. So I was thinking maybe you'd go round and sort of break the news. He's got a lot of respect for you. An' honest, I ain't kiddin'. He'd kill me for that five dollars." Then with sudden fury she ended, "I'd kill *him* for five cents." [284]

Miss Bailey had never responded with less alacrity to a cry for help. She had a genuine horror of the fierce, sore-eyed old vulture, with whom she had had to struggle so determinedly for the privilege of teaching Gertie. "Of course," she said at last, "he will have to know—" But Miss Bailey was wrong, Mr. Armusheffsky never knew.

Room 18's door opened again to admit two policemen, one plain-clothes man, who silently showed his badge to Miss Bailey, and three garrulous and dishevelled neighbors of the Armusheffsky ménage.

At sight of Gertie the neighbors grew vociferous, triumphant. The policemen stationed themselves one on either side of Gertie, and the plain-clothes man explained to Miss Bailey that old Armusheffsky had been found murdered in his store, and that every man and woman for blocks around was as ready as these incoherent samples to testify that his granddaughter had often wished him dead, and had sometimes threatened to kill him. [285]

"So I guess," he ended pleasantly, "that 'The Tombs' will be this young lady's address for a spell."

"But I've been in Brooklyn all day," protested Gertie when at last she found speech.

"Can you prove it? Talked to anybody? Got any witnesses?"

Gertie recapitulated her story.

"Got the goods you bought? Got the check on them?"

Gertie explained the loss of the purse.

The plain-clothes man shook his head. "I'm sorry, Miss," said he to Miss Bailey, "but I guess it's a case for the sergeant. Of course if that hand satchel turns up it will be all right, but the case looks bad to me. She ain't the first what took the quickest way out of things she couldn't stand. I don't blame them myself, but that's the jury's business. Mine is to take the girl along with me. Your thinking so much of her will go a good ways to help her out. The patrol wagon is at the door. We'll just be moseying along." [286]

Gertie went with him without a word. Her escape from her grandfather's vituperations seemed to make her oblivious to everything else. Miss Bailey, however, was comforted by no such blindness. She realized that tragedy, perhaps death, had come to Room 18, and she set about averting them with characteristic energy.

The one frail thread upon which Gertie's life hung led to one or two pawn shops whence purses, not hers, were reported. Then it snapped, and a whole mountain of circumstantial evidence was piled up in readiness to drop on her defenceless head when the days of the trial should come. Constance Bailey had never been so close to tragedy before, and she bore the juxtaposition very badly. She persisted in, and insisted upon effort, after the police and the reporters had done their best and worst. But always she was met, though never quite daunted, by the challenge to produce the purse with the proofs of alibi. [287]

Under these conditions it naturally occurred that the little First Readers received but a very divided attention. Affairs of state in Room 18 were left largely to the board of monitors, and more than ever did it seem desirable to Isidore Cohen to secure a portfolio within that cabinet. For more than a week he had been ready to present his application. The proof of his fitness for office was wrapped in a newspaper under the decayed mattress upon which he slept. And he only waited a propitious moment to lay it and his application before Teacher. Her new habit of dashing away at the stroke of three had hitherto interfered with his plan, but about a week after Gertie's arrest he found courage to elude the janitor, and to make his way to Room 18 at a quarter past eight in the morning. [288]

And Miss Bailey arriving—pale, distraught, and heavy-eyed—at eight twenty-five, found the lost purse lying upon her blotter, and Isidore Cohen ready with the speech of presentation.

"Mine auntie," it began—he had never had an aunt—"she don't needs this pocket-book no more. You can have it."

Miss Bailey dropped into her chair. "Isidore!" cried she. "Oh, Isidore! You're the cleverest boy! I

would rather have this bag than anything else in the world."

[289]

A moment later her joy was gone again. The bag was absolutely empty, and Constance Bailey did some of the keenest thinking of her career.

"It would be quite perfect," said she, "if I only had a few little things in it. Perhaps a transfer, a lace collar, or some pieces of paper"—she caught the gleam in Isidore's rabbit eye, and amended quickly—"not money, of course. It would be foolish to carry money in a bag like this"—the gleam vanished—"but just a few papers and things would seem more natural."

"Stands somethings like that to my house," Isidore vouchsafed generously. "Mine auntie don't needs them too."

"Then perhaps," said Constance Bailey carefully, "perhaps, dear, your aunt would let me have them."

"I likes," said Isidore, dashing off at an unmistakably natural tangent, "I likes I shall be monitors maybe off of somethings." [290]

Miss Bailey felt the teeth of the trap, but she knew that her hand was touching the very life of Gertie Armusheffsky, and she made no effort to escape. "And what sort of a monitor would you like to be?" she asked casually.

"Off of supplies," was his decided answer.

"I think that could be arranged," she replied. "And these little things to put in my bag?"

"I could to git 'em 'fore the other kids comes in," said Isidore.

And a few moments later she had obtained leave of absence from the principal, and was buttoning her gloves while she gave her final instructions to the substitute who would minister until luncheon hour to the First Readers.

"I'm quite sure you will have no trouble. The children understand that I shall be back in the afternoon. If you want pencils, paper, or anything else, Isidore Cohen will get them for you. For Isidore"—and she laid her hand upon his narrow head—"Isidore is monitor of supplies." [291]

Very late that afternoon a disillusioned monitor of supplies fared unostentatiously homeward from Room 18. He had never met candor equal to Miss Bailey's, and he was in the grip of the paralyzing conviction that for as long as he remained within her sphere of influence, honesty would be the only expedient policy.

---

#### Transcriber's note

The following changes have been made to the text:

[Page 32](#): Was 'or' (healthy **for** somebody)

[Page 43](#): Was 'be' (**by** the man)

[Page 150](#): Was 'or' (**or at** the hospital ward)

[Page 244](#): Was 'chauffers' (**chauffeur**)

---

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK LITTLE ALIENS \*\*\*

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.



**THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE**

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at [www.gutenberg.org/license](http://www.gutenberg.org/license).

**Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work

electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

## **Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™**

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

## **Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at [www.gutenberg.org/contact](http://www.gutenberg.org/contact)

## **Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate).

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses.

Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate)

## **Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.