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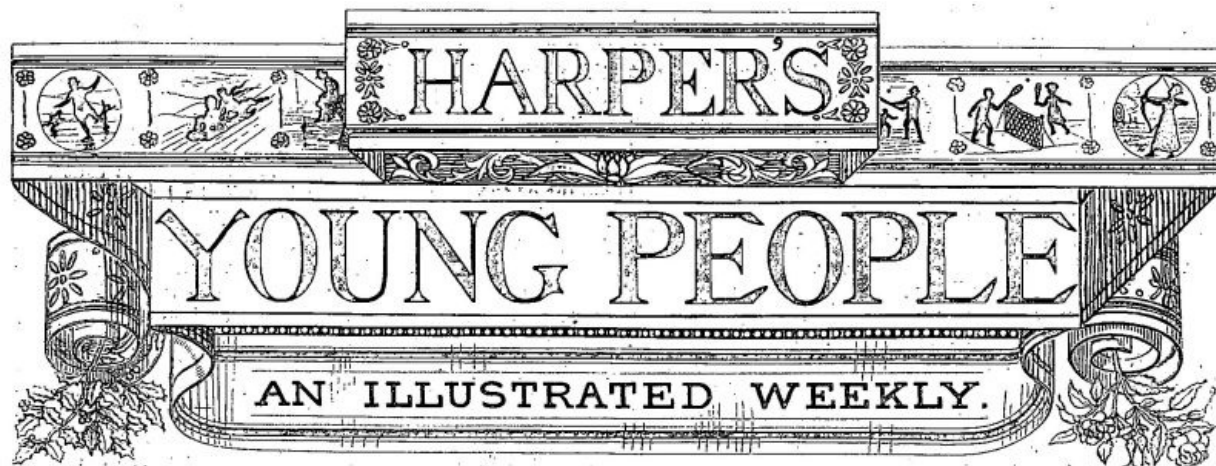
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BEST GIRL IN AMERICA.

LADY RAGS.

**HOW THE WAR OF THE WOODS AND THE TINS—INCLUDING THE
SHORTS—CAME TO AN END.**

BY MARGARET EYTINGE.

The fight, begun a little after three o'clock in the afternoon that 24th of December, was still raging furiously when the hands of the big clock on the market tower pointed to half past four, and the pale sun was preparing to bid the world good-by until Christmas morning.

Snow-balls, some of them as hard as stones, were flying in every direction.

The Tins, yelling like wild Indians, were rushing up on and scrambling over the snow-covered piles of wood, brick, and mortar that lay in front of the half-dug-out cellar of the new building that was to be in Short Street.

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The Woods, yelling like some more wild Indians, were sallying out from the cellar—named "Fort Hurrah" for the occasion—and driving the enemy back, every now and then capturing two or three of them, and dragging them triumphantly into the fort.

There had been war between the Wood Street boys and the Tin Street boys for more than a year. It originated in Tim Ashburner's taking Jack Lubs's parrot—which Jack had lent to him for a week only—into the country with him, and keeping it there all vacation.

Jack Lubs's father, who was a sea-captain, had brought this parrot from some far-distant land, together with a monkey, which Mrs. Lubs said, the moment she saw it, she would *not* have in the house. "Parrots were bad enough, but monkeys—no indeed!"

So Jack was obliged to sell Boomerang, and he sold it so many times—the little creature being always returned on account of its mischievousness and destructiveness—that he became the richest boy in marbles, balls, knives, and nickels for blocks around. And when no other acquaintance could be found anxious to secure Boom for a household companion, Jack gave him to a showman, who had pitched his tent in an adjoining square, for an order admitting "bearer and friends" to the show. But when "bearer" presented that order shortly after, accompanied by "friends" to the number of two-and-twenty, the showman opened his eyes very wide indeed, and exclaimed, "Great elephants! I'll never be caught that way again."

But it wasn't only the stealing—I mean the taking—of the parrot that caused the trouble, for Ashburner brought it back in good condition, it was the adding of insult to injury by teaching it to say, in a hoarse voice, "Hi! Squint-eye, ho! Squint-eye, shiver your timbers, *please*."

This remark the lawful owner justly considered somewhat personal, he being the son of a sailor, and having an eye that did not look as straight ahead as its companion eye did. And after he had been sainted with "Hi! Squint-eye, ho! Squint-eye, shiver your timbers, *please*" at short intervals for an entire Saturday morning, he became very angry, and the result of his anger was that he and four of his chummiest chums decided to go round to Tin Street and demand satisfaction.

They went, and were met by Ashburner, who was on his way home from the baker's with a pumpkin pie. As soon as he learned their errand, however, he, in the most obliging manner, placed the pie on the nearest stoop, and quickly mustering four of *his* chummiest chums, gave them "satisfaction"; that is, if a black eye for Jack, and sundry swollen lips and noses for his comrades, can be called by that name. As for the Ashburner party, with the exception of the pumpkin pie being squashed, that received no injuries whatever.

This doesn't seem exactly right, for Lubs certainly had cause for complaint in the first place. But Justice, they say, is blind, and I suppose that is the reason why she makes mistakes once in a while.

Jack went home breathing vengeance, and his chums, feeling called upon by the sacred voice of Friendship to breathe vengeance too, from that day forth there was war between the Woods, under Captain Lubs, and the Tins, under Captain Ashburner, first one side and then the other being victorious.

The two companies took their names from the streets in which they lived. These streets were on the outskirts of the city and only a block long, and ran in such a way that they, with a very short block named Short Street as a base, formed an isosceles triangle. At the point of this triangle was a drug-store having two front doors, one on each street.

The Shorts were part of them "Woods" and part of them "Tins," and their street faced the open square on the nearest side of which the new building already mentioned had been begun.

"Such a splendid place for a fight we'll never get again," said Lieutenant Rube Howell, to his captain. "The workmen have gone home, and nobody passes that way 'count of the heaps of stuff. I say, Lubs, let's have a last grand battle to end the old year with."

"You're right, Rube," said Lubs, and forthwith sent a challenge to the Tins' commander, and soon a lively skirmish for the possession of the fort—the half-dug-out cellar with a rough board fence around it—was going on.

The Woods won it, and then the fight began in earnest.

Captain Lubs, waving his sword—a long lath—above his head, and his lieutenant, backed by their men, mounted the fence, and derisively requested the besiegers to "come on!" The besiegers, led by Captain Ashburner, waving his sword—a broad strip of tin—above his head, and his lieutenant, Jimmy Mullally, did come on.

Over the snowy hills they rushed, slipping, falling, and scrambling to their feet again; swarming up the fence, to be knocked off by well-directed blows; crawling under the fence in hopes of catching an enemy by the legs, and being caught by the heads themselves, or making narrow escapes, leaving behind them locks of hair, and taking away scratches and bruises.

Lieutenant Mullally twisted his ankle, and sank down groaning behind an embankment. Little Willie Bond's cheek was badly cut with a pebbled snow-ball. A dozen other boys were more or less hurt.

The fight grew fast and furious. Neither side stopped to look after its wounded, when small Bond, who had climbed a ladder leaning against a pile of brick, and who was sitting on the topmost round nursing his wounded face, called out, in his shrillest voice,

"Halloo! a flag of truce! H-a-l-l-o-o! a flag of truce is comin'."

"Don't belong to us," shouted the Woods.

"Don't belong to us," shouted the Tins.

"It's only a girl," said Mullally, getting up on one leg; whereupon his captain, spying him, asked in an indignant tone,

"What are you shirkin' for, Lally? They've got ten of our men. Tins to the rescue! Tins to the rescue!" And in his excitement he let his flashing sword fall so suddenly on the head of the warrior next to him that that warrior immediately bit the dust—snow, I should say. At the same moment a scout flying in with the cry, "It's Lady Rags," fell over him at the captain's feet.

"It's Lady Rags," ran through the ranks.

"It's Lady Rags," Lubs informed his soldiers from the ramparts, and deserting the fort, they all joined him on the sidewalk, their prisoners promptly seizing the chance to escape.

A young girl bearing a white flag made of a piece of muslin neatly tacked to an old broom-handle came slowly toward them. She wore a skirt of blue and red flannel, a black jacket, half silk and half cloth, and a cap of three or four kinds of fur, bordered with soft swan's-down. Her cheeks were glowing with the cold, her great brown eyes beamed with frankness and innocence, and her hair, in two long golden braids, caught the last ray of the setting sun.

"Boys," she said, in a clear, ringing voice, as she reached them, "I want to speak to you."

"Great time to want to speak to fellers," growled Sandy Grip, "when they're finishin' up the old year, and only got a few minutes to do it in."

"You keep still, Grip," said Ashburner. "Guess you forget who prayed for you when you had the diphtheria."

"And the Woods have got to be quiet, or get another captain," said Jack Lubs, remembering the dear little sister who with her dying breath begged him to always be good to "darling Lady."

"I couldn't wait till to-night to say what I have to say," said Lady, "for my mothers need me at home, and so, as I knew I'd find you all here fighting, I thought I'd bring a flag of truce, and you'd stop long enough—oh, how I wish you'd stop forever!—to hear what I have to ask of you."

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"Go ahead, Lady," said the boys, with one accord.

And planting the flag-staff in the snow heap behind her, Lady Rags folded her little red hands, and began.

But before I tell you what she said I must tell you something about herself.

Just thirteen years before the day of the Tins' and Woods' battle, three poor tired old women, who had been wandering about the city in search of rags and what other things they could gather, met at the corner of the street in which they lived.

As they plodded on together—it was fast growing dark—they stumbled over something lying upon the sidewalk. Stooping to look at this something, they found a woman with a baby in her arms.

"I am dying," she whispered, "of cold and starvation."

The three poor old women carried her to their own miserable home, where she died in a short time.

"And what shall we do with the baby?" they asked each other. Then in one voice they answered themselves,

"It is a Christmas gift to us. We'll keep it, with God's help." They named the baby Adelaide, but that being too long a name for a tiny baby, it was soon shortened to Lady, and so the child came to be known as "Lady Rags."

After the coming of Lady Rags the shabby home grew brighter than any one seeing it before could have believed possible. The windows, once scarcely to be seen through for dust and cobwebs, were now washed often, so that the sunshine could come in and dance on the white wall for Lady. The floor was scrubbed almost every day, and a piece of red and green carpet was spread in one corner for her to play on. Here she played from morning until night with all the bright-colored rags and queer odds and ends the old women found or had given them, as happy as many a child in a splendid home with the costliest of toys. The three old crones gave up quarrelling as they used to, for that would have frightened Lady, and they learned to pray again—though they had forgotten how for long years—to pray for Lady.

"My mothers" she called them when she began to talk, and ever after, and they were so proud of the title that they tried their best to be worthy of it. Their scant gray locks began to be always carefully combed and half hidden beneath the whitest of caps; their well-worn garments were neatly patched with patches of many colors, and bits of black, brown, and other sober-hued ribbons were pinned at the wrinkled throats, and all to do honor to Lady.

As the child grew she became so beautiful that, had she been a princess instead of Lady Rags, her beauty would have been a wonder. And she was as good and clever as she was beautiful, and because of her many kindnesses to them, the boys of the triangle were her sworn subjects. Many the cut fingers she had dressed, many the bruises she had bathed, many the words of comfort and encouragement she had spoken, and many the prayers she had offered for the sick and suffering.

"Her prayers go straight to Heaven," said Jack Lubs. "Some people's don't."

But in one thing very near to her heart she had failed thus far. She could not bring peace to the neighborhood. Much as the Woods and the Tins and the Shorts loved her, the war still went on. And as we have seen, when she appeared among them on this day before Christmas, in her quaint costume, looking as though she had stepped from some lovely old picture, they were in the midst of one of their hardest fights.

"Boys," said Lady Rags, "I have come to ask you all to be a surprise party early to-morrow morning. You remember, the most of you, the poor man who fell from the scaffolding while he was painting our house—"

"And bad enough it wanted painting," said Abe Wilson; "hadn't been painted before, I guess, in a hundred years."

"—And was so badly hurt," Lady Rags went on, "that they took him to the hospital. Well, he has been there ever since, and that's nearly two months; but he's coming home to-morrow. And, oh! boys, do you know where that home is?"

"In Mulkins's basement, 'way down in the ground, and dark as Egypt," said Sandy Grip.

"And yet five children without any mother live there," said Lady.

"Give 'em one of yours," suggested Sandy; "three's two too many for one girl."

"Couldn't spare one, for all that," said Lady, smiling. "And as my mothers and I have just found out, these children have had dreadful times since their father went away. They have sold every bit of their furniture, and they have been nearly starved and nearly frozen. And Christmas is almost here—Christmas, when everybody ought to be merry; and I can't bear to think of that poor father coming home to that wretched place. And he must not, boys; you must not let him, *brothers*."

"How can we help it?" asked both the captains, both the lieutenants, and half the privates.

"By each doing something toward making that basement look a little like merry Christmas. My mothers and I and the other girls have done all we can. We have bought an old stove from Mr. Rust, and a new table from Mr. Ashburner, and Mrs. Lubs has given us a bed, and Mrs. Bond some blankets, and my Sunday-school teacher some clothes, and to-morrow morning we hope a certain surprise party will do the rest."

"But, Lady Rags," said Jack Lubs, "my fellers haven't much cash, I know, and what little they have left, after getting Christmas presents for their own folks, they want to spend on you."

"Here too, Johnny," said Ashburner.

Jack glared at him. "Johnny!" he repeated.

"Well, Squint-eye, if you like it better. Shiver your timbers, *please*."

Lubs raised his fist, but Lady sprang forward and seized his arm.

"Oh, boys! boys!" she cried, "you promised to listen." And as they turned away from each other with shamed faces, she began again, "It's very, very kind of you to think of buying me a Christmas present, for I have no right to expect anything—"

"Guess you have, then," interrupted Jimmy Mullally.

"Got us out of lots of scrapes since last Christmas," said Abe Wilson.

"Mended my trousers when I tore 'em goin' down Hysen's coal-hole after my cat, and granny never found it out," said Willie Bond.

"Best girl in America, 'land of the free and home of the brave!'" said Jack Lubs.

"You bet!" chorused all the other boys.

"It's real good of you to think so," said Lady, "for I'm no better than most girls, I am sure."

"There's where you make a mistake," said Rube Howell.

"Well, have your own way about that," said Lady, with a bright smile; "but do let me have my way about the Christmas present. And, oh! boys, the best present you could give me would be to spend all you can spare yourselves, and beg all you can from others, for these poor Janvrins. They haven't anything to eat, and if they had, they have no dishes nor plates to eat from, no knives nor forks to eat with. And there's twin babies only a year old, and they are all so pale and thin! Oh, boys, what a blessed, blessed thing it would be to stop this wicked fight, that has been going on so long, this very Christmas-eve, and begin Christmas-day by doing an act of kindness together! Christmas-day should be a day of love and kindness, for on that day the Saviour was born. What a darling baby He must have been, lying on His mother's lap, with the cows and horses (He was born in a stable, you know) looking at Him with wondering eyes! And He was the best boy that ever lived. And when He became a man He went about everywhere teaching Love, Mercy, and Charity. How He must grieve when He looks down from heaven and sees you fight so terribly! What pain His gentle heart must have felt when Ned Prime, a few weeks ago, was taken home to his mother—and she a widow—nearly blind from a blow got in one of your battles! You say you care for me; you say I have been a help to you. Perhaps you would never have known me if it had not been Christmas-time when my mothers found me. They thought, as they took me in their arms—I know they did—of that other Baby, sent to bless the world. And, oh, boys, I beg of you to be friends. Jack Lubs and Tim Ashburner," she continued, clasping her hands in entreaty, while the tears trembled on her long lashes, "you began this war, and for such a silly cause—oh, do, *do*, do end it!"

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Lubs stepped toward Ashburner; Ashburner advanced to meet him. They shook hands, and a cheer went up from the lookers-on, with the exception of Sandy Grip, who growled, "That's the end of our fun—a lot of fellers givin' in to a preachin' gal!" and was instantly rolled in the snow by the boys nearest him.

"We'll meet in Ashburner's father's shop to-night," said Captain Lubs, "and draw up a—*an* agreement."

"A treaty," corrected Abe Wilson.

"Yes, that's what I mean—a treaty of peace."

"To last forever?" asked Lady Bags, her face glowing with delight.

"Well, I s'pose so, between the Tins and Woods as Tins and Woods," said Jack. "But if any one feller sasses another feller more than he can stand, why, don't you see, Lady, we *can't* promise peace forever between the fellers as fellers, but we'll do the best we can. And we'll be at Mulkins's basement to-morrow morning about nine o'clock."

And carrying the flag of truce between them, the two captains followed Lady Rags—it was now dark, and the shop-keepers were beginning to light their windows—their comrades following them, until they reached the drug-store which united Wood and Tin streets, and which had two

front doors, one on either side.

Through one of these doors, and out of the other, Lady, in a spirit of fun, led them all, much to the surprise of the druggist, who was pounding something in a mortar. Indeed, so surprised was he that he didn't recover presence of mind enough to ask, "What does this mean?" until the last boy passed out on Tin Street; and so, of course, he got no answer to his question.

"Merry Christmas!" rang the bells—"merry, merry Christmas!" "Merry Christmas!" shouted the little children, as out tumbled the toys and goodies Santa Claus had put in their stockings; "Merry Christmas!" echoed the big ones, as they found tokens of remembrance from fathers, mothers, grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, aunts, cousins, sisters, brothers, and friends; "Merry Christmas!" cried the butcher, the baker, the grocer, and the milkman; "Merry Christmas!" called the people on the streets to each other; and "Merry Christmas!" mingled with the jingling of the sleigh-bells as the sleighs sped quickly by.

In Mulkins's basement the old stove was glowing in the most cheerful manner. A long wooden table stood in the middle of the floor, and a few Christmas wreaths were tacked on the newly whitewashed walls. The Janvrin children were gathered around the fire—poor things, they hadn't been as comfortable in a long while—and Lady Rags, her cheeks as red as roses, and a heavenly light in her beautiful brown eyes, stood at one of the windows, looking up into the street.

"Oh, what serious faces you all have!" she turned to say to the group by the fire. "Think of your dear father coming home, and smile right away."

And the children, smiling as she spoke, started to their feet as they heard the beating of a drum directly in front of the house, and rushed to the windows.

"You must not look out," said Lady Rags, gently driving them into the corner behind the stove, and placing herself beside them.

A procession of boys, each with a sprig of cedar in his hat, led by Hodge Wood with his drum and Willie Bond bearing an American flag, filed down the area way and into the basement.

First came Captains Lubs and Ashburner, each having hold of one end of a large dripping-pan, in which reposed a fine roasted turkey. Behind them, Aris Black carried a new tin saucepan filled with gravy, and his brother Ted another filled with cranberry sauce. Then followed Sandy Grip and Rube Howell with bunches of celery worn as shields. Next in order were Jimmy Mullally and Abe Wilson, tugging a great basket overflowing with potatoes, onions, and turnips. Next, two boys with a shining dish-pan heaped high with dishes, plates, and cups and saucers. Next, four boys nursing four huge loaves of bread as though they were babies. Next, six tall boys with chairs on their heads, and two short ones with high chairs for the twins on *their* heads. Next, eight small boys with knives, forks, and spoons, worn as weapons at their sides. Next, two boys with school satchels almost bursting with toys. And last, Ned Prime with a tin basin for a helmet and a broom for a gun, and Jake Smith with a brightly painted wooden pail in one hand and a coal-hod in the other, one full of apples and oranges and the other with coal.

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"Rub-a-dub-dub, rub-a-dub-dub," went the drum, "Hurrah!" shouted the boys as they marched in. The turkey, the celery, the loaves of bread, the pail of fruit, and the knives, forks, and spoons, were placed on the table, and the coal-hod, broom, dish-pan, and satchels of toys under it. The chairs were set down, and the boys ranged themselves around the room, and at a signal from Jack Lubs they all shouted at the top of their voices, "Merry Christmas!" And then what do you think Lady Bags did—she who had told the Janvrin children they must smile? Burst out crying as though her heart would break!

"Good gracious! what *is* the matter now?" asked Tim.

"Girls is never satisfied," growled Sandy Grip.

"You hush!" said Abe Wilson, with more emphasis than politeness.

"The matter?" repeated Lady. "You dear, good, splendid boys, I cried for joy! You can't think how happy I am. But I'm going to laugh all the rest of the day."

"That's right," said Ashburner; "and now, if your Majesty will listen, we have something to read to you."

And in the twinkling of an eye the huge basket was on the floor, and Lady, blushing like a sweet wild rose, seated as on a throne in its place.

"Attention, company!" called Jack Lubs, and mounting a chair, he unfolded a paper, and read as follows:

"We, the Woods and Tins'—which means the Shorts too—'do promise from this Christmas-day, 25th of December, 1878, to fight no more battles, but bury the tomahawk, and smoke the calumet of peace together *forever*. And three cheers for Lady Rags!"

Just at this moment Mr. Janvrin, the crippled painter, limped in. Then, finding everything so jolly where he had expected nothing but gloom, he joined in with all his might. And Lady's three mothers and some girl friends, who had been looking on from the entry, joined in too.

Once more the drum beat, the flag was unfurled, and away went the boys, as happy a throng of boys as ever got together on Christmas-day.



CHRISTMAS MORNING.

THE FAIRY FUNGI.

BY SOPHIE B. HERRICK.

The hill-sides of the southern part of France are covered with vineyards, where the luscious grapes round out under the late summer sunshine into globes of delicious sweetness. When the grapes are ripe, the peasants—men, women, and children—may be seen gayly trooping to the vineyards to pick them for wine. In the famous Steinburger vineyard the pickers are all girls about eighteen years old. Each girl has a row to pick, and they begin together, and move forward as steadily and evenly as a regiment of soldiers. With their gay petticoats looped up so that they may not brush off the ripe grapes, and their bright stockings and mittens, they make a very pretty picture moving along between the rows, snipping the ripe grapes, and letting them drop into their baskets. When the baskets are full they are emptied into a tub, which the men lift by leathern straps and carry to the road-side press. The juice which comes spurting out of the press is placed in vats or barrels, and there left to ferment, which changes the juice, or *must*, into wine. When the cook wants her bread to ferment, or rise, she plants it with yeast; but the wine has nothing planted in it, and yet it ferments.

Pasteur, the great French chemist, made up his mind to find why this was. He was convinced from all his studies in fermentation that the reason would be found in some little plant which was growing in the juice and helping itself to whatever it needed to eat or to breathe. He set to work to find out where the plants came from which turned the grape juice into wine. All his experiments are so fully and clearly explained that any one who is willing to take the pains can try them for himself.

He found that there was no fungus growing inside the little closed bag (which we call skin) in which the pulp, seed, and juice of the grape is sealed up. There is no opening anywhere in a sound grape through which spores (which are the fungus seed) could enter. But he found on the skin of the grape, and thickly over the stem, little plants, something like yeast and something like mould; these make up, in part, what is called the bloom of the grape. He put some water, with these plants mixed through it, into one tightly sealed bottle, and into another he put the pure juice of the grapes which had none of the little plants through it, and then waited to see what would happen. In a few days the water was all yeasty, and the grape juice was unchanged. (Fig. 1.) He tried this same thing over, and over, and over again, and in various ways, to be sure that he was right. He thus found that the little magician that turns the juice into wine is always waiting at the door of the sealed chamber, ready to work its miracle as soon as it can reach the juice.

It is very different with beer. Pasteur gave a great deal of time and attention to finding out why
so many

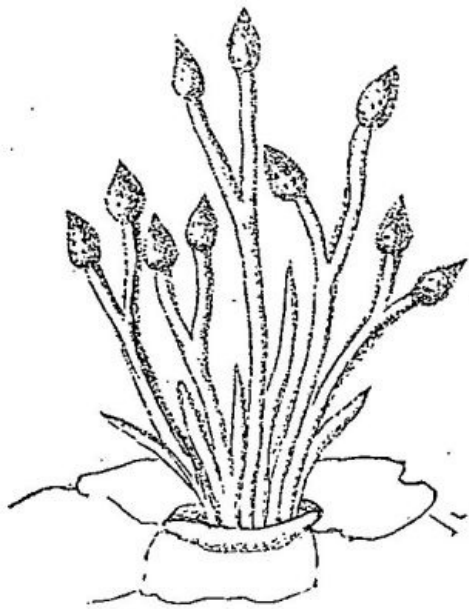


FIG. 2.—POTATO FUNGUS.

millions of gallons of beer were every year spoiled in the making. The brewers could not tell why. They prepared their wort in just the same way, and planted just the same amount of yeast

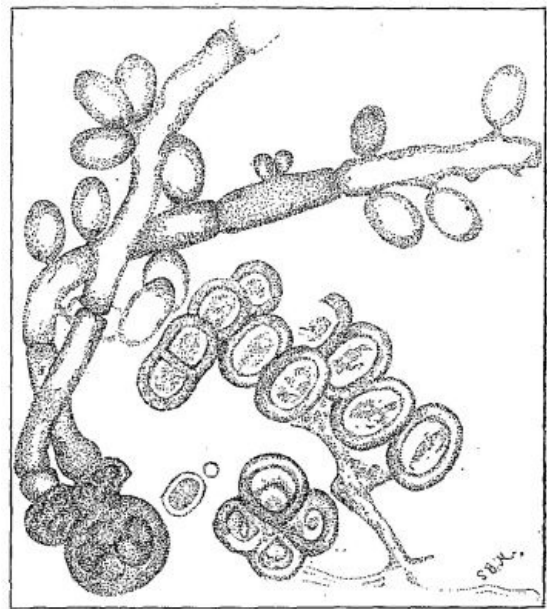


FIG. 1.—GRAPE FUNGUS.

into the good beer as they did in what turned out to be bad. He brought that wonderful microscope of his to bear upon the subject. He found that whenever the wort was planted with yeast which had certain curious little glassy rods mixed through it, the beer turned sour. The brewer, when he put such yeast as this into his wort, was planting, along with the seeds of the yeast plant, seeds of a troublesome weed. The sour beer was really only a very queer kind of a liquid garden, growing more weeds than useful plants.

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Vinegar is another thing made by these little fairy fungi. The cider out of which it is made is set away in a cask to ferment. The spores that work the change in this case are floating in the air, and manage somehow to get into the open cask. Did you never notice the flakes of muddy-looking substance at the bottom of a vinegar cruet? That is the *mother*, the little plant that has made the cider into vinegar.

These are some of the useful things that are done by the fungi, and they are certainly very valuable services. We owe to them our bread, and wine, and beer, and vinegar. But they are not always benevolent fairies by any means. Sometimes we are inclined to think that they are at the bottom of pretty much all the mischief in the world. If they were not sailing about in every breath of wind, getting into all sorts of places where they are not wanted, we probably would never have any chills and fever or diphtheria, and the yellow fever would not sweep off its thousands and tens of thousands. If these little floating spores did not get into every crack and cranny, wounds would not fester, damp linen would not mildew, preserves and pickles would not mould, milk would not sour, nothing would spoil or ferment or decay. There is an old proverb that "the mother of mischief is no bigger than a midge's wing." I sometimes wonder if the old-time people that made the proverbs did not know something of these tiny mischiefs that only seem to be waiting the chance to work their naughty will.

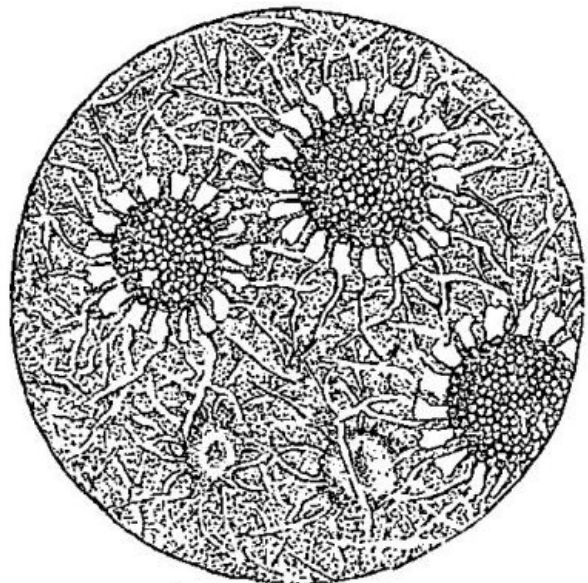


FIG. 3—LEAF MILDEW.

There is one case where this change takes place which you have probably often seen. When I was a child I used to be very fond of getting from the woods close to the house, or from the wood-pile, bits of shining wood and bark, which we called "fox fire." The wood was always old and decaying, and we thought it was shining because it was dying. But really the perishing wood was covered all over with tiny mushrooms, which shone with a light something like the glimmer of a fire-fly. In some countries this brightness is very wonderful. In Australia people have been able to read by the light of a shining stump overgrown with luminous fungi.

Some of the fungi have not even the manners to wait until their victims are dead. They take possession of living plants and animals, and never rest until they have destroyed them. The disease among potatoes called the potato blight (Fig. 2), of which we hear so much, is caused by the growth of a little fungous plant in the mouths, or breathing holes, on the skin of the potato, and the blight and mildew (Fig. 3) and smut of wheat and corn and rye (Fig. 4) are all due to the same

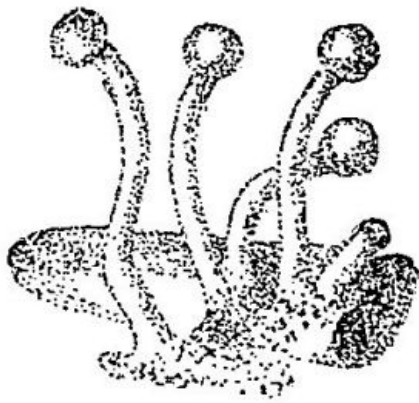


FIG. 4.—RYE SMUT.

cause. The mouldy look upon vine leaves is nothing else. I put a leaf of Virginia creeper which looked whitish

and ugly under the microscope one day, and found the whole surface covered with a network of silvery threads, with a wonderful, fruit growing upon it. The fruits looked like peeled oranges surrounded with threads of spun sugar, or occasionally like a gigantic blackberry sparkling with crystals. This was only a common mildew, but under the magnifier it seemed a wonderful garden, growing conserves and fairy fruits, and was beautiful, beyond description. (Fig. 5.)

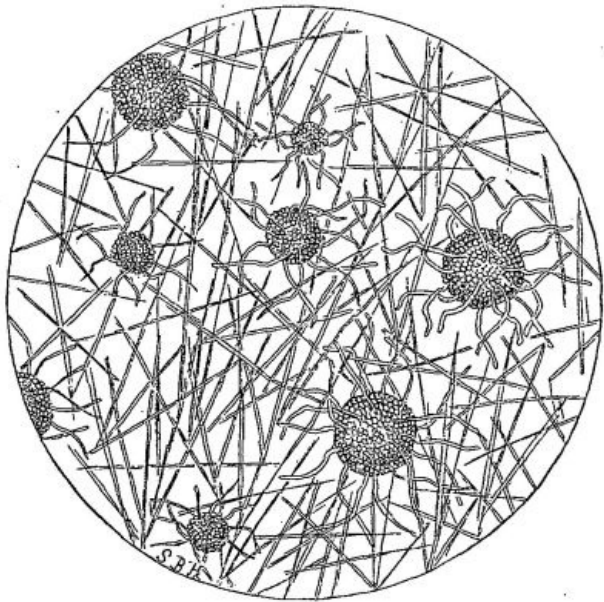


FIG. 5.—MILDEW ON VIRGINIA CREEPER.

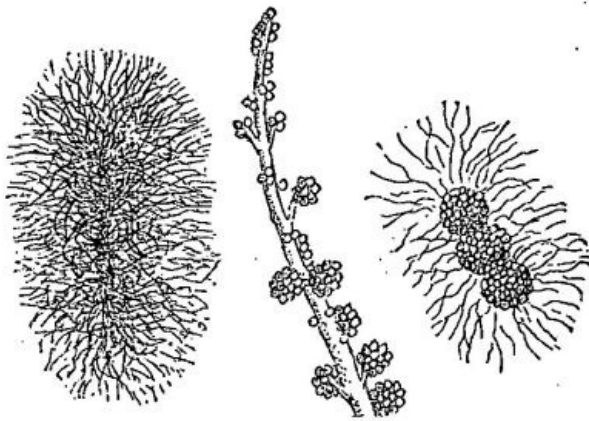


FIG. 6.—SILK-WORM FUNGUS.

The silk-worm is attacked by a fungous plant (Fig. 6). It takes possession of the worm just before it begins to spin its cocoon, and some years ago it destroyed such multitudes that the French silk trade was seriously threatened. The microscope was again brought into use, and the cause of the trouble discovered, and the cure effected.

The untiring Pasteur studied up this and other diseases of the silk-worm as he did those of wine and beer, and helped the silk-worm growers to stamp out the disease when it appeared. It perhaps seems a small thing for a man of genius like Pasteur to give his whole life to studying these little plants through the microscope, but never was a life more helpfully and patriotically spent. Hundreds of thousands of the French peasants depended

for daily food and shelter upon what they earned in the wine and beer and silk trades, and these trades Pasteur's work has saved from destruction or great loss. It has been said that his work with the microscope has saved to France more than the awful French Revolution cost her.

DOT'S CHIMNEY.

[Pg 103]

BY MRS. A. E. THOMAS.

Briskly fell the snow's white plumage,
Tossing o'er the barren moor,
While Kris Kringle's jolly features
So belied the weight he bore.
Fast the pearly flakes were falling,
Glad his hoary head to crown.
Making darkness light about him,
As though angels dropped them down.

Sings his heart its sweetest carol.
Twinkles his gray eyes so bright,
As he pictures the sweet children
In their happy homes to-night.
What cares he that snow is drifting,
And the cold is so intense,
When he sees dear Dottie's chimney
Peeping over yonder fence?

Down the chimney now he's creeping,
Dark and sooty, dim and drear,
Yet his heart is light, though heavy
On his back lies Christmas cheer.
"Quite a journey I've accomplished,"
As he shook himself quite free
From the soot. "Now where's Dot's stocking?
Here 'tis. But what do I see?

"Whose is this, and this, and that one?
One last year, but now three more.
I am old, just turned of eighty,
But can count—one, two, three, four.
Well, I'll fill them," said Kris Kringle;
"Maybe Dottie wants a pile
Of nice goodies. Here they go in.
Now, my boy, you're fixed in style."

He guessed rightly; Dot was greedy,
For he did love candies so.
This was why he hung so shyly
Four bright stockings in a row.
Morning came; Dot was in raptures.
What a pile of luscious things
Hung within that old black chimney!
But hark! now the door-bell rings.

In came Neighbor Gray a-sighing.
Times, he said, were very dull;
And his little Sam grew weaker.
Oh! his heart was very full.
Wife, he said, had watched beside him
Through the cold and bitter night,
And he came to ask for something—
Only "just a little mite."

Up jumped Dottie with a stocking,
Bursting with its festive bliss.
"Here," he said, to that poor neighbor,
"Give dear little Sammy this."
Just then came the widow's children—
Pretty, but so very poor—
Mag and Mamie, nearly frozen.
Travelling o'er the barren moor.

"Come in quick," said little Dottie.
"What's the matter? pray explain."
"We are going for the doctor,
'Cause the baby's got a pain."
Mag and May each had a stocking
When they left the farmer's door.
Oh! 'twas well that little Dottie
In his chimney hung up four.

A NOVEL PRESENT.

BY BERTHA WATSON.

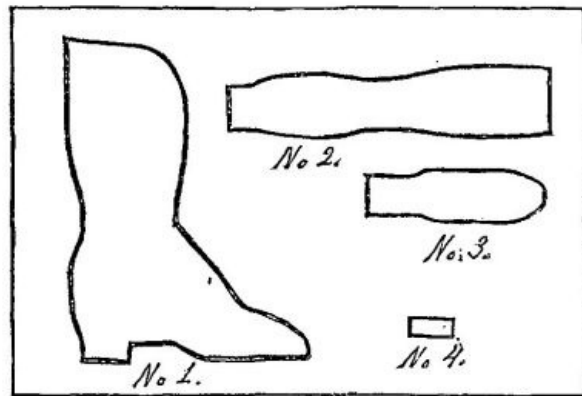
Before you girls put on your thimbles, thread your needles, and puzzle your brains about something to make for Christmas, let me tell you of a beautiful present I once received, and how it was made.

It was an old woman who lived in a shoe, with so many children she didn't know what to do.

The only part at all difficult to make is the shoe or boot itself. My boot was ten inches high, and eight from the toe to the heel, and it was composed of five pieces of very stiff pasteboard, the two sides shaped like No. 1, enlarged, the back like No. 2, and the sole like No. 3. No. 4 is the little strip in front of the heel. Each piece must be covered with black velvet or cloth, all the pieces sewed strongly together, and the top of the boot lined with green silk for three or four inches down. Then bind the top and sides of the front with red braid, and tack a strip of black velvet in the sides of the front for a tongue. Then take a piece of the red braid, and catch it back and forth, like ordinary shoe lacing.

As the boot is so long and narrow, it would be apt to tip over, so, to steady it, put a bag of shot in the toe, and fill the rest with paper.

Now you have the house, and for the garden get a square pasteboard box cover, and spread over it green silk to represent grass. As no ordinary doll's face would be wrinkled and care-worn enough for this poor lady, get one of the long-nosed, long-chinned, old women who sometimes come in Jack-in-the-boxes. Cut her out, springs and all, and cover the springs with a dark calico dress. Put a white kerchief round her neck, a white cap on her head, and a bundle of switches in her hand.



You want as many children as you have the patience to dress; the more the merrier. Get the little china dolls that come for a penny apiece, and the larger wooden dolls that come, I think, for the same price. If you can get two or three very small woolly dogs, they will look cunning standing in the "garden." Dress the dolls in all the bright colors you can find, and put them anywhere and everywhere, on the box cover, climbing up the shoe lacing, in the mother's lap, and behind her back.

A very pretty addition to the whole is a small ladder leaning against the side of the boot, with a doll on each round.

OUR NEW WALK.

BY JIMMY BROWN.

For once I have done right. I always used to think that if I stuck to it, and tried to do what was right, I would hit it some day; but at last I pretty nearly gave up all hope, and was beginning to believe that no matter what I did, some of the grown-up folks would tell me that my conduct was such. But I have done a real useful thing that was just what father wanted, and he has said that he would overlook it this time. Perhaps you think that this was not very encouraging to a boy; but if you had been told to come up stairs with me my son as often as I have been, just because you had tried to do right, and hadn't exactly managed to suit people, you would be very glad to hear your father say that for once he would overlook it.

Did you ever play you were a ghost? I don't think much of ghosts, and wouldn't be a bit afraid if I was to see one. There was once a ghost that used to frighten people dreadfully by hanging himself to a hook in the wall. He was one of those tall white ghosts, and they are the very worst kind there is. This one used to come into the spare bedroom of the house where he lived before he was dead, and after walking round the room, and making as if he was in dreadfully low spirits, he would take a rope out of his pocket, and hang himself to a clothes-hook just opposite the bed, and the person who was in the bed would faint away with fright, and pull the bedclothes over his head, and lie in the most dreadful agony until morning, when he would get up, and people would say, "Why how dreadful you look your hair is all gray and you are whiternany sheet." One time a man came to stay at the house who wasn't afraid of anything, and he said, "I'll fix that ghost of yours; I'm a terror on wooden wheels when any ghosts are around. I am." So he was put to sleep in the room, and before he went to bed he loosened the hook, so that it would come down very easy, and then he sat up in bed and read till twelve o'clock. Just when the clock struck, the ghost came in and walked up and down as usual, and finally got out his rope and hung himself; but as soon as he kicked away the chair he stood on when he hung himself, down came the hook, and the ghost fell all in a heap on the floor, and sprained his ankle, and got up and limped away, dreadfully ashamed, and nobody ever saw him again.

[Pg 104]

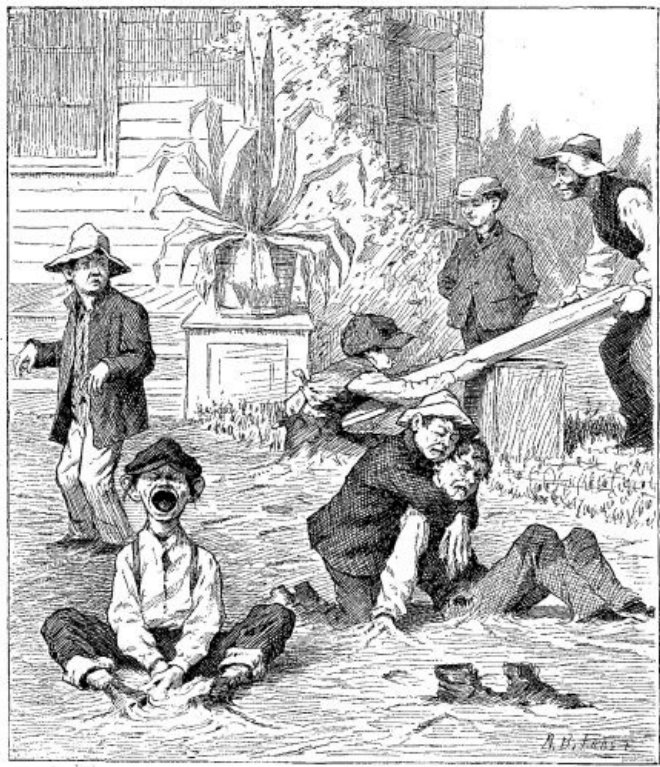
Father has been having the front garden walk fixed with an askfelt pavement. Askfelt is something like molasses, only four times as sticky when it is new. After a while it grows real hard, only ours hasn't grown very hard yet. I watched the men put it down, and father said, "Be careful and don't step on it until it gets hard or you'll stick fast in it and can't ever get out again. I'd like to see half a dozen meddlesome boys stuck in it and serve them right." As soon as I heard dear father mention what he'd like, I determined that he should have his wish, for there is nothing that is more delightful to a good boy than to please his father.

That afternoon I mentioned to two or three boys that I knew were pretty bad boys that our melons were ripe, and that father was going to pick them in a day or two. The melon patch is at the back of the house, and after dark I dressed myself in one of mother's night-gowns, and hid in the wood-shed. About eleven o'clock I heard a noise, and looked out, and there were six boys coming in the back gate, and going for the melon patch. I waited till they were just ready to begin, and then I came out and said, in a hollow and protuberant voice, "Beware!"

They dropped the melons, and started to run, but they couldn't get to the back gate without passing close to me, and I knew they

wouldn't try that. So they started to run round the house to the front gate, and I ran after them. When they reached the new front walk, they seemed to stop all of a sudden, and two or three of them fell down. I didn't wait to hear what they had to say, but went quietly back, and got into the house through the kitchen window, and went up stairs to my room. I could hear them whispering, and now and then one or two of them would cry a little; but I thought it wouldn't be honorable to listen to them, so I went to sleep.

In the morning there were five boys stuck in the askfelt, and frightened 'most to death. I got up early, and called father, and told him that there seemed to be something the matter with his new walk. When he came out and saw five boys caught in the pavement, and an extra pair of shoes that belonged to another boy who had wriggled out of them and gone away and left them, he was the most astonished man you ever saw. I told him how I had caught the boys stealing melons, and had played I was a ghost and frightened them away, and he said that if I'd help the coachman pry the boys out, he would overlook it. So he sat upon the piazza and overlooked the coachman and me while we pried the boys out, and they came out awfully hard, and the askfelt is full of pieces of trousers and things. I don't believe it will ever be a handsome walk; but whenever father looks at it he will think what a good boy I have been, which will give him more pleasure than a hundred new askfelt walks.



PRYING THE BOYS OUT.

So he sat upon the piazza and overlooked the coachman and me while we pried the boys out, and they came out awfully hard, and the askfelt is full of pieces of trousers and things. I don't believe it will ever be a handsome walk; but whenever father looks at it he will think what a good boy I have been, which will give him more pleasure than a hundred new askfelt walks.



MORNING.



EVENING.

CHILDREN OF THE PANTOMIME.

In the great city of London one of the pleasures and delights of the merry Christmas season, to which the children look forward with almost as much eagerness as to the advent of Santa Claus, is the pantomime.

What a fairy-land is revealed to youthful eyes by this holiday amusement! All the stories of Mother Goose become living realities. Jack and Jill roll down the hill; Tom, the piper's son, suffers no end of misfortunes as a punishment for his theft of the pig; Little Jack Horner eats his

Christmas pie; and in company with all these nursery heroes are wonderful crowds of all-powerful fairies, who by a wave of their wands give birds and beasts human intelligence, and render pots, kettles, and pans animated. This gay assemblage appears in fairy grottoes glistening with brilliant colors, sylvan dells flooded with soft moonlight, and meadows on which fairies trace the magic ring and weave the figures of their mystic dance.

The other side of the picture is less radiant. All these fairies with spangled hair, these animated kettles and saucepans, these birds and beasts which dance and hop about in such mirthful fashion, are the little children of the poor, who in this way seek to earn a few shillings for the sick mother, or the starving baby brother or sister, in the dreary and desolate apartments which these poor families call home.

Weeks before Christmas the parents of these children, and often the children themselves, beg to be enrolled in the infantile army needed for the pantomime. The number of applications is so large that the first selection is made by height alone, no child over four feet being received for examination. The smaller the child, the better, so long as it is old enough to learn the duties required of it. The children thus selected are then placed in a line, and told to put forward their left feet and hold up their right hands.

Strange as it may seem, there are many poor children so ignorant as to be unable to do this simple thing. All these are rejected; for a child who does not know its right hand from its left would probably never be able to learn the feats required of it in the pantomime. When the final selection is made and the parts assigned, a crowd of the prettiest and most graceful are set aside for dainty little fairies and elves. Others are destined for hideous little gnomes, for animated vegetables and utensils of all kinds, for cats, monkeys, beetles, and other creatures, while to the most intelligent are assigned more important parts.

Then begins the task of training this youthful band for its work. The drill-masters are, as a rule, as good-natured as possible under the circumstances, but they are very strict, and require the most implicit obedience to their directions. Many of these little boys and girls grow very weary in the work of learning to act like fairies and elves, to jump about as starlings, tomtits, or monkeys, or to march around as kettles, saucepans, cabbages, and other odd figures which go to make up the *dramatis personæ* of a pantomime.

To the children, clad in soft warm garments, who watch all this brilliant show, everything is beauty and happiness. The little audience, which gathers with delight to witness the glittering spectacle, knows nothing of the labor and suffering which these less fortunate children have endured before everything could be in readiness for the grand holiday performances. The Christmas holidays for them are a season of work and anxiety.

The home of the poor children of the pantomime is not like the homes of the readers of *YOUNG PEOPLE*, warm and comfortable, and at Christmas-time gay with wreaths and branches of evergreen, with gifts from Santa Claus, and with dinner tables groaning under the weight of great turkeys and steaming plum-puddings; but it is some dismal little room up flights of rickety stairs, where the cold wind blows through the cracks of the uncarpeted floor, and where want and sorrow and misery are always present.

These children rise to a day of toil. Honest little hard workers, many of them do their best to assist the tired and weary mother to keep the dismal home as clean and comfortable as possible. The hour for the pantomime approaches, and clad in their scanty garments, these little ones hurry away through the snow to appear as sparkling fairies, carrying delight to thousands of hearts. Where are the fairies who bring delight to them? When the performance is over, they leave the glistening grottoes, go back to their comfortless homes, and sleep only to rise again to new toils and anxieties.

There are poor children everywhere. They are the most numerous in great cities like London and New York, but there is scarcely a village so small where some can not be found. Christmas is near. Will the children blessed with happy homes, and kind parents able to gratify their slightest wish, leave these little ones with "empty stockings" on Christmas morning? Remember how small a thing will make their eyes sparkle with pleasure; and when your own Christmas gifts are showered upon you by loving hands do not fail to learn by happy experience the grandeur and truth of the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

THE TALKING LEAVES.^[1]

An Indian Story.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XI.

ow easy it would be even for large bodies of men to be quite near each other without knowing it will be readily understood when the nature of the country, full of sudden changes from mountain and table-land to valleys and plains, is considered. Unless, indeed, they should send out sharp-eyed scouts to find out about their neighbors, as did the miners under Captain



Skinner, and the Lipans of To-la-go-to-de, such a thing might easily happen.

Neither of these "main bodies" remained in camp an hour longer than was necessary, but even after they left their respective camps they moved onward with some caution, half expecting at any moment to see one of their scouts come riding back with important news.

"Motion" was decidedly the order of the day, even for the Apaches. To be sure, there had been no known reason why they should bestir themselves too early in the morning; but their chief himself had given orders the night before, right after supper, that no more lodges should be set up, and that all things should be in condition for a

march.

He needed yet to make up his mind precisely in what direction the march should be, and Rita's "talking leaves" had not given him a single hint about that.

The fact that they had not was a trouble to him, but it was a little too much to expect of a chief and warrior that he should seem to go for counsel to a mere squaw, and not only a very young one, but a squaw of the pale-faces at that. So Rita and Ni-ha-be had not been molested in their lodge all the evening, and a grand talk they had of it all by themselves, with Mother Dolores to listen.

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Dolores had listened, but the girls had been almost surprised by the fact that she asked almost no questions at all—not even about the cavalry pictures.

She did not explain to them that her mind was all the while too completely filled with the thought of the one picture which had spoken to her, and made her shut her eyes and kneel down. There could not possibly be any other which could do more than that, although it was a great thing that Many Bears should have given them any attention.

Ni-ha-be had slept as soundly as usual that night, and Rita had "made believe" do so, until her adopted sister ceased even to whisper to her, and she could hear the loud breathing of Mother Dolores on the opposite side of the lodge.

Then she opened her eyes in the darkness, and tried to recall all she had seen in the three marvellous magazines, page by page.

How it all came back to her! Some of the words that she had not understood began to have a meaning to her.

"They are talking now," she said to herself; "they are almost all talking. They are helping me remember. I'm sure that was my mother, my white mother. But where is my white father? He was not there at all. I must look for him again to-morrow. We must ride off away from the camp, where nobody can see us, and we can talk as much as we please."

"We" meant herself and Ni-ha-be, of course, but it also meant her three prizes. She had brought them to bed with her on her soft buffalo-skin, and she was hugging them now. It seemed to her as if they were alive, and had come to tell her almost anything she could think to ask.

When morning came there was no need for Rita to propose a ride on horseback. Ni-ha-be spoke of it first, and for the self-same reason; but there was nothing unusual about it, for they almost lived in the saddle, like genuine daughters of the great Apache nation.

For a while the very delight of galloping up and down the valley on such swift and beautiful animals as they were riding almost drove out of their minds the thought of the talking leaves. But when, a little later, Many Bears slowly arose from a long fit of thinking there in front of his lodge, and said to Red Wolf, "Call Rita," Rita was nowhere to be seen.

"Find her. Tell her to come, and bring me the white men's medicine, talking leaves."

Red Wolf sprang upon the nearest horse—and there were several standing ready for sudden errands—and dashed away in search of his truant sisters.

Mother Dolores could tell him nothing, but his loud, half-angry questionings drew together a knot of squaws and children, two or three of whom were ready to point toward the northeastern slope of the valley, and tell him he would have to hunt in that direction.

He was ready for it, of course; but he reined in his mustang in front of his father long enough to tell him the cause of the delay.

"Bring them back. They are as wild as rabbits. They will lose their scalps some day."

The chief did not smile when he said that. He was beginning to feel uneasy about the position of his affairs, and he could hardly have told why. He said to himself, "Bad medicine. Can't see him. Great chief smell him."

And then he gave sharp orders to his young braves to have all the ponies caught and brought in from the pastures below, and the squaws to have all their packs ready and their lodges taken down.

"Big talk come," he said again to himself. "Maybe big fight. Don't know. Must be ready. Somebody catch the great chief asleep if he doesn't look out."

Nobody had ever done that yet, for Many Bears had even a greater name for his cunning than for his fighting.

Red Wolf was well mounted, and he darted away at full speed. His father was not a man to forgive a slow messenger any more than a slow cook.

"I understand," he muttered. "Squaws not stay in valley. Go among trees and rocks. Bears catch 'em some day. Eat 'em all up. Not afraid of anything."

So he was really anxious about them, and afraid they would run into danger?

Certainly.

The red man's family affection does not always show itself in the same way with ours, but there is plenty of it. All the more in the case of a young brave like Red Wolf, with every reason to be proud as well as fond of his sister.

And of Rita?

He was thinking of her now, and wondering if she had learned anything more about the cavalry from her talking leaves.

It was, for all the world, just as if he had been a young white man from "one of the first families."

He galloped onward, keenly eying the fringes of the forest and the broken bases of the ledges, until he came to the broad opening below the gap, and here he suddenly stopped and sprang to the ground at a place where the green sod was soft and deeply marked with the prints of horses' hoofs.

"The blue-coat horsemen came out here. Their tracks are old. Ugh! Those are fresh. Ni-ha-be and Rita."

He was on his horse again in an instant, galloping up the not very steep slope of the pass.

The two girls had been in no hurry, and it was not long before Red Wolf came in sight of them.

He put his hand to his mouth, and gave a long, peculiar whoop, that meant: "I am after you. Come back."

They understood it well enough, and Rita might have obeyed if she had been left to herself, but there was more than a little mischief behind the black eyes of Ni-ha-be.

"Let him catch us. He won't do anything worse than scold. I'm not afraid of Red Wolf."

Rita was, just a little, but she rode on beside her sister without turning her head.

"We shall not read any of the leaves this morning."

"Read? What is that?"

"Just the same as a warrior when he finds a trail of a deer. Just like the trail of the blue-coat cavalry. Father and the gray-heads read it."

"Is that the way the leaves talk to you? I guessed it was. It is all signs, like tracks in the mud."

Rita had used the only Apache word she could think of that came at all near to meaning what she wanted, but there was no word for "book," or for any kind of book.

Again they heard the shout of Red Wolf behind them. It was nearer now, and a little angry.

"He is coming, Ni-ha-be. Don't let us ride fast."

"He is saying ugly things. But we will laugh at him and tell him he can not whoop loud enough to be heard."

Red Wolf was proud of his powerful voice, and that would be a sure way to tease him.

"Rita! The great chief is angry. He calls for you."

He was close upon them by this time, and they reined in their horses. Teasing Red Wolf was one thing, but disobeying Many Bears was quite another. They had seen squaws beaten for smaller offenses than that.

"We have done wrong, Ni-ha-be."

"Oh, not much. We can ride back as fast as our ponies can carry us. Turn and meet him."

It had been a very little bit of a "runaway" on the part of the two girls, but it threatened to have serious consequences. [Pg 108]

There was no time even for Red Wolf to scold them before the consequences began to come.

They had ridden just to the end of the spot where the rocks and bushes at the road-side were so thickset and made so perfect a cover for anybody hiding among them.

"Look, Red Wolf, look!"

"Oh, who are they? Enemies!"

The young brave pulled in his mustang so sharply that he almost tumbled him over, and turned his head.

"Pale-faces? How came they here?"

He could hardly have been more astonished if one of the granite boulders near him had stood up and said, "Good-morning." So far as he could have guessed, the nearest white man was many hundreds of miles away, and his nation was at peace with them for the time; but here were three of the hated race standing in the road to cut off his retreat and that of his sisters.



"THE FOREMOST LEVELLED HIS GUN STRAIGHT AT RED WOLF."

Three tall, brawny, evil-looking pale-faces with rifles in their hands, and the foremost of them was levelling his gun straight at Red Wolf, and shouting, "Surrender, you red-skinned coyote, or I'll put a pill into ye."

An Indian brave like the son of Many Bears might deem it an honor to be named after the large, dangerous wolf he had killed in single fight, with only his knife, but to be called a coyote, a miserable prairie wolf, jackal, was a bitter insult, and that was what it was meant for. He had left his carbine in the camp, but his long lance was in his hand, and his knife and revolver were in his belt.

What could one young brave do against three such powerful and well-armed white men?

"Ni-ha-be!" exclaimed Rita.

"I am an Apache girl. I can fight. You are a pale-face."

Rita was stung to her very heart by her sister's scornful reply, for she had also brought her bow and arrows. They never stirred from camp without them, and squaws were not permitted to carry fire-arms.

Ni-ha-be had an arrow already on the string, and Rita followed her example like a flash.

"Red Wolf is a warrior. He is not a coyote. He will show the pale-faces—"

Twang!

The sound of Ni-ha-be's bowstring cut Red Wolf's haughty reply in two in the middle, and it was well for the miner "Bill" that he was quick in dodging. As it was, he dropped his rifle, for there was an arrow through his right arm above the elbow, and Ni-ha-be was fitting another.

Twang!

But the man at whom Rita aimed her arrow was an old Indian fighter, and he parried it easily.

"Red Wolf, your pistol!"

"Boys," exclaimed Bill, "they're a lot of young wildcats! We'll jest have to shoot. Pick off the red-skin, quick, and knock over the two girls before they make a hole into ye."

The two parties were hardly twenty yards apart, and all this had happened in a few seconds; but just then Red Wolf was exclaiming,

"Two more!"

And Rita said, excitedly,

"Stop, Ni-ha-be! See! They are fighting each other. These two are friends. Don't shoot!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DOBBIN'S PERVERSITY.

[Pg 109]

"What can we do on this bright summer's day,
And what may our frolic be?
Shall we play at wild outlaws by Robin Hood led,

Just baby, and Bertie, and me?"



"Or stay, here's old Dobbin—why, children, you know
We must gallop him off to the pond below.
Poor Dobbin is thirsty—we nearly forgot;
He's done lots of work, and he's tired and hot."

Rattle and scamper—hurrah for the fun!—
Three merry youngsters, see how they run!
Fast go their heels, round go the wheels.
Old Dobbin says nothing of all that he feels.
Yet in his one eye lurks a mischievous wink,
And brought to the water, old Dobbin *won't* drink.

Sir Toadie lies low by yon mossy gray stone—
A worshipful toad is he!—
A toad with a wise and wonderful mien,
Solemnly wearing his coat of green,



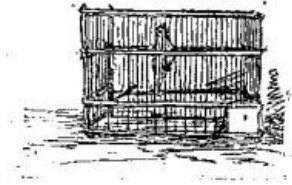
Of what does this knowing Sir Toadie dream?
Hark! he croaks to a passing bee
Watching the scene—the scolding and petting
A very queer steed on the bank is getting,
Now ordered, now asked, now begged, "just one drop,"
Next pushed all a-hurry, it tumbles in—flop!



Nidding and nodding his wise old head,
These are the words that the toad has said,
"Many may lead to the fair river's brink,
But a horse must *will*, ere they make him drink."



Jes you stan' up, you queer old broom.
And be as good as you can be;
You see to-night is Christmas-eve,
And you must be my Christmas-tree.



Rub-a-dub-dub on kettle and pan,
Rub-a-dub-dub, make music who can.
Our gay little party all sing out of tune;
Tom of Puss in the Corner, and Ned of sweet June.
While on the pail drumming Joe strikes with a will,
Loud chanting the story of Jack and of Jill.

Music you call it! I hear but a noise;
But noise is sweet music to small girls and boys.
Patience, grown people, remember the day
When you were but children and rattled away,
With a rub-a-dub-dub on kettle and pan,
Rub-a-dub-dub, making music who can.





In this number of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE we have given our readers a good foretaste of Christmas, just by way of preparation for all the delightful things coming in the next. On December 20 we shall publish our regular Christmas number, which will be entirely given up to matter suitable to the joyous Christmas-tide. The C. Y. P. R. U. will not have its attention drawn, as usual, to articles with sound facts for a basis; the Postmistress will not have a word to say; there will be no Exchanges; even the serial story will be dropped for a week. Our Christmas number will thus be complete in itself, for YOUNG PEOPLE, like its little patrons, has no room for other thoughts during one week in the year than those which are connected with the day which celebrates the birth of the Saviour of the world. The leading features will be a charming fairy story, entitled "Shamruck; or, the Christmas Panniers," by Mr. Frank R. Stockton, illustrated by Mr. Alfred Fredericks; another admirable story, entitled "A Perfect Christmas," by W. O. Stoddard, with illustrations by Mr. Howard Pyle; and a most amusing pantomime, entitled "The Magic Clock," by Mr. G. B. Bartlett, with an illustration by Mr. F. S. Church. There will be a number of minor attractions, which we will leave our readers to discover for themselves, and the whole will be inclosed in an entirely novel and unique cover, ornamented by one of Mr. Nast's most capital drawings.

CALUMET, MICHIGAN.

We have had snow three times this winter, and it has gone off twice, but the weather is very stormy now, and I guess it will stay this time.

I go to school. We have quite a large school-house, it being 190 feet long, 100 feet wide, and 100 feet in height, from the ground to the top of the belfry. The foundation is sandstone, which extends for about eight feet above the ground. There are eighteen rooms in use as school-rooms. I am in the next room below the High School. I am ten years old, and study reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, drawing, higher geography, and grammar.

There are many curious things about the mines here. One shaft is 2400 feet deep. I have not been through the mines since the new machinery was put in, but I have been told that it is a great deal stronger and larger than the old. They have built two new engine-houses, and rebuilt two old ones, and put new machinery in all. One of the boilers at the Hecla is thirty feet long, and there are two of that size at the Calumet.

PERCY P.

MICHIGAN CITY, INDIANA.

I am a little girl eleven years old. I have a pet dog which is part blood-hound, and was named after a famous fox-hound in Pennsylvania. I have ten dolls. Some are pretty old, and have retired from active life. My aunt Mate made most of their clothes. One is quite plain, and I call her the old maid. The beauty of my family I call Daisy. My mamma has been sick four years. I have a brother Charley, four years old last June. We have a bird whose name is Major. We call it that after papa; his friends always called him the Major. Then there is John, the cat, who is four years and a half old; he belonged to my sister, who died four years ago.

This is a great locality for sand. We have a number of high hills; one called Hoosier Slide, covered with white sand, is over a hundred feet high. We have a nice harbor, which has been improved every year since we came here. We don't like it here as well as we did in Michigan. We sent a box of clothing to a little girl there who needed it very much.

MAUD S.

I am a little girl who has owned a great many cats. I lost the oldest one last November. His name was Mark Gray. He was fourteen years and eight months old. The first word I ever said was to call him "Tit-tat." Many persons said to me, "Anna, why don't you let that poor old cat be shot?" But I could not let him meet that fate. He had lost all his teeth, and I fed him on milk and biscuit till he died. I have had a great many dolls, but my favorite is a large one that Santa Claus brought me when I was three years old. I could not then lift her. She has a china head, a cloth body, and red kid gloves. I named her Lizzie M., for one of my young lady cousins, and when she married I changed the doll's name to Mrs. B. I raised twenty-four turkeys last year, and I take HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE with part of my turkey money. I have twenty-three this year, nearly all white. I like white turkeys best, because I can see them better than those of any other color when they wander off to make a nest. I have no brothers and sisters, but we have a little black girl who plays with me and helps me to drive up my turkeys. They got wet twice, and I thought they were dead, but we put them under the stove, and they revived. I have a garden and a little pit. I have five rose-bushes; one has blossoms no larger than my finger-nail. I have a bed of sweet violets; they begin to bloom in February. I have a lovely species of white asclepias that grows wild here; it looks like wax. Mamma says if it had come from the Cape of Good Hope, people would go wild about it. My pit is three feet square and one and a half feet deep. I plant in it verbenas, feverfews, Japan pinks, and rose cuttings. I cover it with boards, and when it is very cold I put a rug on top. I kept my flowers safely last winter, although it was so cold. This is November 7, and we have not yet had any frost. The roses are as pretty as in spring-time, and the garden is gay with zinnias and chrysanthemums.

ANNA MINER R.

We ask attention to the letter from two little girls which follows this paragraph. We have sent them a bound volume of YOUNG PEOPLE for 1881, which we hope will help them in making the Christmas season a glad one to their little friends the "Innocents."

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS,—Christmas is drawing near now, and you are all preparing for the Christmas tree, and lots of you are making pretty presents for your friends. We wish to ask you a favor, so now please give attention.... The pastor of the Trinity Episcopalian Church established a "Home for the Innocents." All poor little waifs are taken to this Home, and little ones are left whose mothers work out by the day. They have a nice time playing together, and some kind Sisters watch these little ones. But the church caught fire and burned down, and now the members (who are mostly poor people) are saving their money so we can build the church up again, and we are sadly afraid the little ones will lose their Christmas fun. The Sunday-school scholars have given up the tree, so they could help the church, but the "Innocents" will have *nothing*. Now won't you *all* send us some toys, or brightly colored picture-books, or Christmas-tree ornaments. Rummage your closet shelves, and see if there are not broken toys or dolls you don't care about any more, and send them to *us*. Some of you write and tell of so many things you have; can't you spare one for these children? Please do, and after Christmas we will write again all about them.

LYDIA BELLE HARGREAVES,
LULU G. RUCKSTUHL,
508 Wenzel St., Louisville, Ky.

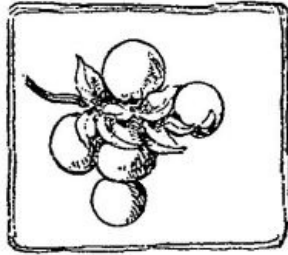
Be particular, children, to send your gifts directly to Lydia or Lulu, and not to Harper & Brothers.

LAWRENCE, KANSAS.

I am a little Kansas boy who reads your paper regularly. I am very much interested in the Wiggle department of the YOUNG PEOPLE. I sent a wiggle for No. 95 and No. 104, and it made me very happy to see them in the paper. I shall send some more. I am eleven years old, and have been going to school four years, and am in the sixth grade. I live in Lawrence, and the University of Kansas is here. When I become old enough I will go there. I want to get a good education. Then, when I become a man, perhaps I may be an editor, or write story-books. West of Lawrence a few hundred miles are the great plains. The Indians used to live there, and hunt buffaloes. The Indians have gone now, and so, I suppose, have the buffaloes.

Kansas is a good place for little boys. I used to live in Washington. D. C. But there the houses are too thick to fly a kite. Here on the prairies we boys often fly our kites to the height of two balls of twine. We have lots of room to run. Father has promised me a pony on my next birthday. He says thousands of people come to Kansas every year from the Eastern States. I wish lots of little boys from the East would come to Lawrence to live. I am very anxious to hear about Mr. Stubbs's brother.

This little picture, represents a branch of oranges sent to the office of HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE. It was cut by Mr. James Otis from an orange-tree in Duval County, Florida, which this season has borne over 2000 oranges. We thank Mr. Otis for his kind remembrance.



McKEESFORT, PENNSYLVANIA.

I am six years old, and have a little brother John sixteen months old. He came Sunday night, July 4, and he bothers me a heap—wants all my playthings, and when he gets them, breaks them all up. At night, when I want papa to read me the stories in YOUNG PEOPLE, he screams and screams to see the pictures, and I have to wait for the stories till he goes to bed. I am going to start to school this week, and I will study hard and learn to read, so I can read the stories myself. My grandpa lives on a farm, and I go to see him nearly every day to get rides on the horses, and drive the cows, and to see the men working at the water-works basin which the town is building to get water from the Youghiogheny River. The only pet I have is an Alderney heifer named Bessie, which my grandma gave me. She is so quiet I can put my arms round her neck, and hold her by the horns.

TOMMY E.

WEST NEW BRIGHTON, NEW YORK.

I am eight years old. I have a white cat with one blue and one green eye. We have a dog called Grip, a bull-terrier. He is very gentle and playful. I lost my dog called Pickles. My father is going to get me another. I go to school at New Brighton, and take French lessons, spelling, reading, and geography. I have a little brother nearly a month old, and two others. Perhaps I have said enough.

DAVY B.

It is quite proper for little correspondents who have not yet learned to write to do so by proxy; by which we mean to get their fathers or mothers to write for them while they dictate the letters. Such letters are always welcome. Master Davy B. signed his name very boldly to the letter his father wrote for him, and probably Tommy E. will soon be able to do the same.

I am a little boy seven years old last Valentine's Day. I have been taking HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE from No. 1 to the present time. I have had two volumes bound, and am saving up for the third volume. I have two numbers (duplicates), 20 and 76. I will *give* them to any of the little readers that will send me his or her address. I have eight cats and three kittens, also an English pug-dog. Pug does not like the cats, but the kittens eat out of his dish with him. One Sunday Pug went to Sunday-school, and sat on the bench beside my sister Helen. I am so interested in the story, "The Talking Leaves."

LOUIS N. W., JUN., Beverly, N. J.

HARRY VAN N.—Your description of the industries of Minneapolis is very interesting. A city where there is so much manufacturing, so much enterprise, is a good place for an intelligent lad to live in.

Six little girls at Pulaski, Tennessee, were directed by their teacher to write letters to Our Post-office Box, and bring them to her instead of their usual weekly compositions. The letters signed by S. K. A., Maggie J. A., F. W., A. B. A., M. R., and Julia R. have been sent to us, and are very

creditable to the little writers. Our thanks are due to their kind teacher for her appreciation of our efforts in behalf of young people.

ALICE McL.—For a boy of twelve who is fond of reading we know of no more enchanting book than *What Mr. Darwin Saw in his Voyage Round the World in the Ship Beagle*. This is a beautifully illustrated volume, and its price is \$3. THE BOYS OF '76, at the same price, is a fascinating book which tells young Americans about the stirring scenes of the Revolutionary war. There are three volumes of *Travel in the Far East*, by Colonel Knox, each of which boys pronounce splendid. They relate the adventures of youthful travellers in a journey to Japan and China, to Siam and Java, and to Ceylon and India, and the books, which may be purchased separately or together, cost \$3 a volume. These books are all published by Harper & Brothers. *Hector*, by Flora L. Shaw, published by Roberts Brothers, and *Boys at Chequasset*, by Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney, published by Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., are very charming books, smaller than those we have placed first on the list.

A bright boy who already has a sled, skates, etc., might be pleased with a well-furnished tool-chest or a printing-press. At twelve, boys no longer care for toys which are merely playthings.

In addition to the pretty things you already have, make little mice and pigs of white Canton flannel for your Christmas tree. If you can procure some cotton as it grows, crystallize it with alum, and dispose clusters of it here and there. There are bright little balls of different colors which may be purchased for a few cents, and used to festoon the tree, and if put away carefully they may be used for successive years. Have plenty of little wax tapers, and your tree will repay your trouble.

[Pg 111]

We desire to call the attention of exchangers to the notice which is printed at the head of the Exchange list. Please make it a rule to follow this in every instance. When a boy has five or six coins, two or three hundred postmarks, or a few relics or curiosities, and calls attention to them in these columns, many thousands of readers see the notice, and he finds himself confronted with so many replies that his embarrassment is very great. In the mere matter of postage he may find himself burdened with considerable expense, perhaps more than his pocket-money will pay, or than his parents will allow him to spend. This inconvenience, and the further peril of being thought dishonorable, may be avoided by having a correspondence by postal cards before sending any precious things away.

It is not possible for us to rectify mistakes, nor to compel delinquent exchangers to make proper returns. We prefer to think that all who avail themselves of this privilege are worthy of it. We desire and hope that every girl and boy who is numbered among our young people shall be true, courteous, prompt, and obliging. Without the exercise of these qualities, neither exchanging nor any other business can be satisfactorily carried on.

Those who have saved their back numbers, as we think all ought to do, will find a paragraph on this matter in the Post-office Box of Vol. II., No. 80. To this we refer the attention of Willie B. G., who writes to us complaining of an apparently dishonest correspondent. We can not settle difficulties which arise among exchangers, but we think careful attention to preliminary correspondence, and to the full payment of postage, would prevent much confusion.

Until after the Christmas number the pressure upon our columns will prevent us from publishing all of the large accumulation of Exchanges we have received, but we will print them as rapidly as we can when the holidays are over.

C. Y. P. R. U.

PAPER.—How many varieties of paper do you think they manufacture in Japan? Over sixty kinds are made from the fibres of various grasses and plants. "Paper," says Miss Bird, in her interesting record of travel in Japan, "is used for walls, windows, cups, pocket-handkerchiefs, lanterns, string, wrappers, cloaks, hats, and baggage covers, and is used domestically and professionally for all purposes for which we use lint, bandages, and cloths. It is so tenacious as to be nearly untearable, and even the finest kind, an exquisite and nearly diaphanous fabric, soft like the most delicate silk crepe, in which fine gold lacquer is usually wrapped, can only be torn with difficulty."

The same writer tells about the fine varnish or lacquer which we see on the beautiful Japanese trays and bowls. It is a natural varnish, the product of a tree, from which the sap is taken in the early spring. When it comes from the tree it is of the color and thickness of cream, but it darkens when exposed to the air. Lacquer is used for all kinds of purposes, from the golden shrines in the temples to the rice bowl in which the humblest cooly takes his meal.

WORK FOR LITTLE FINGERS.

Is it not wonderful, when you think of it, that with four little fingers and a thumb, two bright eyes, and the exercise of a subtle quality called taste, so much may be done to make home attractive? The young folks who have been asking the Postmistress what they should make for Christmas gifts no doubt read Aunt Marjorie Precept's "Bits of Advice" on the subject last week. But perhaps they will like to hear about some of the pretty things the Postmistress saw when, one very stormy day, she took a walk through some of the New York stores and bazars on their account. She looked specially for easy and pretty things which could be made by small but skillful fingers. A holder for the whisk-broom pleased her fancy. A frame of willow was covered with maroon silk, over which bands of black velvet were crossed, and embroidered with daisies. The willow frame may be purchased, or an ingenious boy could easily make one for his sister. A lining of old gold with bands of scarlet, or of pale blue with garnet bands, would be very striking and harmonious, and such a broom-holder is really artistic.

A graceful present for a young lady is a hair-pin box, mounted—of all things in the world!—on a wheelbarrow. Here comes in the boy's bracket-saw, to construct the barrow, into which the box must be very neatly fitted. The box must be stuffed with sawdust, and tufted closely with worsted, either by knitting-needles or with the crochet-hook, as you please. The wheelbarrow may be made of any common wood, and gilded, or it may be of black walnut, or basswood, without any other ornament than its carving.

Very elegant wall-pockets are made of old hats. Indeed, the possibilities of old or new straw hats are endless. You take a roughly braided bathing-hat which you wore last summer at the beach, line it with azure satin, twist it into any graceful shape you please, on the upper surface of the flaring brim paint or embroider a group of flowers, and to the lower attach a large bow of ribbon with broad loops, and you have an ornament which sets off the wall splendidly. The deep crown forms the pocket, and the brim makes the picturesque part, and you would hardly suppose that with so little you could do so much toward the brightening of a dull room. Father's summer straw hat (which you hid away in the attic, so that he should be compelled to buy a new one) will lend itself to your ideas of the beautiful very readily. Line it with crimson flannel, fasten a cluster of wheat, a bunch of summer grasses, or a few spears of oats to one side, and tack one bit of the brim down with a bow, and there you are with the scrap-basket, which is just what you need in the sitting-room or library.

Nothing provokes the neat housekeeper's anger like the scratching of matches on the walls, and it is very hard to teach some people never to deface the house in this way. Any little eight-year-old girl or boy can make a splendid match-scratcher by taking a round piece of wood, covering it with velvet, silk, morocco, or Java canvas, on which a little pattern has been worked, and then gluing on its reverse side a piece of sand-paper. Finish it with a loop of ribbon, and present to Uncle John or Cousin Ralph, and while they may appreciate its delicate hint, they will not resent it as personal.

A dozen sheets of blotting-paper, fastened together with a bow, and bearing on the outside a dainty little pencil drawing, either a cute little Kate Greenaway sort of picture, or a landscape, or a few wild roses and ferns, with a motto, is an acceptable gift to either a lady or a gentleman. Still prettier is this gift when a little panel picture, wood or card-board covered with satin, and then painted, is laid on the upper surface of the packet.

People who board are often quite bothered to find a good method of keeping account of the weekly wash. A laundry-cushion, which is simply a pincushion with the words shirts, collars, cuffs, handkerchiefs, etc., in a row down one side, with the numbers from one to a dozen corresponding to the articles, is a very convenient device for them. They need only stick a pin into the number of each article they have sent away, and count the things when they are returned. The writing on this cushion can be done with indelible ink.

A shaving-case, made of two pieces of pasteboard cut into the shape of a mug, covered with silk, and filled with tissue-paper, a little pasteboard handle at one side, is easily made, and will be acceptable to almost any gentleman.

The pretty articles here described were seen at the Exchange for Women's Work, No. 4 East Twentieth Street, New York city.

KATHARINE R. MCD.—Thanks for your kindness in copying for us the metrical table of the Kings and Queens of England. It will be better, however, for the boys and girls to go to the history of England; and follow the line of the royal succession for themselves. We prize most what costs us most labor.

BEACON BEACH, ONEIDA LAKE, NEW YORK.

DEAR POSTMISTRESS,—I am in the woods now, but am soon going up town to my home. I was ten years old a few weeks ago, and my papa has given me HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE for a birthday present ever since it began. The other day my mamma and I took a walk in the woods, and found two kinds of fungus—one was the "earth star" (a good description

of which is in *Appleton's Cyclopædia*), the other was tiny toadstools growing on oak leaves in the sand, with slender, shining stems, black as ebony, and whitish tops, which look as if designed for fairy parasols. Would you please tell me the name?

I have a puzzle for the C. Y. P. R. U.'s that I found in a newspaper: "I went out in the woods and got it; after I got it, I looked for it; the more I looked for it the less I liked it; I brought it home in my hand because I couldn't find it."

IRMA C. F.

Who can guess the answer to Irma's puzzle? I will give you three weeks to think it over, and will tell you the answer in No. 114. I am sorry that it is not possible from the description to identify the particular kind of fungus which Irma has found. There are more than two hundred fungi which infest the living oak, and myriads more which grow on dead leaves. Even were the fairy parasol sent, it would probably be withered by the time it reached this Post-office Box.

I am very much obliged to dear Irma for writing plainly on purpose to save my eyes. The eyes of a busy Postmistress like myself have to work pretty steadily, and they always feel thankful to such thoughtful little girls. But you ought to see how indignantly they snap when some of the pencilled letters arrive, almost faded out before the Postmistress gets hold of them.

The members of the C. Y. P. R. U. will find in this number, under the title of "The Fairy Fungi," by Mrs. S. B. Herrick, a most interesting account of the good and mischief worked by these strange little inmates of the vegetable world. The article on "Children of the Pantomime," by Mrs. Helen S. Conant, gives a striking and pathetic picture of the lives led by the children who are employed by London managers in getting up these entertainments. "A Novel Present" will help some of the girl readers who are undecided what to make for some little friend for Christmas.

PUZZLES FROM YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

No. 1.

DOUBLE SQUARE.

Across.—1. Play. 2. A knot. 3. A place of public contest. 4. Reposes. 5. A ringlet.

Down.—1. The handle of a plough. 2. More perfect. 3. Fleшы. 4. Schisms. 5. A volcanic earth.

MILTIADES.

No. 2.

EASY ENIGMA.

In eel, not in fish.

In urn, not in dish.

In gun, not in shot.

In rope, not in knot.

In cent, not in dollar.

In necklace, not in collar.

Look not in this for wealth or fame,

But seek and find the writer's name.

E.

No. 3.

TWO EASY DIAMONDS.

1.—1. A letter. 2. To jump. 3. A salutation. 4. A mark made by pressure. 5. An insect. 6. A letter. Centrals read down and across—Something which never comes after noon.

BLANCHE S.

2.—1. A letter. 2. Evil. 3. A part of the body. 4. Something that is never old. 5. A letter.

EDWIN and MARIE S.

No. 4.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

I am slow and easy-going, and never was known to hurry;
You couldn't, if you should try your best, put me into a flurry.
My 4, 5, 8, 7 is part of the human frame.
My 7, 2, 3, 1 is what scholars a species name.
And by 8 little letters I'll be handed down to fame.

WILL A. METTE.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN No. 108.

No. 1.

Magna-Charta.

No. 2.

C
B O W S
B O W I E A T E
C O W P E N S S T A R S
W I E R D E R A
E N D S
S

No. 3.

Ton, Eaton, Canton, pistol.
Constantinople.

Correct answers to puzzles have been received from May Ridgway, May Terry, Maggie J. Laurie, "Brooklyn Reader," Grace C. Hayes, Helen S. Woodworth, Blanche Spinning, Jesse S. Godine, Frankie Wadsworth, Gracie S., Grant K., Mabel Strickland.

The answer to "What am I?" published in No. 109, is Bark; and to the Enigma, Napkin.

[For Exchanges, see third page of cover.]



PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS.

ENIGMA.

I'm headless, mouthless, yet my back is handsome, too, and strong;
I sometimes have a tail to boast, although it is not long;
I'm wonderfully formed and well,
As England's proudest ladies tell,
That bear me up aloft;
I'm useful, and for show.
Some birds and insects know me well.
Now try if you my name can tell.

TWO BOYS.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

"A fellow can't have any fun,"
Says Harry, at the pane;
"I wish the tiresome day were done—
I hate the horrid rain.
That boy looks jolly over there;
His clothes are nice and old;
I'm sure his mother doesn't care
How often he takes cold."

"Some fellows do have lots of fun,"
Sighs Jimmy, in the street;
"Up at the window there is one
Who has enough to eat,
And books to read, and clothes to wear,
And pleasant things to see;
I don't believe that boy would care
To change awhile with me."

SCIENTIFIC PUZZLES.

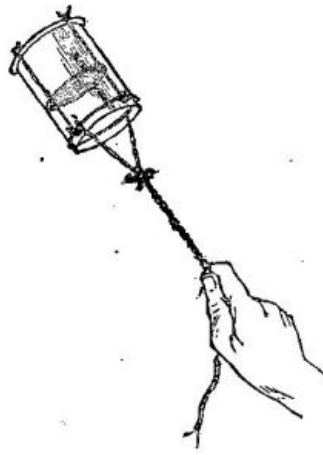


FIG. 1.

Fig. 1 is an illustration of centrifugal force, or the tendency of a body revolving rapidly around a fixed centre to fly off from that centre. A tumbler is placed upon a round piece of card-board, to which strings are attached so that they hold the glass firmly in place. Some water is poured into the glass, and it can then be swung round the head without the water being spilled, even when the glass is upside down. For the experiment shown in Fig. 2 a wine-glass, a piece of cork, a plate, and some water will be needed. Pour the water on the plate, light a piece of paper resting on the cork, and cover the flame with the glass turned upside down. What follows? The water rises in the glass. The reason is that the burning of the paper having consumed a part of the oxygen in the air, its volume is diminished, and the pressure of the outside atmosphere forces the water into the glass.

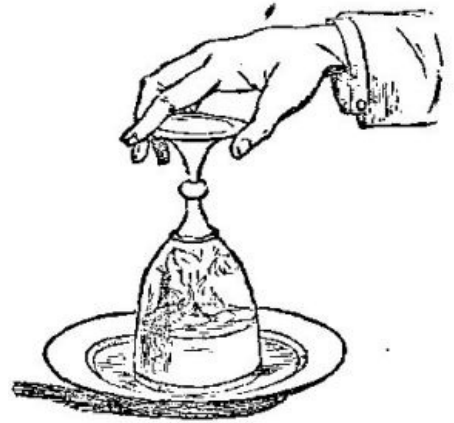
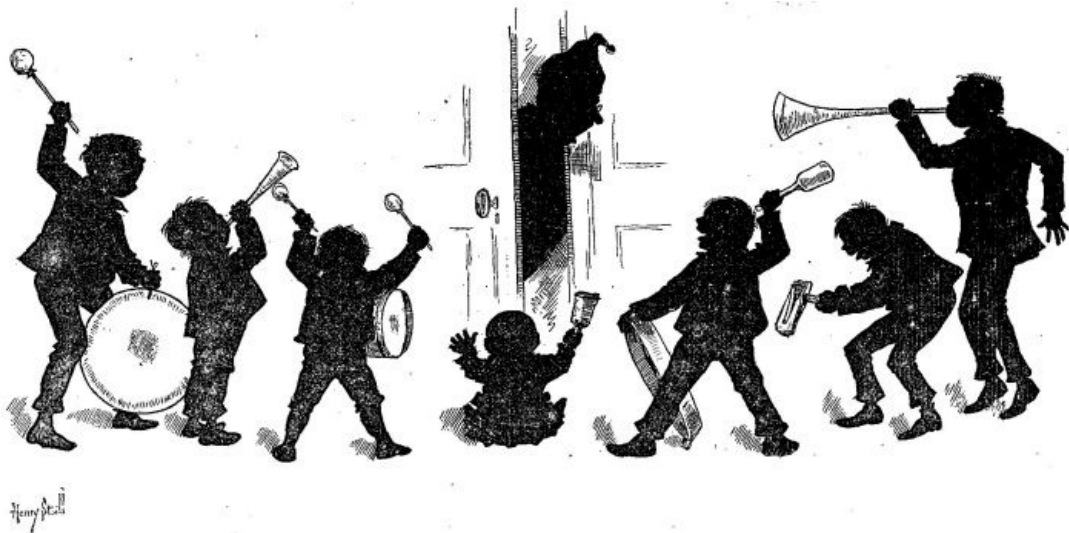


FIG. 2.



BEFORE DAYLIGHT—CHRISTMAS MORNING.

"Merry Christmas, Grandpa! What you going to give us?"

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Begun in No. 101, HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE.

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