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THE ART OF STORY-TELLING

THE ART OF STORY-TELLING

With Nearly Half a Hundred Stories

BY

JULIA DARROW COWLES

Author of "Stories to Tell"

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PREFACE

In preparing this book the author has sought to awaken a keener perception and a higher appreciation of the artistic and ethical value of story-telling; to simplify some of its problems; to emphasize the true delight which the story-teller may share with her hearers; and to present fresh material which answers to the test of being good in substance as well as in literary form.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to Miss Mabel Bartleson, children's librarian, and to Miss Ida May Ferguson, of the children's department of the Minneapolis Public Library, for their thoughtful assistance, and to the authors and publishers of copyrighted stories included in this volume, for their generous aid. Specific credit is given in connection with each story.

J. D. C.

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PART I

THE ART OF STORY-TELLING

The Art of Story-Telling

CHAPTER I

Story-Telling in the Home

THE home, the school, and the library have each a distinct purpose in story-telling. These purposes may be more or less complex, they may in some instances coincide, yet the fields are separate, and each has its own fundamental reason for presenting the oral story to the child.

In the home, the chief object in story-telling is to give content, to satisfy. The child, becoming tired of his toys or of his games, comes to his mother and begs for a story. He wants to be taken into her lap, cuddled within her arms, and entertained. Oh, the wonderful, the far-reaching opportunities held by the mother in such moments as these! The child is in a quiet, receptive mood, and the stories told him at such times will never be forgotten; their influence will follow him as long as he lives. Nothing that he can learn in school in the after years will abide and enter into the essence of his being as will the stories which his mother tells him. Strength of character, purity of life, truthfulness, unselfishness, obedience, faith — all may be made beautiful and attractive by means of stories.

Nor is the directly ethical training the greatest good achieved by story-telling in the home. Nothing else so closely links mother and child in a sweet fellowship and communion of thought. Nothing else so intimately binds them together, nor so fully secures the confidence of the child. When they enter together the enchanted realm of story-land, mother and child are in a region apart, a region from which others are excluded. The companionship of story-land belongs only to congenial souls. And so the mother, by means of stories, becomes the intimate companion, the loving and wise guide, the dearest confidant of her child.

Not all the stories of the home need be ethical in their teaching, though all stories worth telling have a foundation of truth. There should be a wise blending of fairy stories, mythological tales, fables, nonsense verses, and true nature stories; and the advantage of story-telling is that it may be carried on in connection with many of the household duties, with no diminishing of the story's charm. While the mother sews or embroiders or mends, while she stirs a cake, or washes dishes, she can tell a story which will not only entertain or influence the child, but will carry her own thoughts away from the ofttimes dullness of her task into realms of beauty and delight. Then, too, many a childish task may be robbed of its seemingly tedious character by the telling of a story during its progress, or as a reward when the task is completed.

Let me beg of you, mothers, do not think that you cannot tell stories. Try; try; keep on trying; and ease in telling is bound to come. Do not think of yourself in the telling; think of the story and of the child who listens. Nothing else matters.

It takes time to search out and familiarize oneself with just the stories that are best worth telling, but surely no mother can find a more important or more worthy object upon which to expend the time. Librarians and story-tellers within the past few years have prepared lists which make such selection comparatively easy, and classified lists are included in the present volume.

The very little child can grasp only the simplest story, but the essential facts of any story which he can comprehend, can be simply told. A story for a little child should have few characters, little if any plot, and a familiarity of action or place. Mother Goose and similar nursery rhymes naturally come first for little children in the home. The kindergarten collections of stories contain good material, and these can be followed by or interspersed with the simplest myths and fairy tales.

Just as children love the companionship of animals, so do they love stories of animals; and when these animals do the things that children do, an element of surprise and new delight is added. Children intuitively want the right to prevail. They love the old tales wherein animals talk, and the crafty old fox is always beaten by the good little hen.

Bible stories should be told to children day by day. They can be made very simple in outline, but they should be told over and over, with a distinction made between them and the fables and folk tales. The latter may teach a true lesson, but the former teach *The Truth.* And not only should we tell the Old Testament stories of heroes and of great wonders, but the story of Christ's birth, of his life, his death, and his resurrection, should be made a part of every child's early teaching in the form of stories reverently told. They will make a lasting impression; an impression deeper than the most eloquent sermon heard in maturer years.

A careful choice of the kind of stories told to little children lays not only a sound moral foundation, but a foundation for good literary taste.

A child brought up from its earliest years on stories from the Bible, Anderson, Æsop, Stevenson, and Field, will instinctively detect and reject trash when he begins to read for himself. But the supply of good literature must be kept at hand, for children *will* read *something.*

What sweeter bit of verse can a mother repeat to the child she is hushing to sleep than this:

> Sleep, little pigeon, and fold your wings —
>   Little blue pigeon with velvet eyes;

Sleep to the singing of motherbird swinging —
Swinging her nest where her little one lies.

In through the window a moonbeam comes —
Little gold moonbeam with misty wings;
All silently creeping, it asks: "Is he sleeping —
Sleeping and dreaming while mother sings?"

The stanzas are from "A Japanese Lullaby," and are selected from a host of similarly dainty verses in *Lullaby Land*, by Eugene Field (Charles Scribner's Sons).

Robert Louis Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verse* is another storehouse of treasure for mothers. Some of his rhymes, such as "Good and Bad Children," are quite equal to Mother Goose in their good advice administered in quaintly merry form, while his "Foreign Lands" and "My Shadow" teach children to idealize the every-day happenings of the home life.

How could a mother better remind her small boy or girl that it is time to waken than by repeating his lines:

A birdie with a yellow bill
Hopped upon the window-sill,
Cocked his shining eye and said:
"Ain't you 'shamed, you sleepy-head!"

When a mother habitually repeats to her child stories and verses of the character outlined, she is not only forming his taste in literature along right lines, but she is helping to enlarge his vocabulary.

"What does 'embark' mean, Mamma?" is sure to follow the first or second recital of Stevenson's "My Bed Is a Boat":

> My bed is like a little boat;
>   Nurse helps me in when I embark;
> She girds me in my sailor coat
>   And starts me in the dark.

And "gird" will also need interpreting. These words will soon become a part of his normal vocabulary. He may not use them in his everyday speech, but he will not need to have them explained to him when he comes upon them in his later reading. Teachers invariably know when a child comes from a home of culture and of good literary taste, by the foundation already laid. The child's own forms of expression and the range of his vocabulary are unmistakable evidence of the home influence and teaching.

A literary sequence which will give the child a knowledge of literature as a development or a growth—not as a vast accumulation of unrelated parts—can be carried through his reading and study. This subject is taken up in the chapter upon "Systematic Story-Telling," and while it is essentially the work of a teacher, the foundation for it may be laid by the wise mother who starts her child along right lines through the medium of her story-telling.

It has already been said that all stories worth the telling have a foundation of truth. The story with which this chapter closes is a beautiful example of a nature story which embodies a higher truth. It is found in Mrs. Gatty's *Parables from Nature* (The Macmillan Company):

A Lesson of Faith*

A mild, green caterpillar was one day strolling about on a cabbage leaf, when there settled beside her a beautiful Butterfly.

The Butterfly fluttered her wings feebly, and seemed very ill.

"I feel very strange and dizzy," said the Butterfly, addressing the Caterpillar, "and I am sure that I have but a little while to live. But I have just laid some butterfly eggs on this cabbage leaf, and if I die there will be no one to care for my baby butterflies.

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* Adapted for telling. By permission of the publishers.

I must hire a nurse for them at once, but I cannot go far to seek for one. May I hire you as nurse, kind Caterpillar? I will pay you with gold dust from my wings."

Then, before the surprised Caterpillar could reply, the Butterfly went on, "Of course you must not feed them on the coarse cabbage leaves which are your food. Young butterflies must be fed upon early dew and the honey of flowers. And at first, oh, good Caterpillar, they must not be allowed to fly far, for their wings will not be strong. It is sad that you cannot fly yourself. But I am sure you will be kind, and will do the best you can."

With that the poor Butterfly drooped her wings and died, and the Caterpillar had no chance to so much as say "Yes," or "No."

"Dear me!" she exclaimed, as she looked at the butterfly eggs beside her, "what sort of a nurse will I make for a group of gay young butterflies? Much attention they will pay to the advice of a plain caterpillar like me. But I shall have to do the best that I can," she added. And all that night she walked around and around the butterfly eggs to see that no harm came to them.

"I wish that I had someone wiser than myself to consult with," she said to herself next morning. "I might talk it over with the house dog. But, no," she added hastily, "he is kind, but big and rough, and one brush of his tail would whisk all the eggs off the cabbage leaf.

"There is Tom Cat," she went on, after thinking a few moments, "but he is lazy and selfish, and he would not give himself the trouble to think about butterfly eggs.

"Ah, but there's the Lark!" she exclaimed at length. "He flies far up into the heavens and perhaps he knows more than we creatures that live upon the earth. I'll ask him."

So the Caterpillar sent a message to the Lark, who lived in a neighboring cornfield, and she told him all her troubles.

"And I want to know how I, a poor crawling Caterpillar, am to feed and care for a family of beautiful young butterflies. Coul you find out for me the next time you fl away up into the blue heavens?"

"Perhaps I can," said the Lark, and of he flew.

Higher and higher he winged his way unti the poor, crawling Caterpillar could not eve hear his song, to say nothing of seeing him.

After a very long time—at least it seemed so to the Caterpillar, who, in her odd, lumbering way, kept walking around and around the butterfly eggs—the Lark came back.

First, she could hear his song away up in the heavens. Then it sounded nearer and nearer, till he alighted close beside her and began to speak.

"I found out many wonderful things," he said. "But if I tell them to you, you will not believe me."

"Oh, yes I will," answered the Caterpillar hastily, "I believe everything I am told."

"Well, then," said the Lark, "the first thing I found out was that the butterfly eggs will turn into little green caterpillars, just like yourself, and that they will eat cabbage leaves just as you do."

"Wretch!" exclaimed the Caterpillar, bristling with indignation. "Why do you come and mock me with such a story as that? I thought you would be kind, and would try to help me."

"So I would," answered the Lark, "but I told you, you would not believe me," and with that he flew away to the cornfield.

"Dear me," said the Caterpillar, sorrowfully. "When the Lark flies so far up into the heavens I should not think he would come back to us poor creatures with such a silly tale. And I needed help so badly."

"I would help you if you would only believe me," said the Lark, flying down to the cabbage patch once more. "I have wonderful things to tell you, if you would only have faith in me and trust in what I say."

"And you are not making fun of me?" asked the Caterpillar.

"Of course not," answered the Lark.

"But you tell me such impossible things!"

"If you could fly with me and see the wonders that I see, here on earth, and away up in the blue sky, you would not say that *anything* was *impossible,*" replied the Lark.

"But," said the Caterpillar, "you tell me that these eggs will hatch out into caterpillars, and I *know* that their mother was a butterfly, for I saw her with my own eyes; and so of course they will be butterflies. How could they be anything else? I am sure I can reason that far, if I cannot fly."

"Very well," answered the Lark, "then I must leave you, though I have even more wonderful things that I could tell. But what comes to you from the heavens, you can only receive by faith, as I do. You cannot crawl around on your cabbage leaf and reason these things out."

"Oh, I do believe what I am told," repeated the Caterpillar — although she had just proved that it was not true — "at least," she added, "everything that is *reasonable* to believe. Pray tell me what else you learned."

"I learned," said the Lark, impressively, "that you will be a butterfly, yourself, some day."

"Now, indeed, you are making fun of me," exclaimed the Caterpillar, ready to cry with vexation and disappointment. But just at that moment she felt something brush against her side, and, turning her head, she looked in amazement at the cabbage leaf, for there, just coming out of the butterfly eggs, were eight or ten little green caterpillars — and they were no more than out of the eggs before they began eating the juicy leaf.

Oh, how astonished and how ashamed the Caterpillar felt. What the Lark had said was true!

And then a very wonderful thought came to the poor, green Caterpillar. "If this part is true, it must all be true, and some day *I* shall be a *butterfly.*"

She was so delighted that she began telling all her caterpillar friends about it—but they did not believe her any more than she had believed the Lark.

"But I know, I *know,*" she kept saying to herself. And she never tired of hearing the Lark sing of the wonders of the earth below, and of the heavens above.

And all the time, the little green caterpillars on the leaf grew and thrived wonderfully, and the big green Caterpillar watched them and cared for them carefully every hour.

One day the Caterpillar's friends gathered around her and said, very sorrowfully, "It is time for you to spin your chrysalis and die."

But the Caterpillar replied, "You mean that I shall soon be changed into a beautiful butterfly. How wonderful it will be."

And her friends looked at one another sadly and said, "She is quite out of her mind."

Then the Caterpillar spun her chrysalis and went to sleep.

And by and by, when she wakened, oh, then she *knew* that what the Lark had learned in the heavens was true — for she was a beautiful butterfly, with gold dust on her wings.

CHAPTER II

Why Tell Stories in School?

EVERY lover of children knows that a good story, well told, is a source of the purest joy; but while this of itself is sufficient reason for story-telling in the home and in the nursery, it is not sufficient reason for general story-telling in the school. Happiness is a powerful ally of successful work, but it never should be substituted for the work itself; it may well be made one of the means of attainment, but never the object to be attained. Useful service is a far higher ideal than personal happiness, and it should be the ideal held before the child who enters school.

As all educational methods have for their ultimate object that of making the child of today the good neighbor, the true friend, the useful citizen of tomorrow, so we have a right to question the recent and growing demand for story-telling in our schools. What is its object? Does this object aid in the ultimate end to be attained?

First of all let us consider the well-recognized fact that through story-telling a teacher may come into so close and happy a relationship with her pupils that they will respond to her suggestions and be molded by her influence to a degree not easily attainable by any other means. A story may be told as a means of restoring order in a roomful of restless children, or when some untoward occurrence has brought the tension of school discipline dangerously near to the breaking point. This use of the timely, the appropriate, story is worthy of consideration by teachers far beyond the primary grades.

Stories may be used as an aid to language work. The diffident, self-conscious child who cannot be induced to talk upon the ordinary topics of school work, can be aroused into forgetfulness of self and made to respond with growing animation to questions regarding a story that has awakened his interest. A "point of contact" may be established with even the dullest child if his interests are studied and the right story chosen for telling. Sometimes the story may need to be improvised to fit the occasion. A story chosen, or especially written to meet the need of some particular child, has in more than one instance influenced his whole after life.

Lessons of unselfishness, of thoughtfulness, of cleanliness, of patriotism, of obedience—of all the characteristics which we wish to cultivate in the children—may be impressed by means of stories. This field of story-telling should begin in the home, but it may well extend on into the school room.

A love of nature and of outdoor life may be strengthened by stories of birds and animals, of trees and of plant life, thus leading naturally to essays and poems upon the same subjects for later reading.

The funny story has its legitimate place in the school room, although there are teachers who would as soon think of introducing a bit of fun into a church service as into a school session. But fun is a wonderful lubricant, and there are times when a funny story will oil up the pedagogical machinery as nothing else could.

In the more advanced grades stories may be used to awaken an interest in history, both local and general, ancient and modern. Nothing better can be devised for making the dry bones of names and dates take on life, than the telling of an interesting story of the time and the characters of the lesson. Such stories should not be told as an end in themselves, but as a means to an end — the awakening of interest in historical subjects by giving life and reality to historical characters.

In the same manner an interest in the works of the best authors may be aroused by telling the story of one character in a book, or by telling part of the story of a book and leaving it at an interesting point. There are many children, boys especially, who leave school after passing through the seventh or eighth grade. If they have not formed a taste for good literature, their reading after leaving school is likely to be without value if it is not positively injurious. One of the surest means of leading such boys to read and enjoy good books lies in the hands of the teachers of these grades. Let her tell stories from Dickens, from Scott, from Cooper, from Stevenson; let her tell stories from local history, general history; stories of discovery, of science, and of art. Let her make these things attractive, and show her pupils where more of the same fascinating material may be found.

So thoroughly is the value of this class of story-telling understood that progressive librarians throughout the country are having "story hours" at the libraries for the purpose of reaching boys of this age and bringing them into closer touch with the treasures of the library shelves. Teachers in districts having any large percentage of boys of this class can accomplish far-reaching results by devoting some portion of each week, at least, to telling stories having this special end in view.

With the foregoing objects—a sympathetic understanding between teacher and pupils, better discipline, help for the self-conscious and the "dull" pupil, character lessons, the development of a love of nature, an interest in history and in good literature—all attainable through story-telling, there remains little ground for question as to the work coinciding in its results with the ultimate object of our common school education. But let the teacher have a definite object in her story-telling. Let her use this new-old art as a means of arousing her pupils to action, to achievement. A story told in school should not be offered as a sugary, educational confection which will destroy the taste for solid food, but as a spicy condiment to whet the appetite for a substantial feast.

CHAPTER III

How to Choose Stories for Telling

THERE are certain subtle qualities which a story must possess in order to give pleasure through its telling, which are not necessary in the story which is to be read. These qualities are of form rather than of substance. They are those qualities which permit of the personality of the speaker entering into the narrative to such an extent that the story becomes a recounting of something *known to her*. No matter how remote in point of time or place, the story must be of a character which can be personally set forth. I do not mean by this that the one who tells the story should be thrown into the foreground, or that there should be any use of the pronoun "I"; but simply that the teller of the story should be able to set it forth with all the earnestness and intimacy of a personal narrative, and the story itself must therefore possess the form which makes this possible.

A story of this character may be so told to a roomful of small children that it will hold them breathless with interest even at the close of a hard day's work, and *when the dismissal bell is ringing,* as the writer has inadvertently proved.

To some, the story that is adapted in substance and in form for telling, makes instant appeal. Its possibilities are intuitively recognized. To others, only a critical examination and analysis will show whether the story is one to which children will listen with delight. Of course, after all is said and done, the true test of the story lies in telling it.

What, then, are the essential requirements in the form of the story?

The story must begin in an interesting way. The first sentence, or at most the first paragraph, should locate the story and introduce its hero. To be sure the "location" may be that delightfully indefinite past from which so many of childhood's stories emanate — the "Once upon a time" of the fairy tale or of the "little small Rid Hin"; or it may be "many years ago"; or "in ancient times," as in the story of "Why the Cat and Dog Are Enemies"; or simply "once"—"There was once a shepherd boy who called 'Wolf,'" or "The Sun and the Wind once had a quarrel."

Of course the time may, on the other hand, be very definite—"'Twas the night before Christmas"—but in either case the story starts out positively, the place or time is assigned, the subject of the story is introduced. Then you will see the children, their expectation aroused, settle themselves for the delightful developments which are to be unfolded, for the denouement which is sure to follow, and their eager faces are all the incentive needed to arouse the story-teller to her best endeavor.

The story, properly introduced, should move forward clearly, somewhat concisely, toward a well-defined end or climax. The form should be mainly narrative or conversational, with vivid touches of description never prolonged. There should be life, action, dramatic action, but very little of explanation. The incidents of the story should be so arranged as to be self-explanatory in their sequence.

For small children, repetition has a special charm—repetition such as is to be found in

"The Three Bears," or "The Cock and the Mouse."

For older children there may be introduced a little more of the descriptive form, but it is well to beware of adding much of either description or explanation. Even "grown-ups" enjoy the straightforward narrative that delights the child, and the introduction of detail soon grows irksome and uninteresting, even to the most conscientious listener. And no child is a "conscientious listener." He listens for love of the story. If it does not interest him he stops listening and does something else.

The story must reach a climax and stop there. Many a good story has been spoiled by its ending. Story-tellers sometimes remind one of a man holding the handles of an electric battery. The current is so strong that he cannot let go. The story-teller must know when and how to "let go." Let us suppose that, in telling Hans Christian Anderson's story of "The Nightingale," the story-teller — after the delightful denouement of the supposedly dead Emperor's greeting to his attendants, where he "to their astonishment said 'Good morning!'" —

were to add an explanation of the effect of the nightingale's song in restoring the Emperor to health! It would be like offering a glass of "plain soda" from which all the effervescence had departed.

Bring the story to its self-wrought denouement and—let go. Do not apologize for the ending, do not explain it, do not tack on a moral—just "let go," and you will leave all the tingle and exhilaration of the magnetic current still in the veins of your listeners.

So much for the structural form of the story. Next let us consider its

Point of Contact

Has the story something which is in common with the life and experience of the listeners? Has it a familiar groundwork? Does it deal with familiar objects or actions? In other words, is it "understandable" from the child's point of view? Not that all the characters nor all the adjustments of the story need to be those which the child already knows by experience, but there must be some common ground from which a start may be made. Then the story may lead on into wonderful regions of fancy or into remote times and places which only the imagination can trace. For instance, of what value or interest would the story of "Toads and Diamonds" be to a child who never had seen a toad and who had no knowledge of what a diamond was like? And does not the boy's understanding of "How Thor Went Fishing" lie in the fact that *he* has fished?

Little children love to be told stories of the life which they know by daily contact; stories of the home and of the home industries, of school, of children, of pets and animals. They live in "a daily fellowship with nature and all creatures." Fairy tales and stories of animals are doubly delightful when the fairies and the animals do the things which children do. This does not imply that the story be commonplace, for the normal activities of children are far removed from the commonplace, and the story, having its point of contact established, should, through its imaginative or its moral influence, carry the child into quite unexplored regions of beauty and truth.

This leads us to another determining factor—*the* determining factor—in choosing a story.

Is It Worth Telling?

The structural form of a story may be changed; with more difficulty a point of contact may be established by a bit of suggestive explanation, but if the story content is not good, no amount of "doctoring" will make it worth the telling.

Suppose we apply these tests: Is the effect of the story helpful? Does it strengthen the imagination? Does it teach a right principle of action? Does it inspire a love for the beautiful and the true? Does it inspire reverence for the Creator and appreciation of the works of His hand? Does it exemplify sane and happy living? Does it teach neighborly kindness? Will its telling make a child better and happier? If the story calls for an affirmative answer to any of these questions, if, in other words, its teaching is simple, pure, and true, then it is by all means worthy of telling.

It is not necessary that the story should make no mention of selfishness, of craftiness, of evil temper, or of disobedience to laws moral or physical; but no story in which evil is rewarded or in which the wrongdoer triumphs should ever be told to children, for in its essence such a story is not true, its teaching is not true; it is not in accord with God's eternal laws. Children assimilate long before they analyze.

At first glance it may seem easy to decide as to the moral influence of a story, but there are differences of opinion even here, and some writers condemn unsparingly that old acquaintance of our childhood, Jack, of Beanstalk fame, and set him down as an arrant thief and murderer whose crimes brought him riches and comfort in his old age. And the tale of Cinderella, while it can be said to cast no stain upon the character of its heroine, is condemned as leaving an impression, upon the impressionable mind of childhood, that all step-mothers are hard and cruel and unjust. As the Mother Goose stories are dealt with at greater length in a later chapter, I will make no comment now upon these criticisms. But they are worthy of due consideration, and go to show that it is not always as easy as it may at first appear, to judge the exact influence of a story, and some of our old acquaintances which have been accepted simply because they are old acquaintances, may really need to be given the "cut direct."

This much is safe to say: If you have any doubts about the influence of a story being wholly good, leave it untold. There are so many good stories, so many whose teaching is wholly and positively helpful, that there is no need of hesitating over one which presents a doubt.

There is one more qualification which should be required of the story told to children. It should be written in

Good Literary Form

Since one of the objects of story-telling is to cultivate a taste for good literature, the story chosen should not only be tellable in its form and true in its essence, but it should be artistic in its workmanship. It should be written in pure, simple English, fitted to the thought expressed. But, it may be objected, few story-tellers ever give a story in the exact language in which it is written. This is true, for if the story is learned word for word, the narrator is very apt to give a recitation, rather than to tell a story. At the same time the true story-teller will learn her story so thoroughly, will become so at home in every essential detail, that the spirit and style of the writer will be assimilated and so bound up with the story itself that the literary qualities will be retained and their essence imparted to the orally reproduced story. So, only, can appreciation and love for the beauty of literary forms be imparted to the children by means of the verbal story. Herein lies the *art* of the story-teller.

CHAPTER IV

The Telling of the Story

HAVING chosen the right story for telling, the next consideration is how to tell it in the best manner possible.

Aside from all question of voice, enunciation, ease of manner — which, though important, are more or less matters of personal habit or physical endowment — there are two absolute essentials to successful story-telling: a thorough knowledge of the story, and forgetfulness of self.

The best story may be spoiled by the manner of telling. A good story told by a master of the art will be a source of delight, while the same story told by a self-conscious, poorly prepared novice will be annoyingly tiresome.

The first step in the preparation, then, must be a thorough assimilation of the story. This does not involve memorizing, but the substance of the story must be made your own. Formulate in your own mind its plan or outline. What is its climax? What are the essential facts leading to this climax? How do they follow, in order to bring about the final surprise or culmination?

Having this outline well fixed in mind, begin to fill in details. Note the bits of wit or of wisdom which strengthen the story; the apt phrases or happy turns of expression which exactly fit the thought. Memorize these, and these only. Think the story over, again and again, until it becomes a personal possession — something which you *know*. Then begin formulating it. You can do this mentally, inaudibly at first, following the general mode of expression of the written story, so that you will tell it in a manner which conforms to the literary style of the author. This is not difficult, for if you have selected a well-written story, the style in which it is written will be in keeping with its character and will seem the natural mode of expression. This assimilation of style as well as of substance takes the place of literal memorizing. It allows full liberty in the telling, while memorizing only cramps and hampers.

Repeat the story mentally until you not only know its substance as a personal experience, but until you are so familiar with its literary style that you could scarcely tell that particular story in any other form. This assimilation of style as well as of substance takes time, but the ability to learn a story readily will come with practice. After you have mastered the *method* of learning, you will be able to acquire new stories with little difficulty.

You are now ready to tell the story orally; not at once to an audience — at least not until you have gained sufficient experience to know to just what extent you can depend upon yourself — but to an imaginary assembly. A doll makes a very good "practice auditor," and is not inclined to encourage you overmuch by her responsiveness. If your imagination is good, a sofa pillow or a chair will do as well. You will probably make your first audible effort at an opportune moment when you are left quite alone in the house, and the first opening door will bring the rehearsal to a definite close. But in time, if you persevere, the family will become used to it. As for yourself, however, you will probably find that an amused audience of one, even though unseen, is more conducive to self-consciousness than an interested audience of one hundred.

A teacher presenting a story to her own class of pupils will not, of course, have so many difficulties to overcome. She and the children are on a familiar footing; she talks to them every day; she knows the number and responsiveness of her audience, the size of the room, the carrying power of her own voice. She is scarcely conscious that these factors enter into the success of story-telling. But when a story-teller addresses an unknown audience, these factors assume unexpected importance.

I have in mind an early experience when a story hour was arranged at one of the branch libraries of a large city. I knew that the "fifty-seven varieties" of childhood were accustomed to assemble there and that the room was not large, but I was not prepared to find two hundred children compressed within little more than two hundred square feet of space. My natural voice proved wholly inadequate. I began, but saw at once that the children at the farther end of the room could not hear, and I stopped. Taking a more central position, I found an entirely new voice — one so much higher pitched that I am sure I should never have recognized it as my own, elsewhere — and I told the stories. The new voice carried, and under the conditions sounded wholly normal. The children grew quiet, and for nearly an hour we traveled together through fairy-land, across western prairies, along the streets of Hamelin town, into the Empire of Japan, and among the Korean folk. How we did enjoy it!

The incident taught me two things at least: one, the value of having an intimate knowledge of the stories to be told, so that no unexpectedness of conditions could cause them to take flight; the other, the necessity of being able to adapt oneself to unexpected conditions.

The need of adapting the story, or the mode of telling, to the requirements of the immediate occasion, can only be learned by watching your audience.

Be sure your voice reaches the farthest child in the room. You need not use a loud tone, but a little difference in the pitch will make a great difference in the carrying quality. If the children must exert themselves, hold themselves tense, in order to hear, they will soon relax the effort and become restless and indifferent.

If a child becomes inattentive, address your story to him for a time, and turn to him frequently afterward. Each child loves to feel that the story is being told to *him*. For this reason, the story and the children are the only things to be taken account of. The story should be told directly to the *individual* children, not to the *mass* of children.

At a recent story hour the children were grouped upon the left hand side of the large audience room, and the older people, of whom there were a goodly number, upon the right hand side. A small cousin of the story-teller—aged three—who had heard the stories until he could tell them himself, sat upon his grandfather's lap on the "grown-up" side of the room.

The story-teller devoted her attention to the children's side of the room exclusively. She began with the story of "Raggylug," by Ernest Thompson-Seton. The moment the story was finished, a small voice from the neglected side of the room demanded, "Now tell it to *me!*"

The incident is used to show that each

child wants to feel that the story is being told to him, and emphasizes the need of telling stories with a personal directness of appeal.

I have said that the story and the children should be the only things of which the story-teller takes note. A consciousness of one's own self as the actor upon the boards, spoils all.

This self-consciousness may be betrayed by a nervous twirling of a handkerchief, a twisting of rings or bracelet, by an arranging of the hair or the dress. It may be but a slight action in itself, but it betrays the fault which will be felt, though probably not defined.

Forget yourself. Become so interested in your story that you can think of nothing else — except the children who are drinking it in.

You may safely use as much dramatic action as springs spontaneously from a vivid telling of the story, but it must never be a conscious effort for dramatic effect. Give yourself perfect liberty. As you watch your audience, interpolate, enlarge, omit, explain briefly, as you see the need arise — but you can only do this if you *know* your story. The changes made should all be kept in harmony with the style of the original narrative, and used only in order to stimulate or to arouse your hearers to a quicker perception or a better understanding.

Take time to bring out the essence of the tale, to impress the beauty of the description, to enhance the humor of a situation. A story should never be hurriedly told, any more than it should be hurriedly prepared.

It is quite possible for the same story to be so told as to teach exactly opposite lessons, and yet without any alteration of the essential facts. This point is well illustrated by the story of "Robin Hood and Sir Richard-at-the-Lea," taken as an example. In this story it would be easy to call undue attention to Robin Hood as the "robber outlaw." On the other hand, it is equally easy, by a few wise omissions, or a difference in handling, to make prominent the characteristics which caused him to be loved by all his "merrie men," trusted by the poor and helpless, and worshipped as a hero by the boys of all succeeding generations. This difference in handling applies to nearly all of the Robin Hood stories, and to many of the old nursery tales as well. They illustrate the point which I have made, that the same story may be so written, or so told, as to leave entirely different impressions upon the mind.

The story-teller may not as a rule require special training in the use of the speaking voice, but it is essential that she enunciate easily, clearly, and agreeably. A well modulated voice tires neither speaker nor hearer.

To summarize —

Know your story; know it so thoroughly that it is flexible under your handling, yielding easily to the varying conditions under which it is told while retaining all its essential qualities of style and of substance:

See that your voice carries:

Forget yourself:

Do not hurry:

Bring out the true essence of the tale:

Tell it with directness of appeal to your immediate audience:

Carry it to its climax:

"Let go."

CHAPTER V

Use of the Story in Primary Grades

IN the primary grades of the schools, stories may be told as a relaxation, as an incentive to learning to read, and as a means of enlarging the vocabulary of the little people and thereby giving them greater freedom of self-expression. In the more advanced grades the story is used to awaken interest in new subjects, to fix the essentials of a lesson, and to cultivate a taste for the best in literature. But in all the grades, as well as in the home, it may be made the means of carrying home a lesson or of clinching a truth.

The use of the story in the primary grades coincides in some degree with its use in the home, but it goes much further. The old method of primary teaching whereby a child was made by laborious exercises to *learn to read* in order that he might be able in later years to enjoy the treasures of literature, has undergone a radical and healthful change.

Under the former method, the child, through the barrenness of his labor, was often discouraged in his attempt to master reading, and he had but a dim idea at best of the benefit which was to accrue to him from learning.

Under present methods, the child, before he is given any of the laborious drill work—which is as essential as ever to his learning to read for himself—is told stories, is led into the beautiful realms of literature, and is made to realize what is in store for him when he has mastered the technical difficulties of reading. After that, the drills and the oral stories are carried on together, and the stories form a tempting incentive to hard work upon the drills. Children are willing to work, and to work hard, if they see a desirable object to be attained.

The primary teacher who makes judicious use of stories in her class room lays hold upon one of the most efficient aids to successful work. But when a story has been told to the children, it has but half served its purpose. If it was worth telling, it is worth remembering; and there is no means by which the story may be so thoroughly impressed upon the child's mind as by his telling it himself.

The first advantage gained lies in the fact that if the child knows that he is likely to be called upon to re-tell the story, he will listen more intently, more acutely. This in itself helps him, because he learns to be attentive, and to concentrate his thoughts. When he tries to re-tell the story, if he has not grasped the essentials or cannot follow the sequence, then he will have to listen again—more carefully, this time—and he will have shown wherein he needs help.

With very young children, it is a good plan to talk the story over, after it has been told, bringing out the essential facts, and so forming a framework or outline upon which the child can more readily rebuild the story.

The opportunity which the reproduction of a story affords of helping the child to express himself in clear, correct English, and to enlarge his vocabulary, is of exceptional value. At the same time his absorption in the story itself overcomes his timidity or self-consciousness to a wonderful degree, and often arouses a child from a dull lethargy of indifference.

Again, no reading lesson will admit of the freedom of expression in face, tone, and general attitude which the telling of a story permits. Why? Because the child enjoys it. It is a natural thing to him, while reading, in the early grades, is unnatural.

Teachers should be careful not to let the children who are eager to re-tell the story, monopolize the time. It is those who are shy and backward who need the exercise most. The eager ones may lead the way, but the shy ones should be encouraged to follow.

Dramatization goes a step farther than reproduction. The dramatizing or playing of a story makes it take on life and reality for the child. When he hears a story read or told he forms a mental picture which is more or less hazy and easily dispelled. When he has for himself played the story, assumed one of the characters, and acted its part, then the thought of the story becomes crystallized. He grasps its meaning, sees its beauty, understands its truth, and *remembers* it. This intensifying of his mental pictures results in more expressive reading as well as in better language work and in greater power of self-expression.

Another distinct advantage gained through dramatizing is the bringing of the life of literature into direct contact with the child's life, and so causing all literature to become more real and vital.

The play—for so it seems to the child—forms a connecting link between the home or play-life to which he has been accustomed, and the new and strange life of the school. It helps to banish diffidence, and to establish a familiar atmosphere and a spirit of fellowship with the teacher and the other pupils. It is also a source of pure joy to the child, and "the education that brings joy along with careful and exact training is better than the kind that omits the joy." Would that every teacher might remember this!

It need hardly be said that while dramatizing in the schoolroom may be helpful and vitalizing when under the control of a teacher who recognizes its educational value, it may, on the other hand, become inane and even silly if used simply as an amusement or as a time-filler.

While much of the value of dramatizing must depend upon the insight and oversight of the teacher, much also depends upon the selection of material. "Not what *may* be dramatized, but what *should* be."

If a teacher has clearly before her the thought of *why* we dramatize, then the question of *what* to dramatize will be more readily determined.

Stories of nature, in which the children represent birds, bees, flowers, the wind, the seasons, are all useful for the purpose. Such stories quicken the imagination and bring the child into closer relationship with outdoor life.

An especially good example of a story to dramatize is the "Lesson of Faith," in the first chapter of this book. Teachers will find this story especially appropriate to their Easter exercises.

After the story has been told often enough for the children to become familiar with its thought and outline, let some little girl represent the Caterpillar, and another the Butterfly. Have a boy represent the Lark, and eight or ten other children the butterfly eggs.

Begin the dramatizing by having this last group of children curl themselves down quietly together, while the little girl who represents the Caterpillar moves slowly about near them. Then let the Butterfly, slowly moving her wings, settle beside the Caterpillar and address her, telling her of the little eggs, and asking her to care for them. Then have the Butterfly droop her wings and become quiet, as though dead. It is best, then, to allow this child to resume her seat while the others carry on the little play.

Next have the Caterpillar indulge in her soliloquy, and presently the Lark should come flying to her side. Then follows the dialogue between the two, the Lark flying away and returning as described in the story.

As the Caterpillar declares that the Lark is making fun of her when he tells her that she will one day be a butterfly herself, have the little butterfly eggs — now caterpillars — begin to move about, one brushing against her, and let them begin to nibble as though eating.

After the Caterpillar has shown her great surprise, have her show her great joy at learning that the Lark's message is true. Then she should go to one or two of the children in the seats, who represent the Caterpillar's friends, and tell them the great good news which she has learned.

They are to show their unbelief of what she has said.

Next have these friends come to her and tell her that it is time for her to form her chrysalis and die.

Then the Caterpillar becomes very still, the little green caterpillars, meanwhile, eating and moving about very quietly.

As the final act of the little drama, have the Butterfly emerge from her chrysalis, spread her wings, and fly away.

This story answers perfectly to the requirements of dramatization, and it is clearly not one which *may* be dramatized, but one which *should* be. The children who take part, and those who look on at the little play, will have their mental conception of the story, which was first given in words only, intensified; made real and lasting.

When children imitate, say, the robin or the crow, see that their motions accord with those of the bird represented—have them hop like the robin, or walk like the crow. The eagle and the swallow fly poised on outstretched wing, while the humming bird's wings move rapidly. All these differences, if noted, teach the children to observe. If a child makes a mistake, such as hopping when representing the crow, do not tell him what his mistake is, but have him find out before the next day how the crow moves when on the ground. This is of especial value if he can have an opportunity of watching a crow for himself, since it teaches him to observe closely; to use his own eyes.

Fairy and folk tales afford excellent material for dramatizing, as do some of the familiar mythological stories. They quicken the child's imagination by helping him to understand the personification of the forces of nature, and this understanding is greatly helped if he not only hears and reads the stories, but plays them as well.

The story of Midas is well adapted for dramatizing. Choose a boy to represent the avaricious king, and another boy for Bacchus, who bestows upon him the golden touch. Other children, either boys or girls, may be selected to typify the apple tree and the rose bush—moving their leaves in the breeze till stiffened by Midas' touch. A little girl must, of course, personify Midas' little daughter.

After all these have been turned to gold, Midas visits Bacchus and implores his aid in getting rid of the fatal power which has been given to him. Then he returns with joy and restores the apple tree, the rose, and, best of all, his own little daughter, to life. The details of the story will have to be worked out according to the version chosen, but the story is too well known and too readily found, to make it worth while to give it in detail here.

The reproduction of a story also through constructive mediums — clay modeling, painting, or paper cutting — helps the child to a physical application of the knowledge which he has gained, and so strengthens the impression which has been made.

A little further on, when lessons in nature study, geography, and history are about to be introduced, the child can be led into them almost unconsciously, through talks and stories of nature, of travel, of foreign countries, and of biography and history. Under this method of teaching, children are made to realize that history is a narrative of real events, directed by people who did great things, great enough for the whole country or the whole world to be interested in, and the men of history become heroes of flesh and blood; geography steps out from between the covers of a book and becomes a multiplied home, the home of many people and of many races, each home possessing characteristics which interest and appeal to the child; nature study becomes an introduction to new friends clothed in feathers and fur.

When stories are reproduced in the school room the work should not be undertaken as a formal language drill. The story should be left to make its appeal to the childish imagination and should then be expressed in his own words. Let the exact drill upon words be done with sentences which are designed for that purpose, but let the reproduction of any story which is worthy of a place in literature be a spontaneous expression upon the part of the child, so that the life and beauty of the story may be preserved to him. A story loses its grace and its ethical value when hammered into a rigid form of words. Word drill is right and proper in its place, but the reproduction of a worth-while story demands that the thought be kept living and active, and the form of expression free.

CHAPTER VI

Jingles, Fables, and Folk-Lore

THE first stories told to a child are almost invariably the Mother Goose rhymes and jingles, beginning perhaps with:

> Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man!
> So I will, master, as fast as I can:
> Pat it, and prick it, and mark it with T,
> And toss in the oven for Tommy and me.

Or this, from the *Chinese Mother Goose* (Fleming H. Revell Company):

> Pat, pat,
>   A swallow's nest we'll make,
> And if we pat some money out
>   We'll buy ourselves a cake.

These are usually accompanied by appropriate finger plays.

Can we give a tangible reason for this choice? Why do all mothers turn to them with unwavering fidelity? Why do all children love them?

There can be but one answer. Before a child is able to follow the thread of the simplest story, he can enjoy the musical cadence of these rhymes. There is rhythm in their measure, an allurement of sound in their words and phrases which pleases his ear and satisfies his senses long before their words carry any intelligent thought to his mind.

Why are "memory gems" taught in the primary grades of the schools? The children understand but little of their true beauty of thought, but the cadence of the lines fixes them in the memory, and the deeper meaning comes with later years.

It is because this is so, because the children love musical cadence before they understand words, that mothers can follow or mingle the Mother Goose melodies with more modern verses such as those of Field or Stevenson. The little child will love such lines as these, by Henry van Dyke:

I guess the pussy-willows now
Are creeping out on every bough
  Along the brook; and robins look
For early worms behind the plough.

Or the introduction to "The Fountain," in James Russell Lowell's *Poems* (Houghton, Mifflin Company):

Into the sunshine,
  Full of the light,
Leaping and flashing
  From morn till night.

Into the moonlight,
  Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower-like
  When the winds blow.

Into the star-light
  Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
  Happy by day.

The true poetry of these lines will not appeal to him in the beginning, but the cadence of the lines will, and they will become fixed in his mind. The beauty of the poems will be his in later years.

As soon as a child is old enough to follow the thread of a simple story, fables and folk-lore will lead him into the realm of the world's earliest literature. These are the stories which delighted the race in its childhood, and they have delighted childhood in all succeeding generations. These old fables are so familiar that they are incorporated into our everyday conversation. How often do we refer to "The Hare and the Tortoise," to the "Dog in the Manger," or to "The Goose That Laid the Golden Egg?" How frequently do we illustrate a point by a reference to " Sour Grapes," or to " A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing? " Yet probably not one in twenty knows that all these familiar illustrations find their origin in the fables of Aesop or La Fontaine.

These old classic fables are a part of the literature " which the world has chosen to remember." They have become a part of the literary coin of the realm. In his introduction to Aesop's Fables, Joseph Jacobs says: " In their grotesque grace, in their quaint humor, in their trust in the simpler virtues, in their insight into the cruder vices, in their innocence of the fact of sex, Aesop's Fables are as little children." As an example:

> It happened that a fisher, after fishing all day, caught only a little fish. " Pray, let me go, master," said the fish. " I am much too small for your eating just now. If you put me back into the river I shall soon grow, then you can make a fine meal off me."
>
> " Nay, nay, my little fish," said the fisher, " I have you now. I may not catch you hereafter."

It has been well said that the fables are the child's best introduction to the study of human nature. They are "an interpretation of life." That animals are made to talk, and to exhibit human traits, only adds to the charm of the story without lessening its ethical value. The child applies to all nature his own standard of ethics.

The child's ability to understand is far in advance of his ability to read, and the old folk-tales which have been handed down orally from generation to generation, and later gathered into volumes for the children of all nations to enjoy together, are a veritable mine of delight to both story-teller and listener.

Folk tales and fairy tales are so interwoven that it is difficult to separate them. That some of both are open to criticism is conceded, but with such abundance of supply there is no need of telling a story which presents even a doubt as to its value.

In her introduction to "The Story Hour," Kate Douglas Wiggin says: "Some universal spiritual truth underlies the really fine old fairy tale; but there can be no educational influence in the so-called fairy stories, which are merely jumbles of impossible incidents, and which not infrequently present dishonesty, deceit, and cruelty in attractive or amusing guise." Here we have the true test which anyone may apply: an underlying "universal spiritual truth." Does our story contain such?

Two very familiar nursery tales which owe their origin to the folk-lore of old—namely, "Jack, the Giant Killer," and "Cinderella"—have recently been brought into question upon the ground of their moral teaching. The critics in question look upon Jack as a thief and a murderer, who "lived happily ever after" upon his ill-gotten gains. For my own part, I find less to condemn in Jack's treatment of the Giant, than in making a hero of a boy who was lazy and disobedient. The Giant had robbed and killed Jack's father, and he was wicked and cruel to all, and Jack could scarcely be blamed for trying to regain his father's stolen wealth, or for cutting down the bean-stalk when the Giant was descending for the purpose of killing him and, in all probability, his mother. But the false note in the story, to my mind, lies in selecting a boy who was avowedly lazy, idle, disobedient, and neglectful of his mother, for the hero of a tale of such marvelous deeds. The tale of Jack, the Giant Killer, however, has many versions, and there is no need whatever, when telling the story, of giving to Jack any of these undesirable traits. Rather, picture him as a boy capable of performing heroic deeds. The change is easily made.

On the other hand, I would champion the story of "Cinderella." The recent criticism brought against this story is that it leads boys and girls to believe that all step-mothers are cruel. I do not think so. The stories of "The Babes in the Woods," and of "The Princes in the Tower," do not teach that all uncles are cruel. Of course the fact that Cinderella's step-mother was a *step*-mother might be so emphasized in the telling as to give this impression, but it is not emphasized in the story—not, at least, in most of the versions which I have read. Selfishness and pride are set forth in the half-sisters in all their unattractiveness; while Cinderella's final triumph serves as a means of showing her gentle and forgiving nature. These are the points to be brought out in the story-telling, and it would seem to me to be an unjustifiable robbery to take the story of Cinderella from the child's early store of fairy tales. What a thrill of exquisite delight is felt by the child when the magic of the god-mother's wand turns Cinderella's rags into the robe of a princess and she is whirled away in her golden chariot to meet the prince. It is a story of goodness rewarded and of evil punished, but all in such a magical and wonderful way! I can feel the early thrill of it yet — and so can you.

There are different versions of both these stories, and it is not a difficult matter to tell either one in such a way as to do away with all objectionable features. As was shown in a previous chapter, much of the impression which a story leaves is due to the manner of its telling. The story of Cinderella certainly contains the "underlying universal, spiritual truth," and so answers to the test of a truly "fine old fairy tale."

American story tellers should not go far afield for their tales of folk lore, and overlook the two distinctive sources afforded by our own country. The stories of the North American Indian, told by camp fire or in tepee, are full of poetic imagery, of symbolic truth, and of heroic valor. They form the original legendary lore of our land, and they should be told to the children, preparing them for a later reading of the poets and authors who have shown us the picturesque as well as the tragic side of the history of the Red Man.

The other American source of folk lore tales is found in the south, and is typified at its best in "Uncle Remus," though not confined to him. As has been said, the dialect story is difficult for a child to read, and Uncle Remus is undoubtedly most thoroughly appreciated by children of a larger growth. But no child can resist the drollery or the rollicking fun of the true darkey story when it is *told* to him.

The following story of "Ithenthiela" which closes this chapter is a good example of the folk lore tales of the Indian. Only a portion of the original story is here given, but it is to be found, with other good stories for telling, in *Tales of the Red Children,* by Abbie F. Brown, and James M. Bell (D. Appleton and Company).

"The Story of Ithenthiela" *

Many years ago there was a brave Indian boy named Ithenthiela, the Caribou-Footed, who lived far away in the great northwest.

One day, as Ithenthiela went through the woods, he saw a squirrel in the branches of a tall red spruce tree, and, raising his bow, he shot an arrow at it. Down fell the squirrel, but the arrow lodged in the branches.

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* Adapted for telling. By permission of the publishers.

Then Ithenthiela started to climb after the arrow, but he had not climbed far when he heard a great pack of wolves howling at the foot of the tree. So he climbed higher, and as he mounted, the arrow went up, too.

Up, up, it went, until at last it came to the sky itself. The arrow passed through the thin blue, and Ithenthiela wriggled after it.

Great was Ithenthiela's surprise when he entered the Sky Country; it was so different from what he had expected. He had imagined a glorious country where the sun always shone, and where huge herds of musk-oxen, caribou, and moose roamed at large. He had expected to find many of his own people camped in wigwams here and there, preparing to fight with other tribes. But instead, the air was damp, dreary, and cold; no trees or flowers grew; no herds of animals ran on the silent plains; the smoke of no wigwam greeted his anxious eyes; no war-whoop or hunting cry was heard. But far in the distance against the sky shimmered a great white mass, like a pile of snow when the sun shines upon it in the early summer. Toward this great white wonder ran a winding path from the very spot where Ithenthiela stood.

"I will follow it," thought he, "and see what I find in that shining wigwam over there."

As he passed along he met an old woman who said to him: "Who are you, and where are you going?"

"I have come from far," said Ithenthiela. "I am the Caribou-Footed. Can you tell me who lives over there in that big white wigwam?"

"Ah," said Capoteka—for that was the old woman's name—"I know you, Ithenthiela! Long have I known that sometime you would come here. But you have done wrong; this is no country for man. In that great wigwam over there lives Itakempka; and he is unhappy because he has lost his great medicine belt. Until he gets it again, no one will be happy in the Sky Country. The belt is at the tepee of the two blind women who live far beyond the wigwam which shines so white, and no one has been able to get it from them. But whoever cap-tures it, and takes it from the blind women, will have the daughter of Itakempka, the beautiful Etanda, for his wife."

At these words off started Ithenthiela, and, traveling hard, he soon came to a tepee which stood alone; the home of the two old blind women.

Dull and gloomy was the covering of the wigwam; but from the tiny hole in the smoke-begrimed moose skins came a strange, bright light at which Ithenthiela marveled.

But when he entered he saw what it was that gave the mysterious light. It came from the great medicine belt which hung upon the wall, and surrounding the belt were the skulls of many men.

The belt was studded with gems. From great rubies sparkled the rays of crimson; from huge amethysts shone streams of purple; from mighty sapphires came the deepest blue, and gorgeous emeralds shot rays of green; while great cairngorms scintillated with yellow glow. The lights changed from blood-red to purple, from purple to blue, from blue to green, from green to yellow, and ever and anon faded altogether, to be succeeded by the mixed rainbow of color from fair opals or by the pure white light of great diamonds. This was the magic belt of Itakempka.

The blind women bade Ithenthiela welcome and said to him:

"Tell us, Ithenthiela, when you are about to leave, so that we may bid you good-by."

Now, Ithenthiela had noticed that each of the old women had behind her back a knife of copper, long and sharp and gleaming; and that one sat on either side of the door, waiting.

"Ah!" thought he, "when I leave they mean to kill me. But, I shall fool them."

In one part of the wigwam lay a muskamoot, or bag, of bones and feathers. To this he tied a string, which he pulled over the pole above the door. Then, said he:

"I am going now, Blind Women. Remember that I am old and fat, and when I leave I make much noise."

With this he pulled the string, whereat the bag of bones and feathers trundled toward the door. Immediately the two old hags stabbed; but striking only feathers, the long knife of each passed through the bag into the body of the other, and both were killed.

Then Ithenthiela took the precious belt

and hastened with all speed toward the wigwam of Itakempka. As he neared the great Chief's home he heard no sound of man or beast. Entering, he saw that all the camp was sleeping. Around the long-cold fire lay the warriors and maidens, the old men and women, and in their midst the tall Chief, decked with faded plumes.

Then for the first time, Ithenthiela drew from beneath his leathern shirt the belt of medicine. Around the wigwam flashed the rays of red, purple, green, and gold. Instantly the warriors and maidens, the old men and women, awoke. Up rose the Chief, fine and stately among them, as the color came back to his gorgeous headdress, and as the fire on the hearth sparkled into life.

Then said Ithenthiela: "Great Chief, be you happy now. I have brought you back your healing belt, the band of life, of hope, of war, and of peace. Henceforth it shall abide here in its true place with you."

Then said Itakempka: "Greatly I rejoice, O Ithenthiela! You have saved my people. Now shall the sun shine again. Now shall musk-oxen, caribou, moose, and bears live once more in our country. Again shall we see the smoke of many wigwams. Once more shall we hear the voice of many hunters, and ever and anon the war-whoop of the warriors. You have wakened us from our long winter sleep. Take you now my daughter, the fair Etanda, for your wife. But leave me not. You shall stay with me, and be a great chief after me." So Ithenthiela remained in the shining white home of Itakempka.

And still the Red Children in the distant northern lands tell of Ithenthiela when the northern lights flit across the sky.

"Ah!" they cry, with their faces bowed before that splendid light, which is to them the most mysterious thing of nature. "See the fingers of Ithenthiela are beckoning us to the home which he found for us beyond the sky."

CHAPTER VII

Myth and Hero Tale

THE world is a wonder-palace to the child. "Everything hints at something more magical and more marvelous which is to come." The inanimate objects about him are given living attributes; animals and flowers are endowed by his fancy with human thought and feeling. He talks to the clouds and the stars; he peoples the sky with living inhabitants; to him the winds are not "forces of nature"; they are boisterous companions or gentle friends.

This applies to the imaginative child, and there are more imaginative children than the most of us suspect. The imagination may be suppressed by older and "wiser" companions, or natural shyness may cause the imaginative fancies to remain unvoiced; but the fancies are there — bubbling over in fantastic follies or childish imagery, or kept in those hidden chambers of the soul to which grown-ups are forbidden entrance.

Because of this mental attitude, children are inherent myth-makers. And to the same mental attitude upon the part of the children of the race, is due the fund of mythological lore which has enriched the world's literature and inspired much of its art.

To this rich store, then, the child may be introduced by means of mythological stories. Their appeal is strong because they are in harmony with his own spontaneous interests. Froebel says: "Would'st thou know how to teach the child? Observe him, and he will show you what to do." If, then, the child so loves the myth, let us hold him and help him by means of the mythological story. Those which contain an objectionable element may readily be withheld; there are plenty which are beautiful in their form and true in their teaching.

The myth, strictly speaking, differs from the fairy story in that it personifies the forces and manifestations of nature: Aurora awakening the sleeping world with her shafts of light; Ceres presiding over the harvests of golden grain; Jove hurling the dreadful thunderbolts; and Narcissus living in the beautiful blossom which bears his name.

Few children will accept these stories as absolute statements of fact, nor need they be so presented. Whatever this personification of the universal elements may have meant to the ancient Greeks, to us it is purely imaginary; it is the fairy-land of nature. Children love to "make believe," and their own personifications of the forces of nature, while spontaneous and vivid, are a part of their imaginative world—a part of their "make believe." So, mythological stories are never accepted by them upon the literal plane of the true nature story, nor should they ever be so presented. When stories of the ancient gods and goddesses are told, they may be very briefly outlined as the imaginative stories of an ancient race. This will give them their true place, without in the least detracting from their charm.

The child who is made familiar with the old mythology by means of stories and verse, holds the key of understanding to the countless allusions of the world's best literature. He may not comprehend the deeper meaning, nor understand that they were the religion of an ancient people, but when in his later reading of some masterpiece of poetry or prose he finds an allusion to Phaeton, to Apollo, or to Neptune, he will experience the same delight that comes to one who meets an old playfellow in a foreign land.

The Hero-Tale

As the child creates a world of fancy and, when left to himself, lives within it, so marvelous deeds and achievements are to him as the daily breath of our own lives. He imagines himself the hero of such wonderful and impossible adventures that when he is told of Phaeton and his mad ride, he accepts it with the same calm appreciation which is accorded the imaginings of his own creative moods. The slaying of the Gorgon is fully in harmony with his own future plans. Not that he believes in these hero tales literally, or comprehends their deeper significance, but they fit in so perfectly with his normal habit of creative fancy that they seem to him as his very own, and he loves them.

The hero-tale appeals as strongly to the child as does the myth — probably more strongly to the boy. Indeed, the myth and hero-tale are often one, for Greek and Norse mythology abound in heroes and heroic adventures, and the lad who pores breathlessly over the thrilling experiences of a Captain Kidd, would find equal delight in the story of the Wooden Horse and the Fall of Troy, were it told him in a manner suited to his age and understanding.

The story of Arion, returning victorious from the great musical contest, and threatened by the mutinous seamen of his vessel, stirs any boy to enthusiasm, as do the adventures of Perseus, who, helped by Minerva and Mercury, slew the Gorgon, Medusa.

In another field there are the merry tales of Robin Hood, the outlaw beloved of boys, with his host of adventurous followers; and the chivalrous deeds of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Stories of the knights appeal to universal boyhood. Well do I remember a story hour in which the compact body of the audience was fringed all about with boys under whose arms were shoe-blacking kits, or bundles of newspapers. They dodged in for a story, and out again for a customer, but with one voice they demanded—it was not a request —"Give us a knight story! Give us a knight story!"

Boys can be kept from reading worthless

fiction if books and stories of the right sort are placed in their hands, and the surest way to make these attractive is to give them the contents or a part of the contents in story form first. Make the stories vivid, give them plenty of life and action, and Captain Kidd or Bunco Bill will pale before King Arthur and Ulysses.

The younger children will listen with greatest delight to stories of imaginary heroes, such as abound in folk-lore and myth — Jack the Giant Killer easily leading in favor, as has been proven by statistics.

Children demand definite aims, swift action, prompt reward of the good, and punishment of the evil. They do not understand complex motives nor the slow working out of nature's retribution. This comes with later years. The story-teller must choose her subjects in accordance with the age of the child. The world of fancy gradually gives way before the world of fact, and there comes a time when the heroes of the myth and the fairy tale are received with a certain degree of scorn. They are "out-grown." At this period the boy and girl demand heroes of flesh and blood; men who "do and dare" especially appeal to them. There must still be rapid action and swift retribution or reward, but motives begin to be understood more fully, and little by little these motives begin to be less self-centered; they touch an ever-broadening circle.

To follow this circle and select stories which fit its circumference should be the aim of mother and teacher. Here, as everywhere in teaching, the "spontaneous interests" furnish the key for selection.

The range of hero-tales is wide. Among them are the mythological and folk-lore tales previously suggested; the legendary hero-tales which are partly fact and partly fancy, such as the *Knights of the Round Table, Robin Hood,* and most of the medieval stories; and Bible stories, among which there are a host of heroic characters, whose *moral* heroism should be made the dominant note.

There are also the heroes who have traveled, explored, and dared in the interests of science, and those who have endured hardship and privation in order to carry civilization to the dark corners of the globe. There are heroes also, often unknown, who risk their lives almost daily to carry on the mechanical processes of modern civilization. Any of these will form the nucleus of stories of thrilling interest to the growing boy and girl. Let the motive for the heroic deed be felt throughout the story. Do not tack it on as a moral; let it permeate the whole narrative. It has been truly said that "To add a moral application to a story is as complete a confession of failure as to append an explanation to a joke."

The material for hero-tales lies all about us—upon the pages of the newspaper and the magazine, as well as between the covers of the Iliad and the Odyssey.

Give the boy and girl stories "clean in the warp and woof"; stories of brave, noble men and women, worthy of emulation, for "with the great, one's thoughts and manners easily become great."

The following story of "The Coming of Arthur" from *Some Great Stories and How to Tell Them* (Newson and Company), by Richard Thomas Wyche, founder of The Story-Tellers' League, is one of the best examples known to the author of the sort of hero or knight story which all boys love, and which will lead them into the realms of the best and purest literature.

The Coming of Arthur*

One dark stormy night a long time ago, in a land beyond the seas, old King Uther lay upon his bed dying. He was weeping and lamenting, not so much because he was leaving this world, as because he had no son or daughter to come after him and rule England. There were two old men who stood near the king, whose names were Bleys and Merlin. When they saw that their king was silent in death, they passed out into the black night and walked down toward the ocean where the great waves came rolling in from the deep.

The night was stormy, and they noticed that the waves grew larger and larger. They counted them — one, two, three, up to the ninth — which seemed to gather half the sea. Suddenly, on the highest crest of this wave, they saw a shining ship in the form of a dragon, and all from stem to stern the deck was covered with shining people. No sooner had they seen the ship than it disappeared. But nevertheless this great wave came rolling in and tumbled at their feet. Strange to say out of this wave there rolled a little naked child, and Merlin picked it up and cried, "The King! The King! An heir for Uther!" Then the long wave swept up the beach, wrapped about the old man and flashed like fire. After which there was a calm, and the stars came out, and the elves and fairies blew their horns from cliff to cliff.

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* By permission of the author, and publishers.

Merlin gave the little child to an old woman to nurse. He was given the name of Arthur, and as the years passed by he grew into a beautiful boy with blue eyes and golden hair. Merlin, who was a very wise old man, became the boy's teacher.

But let me tell you a story about the boy. One day, as Arthur was walking out all alone in the sunny fields, he came upon a little girl sitting upon a bank of heath, weeping as if her heart would break, and saying: "I hate this fair world and all that 's in it." She had been beaten for a fault of which she was not guilty. When she looked up there stood the boy, Arthur. Whether he could walk unseen like his old teacher Merlin, who was something of a wizard, she did not know, but there he stood smiling at her. He dried her tears, comforted her heart, and was a child with her. But one day after that when she saw him again he was so dignified and cold she was afraid of him. But again when she saw him his ways were sweet and they played as children together. They were golden hours for her and for him. She said then, " Some day he will be King."

As Arthur grew into manhood he wanted a sword, as all boys did in those days. One summer day he was in his boat on the lake. All around him spread the shining water, above him bent the sky, soft and blue. He moved to the center of the lake and stopped. It was noon, and he sat thinking. Perhaps he was wondering what he would do when he became a man. Suddenly he heard the water ripple, and near by he saw, rising from the lake a white arm and hand holding a sword. Arthur reached out and took the sword and then the hand disappeared.

The hilt of the sword was in the shape of a cross, studded with jewels that sparkled and flashed. He pulled it from the scabbard and the blade was so bright that it hurt his eye to look at it. On one side of the blade he saw cut in the steel in the oldest language of all the world, the words, "Take me," but on the other side, in the language of the people, "Cast me away." It made him sad to think he must cast it away. He took it to his old teacher Merlin, who was then a hundred winters old. Merlin said: "'Take me' means that you must take the sword, clear the forest, let in the light and make broad pathways for the hunter and the knight; break up the robber bands and bandit holds; drive back the heathen that come swarming over the seas, burning the houses and killing the people." Then he whispered into Arthur's ear and said: "Some day you may be king. After you have ruled the land and made it better, the time will come when you may cast the sword away, but that is a long way off."

The years passed. Not since the dark stormy night on which King Uther died had there been a strong ruler in England. The people fought among themselves. The heathen came swarming over the seas; the wild animals came from the woods and carried off the children. The land was going to ruin. One day the people came together and said: "We must make one man king."

Whom do you suppose they crowned? Merlin, with his knowledge and power, had Arthur lifted up and put on the throne. Many believed he was the rightful king, but others said: "Away with him, he is no king of ours, he is base-born." But then Arthur spoke to the people in the hall, and asked all the young men who would help him rule the land to come forward. Many heard his manly voice and came and stood before him. He said to them: "Will you speak the truth; be pure; right the wrong; be strong, yet gentle; be true in love; obey the king and your conscience?" When they said "yes," they kneeled before him, and he made them his knights. When they arose from the knighting, he spoke to them in a low deep voice of authority and told them that he wished to make a good king, and that he wanted them to rule the land and make the world better, and the people happier.

While he stood speaking to them, for a moment every man seemed to favor the king; their faces were radiant. Then suddenly three rays of light fell as if from heaven, and lit up the faces of three tall queens, who stood near the throne to help the king at his need. Near him stood his old teacher Merlin, and the Lady of the Lake who, it was said, made and gave him Excalibur, the wonderful sword. After that, other young men came and took the vows of knighthood, until there were hundreds of knights. They were called Knights of the Round Table.

Then King Arthur went against the heathen, and in twelve great battles drove the last one from the country. One day, as he was passing with his army through the streets of a village, he saw, standing by a castle wall, a beautiful young woman. He did not know her, nor did she know him; for Arthur was clad simply as one of his knights, and not in his kingly robes. Arthur could not forget the face. He was in love with the young woman, and wanted to make her his wife and queen. When he returned to his palace, he called Sir Bedivere and two other knights, and sent them to search for the young woman.

The young woman's name was Guinevere, called the pearl of beauty, and her father was an old king, Leodogran, King of Camelaird. When the knights stood before him, and said, "King Arthur wishes Guinevere to be his wife and queen," the old man spoke roughly to them, and said, "Who is Arthur, that I should give my daughter in marriage to him? He is base-born, and not the son of a king. Even though he has helped me in battle, how can I, being a king, give my daughter in marriage to a man that is not a king, or the son of a king?"

When Leodogran was persuaded to make further inquiries, and heard of Arthur's birth and boyhood, of the wonderful sword Excalibur, of the three rays of light at his coronation, and of his pure life and great deeds, he still doubted.

He sat upon his seat and actually nodded, napped, and kept the knights waiting. But while he napped, he dreamed, and in his dream saw a great battlefield starting at his feet and sloping away as far as the eye could reach. On this field armies were passing and moving. Arthur, the newly crowned king, with his army, was victorious and glorious. When Leodogran woke up, he called the knights and said: "Yes, Guinevere, my daughter, may go."

Some time after that, King Arthur called Sir Lancelot, his best knight and warrior, and sent him to bring the Queen-to-be to his palace. Sir Lancelot and the other knights with him rode away on horseback, while King Arthur stood and watched them from the gates as they disappeared. Guinevere was ready and came with Sir Lancelot. It was the first of May, when the earth was white with hyacinths. The woods were all abloom and seemed full of singing birds. Guinevere rode on horseback by Sir Lancelot. Each day couriers went before and pitched a tent where the Queen-to-be might rest at noon. The journey was soon at an end. Sir Lancelot had entertained Guinevere with talk of the tourney, the chase, the hunt, and of King Arthur and his noble deeds. Sir Lancelot was so strong, yet gentle and tender, that she could not help but like him, and love him. When King Arthur came out to meet her, clad in his kingly robes, he seemed so tall and dignified that she felt a little afraid of him. But she knew that she was to be his wife and queen. Straightway they went to the church, and there before the highest of altar shrines, the bishop made them man and wife, and blessed them. Then as they went from the church King Arthur's Knights, clad in stain-less white, marched before him with trumpets and a song:

Blow trumpet, for the world is white with May!
Blow trumpet, the long night hath rolled away!
Blow thro' the living world, "Let the King reign!"

And that was the coming of King Arthur.

CHAPTER VIII

Holiday and Vacation Stories

STORIES fitted to the holiday seasons, and the out-door stories of vacation time are always a source of delight to both story-teller and listeners. Each holiday has its quota of timely stories; and by no other means can the spirit and the lesson of a special day or season be more vividly impressed upon a child's mind than by a well-chosen, well-told story. Many mothers and teachers understand this, and a still larger number would find undreamed-of pleasure and resultant good in a practical test of the statement.

The spirit of Thanksgiving may be made active in the child and a lasting impetus for good imparted through stories which are strong, and full of the Thanksgiving atmosphere.

The same is true of stories pertaining to Christmas, to New Year's, to Washington's and Lincoln's Birthdays, to Memorial Day, and to all other days that are generally observed, and whose lessons teachers are expected to impress.

In making up special day programs, if teachers will devote one number to a good, strong story, appropriate to the occasion, it will prove not only one of the most interesting features of the day, but the one which will make the most lasting impression. This applies to the higher grades even more emphatically than to the lower grades where stories are more frequently told, and are, in consequence, less of a treat and an innovation.

Vacation Stories

After the first few blissful days of vacation idleness, children of school age begin to grow restless, and are ready for occupation or entertainment. This natural desire opens up a useful and delightful occupation for teachers, or for others who are interested in children and capable of telling them stories in a fascinating way. This consists of a series of "story hours in the open" which may be arranged for the summer months. The work should be planned systematically, with a definite object in view for each series, and with special regard to grouping children of the same approximate age.

One series may be made up of stories of out-door mythology, or fairy tales dealing with out-door life. They may be told upon a lawn or in some park, with the children seated upon the grass in informal groups, and the story-teller in their midst. The outdoor environment will give the children a sense of participation in the events of the story which cannot be gained within four walls.

A park or a bit of natural woods makes an ideal setting for a series of Robin Hood tales, or for tales of chivalry. The boys and girls will people the woods about them with the characters of the story, and the tales they hear under such conditions will not be easily effaced.

Excursions to parks, or near-by lakes, or woods, seem an almost necessary accompaniment to stories of the trees, the birds, the wild life of the floral and the animal world. Material for such stories is abundant. There are the works of John Burroughs, Olive Thorne Miller, Dr. Long, Kipling, Thompson-

Seton, and Charles G. D. Roberts, with a host of others which any library or book store can furnish.

Boys and girls will show a vital interest in stories of local history, if the stories are not thus labeled.

The early history of the region in which they live, the struggles, experiences, and adventures of the early explorers of the territory surrounding their own home, may be made intensely interesting; and if the group of listeners can be taken to the spot which forms the setting of the story, the bit of history becomes most vital and real.

This plan of out-door story-telling combines the benefits of the usual vacation activities with the legitimate good of the story hour as conducted in our libraries during the winter months.

Stories of industry, and of the development of a given line of commerce or manufacture are full of interest for boys especially. These may be told in connection with the leading business interests of the city or community in which the stories are given.

Every state, every city, affords story material which may be so cast as to rival the wonders of Aladdin's lamp. These stories are not, as a rule, ready-made. They require study, research, preparation, but the warp and the woof are there, ready at hand in the records which any state or city library holds, and it remains for the story-teller so to weave the fabric of her story that it shall attract the fancy and stir the imagination. It need not be a literary masterpiece, but it must have life and action; it must tell of difficulties overcome, with a triumphant ending of final achievement.

CHAPTER IX

Bible Stories

OF ALL the stories that we may tell our children, first in importance are the stories of the Bible. During the early years, when the most lasting impressions are made, when faith is simple, when the thought of God's presence and love is natural, the Bible stories should be told over and over again.

There should be no attempt at this time to interpret the stories or to bring out theological questions. The stories should be told in all their original simplicity, using as far as possible the Bible language, which is brief, strong, picturesque. No possible improvement could be made over the wording of the Creation Story as told in the first chapter of Genesis and the first three verses of the second chapter. The children will not tire of its telling, and it should become as familiar to them as are their nursery rhymes. The shame is upon us as fathers and mothers that this is so seldom the case.

The story of the flood, divided into its four parts, as given in the collected stories of this book, should be made equally familiar to the children. A comparison of these stories with the Bible narrative will show that the original language has been retained, and only such detail and repetition as would confuse the little child, have been omitted. The literary style is unchanged.

In these stories there is all the charm of the folk-tale with its simple directness of style, its rapid action, its repetition of words and phrases, such as "every living thing, of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing," yet it is lifted far above the folk-tale by the all-pervading thought of God acting in righteousness.

No Bible story is worthily told which does not touch the underlying truth of the beauty of holiness, and the folly and inevitable consequences of sin. In preparing Bible stories for telling, the story-teller should have always in mind what has been called the "basic principle of both Old and New Testaments" —the perfect God desiring to restore man "to holiness and true communion with Himself." But this truth should be inherent in the story, and not presented in the form of an appended moral.

As to the manner of telling: a Bible story should be narrated with the spontaneous life that is accorded the telling of any other story. Too often, through an effort upon the part of the conscientious story-teller to impress their religious nature, to communicate to the child a feeling of awe, the Bible stories are told in a truly *awful* manner, and the child, without knowing why, learns to dread them. They have been made to him something unreal, something which he cannot understand, which he fears. This is the last result that the story-teller has desired, but it is the inevitable result when sanctimoniousness is substituted for the "love, joy, and gentleness" which are among the fruits of the Spirit, and which must fashion the telling of the Bible stories.

Rightly told, the Bible stories arouse in the child the keenest interest and the deepest pleasure. What child, after hearing the story of Joseph — the child who dreamed dreams and who wore the marvelous coat of many colors — being sold into bondage to the Midianites by his brethren, will not want to hear "what happened next?" And what story is more beautiful, more filled with wonders and marvels, with love, and forgiveness, and moral steadfastness, than the story of Joseph? It is quite as fascinating as any tale from the Arabian Nights, and it excels the latter a thousand-fold in its fundamental value, for these Old Testament stories eclipse the myth and the hero-tale not only in their genuine interest for the child, but because they bring him into conscious relationship with God—the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; the God whose throne is for ever and ever, and the sceptre of whose kingdom is the sceptre of *righteousness.*

It is possible here to give only the briefest outline of the various kinds of stories which one may choose from this wealth of material. There are the wonder stories of the creation, the Garden of Eden, the flood, in the first part of the book of Genesis; the patriarch stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, in the latter part of the same book; the story of Moses, and all the wonders of the Exodus; the stories of the prophets, of Joshua, Samuel, Daniel; the hero-stories of Samson, of David's encounter with Goliath;

of Gideon; the pastoral story of Ruth. In the New Testament are the stories of Christ's birth, His life, with all its boyhood incidents, its parables, and its wonders, closing with His death and resurrection. The question is not, " What can I tell? " but, " Which shall I tell?" The fund is practically inexhaustible.

I have a word of caution to offer to the one — be she mother, Sunday School teacher, or story-teller, who presents Bible stories to children: put nothing into the stories by way of explanation which the Bible does not put there, and which will have to be recalled or modified when the child grows older and begins to ask questions, and to this end do not make the mistake of confounding the truth taught, with the literal form of its teaching.

As the child grows older and begins to analyze, to reason, and to ask questions, then must the story-teller — and let us hope that the chief Bible story-teller may be the mother — be ready to guide surely and unfold wisely the deeper and higher meaning of the stories of the Book of Books.

CHAPTER X

Systematic Story-Telling

THE thought that literature is a growth; that it had its infancy, and its periods of development through succeeding ages; that the different periods are related to each other and spring from one another, is too often ignored in the study and in the teaching of the subject.

Not only the average child, but the great majority of children — if not of adults — look upon literature as a great heap of miscellany; a vast array of unrelated writings. Few grasp the idea that "literature is the evolution of the thought of humanity"; that it had its beginning in the myth-making ages, was further developed by the Greeks and then by the Latin races; that after the time of Christ there was the distinctive literature of the chivalric period, followed by the development of Chaucer's time, of Shakespeare's, up to and including that of the present age. Each of these periods has its many subdivisions, but each is the outgrowth of the preceding.

The story-teller who has grasped even the simplest outlines of literary development will be able to present to the children a sequence of stories which shall, dimly at first, but more and more clearly as time goes on, enable them to look at the literature of the world as a related whole. This is, of course, the privilege only of the mother, or of the teacher who is in daily contact with the same pupils for an extended length of time. It cannot be done by the occasional story-teller.

As ocular demonstration produces the most lasting impression, the best method of fixing this idea of development is by means of diagrams made up in the simplest manner possible. If no blackboard is available, a paper chain will answer the purpose, its few, large links representing the literary periods. Suggestions for diagrams or charts suited to all grades, and to children of all ages, are given in Miss M. E. Burt's concise but comprehensive book *Literary Landmarks* (Houghton, Mifflin Company) — a book which every teacher should read.

The simplest chart of all consists of a

straight line drawn horizontally, in the middle of which is a cross, representing the time of Christ. The portion of the line to the left indicates the time before Christ; that to the right, the time since Christ. Present day stories may be shown as belonging to the right hand portion of the chart, New Testament stories to the middle portion, and the myth to the left hand. A very few words of explanation will suffice to make plain the meaning of the chart as giving the relative time of the story's origin. Then proceed to tell the story as usual.

The first story in a series planned along these lines, may well be one of the earliest myths, that of Phaeton, or of Vulcan, illustrating the earliest conception of the phenomenon of light and of fire. The Indian myth, giving the origin of fire as conceived by the North American Indian, should also be told, and located on the right hand side of the chart.

The story of Cupid can be traced from its origin in the old time myth, through Greek literature and on into modern poems and prose, thus showing how the original thought of the myth-making period grows into new forms and new beauty in the literature of later periods.

Miss Burt sets forth clearly the use of the diagram or chart in the teaching of literature. It can be used with equal success and to as great advantage by the story-teller who gives a related series of stories from different periods of time. Grade teachers can make the chart serve its original purpose in the teaching of literature, and in story-telling can place the story in a brief word or two which shall give it a place, or a relationship to literature. This makes the story of greater value, through helping the child to assemble his literary landmarks.

The mother who follows this method of story-telling in the home, selecting her stories from the best that literature affords, and grouping or placing them according to the period to which each belongs, will find as great delight and profit in the task, as will the children in the stories themselves. To many a mother, and teacher as well, it will prove a new viewpoint from which to study literature, while meeting the child's desire for stories in more than aimless fashion.

The historical outline of a nation's progress can be given by means of stories told in sequence. These stories should follow a chronological plan which can be as readily developed by means of a chart as can the periods of literature. The outline should be a very simple one at first, dividing the history into a few main periods of development, and telling stories characteristic of the divisions of time. Later these main periods may be subdivided, and new stories told of prominent characters or events, until a fairly comprehensive view of the history as a whole has been acquired.

Mothers who fear that the home duties and the rearing of children will cause them to drop behind the times, or to become out of date in their mental equipment, need have no fear of the children outstripping them if they will prepare themselves with a good outline of literature and of history, and follow these in the stories they tell their children. Such outlines may be found at any good library.

Mythology and chivalry may be knitted into the hose and mittens of the little people; fairy tales may be hemmed into the dainty garments; and deeds of heroism mixed with the custard and the rolls, thus clothing and building up discriminating minds to fit strong and rugged bodies.

To mothers, as to teachers, I would most heartily recommend Miss Burt's book already mentioned, for it is full of suggestive outlines which may be simplified or modified to meet any existing need, while it gives a wide range of books from which stories may be chosen to fill the outlines.

Another source of help to which too few mothers have recourse is to be found in the modern "children's librarian." Since story-telling has been made so important a feature of library work in the children's department, the subject has been given close study, lists have been compiled, and special outlines prepared. Librarians are eager to extend these helps to mothers who may thus be saved the time which would otherwise be required for individual research.

CHAPTER XI

The Joy of Story-Telling

DID you ever drop down upon a somewhat sleepy village where recreations and amusements are almost unknown, and there gather the children together and give them a story hour?

They come with wonder, even with suspicion that you have some ulterior object as yet undisclosed, and they file in and eye you askance.

And then you begin to tell the stories—animal stories, for all children love those; a story from the Bible which reveals to them the fact that there are as great heroes among the Bible characters as are to be found in secular history; a tale of chivalry which stirs the boys; and then perhaps a dialect story from Uncle Remus;—and as you tell the stories the suspicious look vanishes; the clear eyes before you look straight into yours; then there creeps into them a brightness, an eagerness for more; then comes the ripple of merriment; a spontaneous ring of laughter; and then the plea, "One more, oh, please, *one more!*"

When you have done this; when you have won to you the shy children of a whole village, then you know the pure joy of story-telling.

There is nothing better worth winning than the love of a child, and there is no surer way of reaching a child's heart than through the story.

The Story Hour

Story-telling may be made a serious matter as to its purpose, but it should never be a serious matter as to its presentation. Whatever its purpose, the story itself must be a source of joy to the hearer, or its purpose fails. The lesson to be taught, whether moral or educational, fails in its object if the story itself be irksome or stupid.

Conscientious teachers, feeling the weight of argument against them, and taking up the *task* of story-telling as an added obligation of schoolroom duty, wonder why the results are not what the evidence of other story-tellers had led them to believe. Story-telling, as a duty, unlightened and unbrightened by a genuine love of the story and an eagerness for the joy it is to bring to the listeners, can never prove a success.

The story-teller must enter with all her heart and all her enthusiasm into the life and beauty of the story she is telling, in order to achieve the best results. Without this she cannot win the response of her hearers, nor reap the reward which should be her own.

It is in the story hour that the true story-teller comes into her kingdom. Here she is free to give to the expectant hearers just the tale which they love to hear. She is not bound by rules or regulations, by systems or courses, but may follow the promptings of her intuition and sway her small auditors at her will.

Here the rig-ma-role story may find its proper place and delight by its whimsical nonsense; the tale of chivalry, the story of brave achievement, or of loyalty of purpose, may be made to stir her hearers; the dialect story — which the children seldom read but love to hear — may lend its quaint charm; or the nonsense tale may be used as the safety valve for bubbling emotions. Varied in character as the stories may be, each is permeated by the truest, purest joy in the telling — be it the classical story of the "Wooden Horse" and the "Fall of Troy," or the nursery tale of the "Little Small Rid Hin" and the fall of "Reynard the Fox."

Thus may we win the hearts and the confidence of the children, and having won these, we may lead them whithersoever we will. And so, with Kate Douglas Wiggin, I can truly say: "I would rather be the children's story-teller than the queen's favorite or the king's counsellor."

CHAPTER XII

Story-Telling as an Art

THE artist in colors works out his conception of a picture upon canvas. It is finished, and he steps aside. Personally he has nothing further to do with the presentation of that picture. But if his own individuality has not entered into the work, if something of himself has not permeated it, it can never be a work of true art.

The story-teller also presents a picture—a word picture—and, like that of the artist of the brush, if her own individuality has not entered into it, if something of herself has not permeated it, it can not be true art. But, unlike the painter, her picture is never completed; she is never able to step aside and say, "It is finished." And here the story-teller has the advantage of the painter, for each re-telling of her story is a new presentation, and in each re-telling her own personality may lend a deeper pathos, a rarer glint of humor, a more searching vision of truth.

The story itself is the picture; its theme forms the subject; its literary quality corresponds to canvas and color. Hence a story, to be artistically told, must be well chosen. In its inherent character it must awaken the imagination; it must satisfy the love of beauty; it must mirror truth; and it must appeal to both the intellect and the emotion.

Art's chief charm lies in its power to awaken the imagination, to stir the fancy, to suggest something above and beyond the actual portrayal. The subject of artistic story-telling must always be beautiful, but there are many types of beauty, many forms and fancies which appeal to our aesthetic sense. Again, no story which is not painted against "a universal background of truth" can be artistic, for truth, not error, is beautiful. Finally, a story, to be great, must of necessity appeal to the intellect; but if its appeal be to the intellect alone, it is cold and formal. It must touch the emotions as well: it must have a human interest.

Every well-told story, as every gem from the artist's brush, must have atmosphere — that indefinable something which casts its glamour over the whole. In story-telling, this sense of atmosphere must come from the personality of the teller. That is why there is such a variety of charm in hearing the same story told by different persons. This sense of atmosphere is created by the story-teller's losing herself wholly in the story. She completely absorbs the story, its setting, its characters, its ideals, and when she gives it forth again, it takes on something of herself. This cannot be the case if the story is told as something assumed, external, or borrowed. In the latter, no matter how good the technique, the art is lost. Perhaps this point, which is most essential to artistic story-telling, may be more deeply impressed by a concrete example:

The story-lovers of one of our large cities recently had the pleasure of listening to two well-known story-tellers, each giving an hour with Uncle Remus. Only a few days elapsed between the two presentations. In the first instance the story-teller had scarcely more than commenced when we felt that we were sitting in Uncle Remus' cabin, away down South, listening to the adventures of Brer Wolf, Brer Fox, and Brer Rabbit, told by the old man who loved them as his own brothers of the woods. *We were* the little boy, to whom Uncle Remus was telling the stories in his own inimitable way.

In the second instance we were an audience in the North, listening to a well-told — a thoroughly well-told — account of Uncle Remus' telling to a little boy the adventures of Brer Wolf, Brer Fox, and Brer Rabbit. We laughed with the little boy; we enjoyed it with the little boy, but we ourselves were not that little boy sitting at the feet of Uncle Remus.

Do you see the contrast? The first story-teller created the true "Uncle Remus atmosphere"; his story-telling was an art.

What was the difference in the telling? It was very simple. The one became Uncle Remus in spirit. In all conscious simplicity he *was* the old colored story-teller whom Joel Chandler Harris created, and he was telling his story to the little boy — not to an "audience." The other told us — most delightfully — *about* the old colored story-teller, and reproduced for us his stories. His technique was above reproach, and he satisfied the intellect. The first also satisfied the intellect, but he reached far beyond it and touched the heart.

The artistic story must have perspective. One which lacks this quality is like a diagram; it is not a picture. There must be relative values, and the "witching glamour of the past." Give the old stories their appropriate setting in time and place. Let the modern story be the central figure against the universal background of truth — a background which will soften its sharper outlines, and mellow its cruder tones. Preserve in the classic the classical spirit, as well as the classical form — that classical spirit which kindles the fancy and stirs the imagination. Let the hearers see their heroes through the vista of vanishing years.

Technique is a necessary part of any artistic production. Note how carefully the artist selects his brushes and prepares his palette. The story-teller should do no less. As the brush of the artist must, to a certain extent, influence the effect of his colors, so the voice and manner of the story-teller must, to a certain degree, affect the presentation of the story. Even the manner of dress has its influence. And so, with the example of the artist before us, let us choose these minor tools of our art with the single purpose of their suitability. Let them be natural, simple, harmonious. No judge of a picture thinks of the canvas or the pigments. They are wholly lost sight of. So will it be with the elements of the story-teller's equipment if they are suitable; in other words, if they are in harmony with her real purpose. But let us also bear in mind the fact that a true artist can do much with a poor brush, and the true story-teller can achieve good results even though the details of her equipment are not at their best.

There must be variety in the story-pictures. No one cares to look continually at the paintings of even the greatest master, be he a Michael Angelo, or a Velasquez. The water colors of a Turner, or even the vagaries of a Whistler afford needed change and variety — each arousing our admiration, each presenting its own phase of art. So we need not always tell the stories of a Homer or a Shakespeare. These may well be interspersed with the tales of an Anderson, a Dickens, or a Joel Chandler Harris.

There is an "indefinite something" about art which raises it above the commonplace. Perfection of craftsmanship does not produce this indescribable charm. It must emanate from the personality of the worker.

Let us never confuse art with artificiality. Art is nothing assumed; it is something felt. Until we feel our story we can never tell it at its best.

Not all are artists, few are great artists; but you and I may do our best toward artistic attainment, and comfort ourselves over any lack of achievement by the reflection that while only the favored few see the great masterpieces of painting, the lives of the multitude are made brighter and happier by the work of the lesser artists, who, striving against their limitations, have yet given to the world their best.

PART II

Selected Stories to Tell

Selected Stories to Tell

THE following stories are selected with a view to fulfilling various purposes, to meeting varied needs. Though not all are *great* stories, yet the object to be attained by telling them is great; for the work of molding the mind of a child can be nothing less. Each story is worth while: most of them lie outside the beaten path.

The Robin's Carol*

This is the carol the robin throws
  Over the edge of the valley;
Listen how boldly it flows,
  Sally on sally:

  Tirra-lirra,
  Down the river,
  Laughing water

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* From *The Angler's Reveille,* by Henry van Dyke.—By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

All a quiver.
Day is near,
Clear, clear,
Fish are breaking,
Time for waking.
Tup, tup, tup!
Do you hear?
All clear—
Wake up!

The Little Baldhead *

You dear little baby,
  Don't you cry;
Your father's drawing water
  In the south, near by.
A red tasseled hat
  He wears on his head;
Your mother's in the kitchen
  Making up bread.
Walk a step, walk a step,
  Off he goes,
See from his shoe-tips
  Peep three toes.

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* From *Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes.* Translated by Isaac T. Headland. By permission of Fleming H. Revell Company.

Why the Bear Sleeps All Winter *

Once upon a time, little Brother Rabbit lived, quite sober and industrious, in the woods, and just close by lived a big, brown Bear.

Now little Brother Rabbit never troubled his neighbors in those days, nor meddled with their housekeeping, nor played any tricks the way he does now. In the fall, he gathered his acorns, and his pignuts, and his rabbit tobacco. On a frosty morning, he would set out with Brother Fox for the farmer's; and while Brother Fox looked after the chicken yards, little Brother Rabbit picked cabbage, and pulled turnips, and gathered carrots and parsnips for his cellar. When the winter came, he never failed to share his store with a wandering chipmunk.

Now, in those days, old Bear was not content to do his own housekeeping, and doze in the sun, and gather wild honey in the summer, and fish through the ice in the winter. He was full of mischief, and was always playing tricks. Of all the beasts of the wood, the

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* From *Firelight Stories,* by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey (Milton Bradley Company). By permission of the author and publishers.

one he loved best to trouble was sober little Brother Rabbit.

Just as soon as Brother Rabbit moved to a new tree stump, and filled his bins with vegetables, and his pantry with salad, along came old Bear and carried off all his stores.

Just as soon as Brother Rabbit filled his house with dry, warm leaves for a bed, along came old Bear, and tried to squeeze himself into the bed, too, and of course he was too big.

At last, Brother Rabbit could stand it no longer, and he went to all the beasts in the wood to ask their advice.

The first one he met was Brother Frog, sitting on the edge of the pond, and sticking his feet in the nice, cool mud.

"What shall I do, Brother Frog?" asked Brother Rabbit; "Brother Bear will not leave me alone."

"Let us ask Brother Squirrel," said Brother Frog.

So the two went to Brother Squirrel, cracking nuts in the hickory tree.

"What shall we do, Brother Squirrel?" asked Brother Frog; "Brother Bear will not leave Brother Rabbit alone."

"Let us ask Brother Mole," said Brother Squirrel, dropping his nuts.

So the three went to where Brother Mole was digging the cellar for a new house, and they said:

"What shall we do, Brother Mole? Brother Bear will not leave Brother Rabbit alone."

"Let us ask Brother Fox," said Brother Mole.

So Brother Mole, Brother Squirrel, Brother Frog, and Brother Rabbit went to where Brother Fox was combing his brush behind a bush, and they said to him:

"What shall we do, Brother Fox? Brother Bear will not leave Brother Rabbit alone."

"Let us go to Brother Bear," said Brother Fox.

So they all went along with little Brother Rabbit, and they hunted and hunted for old Bear, but they could not find him anywhere. They hunted and hunted some more, and at last they peeped into a hollow tree. There lay old Bear, fast asleep.

"Hush," said Brother Fox.

Then he whispered to Brother Frog, "Bring a little mud."

And he whispered to Brother Squirrel, "Bring some leaves."

And he whispered to Brother Mole, "Bring some dirt, little brother."

And to Brother Rabbit he said, "Stand ready to do what I tell you."

So Brother Frog brought mud, Brother Squirrel brought leaves, Brother Mole brought dirt, and Brother Rabbit stood ready to do what Brother Fox told him.

Then Brother Fox said to Brother Rabbit, "Stop up the ends of Brother Bear's log."

So Brother Rabbit took the mud and the leaves and the dirt, and he stopped up the ends of the log. Then he hammered hard with his two back feet, which are good for hammering. And they all went home, for they thought that old Bear would never, never get out of the log.

Well, old Bear slept and slept, but after a while he awoke, and he opened one eye. He saw no sunshine, so he thought it was still night, and he went to sleep again.

After another while, he awoke again, but he heard the rain and sleet beating outside, and it was very warm and dry inside.

"What a very long night," said old Bear, and he curled up his paws, and he went to sleep again.

This time, he just slept, and slept, until it began to be very warm inside the log, and he heard in his dreams the footsteps of birds outside.

Then he awoke, and he stretched himself, and he shook himself. He rubbed his eyes with his paws, and he poked away the mud, and the leaves, and the dirt, and he went outside.

But was he not surprised?

It had been a frosty night when he had gone to sleep, and now the woods were green. Old Bear had slept all winter.

"That was a fine long sleep," said old Bear, as he set out for little Brother Rabbit's house to see if he had anything good for breakfast; "and I shall go to sleep again, next fall."

So every summer, old Bear plays tricks on little Brother Rabbit, but when fall comes, he creeps away to a warm, dark place to sleep until spring.

And so have his grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren, and his great-great-grandchildren ever since.

The Little Boy Who Forgot to Wash His Hands*

Once upon a time, so very long ago that of course there are no children like that now, there was a little boy who almost *never* washed his hands. He wrote with ink and got ink on his fat little fore-finger; he made pictures with his paints and daubed his thumbs with red and yellow and blue color; he made mud pies and splashed mud all over his chubby palms and he never washed off the ink or the paint or the mud.

And when anyone spoke of his dirty hands, Bobby—that was the little boy's name—would say, "Oh, I forgot." And then he would keep right on forgetting all about nice warm soap and soft dry towels, and pretty, clean, pink hands.

One day, Bobby decided that he wanted to play, very hard. The sun was up, there was a soft, singing wind out in the garden, and the whole world looked clean and happy. So Bobby put on his cap, and because it is always better to play with someone than to play alone, Bobby called his big white pussy cat who often loved to chase up and down the path that ran between the hedges.

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* Jane Arnold, in *American Motherhood.* By permission of the publishers.

"Come, pussy, pussy dear!" called Bobby, "come and play with me."

Then, because the white cat did not seem to hear, Bobby stooped over and picked her up in his arms. But the white cat wriggled and scratched and spit at Bobby and jumped out of his arms. She ran away from him and hid beneath a chair.

"I wonder why she will not play with me," Bobby said as he went out into the garden. There, on the doorstep, stood Bobby's white dove with the pink, pink toes. Bobby loved the white dove, who was very tame and often flew to his shoulder, cooing gently in his ear. He put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a handful of grain which he scattered on the doorstep for the dove—pretty yellow grain it was. But the white dove would not eat it, and when Bobby called her, she flew away from him, as far as the green gables at the very top of the house.

"I wonder why she will not play with me," said Bobby, as he ran down the garden path to the little round pond where his six yellow gold fish lived. The six yellow gold fish were Bobby's friends and they often played with him as well as they knew how. When he threw crumbs into the pond they would come to the top with their little mouths wide open, and would dart about in the shining water as if they wanted Bobby to jump in and swim about and enjoy the feast with them.

But today, when Bobby gave them some crumbs which he had in his pocket, they did not come up to eat them. They stayed deep, deep down in the pond.

"I wonder why—" Bobby began, and then he happened to look down at the water. The top of the pond was a shining mirror and in it Bobby saw a picture of two little black hands.

The crumbs that he had thrown to the six yellow gold fish were black, too. The pretty yellow grain that he gave the dove had been black, and when he had lifted the white pussy cat, his hands had left two big, black smudges upon her beautiful white fur.

"Why, my hands are dirty," exclaimed Bobby.

You see, he had never really thought about his hands before. So he went right into the house to wash them and he never, *never* forgot to wash them again.

The Honest Woodman *

Once upon a time a poor woodman lived with his family near a great forest. Every week day he shouldered his ax very early in the morning, and bidding his wife and children good-by, went out to cut wood for his master.

One day when he was chopping at the trunk of a great tree growing near a stream, his ax suddenly slipped out of his hands and dropped with a splash into the water.

Oh, how troubled the poor man was! He couldn't earn a penny without an ax, and he was too poor to buy one. He sat down on the bank and wept as though his heart would break.

"What is the trouble, my good man?" asked a voice at his side. It was a fairy! And such a jolly-looking fairy, too. He had wings on his cap, and wings on his shoes, and even on his staff!

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* From *Aesop's Fables;* adapted by D. L. Graves in *American Motherhood.* By permission of the author and publishers.

"I dropped my ax in the stream, and I can't chop wood any more, and my family will starve," sobbed the man.

Instantly Mercury, for that was the fairy's name, dived down into the water, and came up, dripping wet, holding a beautiful golden ax in his hand.

"Is this your ax?" he asked.

"No, that is not mine."

The good fairy dived into the stream again, and this time brought up a silver ax.

"Is this yours?"

"No, that isn't mine, either." The poor man needed an ax very much, but he would not claim one that did not belong to him, of course.

Once more Mercury plunged into the water, but this time he came up with a common ax in his hand.

"Is this your ax?" he asked.

"Yes! Oh, yes! that is mine!" cried the man, joyfully. "Thank you so much for your kindness. I am sorry you are so wet."

"I don't mind that," said Mercury. "It is indeed a pleasure to meet such an honest man. I will give you both the gold and the silver axes as well as your own, and you can sell them for much gold, and you shall never be poor again." And he was gone before the woodcutter had time to thank him.

The woodcutter went home a very happy man, for now he would always have plenty for his family. When his neighbors heard about his good fortune, one of them who was a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow decided to try his luck in the same way. He went to the stream, threw his ax in, and sitting down on the bank, wept aloud as the honest woodman had done.

Suddenly Mercury appeared to him.

"What is the trouble, my good man?" he asked, as before.

"I dropped my ax in the river," sobbed the man.

Instantly the fairy dived into the water, and in a moment came up with a golden ax in his hand.

"Is this your ax?"

"Yes! Oh, yes! that is mine," the dishonest man cried, reaching out eagerly for the beautiful golden tool.

But Mercury knew he was not speaking the truth, and was very angry with him. Instead of giving him the golden ax, he dropped it into the stream and disappeared without trying to find the man's own ax. So, instead of going home a rich man, as he had expected, he went home poorer than he had come.

Tabby and the Mice *

Three little mice once lived in an old box.

"I am going to make a new house," said the largest mouse, whose name was Rus.

"*I* am going to make a new house," said the next mouse, whose name was Fus.

"*I* am going to make a new house," said the third mouse, who name was Mus.

"My house shall be made of hay," said Rus, who did not like to be cold.

"My house shall be made of paper," said Fus, who was fond of books.

"My house shall be made of bricks," said Mus, who was as wise as he could be.

So the three little mice made their homes.

One day Tabby Cat came along. She saw the three houses that the little mice had made.

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* This story, reprinted by permission from the second book of the series of *Jones Readers* (Ginn and Company), is an especially good type of story to tell to small children, since it is full of action and of conversation, two features which they particularly enjoy, and its lesson of forethought is made very plain through the development of the story itself.

She was a very polite old cat, so she knocked at the door of the first house.

"Come, Mr. Rus; please let me in!" said she.

"Oh, no," said Rus; "you can't come in."

Tabby was a wise old cat. She put her soft paw into the hay and caught poor Rus.

Then she went to the next house. "Come, Mr. Fus; let me in," she said.

"Oh, no!" said Fus, "you can't come in."

But Tabby knew better than that. She put her paw through the paper door and caught poor Fus. Then she went to the next house.

"Come, Mr. Mus; let me in!" said she.

"Oh, yes!" said Mus; "when I am ready."

So Tabby sat down to wait. She laughed when she thought what a nice supper Mus would make.

When she had waited a long time, she grew tired.

"Are you ready now, Mr. Mus?" she asked.

"Not yet," said Mus.

By and by Tabby knocked loudly on the door.

"I am coming in now, Mr. Mus," said she.

"Very well; come in if you like," said Mus; but he did not open the door.

So Tabby tried and tried to open the door. Then she tried to push down the house. Then she tried to make Mus come out. At last she told Mus just what she thought of him.

This did not trouble Mus at all. He had curled himself up in a snug corner of his house and was fast asleep.

The Gold Bugs *

Once upon a time there were two green and glittering gold bugs, and one said to the other:

"The day is warm and sunny; let us go out and play."

"We will," said the second gold bug, and they decided to play at dancing.

So the two green, glittering gold bugs went down to a brook near by, and there, shining and floating above the water, they saw two glorious dragon flies, one green, and one blue.

"We will dance with these dragon flies,"

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* By Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, in *Firelight Stories* (Milton Bradley Company). By permission of the author and publishers.

said one gold bug. "I choose the blue one."

"You cannot have her," said the other gold bug, "I choose her."

"I will dance with the blue dragon fly," said the second gold bug.

So they quarreled until two other gold bugs came along, and asked the dragon flies to dance with them, so that was an end of the matter.

The two green and glittering gold bugs then said they would play at something else.

"We will play hide and seek," said the first gold bug.

"No, we will play tag," said the second gold bug.

"I will play nothing but hide and seek," said the first gold bug.

"And I will play nothing but tag," said the second gold bug.

"I am going to hide," said the first gold bug; so he went away and hid himself beneath a clover leaf, but, ah, there was no one to blind, and then go and look for him.

"I will run," said the second gold bug; so he ran, but, ah, there was no one to catch him. It was not fun to play that way, and there was an end of the matter.

The two green and glittering gold bugs then said they would play at something else, so they went to a tall bell flower to swing.

"I will sit inside, and you shall rock me," said the first gold bug.

"No, I will sit inside first, and you shall rock me," said the second gold bug.

So they quarreled as to which should swing first, and in their quarreling they tore a petal of the beautiful bell flower, so they could not swing at all, and there was an end of the matter.

"Tut, tut, what is the meaning of this?" asked an old gold bug who came crawling along just then. "Why do you two green and glittering young things quarrel this bright morning?"

"We cannot play, and we are very unhappy, grandfather," said the two gold bugs. "We do not both wish to play at the same games."

"Silly, silly," said the old gold bug, and as he crawled away, he turned his head about, and he said, "Take turns, take turns. Turn about is fair play."

Now it had never occurred to the two green and glittering gold bugs that to take turns is the best way to play, and they decided to try.

They went back to the brook, and there were the two beautiful dragon flies, again floating over the water. So the first gold bug danced with the green dragon fly, and the second gold bug danced with the blue dragon fly; and then they changed about until they could dance no longer.

After that they played tag, and the first gold bug chased the second gold bug until they were tired. Then the first gold bug hid himself, and the second gold bug tried to find him, which was very good fun indeed.

And last of all they found another bell flower, and they rocked each other all the afternoon, until it was time to go home.

So they had a very good day after all, did those green and glittering gold bugs, for they had learned that to take turns is the best way to play.

The History of Tip-Top *

Under the window of a certain pretty cottage there grew a great old apple tree, which

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* From *Queer Little People*, by Harriet Beecher Stowe (Houghton, Mifflin Company). By permission of the publishers. (Abridged.)

in the spring had thousands and thousands of lovely pink blossoms on it, and in the autumn had many bright red apples.

The nursery of this cottage was a little bower of a room, and here five little children used to come to be dressed and have their hair brushed and curled every morning.

Now it used to happen, every morning, that the five little heads would be peeping out of the window, together, into the flowery boughs of the apple tree; and the reason was this. A pair of robins had built a very pretty, smooth-lined nest directly under the window. The robins, at first, had been rather shy of this inspection; but, as they got better acquainted, they seemed to think no more of the little curly heads in the window than of the pink blossoms about them, or the daisies and buttercups at the foot of the tree.

When the little nest was finished, it was so neat, and workmanlike, that the children all exulted over it, and called it "our nest," and the two robins they called "our birds." But wonderful was the joy when the little eyes, opening one morning, saw in the nest a beautiful pale-green egg; and the joy grew from day to day, for every day there came another egg, and so on till there were five little eggs.

After that the mother bird began to sit on the eggs, and then it seemed a very long time for the children to wait. But one morning, when they pushed their five curly heads out of the window, the patient little bird was gone and there seemed to be nothing left in the little nest but a bunch of something hairy.

"O, mamma, do come here!" they cried, "the bird has gone and left her nest!" But at that five little red mouths opened wide, and then they saw that the hairy bunch of stuff was five little birds.

"They are dreadful looking things," said one of the children; "I didn't know that little birds began by looking so bad."

But after this it was great fun to watch the parent birds feed this nestful of little red mouths, until it became a nestful of little, fat, speckled robins.

Then, as there were five children, and five robins, they each chose one bird for his own, and they named them Brown-Eyes, Tip-Top, Singer, Toddy, and Speckle.

Time went on, and as Brown-Eyes, Tip-

Top, Singer, Toddy, and Speckle grew bigger, they began to make a very crowded nestful of birds.

Now the children had been taught a little verse which said:

> Birds in their little nests agree,
>   And 't is a shameful sight
> When children of one family
>   Fall out, and chide, and fight;

and they thought anything really written and printed must be true; therefore they were very much astonished to see, from day to day, that *their* little birds in their nest did *not* agree.

Tip-Top was the biggest and strongest bird, and he was always shuffling and crowding the others, and clamoring for the most food. Speckle was a bird of spirit, and he used to peck at Tip-Top, while Brown-Eyes was a meek, tender little fellow. As for Toddy and Singer, they turned out to be sister birds, and showed quite a feminine talent for chattering.

"I say," said Tip-Top one day, "this old nest is a dull, crowded hole, and it 's quite time some of us were out of it."

"My dear boy," said Mother Robin, "we

shall teach you to fly as soon as your wings are strong enough."

"Humbug!" cried Tip-Top, balancing with his short little tail on the edge of the nest. "Look at those swallows, skimming and diving through the blue air! That 's the way I want to do."

"My dear boy," said his mother, "do go into the nest and be a good little bird, and then you will be happy."

"I 'm too big for the nest," said Tip-Top, "and I want to see the world. It 's full of beautiful things, I know. Now there 's the most lovely creature with bright eyes, that comes under the tree every day, and wants me to come down in the grass and play with her."

"My son, my son, beware!" said the frightened mother; "that seemingly lovely creature is our dreadful enemy, the cat — a horrid monster, with teeth and claws."

At this all the little birds shuddered and cuddled deeper into the nest — all but Tip-Top, who *didn't believe it.*

So the next morning, after the father and mother were gone, Tip-Top got on the edge of the nest again, and looked over and saw lovely Miss Pussy washing her face among the daisies under the tree, and her hair was smooth and white as the daisies, and her eyes were yellow and beautiful to behold, and she looked up to the tree bewitchingly and said, "Little birds, little birds, come down. Pussy wants to play with you."

"Only look at her!" said Tip-Top; "her eyes are like gold."

"No, don't look," said Singer and Speckle. "She will bewitch you and then eat you up; mother said so."

"I'd like to see her try to eat me up," said Tip-Top, again balancing his short tail over the edge of the nest. "Her paws are as white as velvet, and so soft! I don't believe she has any claws."

"Don't go, brother, don't!" screamed both sisters.

A moment after, a dreadful scream was heard from the nursery window. "O, mamma, mamma, do come here! Tip-Top 's fallen out of the nest, and the cat has got him!"

Poor, foolish Tip-Top!

But in another moment the children were in the yard, and Jamie plunged under a bush and caught the cat, with luckless Tip-Top in her mouth.

Tip-Top was not dead, but some of his pretty feathers were gone, and one of his wings was broken.

"Oh, what *shall* we do for him?" cried the children. "Poor Tip-Top!"

"We will put him back into the nest, children," said mamma. "His mother will know best what to do for him."

So a ladder was brought, and papa climbed up and put poor Tip-Top safely into the nest. The cat had shaken all the nonsense well out of him, and he was a dreadfully humbled young robin.

And when the time came for all the other little birds to learn to fly, poor Tip-Top was still confined to the nest with his broken wing.

The Good King *

Once upon a time there was a King in Spain who had only one leg. He was a Good King, and he had a big Animal Farm where he kept all the animals who had lost one or more of their legs.

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* By Margaret and Clarence Weed, in *St. Nicholas*. By permission of the authors and publishers.

In another part of Spain there was a Little Half Chick with only one eye, one wing, and one leg. The other chickens with two eyes and two legs gobbled up the corn so fast that Little Half Chick was nearly starved.

One day a Donkey told Little Half Chick about the Good King and his Animal Farm. Little Half Chick at once started hoppity-hop for Mother Hen and said:

"Mother Hen, I am going to Madrid to see the Good King."

"All right," said Mother Hen, "good luck to you."

So Little Half Chick started off, hoppity-hop, hoppity-hop, along the road to Madrid to see the Good King.

Soon she met a Two-legged Cat going along hippity-hip, hippity-hip, on her leg and crutch. The Cat said:

"Hello, Little Half Chick, where are you going so fast?"

Little Half Chick said, "I am going to Madrid to see the Good King."

"May I go too?" said the Two-legged Cat.

"Yes," said Little Half Chick, "fall in behind."

So the Cat fell in behind. Hoppity-hop,

hoppity-hop, went Little Half Chick. Hippity-hip, hippity-hip, went the Two-legged Cat.

Soon they met a Three-legged Dog going along humpity-hump, humpity-hump. The Dog said:

"Hello, Little Half Chick, where are you going so fast?"

Little Half Chick said, "I am going to Madrid to see the Good King."

"May I go too?" said the Three-legged Dog.

"Yes," said Little Half Chick, "fall in behind."

So the Dog fell in behind. Hoppity-hop, hoppity-hop, went Little Half Chick. Hippity-hip, hippity-hip, went the Two-legged Cat.

Humpity-hump, humpity-hump, went the Three-legged Dog.

Soon they met a One-legged Crow going along jumpity-jump, jumpity-jump. The Crow said:

"Hello, Little Half Chick, where are you going so fast?"

Little Half Chick said, "I am going to Madrid to see the Good King."

"May I go too?" said the One-legged Crow.

"Yes," said Little Half Chick, "fall in behind."

So the Crow fell in behind. Hoppity-hop, hoppity-hop, went Little Half Chick. Hippity-hip, hippity-hip, went the Two-legged Cat. Humpity-hump, humpity-hump, went the Three-legged Dog. Jumpity-jump, jumpity-jump, went the One-legged Crow.

Soon they met a Snake with no legs at all. He had caught his tail in his teeth, and was rolling along, loopity-loop, loopity-loop. The Snake said:

"Hello, Little Half Chick, where are you going so fast?'

"I am going to Madrid to see the Good King," said Little Half Chick.

"May I go too?" said the Snake.

"Yes," said Little Half Chick, "fall in behind."

So the Snake fell in behind. Hoppity-hop, hoppity-hop, went Little Half Chick. Hippity-hip, hippity-hip, went the Two-legged Cat. Humpity-hump, humpity-hump, went the Three-legged Dog. Jumpity-jump, jumpity-jump, went the One-legged Crow. Loopity-loop, loopity-loop, went the Snake with no legs at all.

Soon they came to Madrid and saw the Good King. With the King was his little daughter Margaret. They both laughed as all these funny animals came up. The King said to Little Margaret:

"Do you want to see us all go out to the Animal Farm?"

"Yes," said Little Margaret, "I will lead the way."

So she led the way along the street to the Animal Farm. Behind Margaret came the One-legged King. Next came Little Half Chick, next the Two-legged Cat, next the Three-legged Dog, next the One-legged Crow, and last of all the Snake with no legs at all. So they all went out to the Animal Farm. And there they lived happily ever after.

The Plowman Who Found Content *

A plowman paused in his work one day to rest. As he sat on the handle of his plow he fell a-thinking. The world had not been going well with him of late, and he could not help feeling downhearted. Just then he

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* English Folk-tale.

saw an old woman looking at him over the hedge.

"Good-morning!" she said. "If you are wise you will take my advice."

"And what is your advice?" he asked.

"Leave your plow, and walk straight on for two days. At the end of that time you will find yourself in the middle of a forest, and in front of you there will be a tree towering high above the others. Cut it down, and your fortune will be made."

With these words the old woman hobbled down the road, leaving the plowman wondering. He unharnessed his horses, drove them home, and said good-by to his wife; and then taking his ax, started out.

At the end of two days he came to the tree, and set to work to cut it down. As it crashed to the ground a nest containing two eggs fell from its topmost branches. The shells of the eggs were smashed, and out of one came a young eagle, while from the other rolled a small gold ring.

The eagle rapidly became larger and larger, till it was of full size; then, flapping its wings, it flew up.

"I thank you, honest man, for giving me

my freedom,'' it called out. "In token of my gratitude take the ring—it is a wishing ring. If you wish anything as you turn it round on your finger, your wish will be fulfilled. But remember this—the ring contains but one wish, so think well before you use it.''

The man put the ring on his finger, and set off on his homeward journey. Night was coming on when he entered a town. Almost the first person he saw was a goldsmith standing at the door of his shop. So he went up to him, and asked him what the ring was worth.

The goldsmith looked at it carefully, and handed it back to the man with a smile.

"It is of very little value,'' he said.

The plowman laughed.

"Ah, Mr. Goldsmith,'' he cried, "you have made a mistake this time. My ring is worth more than all you have in your shop; it 's a wishing-ring, and will give me anything I care to wish for.''

The goldsmith felt annoyed and asked to see it again.

"Well, my good man," he said, "never mind about the ring. I dare say you are far from home, and are in want of some supper and a bed for the night. Come in and spend the night in my house."

The man gladly accepted the offer, and was soon sound asleep. In the middle of the night the goldsmith took the ring from his finger, and put another just like it in its place without disturbing him in the least.

Next morning the countryman went on his way, all unconscious of the trick that had been played on him. When he had gone the goldsmith closed the shutters of his shop, and bolted the door; then turning the ring on his finger he said, "I wish for a hundred thousand sovereigns!"

Scarcely had the sound of his voice died away than there fell about him a shower of hard, bright, golden sovereigns. They struck him on the head, on the shoulders, on the hands. They covered the floor. Presently the floor gave way beneath the weight, and the goldsmith and his gold fell into the cellar beneath.

Next morning, when the goldsmith did not open the shop as usual, the neighbors forced open the door, and found him buried beneath the pile.

Meanwhile the countryman reached his home, and told his wife of the ring.

"Now, good wife," said he, "here is the ring; our fortune is made. Of course we must consider the matter well; then, when we have made up our minds as to what is best, we can express some very big wish as I turn the ring on my finger."

"Suppose," said the woman, "we were to wish for a nice farm; the land we have now is so small as to be almost useless."

"Yes," said the husband; "but, on the other hand, if we work hard and spend little for a year or two we might be able to buy as much as we want. Then we could get something else with the wishing-ring."

So it was agreed. For a year the man and his wife worked hard. Harvest came, and the crops were splendid. At the end of the year they were able to buy a nice farm, and still had some money left.

"There," said the man, "we have the land, and we still have our wish."

"Well," said his wife, "we could do very well with a horse and a cow."

"They are not worth wishing for," said he; "we can get them as we got the land."

So they went on working steadily and spending wisely for another year. At the end of that time they bought both a horse and a cow. Husband and wife were greatly pleased with their good fortune, for, said they, "We have got the things we wanted and we have still our wish."

As time went on everything prospered with the worthy couple. They worked hard, and were happy. Indeed, the husband would probably have forgotten all about the ring had not his wife constantly asked him to wish for something.

"Let us work while we are young," her husband would answer. "Life is still before us, and who can say how badly we may need our wish some day."

So the years passed away. Every season saw the bounds of the farm increase and the granaries grow fuller. All day long the farmer was about in the fields, while his wife looked after the house and the dairy. Sometimes, as they sat alone of an evening, she would remind him of the unused wishing-ring, and would talk of things she would like to have for the house. But he always replied that there was still plenty of time for that.

The man and his wife grew old and gray. Then came a day when they both died—and the wishing-ring had not been used. It was still on his finger as he had worn it for forty years. One of his sons was going to take it off, but the oldest said:

"Do not disturb it; there has been some secret in connection with it. Perhaps our mother gave it to him, for I have often seen her look longingly at it."

Thus the old man was buried with the ring, which was supposed to be a wishing-ring, but which, as we know, was not, though it brought the old couple more good fortune and happiness than all the wishing in the world could ever have given them.

King of the Frogs*

Once upon a time—so long ago that the oldest frog now living does not remember it—all the frogs of a far-away country came together in solemn council.

"I propose," said a big green fellow with a very deep voice, "that we ask to have a king appointed to rule over us."

* Original adaptation of an old legend.

"What do we want of a king?" asked a small and inquisitive frog.

But his voice was hardly heard, for all the other frogs shouted together, "Yes, let us have a king. Let us have a king."

"Haven't we all we need, now, to make us happy?" asked the little, inquisitive frog again. But nobody paid the slightest attention to him.

So the other frogs sent a request to the Great Ruler of the land, asking that he appoint a king to rule over them.

"A king of the frogs!" said the Great Ruler, when he heard their request. And then he knit his brows and thought for a very long time.

But nobody knew that his thoughts were the same as those of the little, inquisitive frog to whom nobody had paid any attention.

At last the Great Ruler spoke.

"Why do you want a king?" he asked. "Have you not, now, everything you need to make you happy?"

But all the frogs shouted in chorus, "Give us a king. Give us a king."

So the Great Ruler knit his brows and thought again for a very long time.

At length he spoke. "I will give you a great log for a king. It will bear you upon the water and the sun will shine upon you as you rest on its broad surface."

But the frogs were angry at this. "The idea!" they shouted. "We want a living king; we want no dead log for a king."

So the Great Ruler knit his brows and thought again for a very long time.

At length he spoke. "Since you insist upon it, I will give you the stork for your king."

Then all the frogs sang joyfully, "Yes, we will have the stork for our king. The stork is our king! The stork is our king!"

So the stork was sent to rule over them, and as soon as he came among them he began to eat. And he ate and ate—till he had swallowed *every frog in the land.*

The Adder That Did Not Hear *

Away in the midst of the forest, there lived a tiny adder. He was so very little that the great beasts never thought of talking to him. But the spiders and the wasps and the frogs often stopped to visit at his doorway.

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* Original adaptation of Old Folk-tale.

One morning, as a frog hopped down the path, he stopped and called "Good morning. I've a bit of news for you."

"Good morning," replied the adder. "I hope it is good news, I am sure."

"What's good news to one person may be bad news to another," croaked the frog. "But listen! As I came along through the forest I heard a great chattering among the monkeys, and I stopped to hear what it was all about.

"One little monkey sat crying in the midst of them, and the others were all saying, 'You know you tried to steal—'"

But the adder had rolled over so that one ear lay close to the ground, and he had stuck the end of his tail in the other ear. Of course he couldn't hear another word of what the frog was saying.

"Dear me!" said the frog, looking very much offended. "That is a great way to treat a friend, I am sure." And he hopped off into the rushes.

Presently a wasp flew down by the adder's home and settled upon a leaf near by.

"Good morning," said the adder politely. "What a beautiful day this is."

"Yes," buzzed the wasp, "it's nice today, but there 's sure to be a storm—"

But the adder had rolled over so that one ear lay close to the ground, and he had stuck the end of his tail into the other ear.

"Well, I declare," buzzed the wasp angrily. "What an impertinent fellow." And she flew away as fast as ever she could.

The adder straightened himself out and went about his work once more, thinking as he did so how bright the sunlight was, and how soft and warm the air felt, and how beautifully the birds were singing.

Presently a little brown spider dropped a thread from her web and ran down to the adder's doorway.

"Good morning," she said. "I have come to invite you to a forest revel. Why are you always so quiet? You should come with us and not mind what the sober workers tell you. We will have music and dancing and wine and song—"

But the adder had rolled over so that one ear lay close to the ground and he had stuck the end of his tail into the other ear.

"Such manners!" exclaimed the spider, and she climbed the thread back to her web.

And so it came about that the small people of the forest began to have this saying amongst them, "He 's as deaf as an adder."

The North Star*

Three Ojibway hunters had been out hunting for meat many days; it was in a new place. The woods were very thick, but there were no deer in them. The hunters had nothing to eat; they had no water, for there was none; they were lost in the thick forest.

The hunters sat down and smoked the pipe of peace. They offered the smoke to the Manitous who might live in the woods. They asked the Manitous to help them. The day sun was gone and there was no night sun.

The chief covered his head with his blanket and chanted: "Our wigwams will see us no more. We will stay here forever. We can go no further."

A little Pukwudjinnie came out of a hollow tree when the chief had chanted his story. The Little One was like a little papoose, but he was very old and knew very much.

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* An Ojibway legend from *Wigwam Stories*, by Mary Catherine Judd (Ginn and Company). By permission of the author and publishers.

He said: "I will help the hunters. I will show you the trail."

He pulled the thick bushes apart, and the hunters followed. He found the trail and soon came upon a herd of deer feeding in the bush. The hunters shot two deer and ate much meat; they were stronger after they had eaten the meat. The Little One did not eat; he was not hungry.

There was no rain, and the hunters had no water; they lost their strength and could not walk on the trail. The Pukwudjinnie left them; then the hunters put their blankets over their heads and sat down. They said no words. They could not smoke the pipe of peace, for their strength was all gone.

The Little One came back with a deerskin full of drink for them; he poured it into their mouths; it was not water; it was like no drink they ever had before. They became very strong and wanted nothing more to eat or drink for more than one moon.

He led them on a long trail, to the land of his Little People; he took them to his own chief. The chief was like a little papoose, but he knew all the trails in the forest. He knew all the trails in the sky.

The little chief showed the Ojibway chief the star in the north, the star that never moves. The little chief showed them how to watch this star and not lose their trail. He found their lost trail for them and sent them home.

The three hunterns came back to their own wigwams. They talked in the council and showed their people the star that never moves.

Other nations and tribes know this star now, but the Ojibways believe that their people were the first to know where to find it in the Great Blue Wigwam.

The Cobbler *

Once upon a time there lived a cobbler who sat day after day in his shop, working away at his cobbler's last—just making shoes.

After a time he came to think that because he had made so very many pairs of shoes, he knew more about them than anybody else in the world.

He grew quite puffed up with pride, and was always looking for some way of showing his knowledge.

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* Original adaptation of an old legend.

One day as he was walking in the public square of the town, he saw a statue which had been made by a great artist. And he discovered—ha-ha-ha—he discovered that the shoe-latchet of the statue was not made just right.

"Aha, aha!" he said, and his chest swelled with pride and delight. "Here is a statue made by a great artist—but he does not know how a shoe-latchet is made. Surely, I am greater than he!"

Then he began to look the statue over to see what other mistakes he might find. And after a while it seemed to him that the legs of the statue were not shaped just right, either.

"I will go to the Lord Mayor of the town," he said to himself, "and order the statue removed from our public square."

So he went to the Lord Mayor's palace, and when he came into the Lord Mayor's presence, he said, "May it please your Honor, I have discovered great errors in the statue which is in our public square, and I have come to petition your Honor to have it removed."

Then the Lord Mayor looked the cobbler

over gravely, and asked, "Can you make a better statue to put in its place?"

At that the cobbler turned quite red and stammered, "Oh, no, your Honor; but I can make a better shoe-latchet."

"Then, Sir Cobbler," replied the Lord Mayor, "I would advise you to stick to your last."

Opechee the Robin Redbreast *

A great hunter among the Chippewas, or Ojibways, wanted his son to secure a powerful spirit to protect him in war and all danger. To gain the help of the strong Manitou the boy must fast twelve days.

Many Indian boys can do this, but not all. Many try and fail.

The boy did as his father commanded, for when the time came he went into the secret lodge in the deep forest and laid himself down alone on the mat his mother had woven for him. He did not fear, but his strength was weak. All night he lay there alone.

In the morning his father came and asked

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* Schoolcraft. From *Wigwam Stories,* by Mary Catherine Judd (Ginn and Company). By permission of the author and publishers.

him if the strong spirit had come to him in his dreams. The boy shook his head. No dreams had come to him.

Each day for ten days the father came to the little lodge in the wilderness and asked his son if the strong Manitou had come to him.

"It is not for me to have such dreams, my father, I am not brave. The strong Manitou will not come to me. Let me give up my fast."

"If you give up now, the Manitou will never come. Hunger makes my son weak, but his heart is strong. It is only a short time more to wait. Then my son shall be the strongest of all."

The Indian boy covered his face and lay still upon the mat. He would obey his father.

On the morning of the eleventh day the boy saw his father enter the wigwam. He slowly turned his face toward him and whispered: "Let me break my fast; I have no dreams."

"Tomorrow I will bring you food. Tomorrow you shall come to the lodge of your father."

The boy closed his eyes and said no more. He was very weak and faint.

The next morning the father went with the earliest morning light to the little lodge in the forest. Peeping through the door he saw his son sitting up. Beside his mat were brushes and paint. He was painting himself red and brown.

"The Manitou will free me, but it is not the spirit my father wanted," he heard the boy say.

The father rushed into the lodge, but as he touched his boy the lad changed into a bird and flew out of the open doorway. Sitting on the top of the lodge he sang these words:

"Do not mourn for me, my father, for I am happy. I did not want to be a warrior. I wanted only to be free. I shall find food upon the fields and the hills. I will comfort you." Then he flew away.

Opechee lives near the homes of men. He loves to comfort them when they are sad. He is happy when they are happy.

His songs are for the little children and for the fathers and mothers who want their little ones to be brave. Opechee is not afraid in the storm, and many have heard him singing just after the great thunder-birds had called to each other and the water was coming fast from the sky to find a place to hide in the ground. Opechee is brave, but not strong.

The Country Cat *

The big white cat trotting across the lawn with a rat in his mouth started Meriky on a story this afternoon.

"Huh!" exclaimed Meriky, "cats and mouses didn't used to be sich bad friends as dey is now.

"Once upon a time dey visited back an' forth like yo' ma an' Miz Paterson."

"What made them fall out?"

"Hit come 'bout dis-er-way. Ol' Miz Cat live in de country, but she mighty hongry to know 'bout town doin's. She tell round 'mongst her friends 'bout greatly she's honin' to see de sights.

"Middle of de night come little Mr. Gray Mouse knockin' on de door, and say he got a cousin goin' up to town, an' if Miz Cat

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* By Grace MacGowan Cooke, in the *Delineator*. By permission of the author and the publishers.

still wantin' to see de sights, dis hyer cousin be proud to give her a lift.

"Den Miz Pussy Cat put on her bonnet an' put on her shawl, an' tuck her a poke full o' victuals an' started out wid Mr. Mouse. Mouses does dey travelin' by night an' de cat an' mouse travel all night and git to town de next day.

"When dey come where all de people was, Mr. Mouse pick up his foot and run in a rat hole; but Miz Cat set down by de side de road for to eat the snack.

"She was a-sittin' dar, spreadin' out all dat good country sassige, and good country ham and sich truck, when a town cat come along past.

"Dis hyer town cat was honghy; he was all raggety same as de beggar man what yo' ma give a dinner to yisstiddy. He want Miz Cat's victuals mighty bad. 'M'lan'!' he say, 'whar you git dat pig mess?'

"'Dat my snack,' say Miz Cat, mighty polite. 'I brung hit wid me from home. Won't you jine, sir?'

"Now, dat dar ol' hungry town cat want every bit of Miz Pussy Cat's snack. He never want to jine; so he say, 'Does dey really eat sich a mess as dat in de country whar you come from?'

"'Yes, indeed,' say de country cat, mighty glad to meet up wid town folks, an' larn town ways. 'Don't you eat sich in town? What you eat in town, anyhow?'

"De town cat look all 'bout. He boun' to sen' Miz Pussy Cat on a arrant dat 'll take her 'way from dem good victuals. Right den he see Mr. Mouse peep out a hole to ax Miz Cat how she come on. He boun' if Miz Cat git to runnin' after Mr. Swif' Foot Mouse he have time to steal her dinner.

"'We eats mices,' he say, in de grandest way imaginable. 'You never will larn town ways tell you larn to eat mices!'

"I done told you dat Miz Pussy Cat plumb crazy 'bout larnin' to do like town folks does. She hop up and leave dat lunch, quick as you could wink—an' dat ol' hongry town cat grab hit des' as quick. She run dat mouse plumb down all de way to de Co't House. Dar she ketch him, an' right dar she eat him—all but de squeak an' de teef.

"Den, by dat, she got de taste; and all cats been eatin' rats and mouses to dis good day."

Legend of the Arbutus *

An old tepee stood by a frozen river in the forest where there are many pine trees. The tops of the trees were white with snow. The tepee was almost covered with the snow. An old chief sat in this tepee; his hair was like the icicles that hang from dead pine-tree branches; he was very old.

He was covered with furs. The floor of his tepee was covered with the skins of the bear and the elk. He had been a great hunter. His name was Peboan. Peboan was faint with hunger, and he was cold. He had been hunting for three days. He had killed nothing. All the moose, deer, and bear had gone. They had left no trail. Wabasso, the rabbit, had hidden in the bushes. There was no food, no meat, for Peboan.

He called upon the great Menabozho for help.

"Come, Menabozho, come help Peboan, the chief of the winter Manitous. Come, for Mukwa, the bear, has gone from me. Come, or Peboan must go to the far north to find

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* Chippewa. From *Wigwam Stories,* by Mary Catherine Judd (Ginn and Company). By permission of author and publishers.

Mahto, the white bear. Peboan is old, and his feet are weary."

Peboan crawled on his knees over the furs to the little fire in the middle of the tepee. He blew on the coals with his faint breath, and the coals grew very red. His breath was like a wind; the coals made the wind warm like a south wind. The deerskins that covered the tepee trembled like leaves, for the warm wind blew them.

Peboan sat on the furs on the floor of his tepee and waited. He knew Menabozho would hear him.

Peboan heard no sound, but he looked toward the door of his tepee. It was lifted back, and he saw a beautiful Indian maiden. She carried a great bundle of willow buds in her arms. Her dress was of sweet grass and early maple leaves. Her eyes were like a young deer. Her hair was like the blackest feathers of a crow, and it was so long that it was like a blanket over her shoulders. She was small; her feet were hidden in two moccasin flowers.

"Menabozho heard Peboan, the winter Manitou. He has sent me. I am Segun."

"You are welcome, Segun. Sit by my fire;

it is warm. I have no meat. Sit down and tell me what you can do."

"Peboan may tell first," said Segun.

Peboan said: "I am a winter Manitou; I blow my breath, and the flowers die. The waters stand still; the leaves fall and die.

Segun said: "I am a summer Manitou; I blow my breath, and the flowers open their eyes. The waters follow me on my trail."

Peboan said: "I shake my hair, and the snow falls on the mountains, like the feathers of Waubese, the great white swan."

Segun said: "I shake my hair, and warm rain falls from the clouds. I call, and the birds answer me. The trees put on their leaves, and the grass grows thick like the fur of the bear. The summer sky is my tepee. Menabozho has said that the time has come for you to go."

Peboan's head bent over on his shoulder. The sun melted the snow on the pine trees; it melted the snow on the tepee. Segun waved her hands over Peboan, and a strange thing happened.

Peboan grew smaller and smaller. His deer-skin clothes turned to leaves and covered Peboan on the ground.

Segun looked, but Peboan was gone. She took some flowers from her hair and hid them under the leaves on the ground. There was ice on the leaves, but it did not hurt the pink flowers. Segun breathed on the flowers, and they became sweet.

She said: "I go, but the flowers shall stay to tell of Segun's visit to Peboan. The children shall find them and know that Segun has sent Peboan away. It shall be so each time the snows melt and the rivers begin to run. This flower shall tell that spring has come."

Peboan's tepee was sweet with the breath of the flowers, but Segun was gone.

Why the Dog Cannot Endure the Cat, Nor the Cat the Mouse *

Long years ago it was the custom to give the dog all the meat that fell from the mas-

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* Original adaptation from the folk-lore of South Slavonia. There is another and different version of "Why the Dog and Cat Are Enemies" under the title, "The Enchanted Wine Jug," in *Stories to Tell* (A. Flanagan Company), compiled by the author of this book. Stories of animals are always of interest to children, and the more familiar the animals the greater the child's interest in the story. These two versions of the above story, I have found are not generally known to either teachers or children, for they seem to have been generally overlooked in the many collections of folk-tales.

ter's table. But one day when all the dogs met in council, one of them said, "It might be a wise plan to have an agreement drawn up for the dogs and their masters to sign.

"Some time," said he, "one of our masters might drink too much wine, or get into a rage, and forbid us to have the meat. And then what could we do? It is best to be on the safe side," and he shook his head sagely.

"That is a very good plan," agreed the other dogs. "Let us carry it out at once."

So the secretary of the dogs' council drew up a document and wrote it upon parchment. It stated that all the dogs of every country were entitled to the meat that fell from their masters' tables. It was a very carefully worded document, and it was written out in the most learned form by the lawyer of the council.

Then the secretary took the parchment, rolled it up and went about the whole land until it had been signed by all the masters of dogs.

The parchment was then given to the King of the Dogs, to be carefully kept.

The King of the Dogs gave the parchment to his private secretary, the Tomcat, telling him that it was a very important document, and must be put away with the greatest care.

Tomcat took the parchment and went softly away to the garret, where he hid the precious document behind a beam.

For a long time there was no need of bringing out the parchment, for all the masters did as they had agreed, and the dogs fared well.

But one day it happened that Master Miller had a new cook who was very careless, and when this cook brought in a prime roast of beef, he let it slip from the platter to the floor.

Instantly it was seized upon by Dog Trophy, who started off with it.

But Master Miller was in no mood to lose his dinner, and he snatched the roast from Dog Trophy, telling him that he was a thief. Then he rubbed Dog Trophy's paw with hot ashes to teach him not to steal.

Dog Trophy's heart burned with indignation, and his paw burned with the hot ashes, and he went away on three legs as fast as ever he could to the King of the Dogs.

When he reached the King's house, he set forth his case.

"Bring out the official parchment," called the King, when Dog Trophy had told his story.

Tomcat ran quickly to the garret, sprang to the beam where he had tucked the precious document, and then set up a "maou" of anger and dismay. The mice had nibbled the valuable parchment into tiny scraps!

Tomcat vowed, then and there, that no mouse should escape his claws from that day on.

The King of the Dogs sent Tomcat away in disgrace, and the dogs agreed that thereafter they would chase a cat whenever they should see one.

But, Dog Trophy lost his roast of beef.

The Miser of Takhoma *

Long, long ago, Miser lived near the foot of Takhoma. He never was happy. When food was scarce and the tribe were starving, Miser could find fish in secret places in the streams. When the snows were deep and the black-necked elk hid in the dark places of the forest, he could still secure meat. His skill

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* From *Myths and Legends of the Pacific Northwest*, by Katharine B. Judson (A. C. McClurg & Co.). (Abridged.)

as a hunter and fisherman was known to all his tribe. But Miser cared only for hiaqua, or shell money. Now Moosmoos, the elk, was Miser's tomanowos, or guardian spirit. Therefore, he tried to talk with the elk, even while hunting them. He wanted more hiaqua.

One night Moosmoos whispered to Miser the secret hiding-place of the hiaqua of the tomanowos. The hiding-place was high up on Takhoma. Early in the morning, Miser began to make ready for his search. He sent his klootchman, or squaw, to dig camas roots. Thus he could work secretly. He made two elkhorn picks by taking off all the prongs except the upper ones. He filled his ikta, or bag, with kinnikinnick, and with dried salmon. At sunset Miser began to climb the mountain.

All night he climbed the trail. All the next day he climbed. By night again he was above the snow line, cold and tired and hungry. When the moon arose, he climbed again. Over vast snow fields, across wide cracks in the ice, over the slippery shoulders of the lower peaks he climbed. At sunrise he reached the top. Now Takhoma was the home of the tomanowos, therefore, Miser was afraid. But Moosmoos had told him where the hiaqua was hidden.

In the white snow field which covered the crater was a black lake. Beyond it were three stones of equal height, all as tall as a giant. The top of the first was shaped like a salmon's head, the top of the second was like a camas root, and the third like an elk's head. Then Miser believed the voice of Moosmoos.

Miser threw down his ikta. He unwrapped his elk-horn pick. Then he began to dig in the snow at the foot of the elk's head.

Miser struck the first blow. As an echo he heard a sudden puff. Startled, he turned to see a huge otter climbing out of the black waters of the lake. Big Otter struck his tail with a loud thump on the snow. Another otter appeared, then another. At last twelve otters gathered in a circle around their huge leader. They formed a circle around Miser, digging with his pick at the foot of the elk's head. Then Big Otter leaped to the top of the elk's head. All the others gave a loud puff.

Miser kept digging. At every thirteenth blow of the pick Big Otter thumped with his tail on the elk's head. Then the circle of twelve thumped with theirs on the snow.

Miser became tired and stopped digging for a moment. Big Otter turned on the elk's head. With his tail he struck Miser on the shoulder. Then the twelve turned, walked backward, and struck him with their tails. Miser began to dig again.

As he dug in the rock, his pick broke. Big Otter jumped from the elk's head. He seized the second pick in his mouth and gave it to him.

Miser dared not stop. With each thirteenth blow of the pick and the thump of the tails, the otters came nearer. He could feel their breath as he lifted the last stone. Beneath lay a great hole, filled with hiaqua. As he lifted out the shells, the otters returned to their larger circle.

Miser lifted out handful after handful of the shell money. He strung the hiaqua on elk sinews, twenty strings in all. The rest he covered again. He hurried, for it was after noon and he must return below the snow line. Then Miser left the elk's head. He offered no shells to Moosmoos or to Sahale. He had forgotten the tomanowos.

As he crossed the crater, the otters, one by one, with a loud puff, jumped into the black lake. They began to beat the black water with their tails. He heard them beat the water as he plunged through the snow to the edge of the crater. Miser felt that the shells were very heavy.

As he stepped over the edge of the crater, he glanced back. The three stones had vanished. A thick mist rose from the black waters of the lake. Under the mist was a black cloud, hiding the water. Miser feared tomanowos in the clouds.

Then the storm seized him. It flung him over an ice bank. The blackness of all darkness lay around him. Colenass, the storm god, came down upon the mountain. Tootah, the thunder, deafened him with its roar. The storm crashed about him. Fiery blasts melted the snow into great torrents. Icy winds froze them solid again. In the roar and thunder, Miser heard the voices of all the tomanowos, "Ha, ha, hiaqua! Ha, ha, hiaqua!"

Miser threw away a string of hiaqua. The storm slackened for a moment. Then all began louder than ever. Kakahete screamed, "Ha, ha, hiaqua! Ha, ha, hiaqua!"

One by one Miser threw away the strings of hiaqua, strung on the sinews of Moosmoos, the elk. Always the tomanowos screamed after him. Then when the last string was gone, with a last gust the storm blew him down, flat upon the ground.

Miser slept a long time. When he awoke, Takhoma glistened above him, shining white in the sunlight. All around him grew camas roots. Rocky ridges lay where once the forest had stretched. Sunny meadows lay around him. Miser stretched himself and arose. Only dry leaves and dead grass remained in the rotted ikta. Miser wondered. Then he went down the mountain side. He ate berries for food until he came to a cabin in the valley. There lived a very old woman. He talked with her and found she was his klootchman. Klootchman said he had slept thirty snows. Miser looked at himself in a pool. He was very old. His hair was white. Many, many snows had the angry tomanowos made him sleep. But Miser was happy. He no longer cared for hiaqua.

Little Sister Kindness and the Loving Stitches *

Once, when the world was new, there lived a beautiful princess whose father was the King of Forgotten Land. The King loved his daughter very much, but he was a very wise King; the more he loved the Princess, the more he realized that she must learn obedience, and many other hard lessons.

The King knew that if he allowed his little daughter to be worshipped as many Princesses are, her face would grow hard and full of ugly lines, so the wee Princess was taught to divide her treasures, and to care for the poor in her father's kingdom. And so, instead of growing hard and selfish, the King's daughter grew lovelier every day, and she was known as Princess Tender-heart.

At last, when the Princess had grown, there came a Prince from the land of Bye-and-Bye, to marry the Princess Tender-heart. For a wedding gift he presented her with five hundred and forty-three mansions, surrounding his palace. And the Princess was to give these mansions to the friends she loved best, so that she should not be lonely

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* By Frances Margaret Fox in *Little Folks* (S. E. Cassino Company). By permission of the publishers.

when she went with the Prince to live in the land of Bye-and-Bye.

But one day the King found his daughter very unhappy, and when he begged her to tell him why she was in tears, she said that she had given away five hundred and forty-two mansions, but she still had many friends, and she did not know what to do with the one mansion that remained. It was the one which stood the very nearest to the palace of the Prince.

Then the wise King said, "There, there! We 'll settle this matter easily. That one home shall go to the one who loves you best."

"But how—," began the Princess.

"Never mind how," interrupted her father, and then they both laughed so merrily that all the canary birds in the kingdom began to sing.

The very next day the King of Forgotten Land issued a proclamation which set all the people to talking.

Among those who read the copy that was posted outside the palace gates was a maiden known as Little Sister Kindness.

"So the Princess is to be married one month from today," she exclaimed. Then, turning, she saw a blind man standing by, who had no one with him to tell him what the King's message contained.

Little Sister Kindness stepped to his side and explained to him the contents of the proclamation.

"The Princess Tender-heart is to be married," she said, "and instead of having her wedding garments made by the court dressmaker, the King wishes everyone who loves the Princess to come to the palace and help make her clothes. To the one whose work proves that she loves the Princess best, shall be given the finest gift house of the five hundred and forty-three presented by the Prince of Bye-and-Bye."

"I beg you to tell me more," urged the blind man. "My daughter is a dressmaker. How shall it be known who best loves the Princess?"

"How fortunate that your daughter is a dressmaker!" exclaimed Little Sister Kindness. "I wish that I were a dressmaker, too. The King announces that by examining the wardrobe when it is completed he will know at a glance who best loves Her Royal Highness. Everyone adores the Princess, so only by magic will the King know who loves her best."

"I thank you," the blind man said with a low bow. "I must hasten now to tell my daughter this good news."

"And I must hasten, too," agreed Little Sister Kindness, "for I have many friends who are skillful with the needle, and I must carry the news to each one."

From that hour the sewing room of the palace became a busy, bustling place. For the seamstresses, and the embroiderers, and the lace-makers came from all parts of the kingdom, to sew upon the wardrobe of the Princess Tender-heart.

One day, a week later, Little Sister Kindness called at the palace with a message for a friend who was a noted lace-maker. And while she waited she watched the busy workers, and heard them talking. It did not take her long to discover that each worker was striving to make some great piece of work which should attract the attention of the King, and that each was eager to secure the most showy garment to work upon. She saw, too, that the lace-makers used knots in the end of the threads, and that the stitches which would not show, were carelessly made and finished.

Finally, Little Sister Kindness became so distressed by what she saw in the workroom that she begged to stay.

"But, what can you do?" inquired the manager of the wardrobe.

"Nothing that will count," replied Little Sister Kindness, "but I can tie loose ends of threads, and darn little holes neatly, and finish seams inside and—"

"There, there!" exclaimed the manager of the wardrobe. "Do get a needle and begin. I have been so worried lest the Princess should not have one perfect garment."

So Little Sister Kindness began her work and was soon the busiest maiden in the palace. Scarcely a garment escaped her loving fingers. Everything needed a little stitch here and a little stitch there; a button and button-hole in place of a pin; a bit of trimming to be firmly fastened; a bow to be sewed securely in place; always a stitch here and a stitch there; never a piece of work that would show; not so much as a collar or a belt that the King might say, "Ah! This was made by Little Sister Kindness."

There were days when the maiden felt discouraged and wished that she, too, might be doing something worth while for love of the beautiful Princess. But the unfinished seams and the hastily caught bows kept her too busy to grow dissatisfied, and she knew that she was not skillful enough to fashion beautiful garments, or make filmy bits of lace.

At last, when the wardrobe was completed, the King gave a banquet to which all in the kingdom were invited. Then, in the presence of his subjects, he walked into the great hall where all the wardrobe was displayed. Some of the garments were of linen, some of silk, some of satin, and others of lace; and when the King appeared each robe began to glow with a soft light, and to shine with a hundred little stars; here a star and there a star.

"Oh, oh!" exclaimed all the people, "oh, oh, oh! There are tiny gold stitches shining like stars on every garment. Why do those stitches shine like golden stars? Who put them there? Whose are the golden stitches?"

"Those are the stitches of the one who loves the Princess best!" the King made answer.

Then came a low wondering murmur from all who had worked upon the royal wardrobe, and the murmur sounded like sweet music that sang over and over:

"Little Sister Kindness! It is Little Sister Kindness!"

So it came about that Little Sister Kindness and her family went to live in the home that was nearest the palace of the Prince and Princess in Bye-and-Bye, and there they all lived happily ever after.

The Queen's Necklace *

Once upon a time there lived an old king whom you could not very well call good, in fact he was very disagreeable and horrid.

Now, in his old age, the king had a fancy for marrying and he cast his eye over his many kingdoms to spy out a suitable wife for himself.

In this way his eye fell upon quite a young princess who was called Blanzeflor.

"She is as fair as a sunny day, as mild as a dove, and as meek as a lamb, and she is only

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* Abridged from *Jolly Calle*, by Helena Nyblom (J. M. Dent and Sons, London).

seventeen years old, too! She will suit me admirably," said the king.

But when her father came to her and said: "Blanzeflor, our sovereign lord, the king, would have you for his queen," she wept and said she would rather sit upon a stone and spin goats' wool, than sit as queen at *that* king's side.

But when her father said that she must realize that if she refused the king he would come and hang both her father and mother and all the family upon a tree like so many bunches of onions, then the princess bowed her head and said, "Then I will marry him."

So they clad her in silk and in gold, and set a crown upon her head and combed her long golden hair over her shoulders, then they lifted her upon a white palfrey and rode forth with her to the king, and thus the wedding took place.

On her wedding day the king hung a necklace of pearls around her neck.

"I threaded them myself on this silken cord," said the king. "These are pearls of the East and there are three hundred and sixty-five of them, the smallest being a little crooked; and I warn you," he added, "take great care of them, for on the day you lose the necklace, I warrant you will not care to look me in the eyes;'' and the king began to roll his eyes so horribly that the young queen felt cold shivers all down her spine. Thus Blanzeflor became queen.

Every morning the king ate porridge and cream in bed, and the queen carried it to him in a golden bowl and fed him like a baby, for such was his command. Every evening the king and queen would play chess, and then the queen always had to let the king win, otherwise he would get bad-tempered.

But the very worst was at mealtime, for the king was so proud he would not let anyone sit at table with the queen and himself. The young queen would sit with downcast eyes, scarcely daring to swallow a morsel, so greatly did she tremble for fear lest something should displease the king, for then he became quite terrible.

The only pleasure the court had was to stand and stare at Blanzeflor, for she glowed with a beauty more bright and radiant than all the torchlights in the banqueting hall, and when she bowed and smiled it warmed the heart like the sun in summer.

Now, dreadful stories came to the queen's ears of how the king would fling people into prison for the smallest offence, or wring their necks like chickens; but alas! what could she do in the matter? She, herself, sat like a prisoner in the royal castle, and never was she allowed to go out on foot but only on horseback followed by a royal retinue and closely guarded.

It happened one day, however, that the queen was in church—there at least the king could not prevent her from going—and as she knelt in prayer before the high altar, she noticed how meanly and poorly God's holy altar was adorned.

Then the queen wept bitterly and said to herself: "I drink out of golden goblets, and silver torches are lighted on my table, but upon God's altar the candlesticks are of pewter and the velvet cloth which covers the Lord's table is all faded and patched. I cannot bear to see it." And thereupon she slowly and carefully unclasped her necklace, drew off seven of the largest pearls and laid them upon the altar.

That evening she had her hair combed back and fastened in a knot upon her neck, so that the king might not see that the pearls were missing.

Now it happened one night that the queen lay awake. She could not sleep because she thought she heard strange sounds of sighing and sobbing out in the night. It all sounded so piteous and heartrending that the queen wept upon her silken pillow. "Here I lie upon my bed of satin," she sighed, "whilst outside, perhaps little children go barefooted in the snow. I cannot bear to think of it."

There was a sound of twittering and chirping, and now she saw how one little half-frozen bird after another flew up and tapped upon the window-pane with its beak, in search of a chance grain of corn.

"Alas, alas!" sighed the queen, "I eat roast venison out of a golden dish and drink mulled wine, and there outside the poor little birds starve to death in the cold. I cannot bear to think of it;" and the next day she begged leave of the king to collect the crumbs after meals and to place them in a basket outside her window for the birds.

Well, of course the king thought it was asking a good deal, but as the queen never begged for anything for herself, and the crumbs were, after all, of not much use for anything else, he allowed her to take them, and from that day the queen always sat and rolled bread between her white fingers during meals, and crumbled one little piece after another into little bits, whilst she chatted and jested with the king, so that he might not pay any heed to what she was doing, and when she rose from the table she would sign to her page, and then he would brush all the crumbs into a small basket which was hung outside the queen's chamber window, and at sunrise she was always awakened by the chirping of the small hungry birds when they came to empty her basket.

Now it happened one morning when the queen took in her basket to have it refilled, that she thought she saw a large snowflake lying at the bottom, but it was really a little piece of paper which had been folded around a small stone and thrown up at the window, and on it was written an appealing tale of misery.

" The queen who takes pity upon the starving birds of the air," it said, " will surely take pity upon the starving children upon earth;" and the queen read it over and over again, whilst her tears fell like rain in spring.

But, how could she help them? At last she hit upon a plan.

The king had given the queen a page, who was as young and beautiful as herself. He carried her long velvet train embroidered with golden crowns, he filled her goblet with wine, and lit the torch which was to light her upon her way through the dark passages of the castle, and he slept on a bear skin outside her door with his drawn sword beside him to protect her from all harm and danger.

Now when the page came to carry the train of her sky-blue velvet gown, the queen bent down as if to adjust it, and at the same time she slipped a little piece of paper into the page's hand. In it she had placed one of the pearls from off her necklace, and had written down where she wished him to carry it.

Away he flew as swiftly as a swallow, and when he took up the queen's train again that evening, he placed his hands upon his breast and bowed in silence, but the queen could read in his face that his errand had well sped.

From that day prayers and petitions simply rained down upon the queen's window-sill.

What could she do but take the pearls from her necklace? And so with trembling hands she drew off one pearl after another, and finally one morning there was not a single pearl left.

The king was not in a good temper at dinner that day, and he saw that the necklace was missing!

"Where is the necklace?" he shrieked. His voice sounded like the caw of a hoarse old crow. "Where is the necklace?"

The queen looked confused.

"Oh, I have not got it on today," she said. But the king had her eight tire-women and her eight laides-in-waiting called up, and they had to search over and over through all the queen's drawers and presses, till they were as red as cranberries, but the necklace was not to be found.

"Have you lost the necklace?" roared the king.

"No," said the queen, timidly.

"Have you given it away?" shouted the king. "To whom have you given it?"

The queen dropped her eyelids and said nothing.

Then the king had the queen thrown into prison; there she was to remain until the necklace was found.

Now you can imagine what a hurly-burly there was after this. The king in front, with six attendants at his heels, searched the whole castle from garret to cellar. But still the necklace was not to be found.

Alas for the queen, poor young Blanzeflor! She sat in the darkest of dungeons. No one could get to her.

She fell on her knees upon the straw lying on the prison floor, and prayed to God that he might perform a miracle and set the guiltless free.

" Thou, O God, canst break through prison walls as easily as the sun breaks through the mists," she said. " Thou canst also set an innocent prisoner free."

But scarcely had she ended her prayer when she saw in the pale morning light how the thick prison walls fell apart, and between them came a swallow flying, as easily and as quickly as if it were merely flying through the air.

In its beak it held a white pearl, which it dropped upon the queen's knees.

"This is one of the tears you shed before the high altar," twittered the swallow, "God gives it you back in the likeness of a pearl."

At the same moment came another swallow through the wall, and another and another, and in a twinkling the whole prison was filled with a flight of birds.

Each had a white pearl in its beak, which it laid upon Blanzeflor's lap.

"Here are the tears you shed for those who were poor and sad at heart," they chirped; "not one has fallen in vain."

At last came a little bird with a maimed wing; in its beak was the little crooked pearl, for this, too, had been threaded on the necklace.

Blanzeflor sat perfectly still and let the pearls lie upon her knees, for she could not touch them with her fettered hands. Then the sun rose red in the East and shone into the prison so that it streamed with light like heaven itself.

But just then the king came in with all his retinue. He had come to take the queen away to be beheaded. But when he saw her sitting with a halo of light around her and with the pearls in her lap, he stood stock-still with amazement. Then he began to count the pearls, and every single one was there, all three hundred and sixty-five, even to the little crooked one! But the silken cord on which they had been strung was missing.

Away went the king hobbling up the stairs to his own apartments to fetch a new silken cord. He was afraid to ask anyone else to go for it because he feared they would steal something.

When the king had snipped off his cord he hurried back so quickly down to the prison again, that he tripped over his own feet and fell and broke his neck, and there he lay dead on his way down to the dungeons where he had let so many innocent people suffer and pine to death.

The king was buried, and the queen was proclaimed the only reigning sovereign in all the land.

And never was there a gentler queen than she. If any one was in any trouble or distress they simply said:

"We shall go to the queen, there is sure to be one more pearl left on her Majesty's necklace!"

Robin Hood and Sir Richard-at-the-Lee*

Listen, and I will tell you about a good yeoman whose name was Robin Hood. All his life he was a proud outlaw, but so courteous an outlaw as he was never found, and he would never do any harm to a company in which there was a woman, for he held all women in great respect and honor.

Now one day Robin Hood stood in the forest of Barnsdale and leant against a tree, and beside him stood his good yeoman, Little John, and Scarlet also, and Much, the miller's son.

Then Little John spoke to Robin, saying: "Master, 'tis time to dine."

But Robin answered, "I will not dine till I have some bold baron or a knight or a squire with me who will pay for his dinner."

Then Little John and Much and William Scarlet set out in search of a guest, and after a time they saw a knight riding towards them with his retinue. He made but a sorry appearance, and seemed to have lost his pride, for he had but one foot in the stirrup, and his hood hung down over his eyes, and his clothes and trappings were mean and old.

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* From *Stories from Old English Romance*, by Joyce Pollard (Frederick A. Stokes Company). By permission of the publishers. (Abridged.)

But Little John showed him courtesy, and knelt before him saying:

"Welcome, gentle knight; welcome to the greenwood. My master has been waiting for you, fasting these three hours."

"Who is your master?" asked the knight; and John answered, "Robin Hood."

"He is a good yeoman," said the knight, "and I have heard men speak well of him."

So the knight, whose name was Sir Richard-at-the-Lee, rode on his way with Little John, till they came to where Robin was waiting; and Robin took off his hood and went on his knee, saying, courteously:

"Welcome, Sir Knight. I have awaited thee these three hours."

And the gentle knight replied with fair words:

"God save thee, good Robin, and all thy company."

When they had thus exchanged greetings, they washed and wiped their hands, and sat them down to their dinner. They had bread and wine and venison, with swans and pheasants and many other birds. And Robin bade the knight make good cheer, and the knight thanked him heartily.

"For," said he, "I have not had such a dinner for three weeks; and if I come this way again, Robin, I will give thee as good a dinner as thou hast given me."

"I thank thee, knight," said Robin; "but methinks it is right that thou shouldst pay ere thou goest. It was never the custom, by Heaven, for a yeoman to pay for a knight."

But Sir Richard answered, "I have naught in my coffers that I can offer thee for very shame. I have but ten shillings."

To this Robin answered, "If thou hast no more, I will not take a penny; and if thou hast need of more I will lend it to thee."

Then he called to Little John:

"Go forth and see if there are but ten shillings in the knight's mantle."

So Little John spread the mantle on the ground and searched in it; and he found but ten shillings as the knight had said.

Now Robin wondered at this, and said to Sir Richard:

"Surely thou must have been made a knight against thy will, if thou art so poor; or else thou hast been a bad husbandman, or a usurer, or hast done some evil or other."

But the knight replied:

"I am none of these. My ancestors have been knights before me for a hundred years. But it has often happened that a knight has been disgraced through no fault of his own. Two years ago, Robin, I could spend four hundred pounds yearly, and my neighbors will bear me witness of this. But now, alas! it has come to pass that I have no property whatsoever."

"And in what manner," asked Robin, "didst thou lose thy riches?"

Then Sir Richard told Robin how his son had slain a knight in a joust, and how to save him he had put his lands in pawn to a rich abbot whose abbey was near at hand. The sum he had to pay to redeem them was four hundred pounds, and since he could not pay it, there was nothing left for him to do but to forfeit his lands and go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. For the men who had boasted of their friendship towards him when he was rich had now deserted him, so that he could find no one who was now willing to lend him any money.

Robin and his followers were moved to great pity by this tale, and Robin sent Little John to his treasury to fetch four hundred pounds to give to the knight. Then Little John cried:

"Master, his apparel is full thin. Ye must give the knight a suit of clothes, for ye have scarlet and green-colored cloth in plenty, and there is no merchant in merry England so rich as ye are!"

"Give him three yards of each color," said Robin, "and see you measure it fairly."

So Little John took his bow as a measure and measured out the cloth, and then he turned to Robin Hood, saying:

"Master, ye must give the knight a horse to carry home all this cloth."

So Robin gave the knight a grey courser and a new saddle, and Much added a good palfrey, and Scarlet a pair of boots, and Little John a pair of gilt spurs.

Then the knight asked what day he should come back to pay his debt, and Robin appointed that day twelve-month. And as a last act of kindness, he sent his trusty yeoman, Little John, to attend his guest on his journey. So Sir Richard went on his way rejoicing and blessing Robin Hood; and he redeemed his lands from the abbot's hands, and then returned home to his castle, and began to collect money against the day when he should return to pay Robin Hood the four hundred pounds.

Now the year went by and the appointed day came, but the knight did not appear, because as he rode on his way to the trysting-place he had turned aside for the love of Robin to help a poor yeoman who was not receiving fair play in a wrestling match at some country games. When Robin found, therefore, that the knight did not come, he sent forth Little John, Scarlet, and Much, to seek another guest to dine with him, one who would be able to pay him four hundred pounds; for though he would never rob a poor man, he did not think it wrong to make the rich pay poor men's debts.

Before long the three trusty yeomen saw a monk riding towards them, followed by a retinue of fifty men, with seven strong pack-horses bearing his riches, and Little John cried:

"Brethren, I dare lay my life that this is the man who shall pay our master; and though we are but three against so many, we must bring him to dinner, or we cannot go back to Robin Hood."

Then he called to the monk:

"Abide, and come no farther, for if thou dost I shall slay thee. Thou hast made our master wroth, because he has waited for thee fasting for so long."

"Who is your master?" asked the monk.

"Robin Hood."

"He is a thief," said the monk, "and I have never heard aught good of him."

But Little John answered:

"Thou liest, and thou shalt repent it. He is a yeoman of the forest, and has bidden thee to dine with him."

Then the yeomen drew their bows, and Much pointed his arrow straight at the monk's breast.

At this all his followers turned and fled, save only a little page and a groom, who led the pack-horses to Robin Hood, while Much and Little John took the monk in custody between them to their master.

When Robin saw the monk he raised his

hood; but the monk was not so courteous, and did not return the greeting.

Then Robin summoned his yeomen, and they prepared the meal, and served the monk with his dinner; and afterwards Robin asked, as was his custom, how much his guest had in his coffers.

"Sir," said the monk, "but twenty pounds, as I hope to prosper."

"If there is no more," said Robin, "I will not take a penny; and if thou hast need of more I will lend it thee. But if I find more than twenty pounds thou wilt have to give it up."

So Robin sent Little John to search the monk's mantle and there he found over eight hundred pounds. At this Robin rejoiced, for it was twice the sum that he needed to repay him for what he had generously lent the knight.

But the monk was very wroth, and cried: "By Heaven, 'tis no courtesy to bid a man to dinner and then treat him so ill."

"Nevertheless it is an old custom of ours to leave but little behind for our guests to take away with them," said Robin.

Then the monk put spurs to his horse, for he feared to stay longer. But Robin cried after him:

"Will you not have a drink of wine before you go?"

"Nay," said the monk, "I would I had never come near you, for I should have dined far more cheaply at Blyth or Doncaster."

"Greet well your abbot and your prior for me," Robin called back, "and bid them send me such a monk as you to dinner every day."

So the monk rode away, leaving all his riches behind him; and now at last the knight came riding into the greenwood, with all his merry company. When he saw Robin he alighted from his palfrey, doffed his hood, and fell on his knee, saying:

"God save thee, Robin Hood, and all this company."

"Welcome be thou, gentle knight," Robin answered. "Hast thou thy land again?"

"Yea," said the knight, "and I thank Heaven and thee for it. But take it not amiss that I am come so late, for I have been at a wrestling match, where I helped a poor yeoman who was not getting fair play in the game."

"Sir knight," Robin answered, "I thank

thee. Whoever helps a good yeoman will always be my friend."

Now, when they had thus greeted each other the knight said:

"Here is thy four hundred pounds which thou didst lend me, and twenty pounds more for thy courtesy."

"Nay, by Heaven," cried Robin, "thou shalt keep it for thyself, for I have already received the money for the debt, and it would be a disgrace to take it twice." And he told the knight the story of the monk, and they laughed together over it and made good cheer.

Thus Robin Hood helped the knight out of all his troubles and they were friends from that time to the end of their days.

How the Queen of the Sky Gave Gifts to Men*

By the side of All-Father Odin, upon his high seat in Asgard, sat Frigga, his wife, the Queen of the Asas. Sometimes she would be dressed in snow-white garments, bound at the waist by a golden girdle, from which hung a great bunch of golden keys. And the earth-dwellers, gazing into the sky, would admire the great white clouds as they floated across the blue, not perceiving that these clouds were really the folds of Frigga's flowing white robe, as it waved in the wind.

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* From stories of *Norse Heroes*, by E. M. Wilmot-Buxton (Thomas Y. Crowell Company). By permission of the publishers. (Abridged.)

At other times she would wear dark gray or purple garments; and then the earth-dwellers made haste into their houses, for they said, "The sky is lowering today, and a storm is nigh at hand."

Frigga had a palace of her own called Fensalir, or the Hall of Mists, where she spent much of her time at her wheel spinning golden thread, or weaving web after web of many-colored clouds. All night long she sat at this golden wheel, and if you look at the sky on a starry night you may chance to see it set up where the men of the South show a constellation called the Girdle of Orion.

Frigga was especially interested in all good housewives, and she herself set them an excellent example in Fensalir. When the snowflakes fell, the earth-dwellers knew it was Frigga shaking her great feather bed, and when it rained they said it was her washing day. It was she who first gave to them the gift of flax that the women upon earth might spin, and weave, and bleach their linen as white as the clouds of her own white robe.

And this is how it came about:

There was once a shepherd who lived among the mountains with his wife and children; and so very poor was he that he often found it hard to give his family enough to satisfy their hunger. But he did not grumble; he only worked the harder; and his wife, though she had scarcely any furniture, and never a chance of a new dress, kept the house so clean, and the old clothes so well mended, that, all unknown to herself, she rose high in the favor of the all-seeing Frigga.

Now one day, when the shepherd had driven his few poor sheep up the mountain to pasture, a fine reindeer sprang from the rocks above him and began to leap upward along the steep slope. The shepherd snatched up his crossbow and pursued the animal, thinking to himself: "Now we shall have a better meal than we have had for many a long day."

Up and up leaped the reindeer, always just out of reach, and at length disappeared behind a great boulder just as the shepherd breathless and weary, reached the spot. No sign of the reindeer was to be seen, but, on looking around, the shepherd saw that he was among the snowy heights of the mountains, and almost at the top of a great glacier.

Presently, as he pursued his vain search for the animal, he saw to his amazement an open door, leading apparently into the heart of the glacier. He was a fearless man, and so, without hesitation, he passed boldly through the doorway and found himself standing in a marvelous cavern, lit up by blazing torches which gleamed upon rich jewels hanging from the roof and walls. And in the midst stood a woman, most fair to behold, clad in snow-white robes and surrounded by a group of lovely maidens.

The shepherd's boldness gave way at this awesome sight, and he sank to his knees before the Asa, Frigga, for she it was. But Frigga bade him be of good cheer, and said: "Choose now whatsoever you will to carry away with you as a remembrance of this place."

The shepherd's eyes wandered over the glittering jewels on the walls and roof, but they came back to a little bunch of blue flowers which Frigga held in her hand. They alone looked homelike to him; the rest were hard and cold; so he asked timidly that he might be given the little nosegay.

Then Frigga smiled kindly upon him.

"Most wise has been your choice," said she. "Take with the flowers this measure of seed and sow it in your field, and you shall grow flowers of your own. They shall bring prosperity to you and yours."

So the shepherd took the flowers and the seed, and scarcely had he done so when a mighty peal of thunder, followed by the shock of an earthquake, rent the cavern, and when he had collected his sense he found himself once more upon the mountain side.

When he reached home and had told his tale, his wife scolded him roundly for not bringing home a jewel which would have made them rich forever. But when she would have thrown the flowers away he prevented her. Next day he sowed the seed in his field, and was surprised to find how far it went.

Very soon after this the field was thick with tiny green shoots; and though his wife reproached him for wasting good ground upon useless flowers, he watched and waited in hope until the field was blue with the starry flax blooms.

Then one night, when the flowers had withered and the seed was ripe, Frigga, in the disguise of an old woman, visited the lowly hut and showed the shepherd and his astonished wife how to use the flax stalks; how to spin them into thread, and how to weave the thread into linen.

It was not long before all the dwellers in that part of the earth had heard of the wonderful material, and were hurrying to the shepherd's hut to buy the bleached linen or the seed from which it was obtained. And so the shepherd and his family were soon among the richest people in the land; and the promise of Frigga was amply fulfilled.

King Midas' Ears *

Once upon a time King Midas — the very same King Midas who had been cured of his hated golden touch — was invited to hear some very wonderful music. It came about in this wise:

After King Midas had been cured of his

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* Adapted from Greek mythology.

golden touch, he loved to wander in the woods and fields, away from all sight of the wealth of men, and of the splendors that wealth could buy. In this way he became a great friend of Pan, who ruled over the woods and fields, and over the shepherds and their flocks.

Now Pan had invented the shepherd's flute, which was made from a reed, and upon which he could play better than could anyone else. It was a very simple instrument: one that could produce only simple melodies. But after Pan had learned to play upon it well, he began to think that his pastoral tunes were wonderfully fine, and at last he imagined that they were quite equal to the harmonies even of Apollo, who was master of the art of music, and a matchless player upon a stringed instrument called the lyre.

King Midas, as he walked about the groves and pastures with Pan, listened with pleasure to the music of his pipe, and praised him so warmly that Pan's self-conceit grew beyond all bounds. He thought his simple music equal to that of the gods.

At length Pan sent a challenge to Apollo, asking him to meet him and let it be decided by the listeners who was the greater musician of the two.

Apollo accepted the challenge, and at the appointed time the people gathered in great numbers, for such a meeting had never been heard of before.

Among the listeners was King Midas.

Pan was the first to play. He stepped forth, clad all in green to match the verdure of the meadows and of the trees, over which he ruled.

He put his simple pipe of reeds to his lips and began playing, and the people listened with great interest and pleasure, for surely no one dreamed that such music could come from the shepherd's pipe.

But when Pan had finished, Apollo stepped forth. He was clad in royal purple, and his cloak was thrown back that his right arm might be free.

He struck the strings of the lyre, and the music that fell upon the air was so marvelously sweet, so full of pathos, so full of ravishing beauty, that all the people were moved by the sound. Then they applauded Apollo, and laughed to scorn the boastful challenge of Pan.

"Ho, ho," they cried, "does Pan think that he can match such melody as this?"

But King Midas was faithful to his friend, and, unconvinced by Apollo's wondrous music, he declared that Pan was the better player of the two.

Apollo, wearing the laurel wreath as his crown of victory, declared that the ears of King Midas must be depraved, and that they should thereafter take on a form more in keeping with the taste of their owner.

King Midas had no sooner reached his castle than he felt a strange sensation about his ears; and the strange feeling increased until at length, putting his hands to the sides of his head, he found with terror that his ears had grown long and were covered inside and outside with hair, and he could move them about, just as a donkey moves his. In fact, he found that they had become exactly like the ears of a donkey, or an ass.

King Midas was overcome with shame and rage, and he kept himself hidden from all the people.

After a time it occurred to him that he could have a turban or head-dress made which would cover his monstrous deformity. So he summoned a hair-dresser, of great skill in his trade, and when the hair-dresser had finished his task, King Midas was ready to go forth among his people again, for his ears were quite hidden from sight under the ample folds of his head-dress.

Only the hair-dresser knew his secret, and he had promised never to tell it to a living being.

But as the days went by, the secret began to burn in the hair-dresser's mind, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he kept from repeating it. At last he could keep still no longer, yet he dared not disobey the King and break his promise. So he went into a vacant field and dug a deep hole in the ground. Then, kneeling down, he breathed into the hole these words: "King Midas has the ears of an ass; King Midas has the ears of an ass."

Rising, he covered the hole with earth and hastened away.

But what do you suppose happened?

The next spring the field produced a great crop of rushes, and when the rushes had grown quite tall a wind passed over them, and the rushes murmured, "King Midas has the ears of an ass. King Midas has the ears of an ass."

And all summer long, whenever a breeze swept over the field, the rushes murmured, "King Midas has the ears of an ass."

And when the hair-dresser heard it, he wrung his hands in despair, and said, "Not even the rushes of the field can keep a secret."

Hold Fast, Tom *

The sun was setting over the island of St. Helena on a spring evening in 1673, and in its red glow the vast black cliffs stood out like the walls of a fortress above the great waste of lonely sea that lay around them as far as the eye could reach. Very quiet and very lonesome did it appear, that tiny islet of St. Helena, far away in the heart of the boundless ocean.

But there was *one* part of the island that was busy and noisy enough, and that was the spot where the low white houses and single church-spire of Jamestown, half buried in clustering leaves, nestled in a deep gully close to the water's edge, walled in by two mighty precipices nearly a thousand feet in height.

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* By David Ker, in *St. Nicholas.* By permission of the publishers.

All along the line of forts and batteries, perched like birds' nests among the frowning crags that overhung the sea, there was an unwonted stir and bustle. Cannon were rumbling to and fro, rusty pikes and muskets were being dragged forth and laid in readiness, soldiers in buff jackets and big looped-up hats were clustering along the ramparts, while hoarse words of command, clanking swords, the ceaseless tramp of feet, and the clatter of gun-stocks and pike-staves made every cranny of the surrounding cliffs echo again. What could it all mean?

It meant that the stout-hearted Dutchmen who had taken the island from England a few months before were about to have their courage again put to the proof. Those five ships of war in the offing, coming down before the wind under a full press of sail, had just hoisted the red cross of St. George (not yet changed into the Union Jack), and Englishman and Dutchman alike were eager to try

Whether John or Jan
Be the better man,

as one of their favorite songs worded it.

Neither side, certainly, lost any time in beginning. The sturdy Hollanders did not wait even for a summons to surrender. The foremost English ship had barely dropped her anchor in front of the Zwart Steen Battery, when there was a red flash from the old gray wall, a loud bang, and then a cannon-ball came tearing through the foretopsail, and splashed into the water far beyond. Bang went the Englishman's whole broadside in return, and the balls were heard rattling among the rocks, or crashing into the front of the breastwork; and now the fight began in earnest.

Fire, smoke, flying shot, crashing timbers, deafening uproar, multiplied a thousandfold by the echoes of the surrounding hills—it was a hard fight, for there were Dutchmen behind those batteries who had swept the Channel with Van Tromp, and there were Englishmen aboard those ships who had fought him and his men, yardarm to yard-arm, under Robert Blake; and it would have been hard to tell which were the braver or the more stubborn of the two.

"Fire away, boys, for the honor of Old England!" shouted Captain Richard Munden, pacing up and down the quarterdeck of the British flagship amid a hail of shot.

"Stand to it, my sons, as if Father Van Tromp were with you still!" cried the brave old Dutch commandant, Pieter Van Gebhardt, as he leveled a gun with his own hands over the fast-crumbling parapet. "Fear not for the fire and smoke; it is but the Englishman lighting his pipe."

Both sides fought stoutly, and men began to fall fast; but it seemed as if on the whole the Dutch were getting the best of it. The ships, lying out upon the smooth water, made an excellent mark, while the rock-cut batteries could hardly be distinguished from the cliff itself.

But just at that moment a very unexpected turn of fortune changed the whole face of the battle.

To explain clearly how this happened we must go back a little way.

The Dutch garrison had given their whole attention to the attack in front, feeling sure that this was the only point from which they could be assailed. And they reasoned well; for everywhere else the coast was merely one great precipice of several hundred feet, rising so sheer out of the sea that it seemed as if nothing without wings could possibly scale it.

But they might, perhaps, have been less confident had they seen what was going on just then at the opposite side of the island.

When the English ships first advanced to the attack, the hindmost of them, while still hidden from the Dutch by the huge black pyramid of Sugar-loaf Point, had lowered several large boats filled with armed men, which instantly shot away round the great rocky bluff of "the Barn" as fast as eight oars apiece could carry them.

Away they went, past headland after headland, while every eye was fixed upon the rocky shore, as if seeking something which was not easily to be found.

At length, just when they rounded the bold, craggy promontory of King and Queen point, a dull boom reached their ears, followed instantly by the thunder of a sustained cannonade. At that familiar sound the sailors clenched their teeth savagely, as they looked up at the tremendous precipices that seemed to shut them out from all hope of taking part in the battle.

"Can't we get up anywhere?" growled the

captain of the frigate, who was in the foremost boat. "We 're disgraced forever if they do the job without us."

"With your honor's leave," broke in a stalwart young topman, touching his thick brown forelock, "I think I could get up that rock yonder, and fasten a rope for the rest to climb by."

"What! up there?" cried the captain, glancing doubtfully from the young sailor's bright, fearless face to the tremendous height above. "Well, my lad, if you can do it, I 'll give you fifty guineas!"

"It 's for the honor of the flag, not for the money, sir!" answered the seaman, springing from the boat to the lowest ledge of the terrible rock.

Up, up, up, ever higher he clambered, with the rising wind flinging his loose hair to and fro, and the startled sea-birds whirling around him with hoarse screams of mingled fear and rage. To the watching eyes far below, the tiny points of rock to which he clung were quite invisible, and he seemed to be hanging in mid-air, like a fly on the side of a wall.

And now he was two-thirds of the way up

the precipice; and now he was within a few yards of the top; and now his hand almost touched the highest ledge, when suddenly his feet were seen to slide from under him, and in a moment he was swinging in the empty air, grasping a projecting crag with the strength of desperation.

"Hold fast, Tom!" yelled his comrades, as they saw him.

Tom did hold fast, and the strong hands that had defied the full fury of an Atlantic gale to loosen them from the slippery rigging did him good service once more. He regained his footing, and the indrawn breath of the anxious gazers below sounded like a hiss in the grim silence as they watched the final effort that brought him safely to the top.

The rope was soon fixed, and the last man had scarcely mounted when the daring band were hurrying across the ridgy interior of the island toward the spot whence the cannonade still boomed upon the evening air. And there it was at last, as they crowned the farthest ridge, the tall masts standing up through billowy smoke, and the batteries marked out amid the gathering darkness by the flashes of their own cannon. A deadly volley of English musketry cracked along the cliff, and several of the Dutch were seen to fall while dismay and confusion spread fast among the survivors. Thus, caught between two fires, with the British ships thundering upon them from below, and the British marksmen shooting them down from above, the defenders had no chance; and at length brave old Van Gebhardt, with a look of bitter grief on his iron face, slowly hauled down the Dutch flag in token of surrender.

"Mynheer," said he to the English captain, as the latter came marching into the fort at the head of his men, "my followers have done all that men could do; but yours have done more."

"And if we had not done more, we could never have beaten the gallant Dutchmen," answered the captain, taking off his battered cocked hat with a polite bow.

Thus it was that the English regained St. Helena, over which the British flag flies to this day. Nor has the brave fellow who led that daring attack been forgotten, for the crag which he scaled (and a very grim-looking crag it is) still goes by the name of "Holdfast Tom."

Nils and the Bear *

[Nils Holgarsson, a young boy, has been traveling high over the country in company with a wild goose. He is blown from her back during a hard wind, and alights among the iron mines. He is discovered by bears and taken to their cave.]

Father Bear pushed Mother Bear aside. "Don't meddle with what you don't understand!" he roared. "Can't you scent that human odor about him from afar? I shall eat him at once, or he will play us some mean trick."

He opened his jaws again; but meanwhile Nils had had time to think, and, quick as a flash, he dug into his knapsack and brought forth some matches—his sole weapon of defense—struck one on his leather breeches, and stuck the burning match into the bear's open mouth.

Father Bear snorted when he smelled the burning sulphur, and with that the flame went out. The boy was ready with another match, but, curiously enough, Father Bear did not repeat his attack.

"Can you light many of those little blue roses?" asked Father Bear.

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* Abridged from *Further Adventures of Nils*, by Selma Lagerlof (Doubleday, Page and Company). By permission of the publishers.

"I can light enough to put an end to the whole forest," replied the boy, for he thought that in this way he might be able to scare Father Bear.

"Perhaps you could also set fire to houses and barns?" said Father Bear.

"Oh, that would be no trick for me!" boasted the boy, hoping that this would make the bear respect him.

"Good!" exclaimed the bear. "You shall render me a service. Now, I 'm very glad that I did not eat you."

Father Bear carefully took the boy between his tusks and climbed up from the pit. As soon as he was up he speedily made for the woods. It was evident that Father Bear was created to squeeze through dense forests. The heavy body pushed through the brushwood as a boat does through the water.

Father Bear ran along till he came to a hill at the skirt of the forest, where he could see the big noise-shop. Here he lay down and placed the boy in front of him, holding him securely between his forepaws.

"Now look down at that big noise-shop!" he commanded.

The great ironworks, with many tall buildings, stood at the edge of a waterfall. High chimneys sent forth dark clouds of smoke, blasting furnaces were in full blaze, and light shone from all the windows and apertures. Within, hammers and rolling mills were going with such force that the air rang with their clatter and boom. Just beyond the workshops were long rows of workingmen's homes, pretty villas, schoolhouses, assembly halls, and shops. But there all was quiet and apparently everybody was asleep. The boy did not glance in that direction, but gazed intently at the iron works. The earth around them was black; the sky above them was like a great fiery dome; the rapids, white with foam, rushed by; while the buildings themselves were sending out light and smoke, fire and sparks. It was the grandest sight the boy had ever seen.

"Surely you don't mean to say you can set fire to a place like that?" remarked the bear doubtingly.

The boy, wedged between the beast's paws, was thinking the only thing that might save him would be that the bear should have a high opinion of his capability and power.

"It 's all the same to me," he answered

with a superior air. "Big or little, I can burn it down."

"Then I 'll tell you something," said Father Bear. "My forefathers lived in this region from the time that the forests first sprang up. From them I inherited hunting grounds and pastures, lairs and retreats, and have lived here in peace all my life. In the beginning I wasn't troubled much by the human kind. They dug in the mountains and picked up a little ore down here by the rapids; they had a forge and a furnace, but the hammers sounded only a few hours during the day, and the furnace was not fired more than two moons at a stretch. It wasn't so bad but that I could stand it; but these last years, since they have built this noise shop, which keeps up the same racket both day and night, life here has become intolerable. There are so many people that I never feel safe from them. I thought that I should have to move away, but I have discovered something better!"

The boy wondered what Father Bear had hit upon, but no opportunity was afforded him to ask, as the bear took him between his forepaws and held him up.

"Try to look into the house!" he commanded. A strong current of air was forced into a big cylinder which was suspended from the ceiling and filled with molten iron. As this current rushed into the mess of iron with an awful roar, showers of sparks of all colours spurted up in bunches, in sprays, in long clusters! They struck against the wall and came splashing down over the whole big room. Father Bear let the boy watch the gorgeous spectacle until the blowing was over and the flowing and sparkling red steel had been poured into ingot moulds.

The boy was completely charmed by the marvellous display and almost forgot that he was imprisoned between a bear's two paws.

"I call that real man's work!" the boy remarked to himself.

The bear then let the boy have a peep at the furnace and the forge, and he became more and more astonished as he saw how the blacksmiths handled iron and fire.

"Those men have no fear of heat and flames," he thought. The workmen were sooty and grimy. He fancied they were some sort of firefolk—that was why they could bend and mould the iron as they wished. He could not believe that they were just ordinary men, since they had such power!

"They keep this up day after day, night after night," said Father Bear, as he dropped wearily down on the ground. "You can understand that one gets rather tired of that kind of thing. I'm mighty glad that at last I can put an end to it!"

"Indeed!" said the boy. "How will you go about it?"

"Oh, I thought that you were going to set fire to the buildings!" said Father Bear. "That would put an end to all this work, and I could remain in my old home."

The boy was all of a shiver.

So, it was for this that Father Bear had brought him here!

"If you will set fire to the noise-works I'll promise to spare your life," said Father Bear. "But if you don't do it, I'll make short work of you! Will you or won't you?"

The boy knew that he ought to answer promptly that he would not, but he also knew that then the bear's paws would squeeze him to death; therefore he replied:

"I shall have to think it over."

"Very well, do so," assented Father Bear. "Let me say to you that iron is the thing that has given men the advantage over us bears, which is another reason for my wishing to put an end to the work here."

The boy thought he would use the delay to figure out a way of escape, but instead he began to think of the great help that iron had been to mankind. They needed iron for everything. There was iron in the plow that broke up the field; in the axe that felled the tree for building houses; in the scythe that mowed the grain; and in the knife, which would be turned to all sorts of uses. There was iron in the horse's bit, in the lock on the door, in the nails that held furniture together. The rifle that drove away wild beasts was made of iron; iron covered the men-of-war; the locomotives steamed through the country on iron rails; the needle that had stitched his coat was of iron; the shears that clipped the sheep and the kettle that cooked the food. Father Bear was perfectly right in saying that it was the iron that had given men their mastery over the bears.

"Now will you or won't you?" Father Bear repeated.

The boy was startled from his musing.

"You mustn't be so impatient," he said. "This is a serious matter for me, and I 've got to have time to consider."

"I can wait a little longer," said Father Bear. "But after that you 'll get no more grace."

The boy swept his hand across his forehead. No plan of escape had as yet come to his mind, but this much he knew—he did not wish to do any harm to the iron, which was so useful to rich and poor alike, and which gave bread to so many people in this land.

"Come, come!" growled the bear. "Will you or won't you?"

"I won't!" said the boy.

Father Bear squeezed him a little harder, but said nothing.

"You 'll not get me to destroy the iron-works!" defied the boy. "The iron is so great a blessing that it will never do to harm it."

"Then, of course, you don't expect to be allowed to live very long?" said the bear.

"No, I don't expect it," returned the boy, looking the bear straight in the eye.

Father Bear gripped him a little harder.

But just then the boy heard something click very close to them, and saw the muzzle of a rifle two paces away.

"Father Bear! Don't you hear the clicking of a trigger?" cried the boy. "Run, or you'll be shot!"

Father Bear grew terribly hurried. He thought he heard hounds and hunters pursuing him.

But the boy stood in the forest, free and unharmed, and could hardly understand how it was possible.

Jericho Bob*

Jericho Bob, when he was four years old, hoped that one day he might be allowed to eat just as much turkey as he possibly could. He was eight now, but that hope had not been realized.

Mrs. Jericho Bob, his mother, kept hens for a living, and she expected that they would lay enough eggs in the course of time to help her son to an independent career as a bootblack.

They lived in a tumbledown house in a

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* By Mrs. John Lane, in *St. Nicholas*. By permission of the author and publishers.

waste of land near the steam cars, and besides her hens, Mrs. Bob owned a goat.

Our story has, however, nothing to do with the goat except to say he was there, and that he was on nibbling terms, not only with Jericho Bob, but with Bob's bosom friend, Julius Caesar Fish, and it was surprising how many old hat-brims and other tidbits of clothing he could swallow during a day.

As Mrs. Bob truly said, it was no earthly use to get something new for Jericho, even if she could afford it; for the goat browsed all over him, and had been known to carry away even a leg of his trousers.

Jericho Bob was eight years old, and the friend of his bosom, Julius Caesar Fish, was nine. They both were of a lovely black; a tallow-dip could n't take the kink out of their hair, and the hardest whipping did not disturb the even cheerfulness of their spirits. They were so much alike that if it had n't been for Jericho's bow-legs and his turn-up nose, you really could not have told them apart.

A kindred taste for turkey also united them.

In honor of Thanksgiving Day, Mrs. Bob

always sacrificed a hen which would, but for such blessed release, have died of old age. One drumstick was given to Jericho, whose interior remained an unsatisfied void.

Jericho Bob had heard of turkey as a fowl larger, sweeter, and more tender than hen; and about Thanksgiving time he would linger around the provision stores and gaze with open mouth at the noble array of turkeys hanging, head downward, over bushels of cranberries, as if even at that uncooked stage, they were destined for one another. And turkey was his dream.

It was springtime, and the hens were being a credit to themselves. Mrs. Bob was laid up with rheumatism.

"Jericho Bob!" she said to her son, shaking her red and yellow turban at him, "Jericho Bob, you go down an' fetch de eggs today. Ef I find yer don't bring me twenty-three, I'll—well, never mind what I'll do, but yer won't like it."

Now, Jericho Bob meant to be honest, but the fact was he found twenty-four eggs, and the twenty-fourth was so big, so remarkably big!

Twenty-three eggs he brought to Mrs. Bob, but the twenty-fourth he sinfully left in charge of the discreet hen.

On his return he met Julius Caesar Fish, with his hands in his pockets and his head extinguished by his grandfather's fur cap.

Together they went toward the hen-coop and Julius Caesar Fish spoke, or rather lisped (he had lost some of his front teeth):

"Jericho Bobth, tha 'th a turkey 'th egg."

"Yer don't say so?"

"I think i 'th a-goin' ter hatch." No sooner said than they heard a pick and a peck in the shell.

"Pick!" a tiny beak broke through the shell. "Peck!" more beak. "Crack!" a funny little head, a long, bare neck, and then "Pick! Peck! Crack!" before them stood the funniest, fluffiest brown ball resting on two weak little legs.

"Hooray!" shouted the woolly heads.

"Peep!" said turkeykin.

"It's mine!" Jericho shouted excitedly.

"Ith Marm Pitkin 'th turkey 'th; she laid it there."

"It 's mine, and I 'm going to keep it, and next Thanksgiving I 'm going ter eat him."

"Think yer ma 'll let you feed him up for thath?" Julius Caesar asked, grinning triumphantly.

Jericho Bob's next Thanksgiving dinner seemed destined to be a dream. His face fell.

"I'll tell yer whath I'll do," his friend said, benevolently; "I'll keep 'm for you, and Thanksgivin' we'll go halvth."

Jericho resigned himself to the inevitable, and the infant turkey was borne home by his friend.

Fish, Jr., lived next door, and the only difference in the premises was a freight-car permanently switched off before the broken-down fence of the Fish yard; and in this car turkeykin took up his abode.

I will not tell you how he grew and more than realized the hopes of his foster-fathers, nor with what impatience and anticipation they saw spring, summer, and autumn pass, while they watched their Thanksgiving dinner stalk proudly up the bare yard, and even hop across the railroad tracks.

But, alas! the possession of the turkey brought with it strife and discord.

Quarrels arose between the friends as to the prospective disposal of his remains. We grieve to say that the question of who was to cook him led to blows.

It was the day before Thanksgiving. There was a coldness between the friends which was not dispelled by the bringing of a pint of cranberries to the common store by Jericho, and the contributing thereto of a couple of cold boiled sweet potatoes by Julius Caesar Fish.

The friends sat on an ancient wash-tub in the back yard, and there was a momentary truce between them. Before them stood the freight-car, and along the track beyond an occasional train tore down the road, which so far excited their mutual sympathy that they rose and shouted as one man.

At the open door of the freight-car stood the unsuspecting turkey, and looked meditatively out on the landscape and at the two figures on the wash-tub.

One had bow-legs, a turn-up nose, and a huge straw hat. The other wore a fur cap and a gentleman's swallow-tail coat, with the tails caught up because they were too long.

The turkey hopped out of the car and gazed confidingly at his protectors. In point of size he was altogether their superior.

"I think," said Jericho Bob, "we 'd better ketch 'im; to-morrow 's Thanksgiving. Yum!"

And he looked with great joy at the innocent, the unsuspecting fowl.

"Butcher Tham 'th goin' to kill 'im for uth," Julius Caesar hastened to say, "an' I kin cook 'im."

"No, you ain't. I 'm going to cook 'im," Jericho Bob cried, resentfully. "He 's mine."

"He ain'th; he 'th mine."

"He was my egg," and Jericho Bob danced defiance at his friend.

The turkey looked on with some surprise, and he became alarmed when he saw his foster-fathers clasped in an embrace more of anger than of love.

"I 'll eat 'im all alone!" Jericho Bob cried.

"No, yes sha'n't!" the other shouted.

The turkey shrieked in terror, and fled in a circle about the yard.

"Now, look yere," said Julius Caesar, who had conquered. "We 're goin' to be squar'. He wath your egg, but who brought 'im up? Me! Who 'th got a friend to kill 'im? Me! Who 'th got a fire to cook 'im? Me! Now you git up and we 'll kitch 'im. Ef you thay another word about your egg I 'll jeth eat 'im up all mythelf."

Jericho Bob was conquered. With mutual understanding they approached the turkey.

"Come yere; come yere," Julius Caesar said, coaxingly.

For a moment the bird gazed at both, uncertain what to do.

"Come yere," Julius Caesar repeated, and made a dive for him. The turkey spread his tail. Oh, did n't he run!

"Now, I 've got her!" the wicked Jericho Bob cried, and thought he had captured the fowl; when, with a shriek from Jericho Bob, as the turkey knocked him over, the Thanksgiving dinner spread his wings, rose in the air, and alighted on the roof of the freight-car.

The turkey looked down over the edge of the car at his enemies, and they gazed up at him. Both parties surveyed the situation.

"We 've got him," Julius Caesar cried at last, exultantly. "You git on the roof, and ef you don't kitch 'im up thar, I 'll kitch 'im down yere."

With the help of the wash-tub, an old chair, Julius Caesar's back, and much scrambling, Jericho Bob was boosted on top of the car. The turkey was stalking solemnly up and down the roof with tail and wings half spread.

"I've got yer now," Jericho Bob said, creeping softly after him. "I've got yer now, sure," he was just repeating, when, with a deafening roar the express-train for New York came tearing down the road.

For what possible reason it slowed up on approaching the freight-car nobody ever knew; but the fact remains that it did, just as Jericho Bob laid his wicked black paw on the turkey's tail.

The turkey shrieked, spread his wings, shook the small black boy's grasp from his tail, and with a mighty swoop alighted on the roof of the very last car as it passed; and in a moment more Jericho Bob's Thanksgiving dinner had vanished, like a beautiful dream, down the road!

Jerusalem Artie's Christmas Dinner *

Jerusalem Artie sat on the doorstep of

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* By Julia Darrow Cowles, in *St. Nicholas*. By permission of the publishers.

his mammy's cabin, buried in thought. It was a very unusual condition for Jerusalem Artie, but then, the occasion was an unusual one. The next day would be Christmas.

Presently he looked up. "Mammy," he questioned, "what's we-all a-gwine hab fo' Chris-mus dinnah?"

"Lan' sakes, chile," his mammy answered, "how-all 's I a-gwine know dat? Yo' pappy ain't got nuthin' yit, an' I ain't a-reckonin' he will git nuthin'."

Jerusalem Artie looked down, and was once more lost in thought.

He made a comical little figure there on the door-step, but to this fact both he and his mammy were blissfully oblivious. On his head he wore an old straw hat which his pappy had discarded for a fur cap at the approach of winter weather. In the spring the exchange would be made again, and Jerusalem Artie would wear the fur. But this did not trouble the boy. When it grew too hot, he left off any sort of head covering; and when it grew too cold, he wrapped one of mammy's gay bandanas about his woolly head, and set the battered straw on top of that.

His shirt, and his one-sided suspenders, and even the trousers that he wore, had also belonged to his pappy. As Jerusalem Artie was only eight years old, the trousers were a trifle long. He had once suggested cutting them off, but his mammy had objected.

"Co'se yo' cain't, chile! Yo' pappy might hab to weah dem pants some mo' hisself yit, an' how-all 'd he look den?"

The question was unanswerable.

"An' what-all 'd *I* weah den?" he had queried, dismayed at the possibility.

"How-all yo' s'pose I 's a-gwine know dat?" his mammy had responded. "Maybe yo' skin."

So Jerusalem Artie had rolled, and rolled, and rolled the bottom of the trouser legs till his little black toes emerged from the openings.

But now, as he sat on the door-step, his mind was not upon his clothes, not even upon the offending trousers. It was upon the Christmas dinner for which he was longing, but which did not exist.

"All neighbo' folks a-gwine hab Chris'mus dinnahs," he was saying to himself. "Boys done tol' me so. An' we 's gwine hab Chris'-

mus dinnah, too,'' he added, straightening up suddenly.

He got up from the door-step and started slowly toward the bit of tangled underbrush that grew back of the cabin. He did not know, yet, where the Christmas dinner was coming from. He had gotten no further than the resolve that there should be one.

'' Folks hab turkey, er goose,'' he was saying to himself, '' er chickun, er—rabbit pie,'' he ended with a sudden whoop, and made a dash toward the tangled brush, for, at that very moment, a rabbit's white flag of a tail had flashed before his eyes.

'' Hi, yo' Molly Cottontail, I git yo' fo' a pie!'' yelled Jerusalem Artie, and the chase was on.

Into the brush dashed Molly, and after her came Jerusalem Artie; and, as he ran, one leg of his trousers began to unroll. But there was no time to stop.

Molly Cottontail had the advantage, but Jerusalem Artie's eyes were sharp, and Molly's white flag led him on. Molly slid beneath the tangled brush, and Jerusalem Artie made desperate leaps above it, each leap marked by a flying trouser leg.

Suddenly Molly doubled on her tracks, for her pursuer was close at hand. Jerusalem Artie attempted to do the same, but his free foot became entangled with the elongated leg, and down went Jerusalem Artie — squarely on top of Molly Cottontail.

It pretty well knocked the breath out of both of them, but Jerusalem Artie recovered first, naturally, for he was on top.

"Chris'mus pie! Chris'mus pie!" he squealed, as he wriggled one hand cautiously beneath him and got a good firm hold of Molly's long ears. Then carefully he got upon his feet.

The rabbit hung limp from his hand. "Knocked yo' breaf' clean out fo' suah!" he exclaimed, deliberately surveying his prize.

Then slowly he made his way to the road, for the chase had taken him some distance from the cabin, and the dragging trouser leg made walking difficult.

Reaching the roadside, he held aloft the still limp rabbit surveying it with a grin of satisfaction.

"Reckon she 's done fo' as suah as I 's a niggah chile," he soliloquized; and laying his Christmas dinner on the grass beside him, he proceeded to roll up the entangling trouser leg.

While he was in the midst of this occupation, there was a startling "honk, honk," close at hand and a big red motor car flashed into sight.

The sudden noise startled Jerusalem Artie. It also startled Molly Cottontail. Her limp, and apparently lifeless, body gathered itself, leaped, and cleared the roadway, barely escaping the wheels of the big red motor car as it flashed by.

Jerusalem Artie rose to his feet, the trouser leg half rolled, and shrieked: "M' Chris'mus dinnah! M' Chris'mus dinnah!" for Molly Cottontail had disappeared.

As he stood looking helplessly after the offending cause of his loss, a man in the back seat turned, laughed, and, leaning over the side of the car, threw something bright and shining back into the road.

Jerusalem Artie pounced upon the spot, dug with his disentangled toes in the dust, and brought to view a silver half-dollar.

"Chris'mus dinnah yit," he exclaimed, "as suah as I'se a niggah chile!"

Then, with the half-dollar held hard between his teeth, he finished rolling up the leg of his trousers.

"Mammy," he cried, a moment later, as, dusty and breathless, he reappeared in the cabin doorway, "see what-all I foun' in de road."

And Mammy's look of dark suspicion faded as Jerusalem Artie recounted his brief and tragic adventure with Molly Cottontail.

"Yo-all 's a honey chile," said Mammy, when he had concluded; "an we-all 's a-gwine right now an' git a plumb fat chickun."

The next day, as Mammy cleared away the remains of the Christmas dinner, she said: "Now, chile, yo' c'n tote dese yere chickun bones out on de do'-step an' gnaw 'em clean. An', Jerus'lem Artie, yo' pappy say yo' c'n cut off de laigs o' dem pants, an' hab 'em fo' yo'self."

Robin's Christmas *

When I was a little girl I used to look for Robin Redbreast perched in the holly on my Christmas cards, and nearly always he was there, fluttering about in the green, or sing-

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* By A. Gertrude Maynard, in *Kindergarten Review*. By permission of the publishers.

ing a merry greeting from among the red berries. Nowadays I do not see him so often, but I have heard the story of how he came to be there. Listen, and you shall hear it, too.

First, you must know that the English Robin Redbreast (which is the one in my story) does not go South in the fall as our robin does. That is why the little English children sing:

The North wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the robin do then, poor thing?
He'll stay in the barn,
And keep himself warm,
And tuck his head under his wing, poor thing.

Generally Robin gets through the winter very well, but sometimes he has a pretty hard time, and that is why this story came to be told.

One year, about Christmas time, there came a long spell of cold, stormy weather. It would snow, and all the children would shout for joy; then it would rain, and they would almost cry from disappointment; then again it would freeze, and they would run and slide and skate on the ice, only to be driven in by more snow and wind. So

Christmas eve found them all snug in their houses, making the rooms gay with holly and evergreen, and talking about Santa Claus and their Christmas stockings.

But outdoors in the cold a poor little Robin Redbreast was far from being snug and comfortable. It seemed to him that he had n't had anything to eat for a month. Every grain of corn in the barnyard was under the snow, no one threw out any crumbs, and the seed pods and berries that were food in the coldest weather were so thickly coated with ice that it was like pecking glass beads to try to eat one. The North wind seemed to be everywhere. It drove him out of each corner in which he tried to nestle, and Farmer Gray's barn door was closed while he was busy in the hedge trying to get a mouthful of seeds. When it came night, poor Robin felt so chilled and hungry and miserable that he simply could n't "tuck his head under his wing," much less "keep himself warm."

Once, when the lamps were lighted, he fluttered up to a window and tried to get behind the blind, but he could not squeeze in. Then he pecked at the glass, for he was a friendly birdie, and had more than once been fed from a window, but no one heard his little tap, tap, and away he flew, trying once more to find shelter from the driving storm.

Now, there was a church near by. People had been going in and out all day, making it beautiful with Christmas greens, and preparing the children's Christmas tree. Robin finally perched himself in the ivy at one window, though the North wind threatened to blow him off any moment. There were lights within, and he could hear the happy children gathered round the Christmas tree. After awhile every one went away, and the lights were turned out.

A half hour later the faithful sexton came back through the storm to take one more look at his fires, and make sure that all was safe for the night. Robin, just settling himself for a long, cold night, could see his lantern swinging as he pushed his way through the snowdrifts. When he opened the great church door, the wind and snow blew in—and something else, too—a cold, hungry little robin. But the sexton never knew. He banked his fires a little more and went home, leaving Robin alone.

Oh, how warm and quiet and comfortable it was! Robin tucked his head under his wing and was soon asleep on an oaken rafter. When he awoke in the morning, his first thought was that he was in the forest. How big and green and beautiful! Evergreen and holly were everywhere. Great festoons were looped from chancel to window. A great mass of holly hid the choir rail. Little Christmas trees were banked against the walls. Wreaths hung from the arches, and the red and golden lights from the windows bathed all in sunshine. Robin could hardly believe his eyes.

"Chirp! Chirp!" he cried, and flew from rafter to rafter, and from there to the organ loft. What a wonderful place to awaken in! Why had he never found it before? And what were those little red berries? Were they really good to eat?

"Chirp! Chirp! I think I'll try one!" said he.

He hadn't had a good meal for two days and a half, and if the ladies could have seen him eating their lovely decorations, I am afraid they would have been shocked. How good the holly berries tasted! And there was such an abundance! No hunting and picking good from bad; no fuss of any kind. Hungry Robin flew from festoon to wreath and enjoyed the best breakfast he had known that winter. In fact, he ate till he was tired, and then he had another little nap on the rafter.

While he was sleeping the church bell rang, and the children began to flock in again. They had come to sing their carols at early morning service, and soon the church was filled with happy faces. Then the organ played and they began to sing. Robin woke up and watched everything quietly from his perch. He felt warm and happy, and he liked the music; in fact, he began to feel like singing, too. In the middle of the second verse he broke in. High and clear and sweet he sang, and the children looked up amazed. Suddenly the minister held up his hand. Wonderingly the organist and the children ceased. Robin was singing a solo, now. Perched high on the rafter, he threw his little head back and sang and sang, while the delighted children listened. When had they ever heard Robin Redbreast sing in church? How did he get in? What a wonderful song!

When Robin was through he flew to the top of the organ and looked down on them with bright eyes, as if to say: "That is all I can do to thank you for my breakfast and shelter!"

"Children," said the minister, "this little bird must have flown in here last night from the storm. He sings because he is grateful to the Heavenly Father who cares for all, and knows when even a sparrow falleth. Let us lift our hearts and voices, and thank him in our carols for this happy Christmas. Let our voices be as sweet as Robin Redbreast's — our little brother who is welcome to all the comfort our church can give him!"

The children sang their carols as they never sang them before, and they never forgot the Christmas day when they found Robin in church. That was years ago, but that is why, for a long time, Robin Redbreast was on the Christmas cards. Did you ever see him there?

A Tale of the Christ Child *

It was Christmas eve. The soft snow fell in big flakes like white blossoms from the

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* By Phila Butler Bowman, in *Kindergarten Review*. By permission of the publishers.

trees of June. It covered the house roofs and glorified the trees. It hung jewels above the windows of the poor, and softened the lowliest hut to the white beauty of a palace.

And through the beautiful white pathway of the snow a herald rode, and cried that to-night the dear Christ Child would walk through the streets, and even as the falling snow made all barren and ugly things lovely, so would the Christ Child's coming glorify the souls of them that met him aright, and they would be forever blest who should gain speech with him.

No wonder that a million candles lighted the streets. No wonder that great and proud, rich and poor, the sick, the old, and the lame thronged the white beauty of the streets and wandered up and down, wondering and waiting.

The King came forth in royal robes with a throng of courtiers at his back. He bore himself proudly, and proudly he waited.

The priest was there, bearing the blessed cross, and lifting prayerful eyes to the white sky.

The great singer came, singing his loveliest songs in tones so sweet that all who heard him wondered, and said, "Surely he will have speech with the Christ Child."

The poet came with his book, and soldiers with gleaming swords, boasting of battles they had won, and all looked with eager eyes up and down the streets, each longing to be the first to see the Christ Child in all his beauty.

So, in their eagerness they pressed now this way and now that, heeding nothing but their one desire. The shivering beggar was jostled, the lame man was trampled under foot, and lay moaning in a doorway, and children were thrust aside from their eager gazing, and fell, weeping and disappointed, or fled from the stern presence of some blustering soldier, to hide in alleyways, praying that the little Christ Child would find them there, waiting to worship him.

Among the children was one braver than the others—little Karl. He had gone out with a glad heart, saying to his mother, "I will not come back, though I walk the streets all night, until I will see the Christ Child and gain a blessing for you and for me." But his mother kissed him fondly, saying, "Go my son, but do not grieve if you do not see the Christ Child, for there is blessing even in seeking him."

So little Karl, seeing so many crushed and crowded back, though fearing that the Christ Child should pass while he spent the time, lifted the lame man to a place of safety, apart from the crowd, followed the shivering beggar and lent him his cloak, and comforted the weeping children.

And meanwhile the crowd pushed and jostled and threatened, and no one gave heed to a ragged boy who pressed slowly through the throng, going from street to street, and saying now and again, "I hunger. Will one give me a crust of bread?"

No one gave heed, save that the King drew back his royal robes and bade his courtiers clear his pathway of beggars; the great singer asked angrily who was this who dared to interrupt him in his singing, and turned his back upon the child to begin his song anew; the poet saw him not, because his eyes were not lifted from the book, while some, impatient at the interrupted melody, or taking counsel from the king's frown, jostled him in rude malice.

True, the priest turned on him a kindly

glance and would have spoken, but that a sudden movement in the crowd gave hope of the Christ Child's coming, and he forgot all else to press after the others.

But little Karl, now shivering with cold, had pity, and crept to the stranger boy's side, and broke his one piece of bread with him and offered him a place in his sheltered doorway.

"It is cold," Karl said, "and I have lent my cloak, or we could share it with each other, and the bread is old, but it is all I have, and indeed one feels hunger and cold but lightly who watches for the Christ Child and hopes for his blessing."

When, lo! as the ragged boy broke the bread and ate with Karl, his face became glorified, and a light like soft moonlight played about his fair temples, and the eyes that looked into the very soul of Karl, as he rose in glad amaze, were clear and wonderful as the winter stars, and yet gentle as the eyes of a pet lamb.

And suddenly, as he gazed, Karl fell, worshiping, for he knew that he had had speech with the Christ Child.

Then, while the crowd still surged and

quarreled and waited, watching, the Christ Child walked through the soft falling snows, where little Karl led the way. And they sought out the beggar, and the lame man, and the little children, and the great who were also good, and all whose smiles were kindly and whose hearts were like those of little children.

Story of the Ark*

Now God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and it repented God that he had made man. But Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God.

And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them, and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. A window shalt thou make to the ark; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

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* Genesis vi, 5-22.

And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh; and everything that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

And of every living thing, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing of the earth, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

The Flood *

And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the

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* Genesis vii.

ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of everything that creepeth upon the earth, there went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah. And the Lord shut him in.

And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth, and all flesh died that moved upon the earth. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark, and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

The Olive Leaf *

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged. The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; and the waters returned from off the earth continually, and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tops of the mountains were seen.

And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: and he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from the earth.

Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters

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* Genesis viii.

were on the face of the whole earth; then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

And he stayed yet other seven days; and he sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more. And Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, that they may be fruitful and multiply upon the earth.

And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, went forth out of the ark.

And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord.

The Rainbow of Promise *

And the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

And God blessed Noah and his sons. And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow

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* Genesis viii, 21, 22; ix, 1, 8-15, 28, 29.

in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of covenant between me and the earth.

And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years.

The Story of David *

More than two thousand years ago, there was a great battle in the land of Palestine. At that time, Saul was king of Israel, and the battle was fought between the Israelites and the Philistines, their enemies. Now, the Israelites worshiped God or Jehovah, while the Philistines worshiped images of wood and stone.

And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side; and the ravine was between them.

* First Samuel xvii. (Adapted.)

And as the armies were drawn up for battle, there stepped out from the ranks of the Philistines a champion named Goliath. He was a giant in stature, and he was clothed in a corselet of scales, with a helmet of bronze upon his head. His spear was like a weaver's beam — and a shield-bearer went before him.

And Goliath stood and cried to the people of Israel, "I have come forth to defy the army of Israel. Choose ye a man who shall come and fight with me. If he slays me, then will the Philistines be your servants, but if I slay him, then shall ye be the servants of the Philistines."

Then were the Israelites dismayed, and no man dared go forth to fight with Goliath.

Every night and every morning for forty days, Goliath came forth and challenged the army of Israel, and no man dared go forth to fight him.

At this same time, away off among the hills of Bethlehem, there was a young man named David, who was tending his father's sheep. He was a shepherd lad, but ruddy, and of a beautiful appearance. His father's name was Jesse. Now, Jesse's three older sons were in the army of Saul, but David, the youngest, cared for the sheep. He loved the country about Bethlehem, and he had many beautiful thoughts while watching over the sheep that he loved.

But one day his father called him away from the sheep pastures, and sent him to see his brothers, and to bring back a message from them, for he was anxious about their welfare. And he gave him parched corn and ten loaves as a gift for them.

So David journeyed to where his brothers were, and when he reached them, the armies were drawn up, the Philistines on one mountain, and the Israelites on the other, with the ravine between. And as David reached the place, he saw Goliath, coming forth to challenge the army of Israel, as he had done for forty days.

And when David heard Goliath's words, and saw that all the army of Israel was dismayed, he was filled with indignation, and he asked, "Who is this Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

And David's words were repeated to Saul, and Saul sent for David, and David told Saul that he would go forth and fight with Goliath.

Then said Saul, "But thou art but a youth, and this is a man of war."

Then David answered, "I have slain with my hands both a lion and a bear, when they came to destroy a lamb of my flock. And I can also slay this Philistine, for Jehovah, who delivered me out of the paw of the lion and of the bear, will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."

And Saul said to David, "Go, and Jehovah be with thee." And he would have put his armor upon David, but David refused it, and taking his staff in his hand, he chose five smooth stones out of the brook and put them in the pocket of the shepherd's bag which he wore. Then with his sling in his hand, he advanced to meet Goliath.

But when Goliath saw David, he exclaimed, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with a staff? Come on, then, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the heavens and to the beasts of the field."

And David answered, "Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear, but I come to thee in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will Jehovah deliver thee into my hand, and all the earth shall know that Israel has a God."

And David put his hand into his bag and drew forth a stone and put it into his sling and he slung it; and it struck the Philistine in the forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth.

And the army of Israel arose and shouted, and the Philistines became the servants of Israel, and great honors were heaped upon David.

Some years after this, at the death of Saul, David became king of Israel, but he never forgot his days upon the hills of Bethlehem, when he tended his father's sheep; and he was called the "Shepherd King."

After he had become king, David wrote many beautiful songs or psalms, and one of the most beautiful of them all is the twenty-third psalm, which shows that even when all the glory and honor of being a king were his, he loved to think of himself as one of the sheep over whom the Lord watched as a shepherd.

The Twenty-third Psalm

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

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BOOKS FOR THE STORY-TELLER

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The list is not by any means comprehensive, but the books mentioned will abundantly reward the story-teller's search.

MELODIES AND FOLK TALES

Mother Goose Melodies—*edited by W. A. Wheeler*
Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes—*translated by Isaac T. Headland*
English Folk Tales—*Jacobs*
Book of Folk Stories—*Scudder*
Lullaby Land—*Eugene Field*
Child's Garden of Verse—*R. L. Stevenson*
Nonsense Rhymes—*Edward Lear*

ETHICAL STORIES

Parables from Nature—*Mrs. Gatty*
Firelight Stories—*Carolyn Sherwin Bailey*
For the Children's Hour—*Carolyn Sherwin Bailey*
Murray's Story Land

NATURE STORIES

The Wonderful Adventures of Nils—*Selma Lagerlof.*
Further Adventures of Nils—*Selma Lagerlof*
True Bird Stories—*Olive Thorne Miller*

THE JUNGLE BOOK—*Kipling*
SECRETS OF THE WOODS—*W. J. Long*
TRUE TALES OF BIRDS AND BEASTS—*David Starr Jordan*

TRUE HERO STORIES

ADVENTURES AND ACHIEVEMENTS—*Tappan*
AMERICAN HERO STORIES—*Tappan*
EUROPEAN HERO STORIES—*Tappan*
HEROES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW—*Mabie*
ST. NICHOLAS—*in bound volumes*

FAIRY TALES AND FOLK LORE

HOUSEHOLD FAIRY TALES—*Grimm*
ANDERSON'S FAIRY TALES—*translated by Mrs. E. Lucas*
FAIRY TALES FROM PERRAULT—*translated by S. R. Littleton*
AESOP'S FABLES—*Jacobs*
THE GOLDEN SPEARS—*Edmund Leamy* (Irish Fairy Tales)
IN FAIRY-LAND—*Loucy Chisholm*
JAPANESE FAIRY TALES—*Williston*
UNCLE REMUS—*Joel Chandler Harris*
TWILIGHT FAIRY TALES—*Maud Ballington Booth*
BLUE FAIRY BOOK—*Lang*
JOLLY CALLE—*Helena Nyblom* (Swedish Fairy Tales)

HISTORY AND LEGEND

BOYS' KING ARTHUR—*Lanier*
KING ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS—*M. L. Warren*
MERRY ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD—*Howard Pyle*
SOME GREAT STORIES AND HOW TO TELL THEM—*Wyche*
HALF A HUNDRED HERO TALES—*Storr*
STORY OF SIEGFRIED—*Baldwin*
FIFTY FAMOUS STORIES RETOLD—*Baldwin*
STORIES OF HEROIC DEEDS—*Johonnot*
VIKING TALES—*Hall*
WONDER TALES FROM WAGNER—*Anna Chapin*
TRUE STORY BOOK—*Lang*
STORIES FROM OLD ENGLISH ROMANCE—*Joyce Pollard*

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Age of Fable—*Bulfinch*
The Wonder Book—*Hawthorne*
Tanglewood Tales—*Hawthorne*
Story of the Iliad—*Church*
Aeneid for Boys and Girls—*Church*
Nature Myths—*Holbrook*
Myths of Northern Lands—*Guerber*

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Myths and Legends of the Pacific Northwest—*Katharine B. Judson*
Indian Fairy Tales—*Mary Hazelton Wade*
Behind the Dark Pines—*Martha Young*
Tales of the Red Children—*Brown and Bell*

In addition to the above, comprehensive lists of books for story-tellers may be secured from the librarians of nearly all the large city libraries for a merely nominal cost, and in some cases without charge except for postage.

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