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Children's Literature.

WHAT "ST. NICHOLAS" HAS DONE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Victor Hugo calls this "the woman's century," and he might have added that it is the children's century as well, for never before in the world's history has so much thought been paid to children—their schools, their books, their pictures, and their toys. Childhood, as we understand it, is a recent discovery.

Up to the time of the issue of the St. Nicholas Magazine seventeen years ago literature and children's magazines were almost contradictory terms, but the new periodical started out with the idea that nothing was too good for children; the result has been a juvenile magazine genuine with conscientious purpose—the greatest writers contributing to it, with the best artists and engravers helping to beautify it—and everything tuned to the key-note of youth.

It has been the special aim of St. Nicholas to supplant unhealthful literature with stories of a living and healthful interest. It will not do to take fascinating bad literature out of boys' hands, and give them in its place Mrs. Burbank and Peter Parley, or the work of writers who think that any "good-y" talk will do for children, but they must have strong, interesting reading, with the blood and sinew of real life in it—reading that will waken them to a closer observation of the best things about them.

In the seventeen years of its life St. Nicholas has not only elevated the children, but it has also elevated the tone of contemporary children's literature as well. Many of its stories, like Mrs. Burnett's "Little Lord Fauntleroy," have become classics. It is not too much to say that almost every notable young people's story now produced in America first seeks the light in the pages of that magazine.

The year 1891 will prove once more that "no household where there are children is complete without St. Nicholas." J. T. Trowbridge, Noah Brooks, Charles Dudley Warner, and many well-known writers are to contribute during the coming year. One cannot put the spirit of St Nicholas into a prospectus, but the publishers are glad to send a full announcement of the features for 1891 and a single sample copy to the address of any person mentioning this notice. The magazine costs $3.00 a year. Address The Century Co., 33 East 17th St., New York.

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Potter Building, 38 Park Row, New York.

By the Insurance Department.

STATEMENT

Showing the condition of the Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Dug Hill, Carroll county, December 31st, 1890.

ASSETS.

Value of Real Estate owned by the Company, less amount of encumbrance thereon.....	$ 500.00
Unpaid assessments.....	675.00
Cash in Company's principal office and belonging to the Company deposited in bank.....	417.24
Premiums due and in course of collection.....	144.16
Premium Notes in force $308,353.42	
All other admitted Assets detailed in statement on file in this office.....	60.00
Total Cash Assets.....	$1,796.40

LIABILITIES.

Losses reported, adjusted and unpaid.....	160.00
Premium Notes in force $308,353.42	
All other claims.....	1,233.50
Total Liabilities.....	$1,333.50
Surplus as regards policy holders.....	$462.90
Total income.....	$ 8,684.20
Total expenditures.....	8,980.00
Amount of Policies in force in United States on 31st Dec., 1890.....	4,114,309.00
Amount of Policies written in Maryland during the year 1890.....	554,929.00
Premiums received on Maryland business in 1890	74.40
Losses paid in Maryland during 1890.....	5,996.69
Losses incurred in Maryland during 1890.....	3,754.19

STATE OF MARYLAND,
Insurance Depart., Commissioner's Office,
Annapolis, February 18th, 1891.

In compliance with the Code of Public General Laws, I hereby certify that the above is a true abstract from the statement of the Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Dug Hill, of Carroll county, to December 31st, 1890, now on file in this Department.

J. FRED C. TALBOTT,
Insurance Commissioner.

NO. 54 INSOLVENTS.

In the Circuit Court for Carroll County
In the matter of the Petition of William G. Myers in Insolvency.

ORDERED this 27th day of February, A. D. 1891, that the account of the Auditor, filed in this cause, be finally ratified and confirmed, unless cause to the contrary thereof be shown on or before the 16th day of March next; Provided a copy of this order be inserted for two successive weeks before the last named day in some newspaper published in Carroll county.

BENJ. F. CROUSE, Clerk.
True Copy—Test:
feb-28-2t BENJ. F. CROUSE, Clerk.

FARM HANDS WANTED.

A man to work on farm and his wife to attend to making about 15 lbs. of butter a week; also two men for farm work; must be temperate and come well recommended. Apply at this Office. feb-28-3t

AMERICAN SENTINEL.

VOL. 59, NO. 10. WESTMINSTER, MD., SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 14, 1891. ESTABLISHED 1833.

Select Poetry.

PARTED.

Once more my hand will clasp your hand;
Your loved voice I shall hear once more;
But we shall never see the land,
The pleasant land we knew of yore;
Never, on any summer day,
Hear the low music of its streams,
Or wander down the leafy way
That leadeth to the land of dreams.

Still, borne upon the scented air,
The songs of birds rise clear and sweet,
As when I gathered roses there,
And heaped their glories at your feet;
And still the golden pathway lies
At eve across the Western sea,
And lovers dream beneath those skies,
Which shine no more for you and me.

No more, ah, never! and yet
They seem so near, those summer days,
When hope was like a jewel set
To shine adown Time's misty ways.
I sometimes dream that morning's light
Will bring them back to us once more,
And that 'tis but one long dark night
Since we two parted by the shore.

We parted with soft words and low,
And "farewell till to-morrow" said;
From sea and sky and sunset glow
A golden halo round you shed;
Then as you went I heard you sing,
"Haste thee, sweet morrow!" Parting thus
How could we dream that life would bring
Not any morrow there for us?

We parted; and that last fare well
Its shadow on our life-path cast;
And time's relentless barriers fell
Between us and our happy past;
And now we meet when cares and tears
Have dulled the parting and the pain,
But never can the weary years
Bring back our golden dreams again.

Select Story.

PARABLE OF CHARLEY.

E. HUGH IN THE CURRENT.

Now it came to pass that in the third year of the reign of Catharine, Queen of the Earth, I became acquainted with Charley.

Charley was the brother of Catharine, and was a good looking, solid, respectable kind of a fellow, with square shoulders, ruddy face, blonde beard and a full blue eye, whose glance fell upon you like a shaft. In all his social and business relations he was an eminently correct young man, against whom the fewest mistakes or failures could be urged. This, combined with the fact that he was Catharine's brother, was the reason for the deep and undying hatred which I bore him—a hatred which for a long time seemed capable of being appeased only by gore.

In the first place, he was always punctual. The unfailing regularity with which he every morning appeared at his desk in the pork house (he was manager in the establishment) was only equaled by the exceeding precision with which he discharged the minutest details of his daily appointments. Now I am fond of the morning hour for sleep myself, and have a theory that one will live longer if he employ it in sleep. Therefore I pity a man who will continuously peril his health as Charles does.

In the next place he was always methodical. He was never known to vary from his established daily routine of business any more than a responsible clock is observed to deviate from its accustomed method of beating seconds. Being disposed myself to think that all is well that ends well, I can feel nothing but contempt for a man who is such a mere machine.

In the next place he was stable and permanent.

He had at once decided upon his line of life, and had never after wavered from it. He had been twelve years in the establishment of which he was manager, and which he had first entered in the capacity of fourth book-keeper while he was yet a mere lad.

I myself, having tried in turn a half dozen different occupations, all of which proved uncongenial, am by nature in deadly feud with the man who has no spice in his life. (Though I have often suspected that it was my own cake which was all dough.)

And then, again, he was contented at home. He had repeatedly received the kindest invitations to join parties touring to Europe, to Cuba, to California, or to the National Park; but, although abundantly able to travel, he always declined these propositions, saying that he could not spare the time from business.

Now I am passionat ly fond of travel, change and excitement, and have visited most of the leading places of interest to tourists—although myself a poor man. So I have no patience with an unambitious stay-at-home.

When I add to all these things the disgusting prosperity of the man; his house and lot; his money in the bank; his everlastingly increasing salary—I have enough to explain to any rational mind the ill will I bore for Charley.

But that which first fanned the slumbering fires of my wrath, and well nigh caused me to imbue my hands in the heart's blood of a fellow being happened in this wise. I had just returned from a year's residence in California (and was searching for employment,) when, as a matter of course, I called upon Catharine. For Catharine is long suffering and kind, and so I am always privileged to call upon her. As I entered the drawing-room, Catharine extended her hand to me, and permitted me to salute the tips of her fingers. (I often wondered whether, if I had $50,000, she would not—but no matter!) Then I sat down and proposed to tell her all about my experiences in the west. Catharine listened politely for a time—she is the politest person! and then gently told me that she did not care to hear about my western life.

An awkward pause ensued, and at length Catharine remarked:

"Did I ever tell you of the offer Charley had to go in charge of an excursion to California?"

I remarked that she never had.

"Yes; he could have gone for nothing, and have remained a month. The firm wished him to go, and told him he needed rest. But he would not go. Charley is such a hand to stay at home and stick to business!"

I pleasantly changed the topic and began to speak of some of the young lady acquaintances I had met since my return, remarking how glad they seemed to see me.

"Did you see Hattie Coswell?" asked Catharine.

"Oh, yes; and she—"

"They say that she is quite well pleased with Charley. But Charley is a general favorite with the ladies, although I believe he hardly understands why they flock about him so—or perhaps, indeed, never suspects that they do at all."

"He has no heart, perhaps," said I, somewhat acridly.

"Indeed, sir, you quite mistake! I am very sure he has a heart and a manly one at that. I think he will pay little attention to the ladies until he has attained his station in life, and made a home for himself; then I think he will not make much stir about it, but will just get married."

Catharine sighed a little sigh which she checked at once, I changed the subject. I talked of my business plans. She listened for a time, and then said suddenly, as if she had just thought of it:

"Charley never talks of business to us women, although he manages the business of the whole family. He thinks the men ought to attend to the business."

"May the foul fiend fly away with Charley!" thought I.

I gaily fell upon another theme, and asked Catharine to admire my new coat. "Yes; it is very pretty," said she. Then, after a moment, "I do think Charley has the fewest suits, to look so well as he does. But he is economical in everything. He will make a good husband, Charley will!"

I resolved, for the twentieth time, to murder Charley, and soon after excused myself and retired.

It was not long after this I fell dangerously ill, being confined to my bed for some weeks. My condition became so alarming that I was visited and constantly attended by Catharine, who proved herself a most devoted and efficient nurse, so that—although during my convalescence I remembered once to have heard her murmur to herself that "Charley was so strong!"—I could not on the whole find any fault with her ministrations. Indeed, I am now inclined to think that my sickness was a dispensation of Providence, for during the days of my slow recovery I had ample time to review my life, and review it I did, and a very poor and miserable life I found it, with no purpose and no success at all attached to it. It was not the kind of a life which I admired, though, singularly enough, I had never thought of that before, and probably never would have done so had it not been for that convenient Charley. And there and then I resolved to reform, to make the most of myself, and go steadily to work with a purpose.

When I grew better I called upon Catharine again. I took her whole hand in mine and told her that I had been a fool—and that I loved her. I told her that I was going west again, but that I was going to stick to my business and make a home—and that I loved her. Quite soon after that I rose to go. Catharine rose also. She leaned toward me quite imperceptibly, and all at once I saw that, if I wished, it might be as it was five years before. With the greatest struggle of my life, I saluted only the tips of her fingers, and said to her:

"Catharine, my dear girl, I am not worthy to touch your lips now. When I come back I will be, and then I will kiss them."

From the other side of my shoulder Catharine sobbed:

"I am q-quite sure that Ch-Charley would, ri-right now!"

"God bless you, Charley!" thought I.

HIS CONVERSION.

BY KATE A. BRADLEY.

Samuel Baxter sat on the fence with his hands in his pockets, surveying his day's work. It was Saturday night and time tor supper, but Samuel looked anxiously at the clouds and did not move to obey Aunt Hannah's call.

"Ef I don't get this yere fall plowin' done befo' de fall rains sets in, I'se a gonah, suah!" he exclaimed to himself. Suddenly a broad smile broke over his face, and, after a few moments of deep thought, he climbed slowly down from the fence and walked toward the little hut that he dignified by the name of home. He was still smiling as he opened the door, but it was a countenance of preternatural gravity that he presented to Aunt Hannah's complaints as they sat down to supper.

"Hannah, chile," he said at last, "don' 'sturb me. I'se ruminatin' on serious subjec's. Hannah, you 'member I was to dem meetin's over in de grove dis summer? Well, I'se ben t'inkin' seriously 'bout dem meetins, an' I'se 'bout made up my min' dat I'se a Nadventis'."

"A w'at!" shrieked Aunt Hannah, in dismay.

"A Nadventis'," resumed Samuel, unmoved. "A Seben Day Nadventis'. An' we'll begin right off dis berry night. Chillun, stop you starin' an' get down on you' knees—we's goin' to pray."

Mr. Baxter had undoubtedly the best of it, for, having finished his supper and shoved back his chair, he dropped on his knees on the sanded floor and began an unctuous and loud-voiced prayer, in which he begged the Lord to have mercy on his family and redeem them from the sinfulness of their ways.

This ended, he beat a sudden retreat to bed, practically victorious without a shot having been fired by the enemy. But the struggle was yet to come.

The next morning Mr. Baxter arose and dressed himself with a purpose in every movement. Aunt Hannah could stand it no longer.

"Samuel Baxter," she exclaimed at length: "What yo' mean by gettin' into your wo'k-day clo's on Sunday?"

"Hannah," replied Mr. Baxter, severely, "I tole yo' las' night dat I was a Nadventis', an' Nadventisses don' pay no 'tention to Sunday. Dey set an' do nothin' all day Sat'day, an' den on Sunday dey wo'k hahd all day."

"Yo' darst ter tole me, Sam Baxter," cried Aunt Hannah, "dat you'se goin' ter wo'k terday lak it was Monday?"

"Yes I is, Hannah," said Mr. Baxter, doggedly. "I'se goin' ter plow dat ten acre lot, en' don' yo' argy weth me!"

Aunt Hannah said never a word, but the breakfast dishes spoke a language that struck terror to per partner's soul.

"Chillun," she said, as she cleared the table, "you'se go an' get on yer t'ings. You'se goin' ter church 'long o' me, lak yer ort, stead o' stayin' home like shiftless heathens."

"Lat dem chillun 'lone, Hannah," he commanded, sharply. "Dere daddy's 'ligion is dere 'ligion, an' dey shall go out 'n play, stead o' goin' to church. You min' what I say, now. I ain't goin' to be trifled weth in my own fambly no longer."

Aunt Hannah was a wise woman. When Mr. Baxter put his foot down on a subject, she knew that it was not safe for her to offer any objection to his authority. But, being a born diplomat, she yielded graciously when she saw that further resistance was useless, and gained her ends in other ways. Now after a moment's breathless silence she said, placidly: "Bery well, Samuel; dey chillun's yourn ez well ez mine, an' ef you say dey shall keep dere Sunday on Sat'day w'y so dey shall. Now, chillun, put on you' t'ings an' run an' hab a good time playin'. An' yo' needn' come in tell dinner-time, 'cause yer mammy's goin' to church."

There was a wild whoop and a scramble for the outer air that made Aunt Hannah's lips tighten ominously for a moment.

The ten-acre lot lay well down out of sight behind the breezy slope of meadow land, but the children Mr. Baxter had not counted upon, and the sober' church-going deacons were horrified to behold Brother Samuel Baxter's delighted family having a glorious game of "tag" that Sunday morning in the front yard, and before night every good brother and sister in the settlement knew of his change of religion.

All the morning Mr. Baxter plowed sturdily on, watching the threatening clouds meanwhile, and by dinner-time he was unusually hungry and thought of the usual Sunday dinner with a smack of his lips.

Aunt Hannah didn't call him, but at the regular time Mr. Baxter opened the door and entered. Aunt Hannah sat placidly before the fire reading her Bible, while the children stood around the window in a discontented but silent group.

"Wha-whar's dinner, Hannah?" he asked apprehensively.

"In de pantry," replied Aunt Hannah, without looking up.

"When be yo' goin' to get it, Hannah?"

"Samuel Baxter," said she, with severity, "all de dinner you's goin' to get is in de pantry an' you kin jes' go an' he'p yourse'f. Ef I'se got to keep Sunday fer de hull fambly, I ain' goin' to do no wo'k dis day. Git 'long, now, an' eat yo' dinner, an' don' 'sturb dis season ob contemplution!"

And with rueful faces Mr. Baxter and his family were obliged to make their Sunday dinner off bread and cheese and cold boiled parsnips which they found laid out on the pantry shelf.

For some reason the afternoon seemed dull and dreary to Mr. Baxter. Just as he finished his plowing the rain began to drizzle down in a way that meant it had come to stay, and he ate his cold supper and crept to bed cross and comfortless.

The next morning he was waited upon by a solemn deputation of dignified elders, dressed in Sunday splendor and feeling righteously indignant with the man who caused them to lose a whole half-day of fall plowing.

What had been a mere Pharisaical compromise between Mr. Baxter and his conscience now hardened into a dogged resolution to stick to the colors he had so suddenly adopted, and the elders left, angrily threatening to "church" him if he did not appear in his accustomed pew on the following Sunday.

"Dey kin chuch an' be hanged to em!" said Mr. Baxter, angrily, as the door closed upon their retreating figures. "Does dey t'ink I'se goin' to gib up my 'ligion what I'se jes' got lak dat? No, sah! Ef I'se got to suffeh fer my 'ligion, I'll jes' show 'em *dey* cayn't make me backslide."

The week went by in perfect domestic harmony; yet for some reason Mr. Baxter did not seem to be quite easy in his mind. Like his own herds, he sniffed the brewing storm while the sky was yet blue.

Saturday came and Aunt Hannah observed firmly as they arose: "Dis bein' yo' Sunday, Sam, in course yo'll kum in w'en de critters is fed an' read yo' Bible."

"In course, Hannah," replied Mr. Baxter, a little sheepishly.

A little later in the morning the door burst open and Mr. Paxter's flock of woolly heads burst in with: "Maw, dey'se goin' a-nuttin' on Bramble hill! Kin we'se go? Whar's my hat!" and other exclamations of a similar character. Aunt Hannah held up her hand sternly.

"Chilluns, I'se s'prized at yo'!" she said, solemnly, "Didn't yo' heah yo' daddy say dat dis was de Sabbuf, an' yo' wantin' to go a-nuttin'! Yo' kum in an' larn yo' Sunday-school lesson, now; on yo' be quick about gettin' in, too, er yo'll get de wus' trolloppin' yo' eber had 'n all yo' bo'n days!"

There was no gainsaying this, and when Mr. Baxter came in from watering the "critters," he found a silent and studious family awaiting him. Dinner-time came and passed, but Aunt Hannah did not move.

"Yo' kin fin' de col' lunch in de pantry," she said. "We's got to be berry keerful how we monkey wid de sabbuf day to keep it holy," she remarked, placidly.

The children went to bed with visions of a long and lonely play-day before them on the morrow, minus the Sunday dinner that was a landmark in their week to them. After Mr. Baxter had eaten his cold lunch off the pantry shelf out of the remains of his cold dinner, he still lingered near the fire, wrapped in deep contemplation. At last he broke the silence.

"Hannah, is yo' goin' to keep termorrer, too?" he asked, timidly. Long fasting had broken his resistance and Aunt Hannah saw her advantage. "Keep Sunday, Sam Baxter?" she asked, belligerently; "Course I is, fer yo' an' me too."

"Ain' we goin' to hab no Sunday dinner?"

"'Deed we ain't I ain' goin' to do no wu'k ef I'm keepin' Sunday fer bofe on us."

There was a long pause. Finally Mr. Baxter broke out: "Hannah, mebbe I wuz wrong. Ennyway, tain't right fer thar to be feelin's in the fambly, an' ef yo' say so, I'm willin' to gib up my 'ligion an' go to church wid yo' termorrer."

Elder Simpson was in the midst of the long prayer the next morning as Aunt Hannah triumphantly entered the little white-washed meeting house. As he caught sight of them over the top of his gigantic handkerchief he broke forth into loud exclamations.

"Bless de Lawd fer de br'ack sheep w'at was gone astray an' am now come back into de fol'—bless de Lawd!"

Mr. Baxter thought of the plowed and seeded ten-acre lot and of the Sunday dinner even then stewing in the pot, and smiled broadly to himself behind his hymn-book. Possibly it was a smile of triumph that he had vanquished the tempter who had led him astray.

A Dangerous Companion.

From the AMERICAN AGRICULTURIST.

Mrs. Martha Wadsworth, in her home on the New York frontier, was coddling her baby and thinking of her Connecticut home.

Pausing in her meditations, she listened a moment and then glanced from the winter sunshine on the floor to the little Dutch clock on the shelf, saying aloud, "Why! only 3 o'clock and the cows coming home already! Jack said he had put their fodder in the little pasture where they would be sheltered from the wind."

She rose and went to the window murmuring, "Perhaps a wolf has frightened them. Well, the gates are open and they've gone into the yard."

Baby, roused by her exclamation, uttered a sleepy protest at being waked from his nap for even the most astonishing cause, so sitting down she hushed him to sleep again, and then went on with her knitting, saying, sagely: "I need not worry. If it is anything it won't come into the clearing while it is daylight, and Jack will be home before it is dark."

Meanwhile the sunlight slipped quietly away from the little window, the firelight grew redder and redder, and the shadows darkened as the early winter twilight came on. Mrs. Wadsworth rolled up her knitting and put the bread in the oven. Baby had waked and was growing restless, so she took him up, pausing in her plans for Jack's supper to assure her "little man" that he should have his dinner—"yes, he should." Glancing at the frost gathering on the window she added: "It's cold and he'll be terrible hungry, but the biscuits will be hot and I'll just cook up some eggs to eat with them. Now I wonder what I did with those I found this morning. Yes, I left them in the barn. Dear me, they'll be frozen. I must run right out and get them."

She put the baby down hastily, hung a string of spools from the cradle top, then set it rocking, and while he struggled with sturdy, ineffectual clutches to grasp the swinging wonder, she caught up the little red blanket, threw it over her head and started for the barn.

The trees stretched a lace work of bare branches against the golden tinted sky, the crescent moon was a silver thread, all tempting her to linger, but the frosty air hurried her on down the snow trodden path to the barn. She heard Bruno's step pit-pat pit-patting at her heels, and put out her hand saying cheerly, "Nice old fellow!" but instead of responding with a touch of his cold nose, he seemed to pause and drew back. Yet Martha, without looking behind her, stepped briskly on to the barn. As she neared it she again spoke to her four-footed escort: "I forgot about the cattle, Bruno. I am just as well pleased that you came. Let's hurry!"

She had paused at the door, then, with an uneasy laugh, forced herself to go on.

It was as dark as a pocket inside, but she remembered just where she had left the eggs, on the meal bin in the corner. Feeling for them, her hand struck the basket, and picking it up she hurried up feeling a vague sense of danger.

She walked with a rapid footstep, for it was pretty dark and—but then she heard Bruno's steps behind her, and with him she was safe. However, she was glad to reach the house, and running up the steps flung open the door, and turned back with a joyful "Come in, Bru——"

But the words died on her lips, for it was not Bruno that she saw, but a long crouching figure with flaming eyes. the real Bruno sprang growling from the fire.

Quick as a flash she crowded to the door and dropped the heavy bar; then sprung and slammed and barred the massive window shutters; then stood with set teeth listening to Bruno's savage baying and for something else.

What was it that had been following her so steadily in the dim light? What should she do? Were they safe now?

She looked at baby. He was kicking up his heels, happy as a kitten. Bruno had stopped barking and only went from window to door, growling deep in his throat, as if from the memory of an enemy. Should she let him out? No! if he should be killed there would be no protection for herself—and then her husband! She ordered Bruno to lie down, and he obeyed, but with watchful eyes and deep growls.

Taking down the shotgun she loaded it with buckshot, trying to keep under this terrible fear at her heart by saying: "He has his rifle and must see it—it isn't very dark yet."

She had hardly finished loading her gun when there arose a sudden bawling among the cattle. Bruno sprang baying to the door. Should she let him go? He might be able to protect the cattle or he might be killed, and then how could she give the alarm to Jack? These thoughts had hardly passed through her mind when a rifle shot rang out above the other sounds. Her husband!

Quickly opening the door, she let Bruno out, then stood trembling and sick with her hand on the bar. Minutes—they seemed hours—passed, and then a firm step came creaking over the snow. In a moment the door flew open and Jack burst in full of excitment, but instead of paying attention to his jealous exclamation, "Oh Mattie, come see what I have shot," she dropped on the floor and cried. The answer that her bewildered husband got to kisses and petting and protestations, that "It's all right, little woman. Why there is nothing to cry for," was: "I thought it was Bruno, and—and— oh, dear! I'll never go out to the barn again!"

But she did the next morning to see her escort of the previous evening and it was the biggest panther ever killed in those parts.

"There," said Jack, "as I came down the road I heard the cows making a great racket. So I ran across the field, and there I could see him sitting on the yard fence, showing black against the sky, and I dropped him at the first shot."

The great, glossy, tawny skin made a splendid rug for the baby to play on before the fire, but it always gave his mother the "creeps" to see it, for, said she: "To think of my putting my hand back and almost on the panther's nose! I know if I had happened to stop or started to run he would have sprung. Ugh! I never see the old skin but I hear his cushioned paws pit-pat, pit-patting after me."

The Luck of a Ne'er-do-Well.

I was talking to Judge Payson the other day about some of the astonishing things of this last election. "A few years ago," he said, "there lived on a piece of forty acres adjoining that of mine at Pontiac a man who was known about that place as a ne'er-do-well. Though this farm was hardly larger than a truck garden, it was more than he could attend to. He planted his crops in the spring, let the weeds grow up in the summer, and there was nothing to harvest in the fall. In the morning, at noon, or at night, whenever there was any loungers about at the corner store, he was among them. Shiftless and slow at all other things, he was a glib talker. He would tell yarns and talk about the problems of capital and labor, though he took no active part in either. While he was discussing these problems at the store his wife was stuffing old hats and odd articles of carded clothing in the windows to keep the cold wind away.

"In due time a mortgage was foreclosed, and the forty acres went at Sheriff's sale. Gathering up his family and the few goods and chattels remaining to him he moved on, and was soon forgotten by his former neighbors. He took up his home in Nebraska, and resumed his old habit of lounging about and talking about capital and labor. The present member of Congress from the district within whose border he took up his residence was elected by a majority of about 6,000. When the formality of nominating a man to run against him this fall was gone through with there was no one who wanted the honor of being beaten by him. He did not have time to spare for a hopeless canvass, but my neighbor had the time, so they gave the nomination to him. Thus he found himself with official warrant for talking labor and capital. His voice was strong and he was in his element. The 4th of November came, and the men in that district cast their votes. When the votes were counted it was found that my ex-neighbor had been elected to Congress by a majority of over ten thousand. He had made a gain of about 16,000 votes."

More attention should be paid to teaching young horses to walk fast than is done. A fast walking horse is a desideratum not often met with.

On Teasing.

It seems to me that one of the most annoying traits of character which one can possess is a disposition to tease; for when it is freely indulged, there is nothing that can cause more unhappiness to others. To be obliged to spend one's life with an inveterate tease is like living in a bramblebush or suffering constantly from the torture of innumerable pin pricks. To be sure, one pin-prick is nothing much, but when one has to bear ten thousand of them, it is quite another thing.

"Pshaw!" says the tease, "I did not hurt you any. I wouldn't make such a fuss about nothing. I did not mean anything. I was only teasing."

Exactly. And it is just because there is no meaning in it, nor necessity for it, because it is only "teasing," that poor, insulted, tormented, human nature cries sometimes in a passion against it. If the tease cannot find anything else to annoy, he will torment an animal or a little child, and he thinks it is fun; but it is the most malicious, most dreadful and most dangerous fun in the world. I once knew a lady who was literally almost frightened to death by a miserable man who followed her home through the twilight; she reached shelter and dropped fainting on the floor, and the thoughtless fellow who had occasioned the distress explained that "he just followed her to tease her, because he knew she was timid, and he did it just for fun." He found that it was not so funny as he waited, while she hovered between life and death, the victim of the wretched joke.

I think that a genuine tease is always a coward, for he never attacks his equal; his victims are the helpless animals, the little child, the timid woman. If you will notice, it is never the smallest boy who teases the larger one. And then a tease can never bear to be teased himself. Nothing makes him angrier than to be paid back in his own coin.

But really the most distressing thing about the whole matter is the effect which the habit of teasing has upon the nature of the one who indulges in it. A confirmed tease becomes positively heartless. He can look upon physical and mental distress quite unmoved.

If there is a boy who reads these lines, who likes to tease his little sister till she runs in tears to her mother, or who torments some little fellow at school just to see him crimson and bristle with impotent rage, if you want to make a man of yourself, stop it; for it is a most ignoble and unmanly thing to take delight in causing pain to any living creature, especially if it is smaller and weaker than yourself.

The National Plant.

Sarah Freeman Clarke, in an article on "Indian Corn, as our National Plant," in the *New England Magazine* for March, says: "There have been laudable efforts lately to elect a national flower by voting; but however dear, and rightfully dear, to the American heart is universal suffrage, it cannot decide this question, the answer to which should be by acclamation. And how could a fair vote be obtained without an organization almost such as is found necessary for choosing a president for the great Republic,—which in this case is clearly impossible. Of all the plants selected by this republican caucus, the one that is already national has been strangely neglected. The stately sunflower, the fragrant arbutus, the gay golden-rod, the beautiful mountain laurel, the grand magnolia, the gorgeous cardinal flower, have each and all had their adherents, and been voted for; but when a few out of what should have been millions of votes have been recorded, the thing comes to a dead stop. The *American Garden* may speak of "our national flower the golden-rod"; but when nothing has been the choice of the whole people or a representative part of the people, nothing can come of it. But the maize, the Indian corn, has a strong though unacknowledged position as our national plant."

An ill fitting harness or collar will chafe or gall any horse, and any harness will do so when sweat and dirt are allowed to dry into harness, which by degrees becomes brittle, hard, and unyielding. All harness should be oiled at regular intervals.

All past sorrow has a tendency to transform itself into something else. All sorrow, follies, and errors have their edges wonderfully softened off by retrospection; they become possessions rather than detriments.

There are said to be 36 varieties of oak in the United States. Of this number 19 distinct varieties are found in Alabama alone.

Fertilization of Plants.

Those who have written of the curious subject, the agency of insects in the cross-fertilization of flowers, love to tell of the mutual interests involved. The insects want honey—flowers want foreign pollen—so the plant receives the bee as a welcome foreign trader. It receives needed pollen, and gladdens the heart of the busy little merchant, who departs laden with the treasures for which the flower had no use of its own. But in the little world of plants and flowers, as in the wider intercourse among human beings, mutual interest is not always the basis of change. There are wretched instances of ignoble selfishness that set all mortal law at defiance—plants that are worse than cannibals, for they not only actually kill and eat the little traders that venture within their domains, but have not the higher motives outside of mere love of a delicacy, which Seeman tells us the Fiji Islanders have when tempted to dine on their celebrated dish of roast missionary. Among the many instances illustrative of this barbaric trait in plants, that have appeared in print, a very interesting one has recently been contributed by an English observer, Mr. A. D. Webster. It relates to Arum crinitum, an old and well-known Corsican plant, though in modern times it has been given the dreadful name of Helicodiceros muscivorous, the last, of course, in reference to its fly-devouring propensity. It is closely allied to the well-known Indian turnip, of our woods, but has a fetid odor similar to the skunk-cabbage, to which also it has relationship. Mr. Webster says the carrionlike scent is very attractive to large numbers of flies, which enter the spathe but never return. After being open for two days he has found as many as seventy-two captives, without counting the smaller creatures. With a predisposition to believe that the insects were destined to act as agents in fertilization he was amazed to find that the pollen was not in a condition for use till after the captured insects were dead. These, he found, lived long enough to deposit eggs, which by the time the pollen matured had became little "wigglers," which, crawling about the spadix, carried the pollen from male to female flowers. It is not yet quite clear whether the flowers act from pure viciousness in this murderous course—in charity we may suppose the selfishness already hinted at, and believe that in some way the nitrogenous material of the insects is used as food, as in the case of pitcher plants and Venus' fly-traps.

Care of Young Turkeys.

It is not easy to rear young turkeys up to the time when their heads begin to get red. At this period, for some reason, the young birds are exceedingly tender, and exposure to a sudden shower or to continued damp weather will kill them easily. They are also most susceptible at this age to the throat thread worm or gape worm, and this carries off a large number. To save the birds, it is advisable to keep them cooped up until the grass is free from dew in the mornings, and to keep the coops on clean fresh ground by moving them frequently. If they gape and snuffle, give a few drops of turpentine in their food, which should be cracked corn, rye, and shreds of fresh meat. Turkeys consume many insects and require some animal food when in confinement.

Didn't Bother Him.

When Sam Jones was preaching in a western town, some time ago, he was annoyed by a young man who was whispering to his girl. Finally the preacher could stand it no longer, so he looked straight at the young man and said:

"I will pause until the young man in the back of the room gets through talking."

The silence was intense, and every eye was on the young man, who was still whispering to his girl. He had been so busy that he had not caught the preacher's censure. Mr. Jones repeated his remark, and this time the young man heard him. Not an instant did he hesitate, but he immediately tried to square himself. While every one was watching him he looked squarely at the preacher and said:

"Go right ahead, Mr. Jones, you are not bothering me."

Fighting the Hessian Fly.

Prof. S. A. Forbes gives the following preventive and remedial advice: The volunteer grain springing up in the fields must be closely watched and measures taken to destroy it about four weeks after its appearance, as it will otherwise assist to carry the insect through the summer. The damage done will depend, other things being equal, on the fertility of the soil and the strength of the plant. If the plants be strong enough to send out from the root new and vigorous stalks to replace those killed by the maggot, the crop will not be much injured. From this it follows that to maintain the fertility of the soil is a safeguard against any loss.

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