

LITTLE CHILDREN OF THE HILLS

II.

[BY MARTHA PIERCE.]
For The Courier

Alfred came out of the hills at a reckless pace, and struck into the road that led down the valley at a swinging gallop. A queer, even outlandish little figure his must have seemed to a stranger. He wore a cap, made after his own design, of wild-cat skin with the fur out and artistically decorated with turkey feathers. His coat, three sizes too large streamed tatters in the wind. A pair of overalls that had once been blue were thrust into a pair of shoes, improvised from some ranchman's cast-off rubber boots, by the simple device of cutting away the tops. The little brown horse was appropriately shaggy and wild-eyed, but so small and thin that the heavy chain bridle he wore, was absurd.

Alfred peering eagerly down the long valley road, descried, coming, a man on a bony white horse, leading a pack-pony. The boy's round, greasy, cheerful face, grew even more cheerful. He stood in his stirrups and waved his hand.

"Hullo! Daddy!" he cried as the man approached. "What luck?" The trapper who was also this child's father made no reply. When they met he merely grunted. But Alfred remained happy. They understood each other—these two.

The trapper was more repulsive than his son. He had all the boy's raggedness and dirtiness and semi-ferocity, without the saving salt of youth and its concomitants, buoyancy and irresponsibility. All decent men who lived in houses and reared their children like unto other men's, hated him, because he chose to live like the animals he hunted, and trained his child as if he had been a dog, to hunt well, and to love the out-of-doors.

They camped this evening under a steep westward rising slope, with a convenient gulch at the bottom, for the raw wind was east, and a drizzle of rain fell as daylight went. Because of the drizzle they attempted no fire, but ate for supper the thick slices of bread and butter and the pieces of pie, a warm hearted ranch woman had given to Alfred, at arm's length to be sure, with the fence between them, and with admonitions upon the evil of carrying live snakes in one's pockets. For Alfred's father among his other eccentricities cherished a fondness for pet snakes, and Alfred followed in his footsteps, and thereby lost many a warm meal in a clean kitchen.

After supper the trapper smoked and Alfred stole away, returning presently with his latest acquisition, a small, vicious-looking young coyote. A strong collar and chain bespoke the eternal vigilance of Alfred.

Strange to say, the wild thing seemed to feel his kinship with the wild child, and nestled in his arms, though snarling savagely at any attempt of the old trapper to lay so much as a finger upon its soft, fuzzy, gray fur. Alfred amused himself until darkness completely closed down, in a vain effort to teach the little wild creature to sit upon its hind feet, as he had once seen Jamie Dorr's dog do, at the Dorr ranch. Then when it was dark, he put him in his own place, rolled himself in his blanket, close under the hill and slept sweetly until the day. He never knew that the silly woman who had given him the bread, sighed over a certain motherless, and as she thought, worse than fatherless boy, while she tucked her own children into their white beds. And if he had dreams they were not of a mother's tender hands, or a house home, but of the hunting and of wild free gallops among the wild swept hills.

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THE PARTITION OF MR. HYKES.

Della, our Southern importation, was at her duties when I went into the kitchen. A married friend, living in New York, at what Della called "One-Hundred-and-Fifty-seventh Avenue," had invited our cook to pay her a visit. She accosted me with a shake of her woolly head:

"Miss Rufe, while ah'm in Noo Yawk, Ma'y she wants ah should go t' a doctah 'bout mah teef."

"Well, Della," said I, "why not? You've been planning to have them pulled."

Suddenly a gloomy black face was turned upon me: "Ah don' know." She gazed across the table, uncertain as to whether she should proceed: "Ah don' know. Ye see—Miss Rufe"—another pause and appealing glance—"they's doc'ahs 'n' they's studiums. Ah might get int' a studium's office."

"A studium?" I repeated dully.

"Yaas, 'm. Donche know? Ye has t' be a studium 'fore ye kin be a doctah."

"Oh," I assented. "An' ye cain't tell 'em. Looks jes like doctahs. Acts jes like doctahs. Gots bottles round, 'n' chairs 'n' tables, jes like doctahs. But—Miss Rufe"—in a burst of horror—"of they's studiums, they kills ye."

"Oh no!" I feebly gasped. "Yaas, 'm. Down t' my home, down t' Gusta, they cut Mr. William Hykes all up."

"Well," I urged, "wasn't Mr. William Hykes dead?"

"Yaas, 'm," somewhat reluctantly. "An' othah times, they kills 'em. Once they was a studium, an' he was fixin' t' kill a man 'at was goin' ovah a bridge. An' th' man he says" (in a sepulchral chant): "Be suah ye kill me dead. Be suah ye kill me dead." An' th' studium he was scairt, 'n' he run away. Mos' times" (in a brisker tone) "they kills 'em."

"Oh no," I foolishly insisted. "Why, no. If they did Della, they would be hanged."

"Not down t' my home; not down t' Gusta," said she. "It's this way, Miss Rufe: they has t' kill 'em, orless they cain't be a doctah. They kills 'em 'n' cuts 'em up."

So was revealed to me the medical test of courage. If they cannot "cut 'em up," they show too poor a spirit for a future physician.

"Against ignorance the gods fight in vain." I cast about in my mind for arguments that should convince.

"But, Della," I finally repeated, "don't you know that would be murder? And murderers would be hanged."

She extended a pitying smile to my inexperience. "Not down t' my home," the soft drawl persisted; "Not down t' Gusta. They cut Mr. William Hykes all up."

I was dumb. I had no powers of persuasion to controvert that fact of the dismemberment of Mr. William Hykes. Ruth Hall, in Harpers Monthly.

The COURIER
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Williamson—Barker was a poor man when he entered the senate.

Henderson—I didn't know that.

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THEATRICAL.

THE OLIVER.

Several features of more than ordinary interest combine to make the attraction coming to the Oliver Theatre this evening of more than ordinary interest. Two novel plays will be presented; they are by David Belasco, and they signalize the reappearance of Chas. E. Evans on our local stage. The evening's entertainment will open with "Madam Butterfly" the beautiful little Japanese play which was the talk of New York and London last season. In the second play Mr. Evans is the title character, "Naughty Anthony," and is even funnier than in the days of "A Parlor Match."

THE FUNKE.

Everybody who enjoys seeing the oddities of life clearly depicted and its deeper passions carefully portrayed, in short, all who enjoy a thoroughly good play—and who does not—will be glad to learn that "Blue Jeans," Joseph Arthur's world famous comedy drama of rural Indiana life, will be at the Funke Opera House this afternoon and evening. Its first production in New York marked an epoch in the American stage, and to this day, the dramatists and stage mechanics have not between them, evolved a piece of realism to equal its famous saw mill scene. So carefully was this worked out that it bears no sign of staginess or feeble imitation, but looks and is the real thing, true to life in every detail. The play is entertaining throughout, the company a good one and the scenic effects elaborate.

First Pub. Jan. 19-3

Notice of Probate.

In the county court of Lancaster county Nebraska—E 1517.

The state of Nebraska, to the heirs at law, children and next of kin, of Steward Sappenfield deceased and to his devisees and legatees and to any other persons interested in said matter or in his estate.

You are hereby notified, that an instrument purporting to be the last will and testament and codicil thereto of Steward Sappenfield deceased is on file in said court, and also a petition praying for the probate of said instrument, and for the appointment of Mary Sappenfield his widow as executrix. That on the 15th day of February 1901, at ten o'clock A. M., said petition and the proof of the execution of said instrument will be heard, and that if you do not then appear and contest, said court may probate and record said will and codicil and grant administration of the estate to Mary Sappenfield as executrix. Notice whereof is ordered published for three weeks successively in The Courier of Lincoln, Nebraska, prior to said hearing.

Witness my hand and the seal 18th day of January, 1901.
[SEAL.] FRANK R. WATERS,
County Judge.
By WALTER A. LEESE, Clerk County Court.

First Pub. Jan. 19-3

Notice of Petition for Letters.

In the county court of Lancaster county, Nebraska E 1515

In re estate of George P. Botterill, deceased.

The State of Nebraska, to the children, heirs at law and next of kin of George P. Botterill deceased (sometimes known as and called George P. Botterrell) late of Santa Ana, California; and of William Hugh Botterill, deceased and to all other persons interested in their estates.

Take notice that a petition signed by Sarah Botterill, widow of said George P. Botterill praying said court to grant letters of administration of said estate of George P. Botterill deceased, to O.P. Polk, has been filed in said court, that the same is set for hearing on the 12th day of February, 1901, at ten o'clock A. M., and that if you do not then appear and contest, said court may grant administration of the said estate as prayed for.

Notice of this proceeding has been ordered published three weeks successively in The Courier of Lincoln, Nebraska, prior to said hearing.

Witness my hand and the seal of said court this 18th day of January, A. D. 1901.
[SEAL.] FRANK R. WATERS,
County Judge.

By WALTER A. LEESE, Clerk County Court.

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