

BLUEBELLS.

Ah me! how many years have flown
Since I, who wander now alone,
That April morning stood
With my one friend I mean the trees,
While wondrous wild harmonies
Rang through the bluebell wood.

The year was young, the world was sweet,
Our hearts were young, and leapt to greet
The gladness of the day;
No cloud was on the April sky.
We laughed aloud, scarce knowing why,
Along the woodland way.

And like a carpet on the ground,
The azure bluebells all around,
In fair profusion grew,
Among the flowers I sat me down,
And wove my friend a dainty crown
Of tender blossoms blue.

I placed the circlet with delight
Upon her forehead smooth and white;
The azure of her eyes
Might put to shame the bluest flower
That ever grew in sheltered bowers
Beneath the softest skies.

Ah me, my friend, my one dear friend!
Our pleasant Spring-time had an end,
We left the fairy ways,
The mystic paths of sweet romance,
The girlish rounds of song and dance,
For life's bewildering maze.

Now here, alone, within the wood,
Where in youth's bluebell-time we stood,
I sit me down to-day,
My heart fringed with sharp regret,
Because thy path from mine is set
So very far away.

But, dear, my tears are selfish tears,
For God has blessed thy happy years
With blessings wide and deep;
Thy Summer came at Spring-time's close,
And for thy bluebells gave love's rose
For evermore to keep.

Yes, God hath given thee all the good
Of maiden-time and matronhood,
Youth's Spring and Summer's prime;
And now life's reddening Autumn leaves
Fall softly on love's gathered sheaves,
Bound up for Winter-time.

Friend, if to me when Spring-time died,
Was given no glorious Summer-tide,
If never happy May
Succeeded April's shower and sun,
And, if, when bluebell time was done,
No roses lit my way;

If evermore my heart doth miss
A joy foregone, love's crowning bliss,
I know the lesson meant;
If waiting stars of earthly love,
I know one brighter shines above,
My friend, I am content!

—All the Year Round.

A CAMP SURPRISE.

During the summer of 187- a merry party, ten of us in all, camped out in the Adirondack wilderness. There were three guides—I mention the guides first because they are the most important members of a camping party—two gentlemen, two children, two ladies, the children's old maiden aunt, myself and an English nurse to help take care of the little ones.

We had pitched our tents in the grand old Adirondack forest on the shore of a beautiful lake in the heart of the "North Woods," and for ten days had had the jolliest time imaginable.

At last we were getting out of venison, and the gentlemen proposed a night hunt for deer. On former occasions they had always left a guide to guard the camp, but knowing that deer were scarce, we thought the more men in the party, the more likely would they bring home a fine, fat buck. So we protested against being left in charge of a guide, and after talking it over awhile the gentlemen finally agreed to take all the guides with them, and just before dusk started for a pond some miles distant from our camp.

We watched the boats until they passed out of sight, and then strolled about the shore until it was dark. Then drawing near the tents we sat down on some logs around the camp-fire. Touching a match to a huge pile of brush hard by we sat gazing upon the flames as they leaped upward, roaring and crackling, and filling the forest with a cheerful glow.

Every one, we suppose, knows that being courageous in broad daylight is one thing, and being courageous in the dark is another. We had been as brave as lions before sunset, but I think the feeling that we were alone in this immense forest miles and miles from a hunter's tent made us feel a little nervous, for I noticed that we started at every rustling of the bushes, looking up anxiously if the wind gently stirred the branches overhead, and the English nurse jumped at least a foot as a loon sent forth his wild, mocking cry.

"Was that a panther, eh?" she asked in a frightened whisper.

"O, no indeed," replied the children's aunt, and yet the feeble attempt at a laugh ended in a little shiver, and I saw her glance quickly over her shoulder in a scared sort of way.

Piling several logs of wood on the fire to make it last as long as possible, we withdrew to our large sleeping tent. The English nurse headed the procession with an old rusty hunting-knife she had found among the cooking utensils.

Rob, the youngest boy, lugged a broken ear into the tent, while aunt brought up the rear with a tin pan and pudding stick.

"I have often read that any loud noise will serve to frighten away wild beasts," she whispered to me, "and I thought these might be handy to have with us."

After securely fastening the canvas flaps at the entrance of the tent, we lay down on our beds of hemlock boughs, but we didn't seem to be very sleepy; in fact, we were too nervous to sleep at once. I was just dropping into a doze when I heard a sound in the distance—a kind of prolonged howl.

I raised my head to listen—so did aunt.

"What was that?" she whispered.

For a few moments all was still. Again the same unearthly sound broke the stillness of the night. This time it seemed nearer—a long dismal howl.

The children's aunt rose to a sitting posture. The English nurse asked in a frightened whisper, "Indians, eh?"

"Nonsense," returned I. "There are no panthers here, and as for Indians, there isn't a red man within a thousand miles." Here I stopped. My hair was braided down my back in a Chinese pig-tail, and it seemed to rise straight in the air as a gust of wind brought to our ears a third howl, followed by a chorus of unearthly yelps.

We sprang to our feet. I felt some one pulling at my dress and heard Rob's voice—the oldest boy was fast asleep: "What is it, auntie? is it—is it a wolf?" Then I knew that his eyes were as big as butter-plates.

"Whatever it is it shall not hurt you, dear," said I, putting one hand on his shoulder, and feeling with the other for the rifle which one of the gentlemen had placed in a corner of the tent that very afternoon.

"Aunt, where is the rifle?"

And aunt, who had a horror of firearms, confessed that "only a few moments before she had carried it out of the tent and laid it down in the bushes with the butt end toward the camp."

"But it wasn't loaded," I replied angrily.

"Well, dear, rifles go off sometimes when they ain't loaded," she answered. I knew by this that aunt was very, very nervous or she never would have made such a foolish speech. "Our last hope is gone then," I said with a groan.

"Now keep still; not a word for your lives! Perhaps the wolves may go in another direction; they may be chasing a deer."

The moment I said "wolves" the English nurse fainted. "Let her alone," said aunt. "If you bring her to her senses she will faint again. I am sure I have got to be eaten by wolves if I hear rather faint too, then I shouldn't know anything about it."

"Hush! Listen!"

We held our breath. This is what we heard: A howl or two, a crackling and rustling of twigs, the noise of long leaps through the underbrush, and then, oh, horror! the sound of animals rushing madly around the tents. The children's aunt had been peeping through a small hole in one side of the tent.

"Look! for mercy's sake, look!" she gasped.

I put my eyes close to the rent and there, rushing wildly about, were four great, lean, shaggy brutes! By the light of the camp fire I could see their glittering eyes, red tongues and sharp white teeth.

I drew back in horror. "Try the tin pan," said I.

Rob beat a lively tattoo with the pudding stick. For a moment the patter of paws ceased, only to begin again more madly than before.

"O, dear!" moaned aunt in despair. "Any decent wolf would have been afraid of a camp fire, to say nothing of such a racket as this."

She seized the oar and put herself in a war-like attitude.

Just then one of the creatures outside brushed against the tent, while another ran sniffling about and even ventured his nose under the canvas flaps.

"Something must be done," exclaimed aunt with the air of one resolved "to do or die." "I have often read that a wild beast will quail before the steady gaze of the human eye. Then she drew herself up looking the picture of a veritable Lady Macbeth. "The trouble is, I can't look in four pairs of eyes at once."

"And while you were staring at one wolf the others would eat you up," I answered.

"Young woman, this is no time for jesting," said aunt, solemnly. "Heaven knows what will become of us."

At this instant it flashed before my mind that there was something familiar in the sound of the howling outside. I took another look through the little loop-hole, then whistled softly. Dropping the hunting knife I had been brandishing and running to the entrance I began untying the canvas flaps. "Aunt," said I, "listen! Do you hear? Those are not wolves, they are dogs; I am sure of it."

In another moment four great, tawny hounds were leaping about me, putting their paws on my shoulders, nearly knocking me down in their attempt to express their joy.

I led the way to the tent where our supplies were stored, and throwing them some food knew from the greedy way in which they seized it that they had been off on a long trail. It often happens that hunting dogs get lost while on the scent of an animal. In such cases they always make their way to the nearest camp. After the hounds had satisfied their hunger they followed me to the sleeping tent.

I found the children's aunt and the English nurse pale but calm, with the happy Rob between them. We left the tent flaps open and the cheery firelight shone inside the camp; the largest dog stretched himself before the entrance as if to say: "I'm going to keep watch here to-night," while the others took their places by the children's beds.

Then we fell asleep, safe, indeed, under the watchful care of our new-found friends.—Emma W. Demeritt, in Our Continent.

—A girl came with her mother to a physician to be vaccinated, and wasterribly nervous about the matter. Just as the doctor was going to start work she threw her arms around the old lady's neck and sobbed: "One last kiss, mamma, before the operation!"—Chicago Tribune.

A Painful Blunder.

Policemen make mistakes sometimes. But when two persons have the same name the sharpest trackers may go wrong in following an address. An instance of the trouble and heart-pain caused to a young wife by a mistake in reporting a death is thus detailed in the New York Sun:

A lady named Miller, whose husband is employed in the law department of the Mutual Life Insurance Company of this city, was surprised on Monday afternoon by the appearance at her door of a policeman, who told her that she was wanted in New York at once at the Liberty-street Station, and that she must get ready and go with him.

She was much startled, and asked why she was wanted, but she got no reply. She said that she could not leave her baby, as it was only eight months old, and she asked the policeman to wait a half-hour until her husband returned.

"I can't wait," he said; "your husband is over there now."

Mrs. Miller objected to taking her child out in the rain, but the policeman insisted that she should come, and so she bundled it up and started off, while the neighbors looked on wonderingly as they saw a policeman going with her as though he had her under arrest.

On the way over Mrs. Miller repeated her question as to why she was wanted, and the policeman told her that he thought something had happened to her husband, but said that he could tell her no more. When she reached the Liberty-street Police-station the Sergeant asked her whether her husband was in ill health.

"No," she said.

"Has he never had the heart disease?"

"No," said Mrs. Miller. "The only thing I know is that a doctor told him to stop smoking cigarettes, or he would ruin his health."

"Well, madam," said the Sergeant, "I am sorry to tell you that your husband dropped dead at twelve o'clock to-day."

The announcement coming upon Mrs. Miller after the excitement of the policeman's mysterious visit overcame her, and she fainted on the floor. She was lifted up by a policeman, and when she regained consciousness, the Sergeant asked: "How old is your husband?"

"Twenty-four," said Mrs. Miller.

"Oh," said the Sergeant, "this is an old man who has dropped dead. It can't be your husband. May be it's your father."

"My father's name is not Miller," said the young wife.

"Oh, that's true. Well, we have got the wrong person. You can go."

In Mrs. Miller's absence her husband returned home, and finding his wife and infant gone, was much disturbed. His neighbors told him his wife had been taken away by a policeman toward the New York ferries.

He started for New York, and by chance met his wife, weak with excitement, coming out of the gate of the ferry-house. She did not know the way home, and instead of sending for her husband, who was at 146 Broadway, near the police station, the police put her in a car going up town, and she hardly knew how she found her way to the ferry. Mrs. Miller was so prostrated by excitement that a physician was summoned when she reached home.

How a Negro Saved a Train.

The story is a little late being told, but it is none the less interesting. The passengers on the Louisville train that came up to Lexington one night a week or ten days ago will perhaps recollect that the train was stopped at the crossing of the railroad and the iron-works turn-pike, just a little way out of town.

The cause was a signal from a colored man named Oscar Washington, who stood on the track waving a light. He had also built a bonfire on the track, so that the engineer would be bound to see that something was wrong. A huge walnut log had fallen from a freight-train and lay across the track. The log was about four feet in diameter. The colored man, lying near, observed the log on his return from work. He could not move it, so he built a fire on the log, and then went on ahead at a safe distance to give the signal. The company offered him a pass over the road for himself and family, but he declined it, having little or no use for the pass. He does not seem to know what value to put on his great service.—Lexington (Ky.) Press.

—The wheat product of the Pacific coast for 1881 was 40,000,000 bushels, and the exports of wheat during the year (including flour), reached the enormous quantity of 38,936,290 bushels. The barley crop of 1881 was 2,600,000 centals, beet-root sugar, 1,410,000 pounds; wool clip, 43,204,769 pounds, and wine product, 9,500,000 gallons. Imports of sugar in 1881 were 151,432,660 pounds, of coffee 15,313,934 pounds, of rice 56,922,968 pounds, and of tea 17,983,507 pounds. The gold and silver product for the year was \$77,000,000, and the coinage at San Francisco reached \$43,660,000. Value of manufactures in San Francisco in 1881, \$90,000,000.—Chicago Times.

—A poor woman of eighty could not pay her rent at East Brookfield, Mass., and the landlord removed the doors to force her out of the house. When she hung up blankets for a shelter from the wind, he pulled them down. She was already ill, and under this treatment soon died. But her imbecile daughter, aged sixty, still remained. The landlord ejected her. Then a mob of women broke open the replaced doors with axes, reinstated the daughter, and hooted the owner.—N. Y. Herald.

Youths' Department.

KING MIDAS.

Heard you, O little children,
This wondrous story told
Of the Syrian King whose fatal touch
Turned everything to gold?

In a great, dim, dreary chamber,
Beneath the palace-floor
Recounted his treasure of glittering coin,
And he always longed for more.

When the clouds in the blaze of sunset
Burn'd flaming fold on fold,
He thought how fine a thing 'twould be
Were they but real gold!

And when his dear little daughter,
The child he loved so well,
Came bringing in from the pleasant fields
The yellow apple!

Or buttercups from the meadow,
Or dandelions gay,
King Midas would look at the blossoms sweet,
And she would hear him say:

"If only the flowers were really
Golden as they appear,
'Twere worth your while to gather them,
My little daughter dear!"

One day in the dim, drear chamber,
As he counted his treasure o'er,
A sunbeam slipped through a chink in the
wall

And quivered down to the floor.

"Would it were gold," he muttered,
"That broad, bright, yellow bar!"
Suddenly stood in its mellow light,
A Figure bright as a star.

Young and ruddy and glorious,
With face as fresh as the day,
With a winged cap and winged heels,
And eyes both wise and gay.

"O have your wish, King Midas,
A heave by voice begun,
Like all sweet notes of the morning,
Braided and blended in one.

"And when to-morrow's sunrise
Wakes you with rosy fire,
All things you touch shall turn to gold,
Even as you desire."

King Midas slept. The morning
At last stole up the sky,
And woke him, full of eagerness,
The wondrous spell to try.

And lo! the bed's fine draperies
Of linen fair and cool,
Of quilted satin and cobweb lace,
And blankets of snowy wool,

All had been changed with the sun's first ray
To a gleaming cloth of gold.

That rippled and shimmered as soft as silk
In many a gorgeous fold.

But all this splendor weighed so much
'Twas irksome to the King,
And up he sprang to try at once
The touch on every thing.

The heavy tassel that he grasped
Magnificent became,
And hung by the purple curtain rich
Like a glowing mass of flame.

At every step, on every side,
Such splendor followed him,
The very sunbeams seemed to pale,
And mourn itself grew dim.

But when he came to the water
For his delicious bath,
He dipped his hand in the surface smooth,
He started in sudden wrath:

For the liquid, light and leaping,
So crystal-bright and clear,
Grew a solid lake of heavy gold,
And the King began to fear!

But out he went to the garden,
So fresh in the morning hour,
And a thousand buds in the balmy night
Had burst into perfect flower.

'Twas a world of perfume and color,
Of tender and delicate bloom,
But only the hideous thirst for wealth
In the King's heart found room.

He passed like a spirit of autumn
Through that fair space of bloom,
And the leaves and the flowers grew yellow
In a dull and scentless gloom.

Back to the lofty palace
Went the glad monarch then,
And sat at his sumptuous breakfast,
Most fortunate of men!

He broke the fine, white wheaten roll,
The light and wholesome bread,
And if turned to a lump of metal rich—
It had as well been lead!

Again did fear assail the King,
When—what was this he heard?
The voice of his little daughter dear,
As sweet as a grieving bird,

Sobbing she stood before him,
And a golden rose held she,
And the tears that brimmed her blue, blue
eyes

Were pitiful to see.

"Father! O Father dearest!
This dreadful thing—oh, see!
Oh, what has happened to all the flowers?
Tell me, what can it be?"

"Why should you cry, my daughter?
Are not these blossoms of gold
Beautiful, precious and wonderful,
With splendor not to be told?"

"I hate them, O my father!
They're stiff and hard and dead,
That were so sweet and soft and fair,
And blushed so warm and red."

"Come here," he cried, "my darling,
And bent, her cheek to kiss,
To comfort her—when—Heavenly Powers!
What fearful thing was this?"

He sank back shuddering and aghast,
But she stood still as death—
A statue of marble gleaming gold,
With neither motion nor breath.

The gold tears hardened on her cheek,
The gold rose in her hand,
Even her little sandals changed
To gold, where she did stand.

Then such a tumult of despair
The wretched King possessed,
He wrung his hands, and tore his hair,
And sobbed, and beat his breast.

Weighted with one look from her sweet eyes
What was the whole world worth?
Against one touch of her loving lips,
The treasure of all the earth?

Then came that voice, like music,
As fresh as the morning air,
"Bow is it with you, King Midas,
Rich in your answer'd prayer?"

And there in the sunshine smiling,
Majestic as before,
Ruddy and young and glorious,
The stranger stood once more.

"Take back your gift so terrible!
No blessing, but a curse!
One loving heart more precious is
Than the gold of the universe."

The stranger listened—a sweeter smile
Kindled his brave, bright eyes,
"Glad am I, O King Midas,
That you have grown so wise!"

"Again your wish is granted:
All ye swiftly turn before,
All ye have harmed with the fatal touch
You shall again restore."

He clasped his little daughter—
Oh, joy—within his arms,
She trembled back to her human self,
With all her human charms.

Across her face he saw the life
Beneath his kiss begin,
And steal to the charming dimple deep
Upon her lovely chin.

Again her eyes grew blue and clear,
Again her cheek flushed red,
She looked her arms about his neck,
"My father dear!" she said.

Oh, happy was King Midas,
Against his heart to hold
His treasure of love more precious
Than a thousand worlds of gold!
—Edna Thayer, in St. Nicholas.

How Fish-Hooks are Made.

Boys, how long do you suppose it would take you to make a respectable fish-hook? What do you suppose it would cost you to have a skilled workman make you one as good as you can buy for a penny?

Not long ago, bite off a little piece of steel wire, chew it a moment, and then spit it out formed into a perfect hook. It would cost out these little hooks every half second, the different machines making the different sizes.

There are eight steps in the making of a fish-hook by the machines I saw. The boy who tended one of them snatched specimens from the machine as they were passing through, and showed me how each stroke of the little chisels and hammers added to the bit of wire that went in, until it came out a finished hook and ready to fish with, though probably the most fastidious fish wouldn't touch it because it hadn't yet been polished.

The curious little machines would first nip off bits of wire; another stroke of the machine, and the bit of wire had a little loop in one end. The next half second the wire had a back in it near the other end. Then came a little hammer-stroke which flattened out the hooked end. Then a little chisel shaved this flattened end into a point. And last of all, it receives one crook, and drops, a perfectly formed hook, into the little bucket, having been, only four seconds before, nothing but an inch or more of steel wire on a reel.

There are two ways of finishing these hooks. Either they are "japaned," which gives them the black finish which is the most common one, or they are finished with that fine blue that is frequently put upon swords and cutlery. It is done by heating them in a furnace till they come to a "cherry-red" as the workmen call it, and then they are poured into a bucket of oil and left to cool.

After finishing, they are taken up to the deft-fingered girls, who rapidly count them by hooking them over a piece of coarse wire, and throwing out at the same time the imperfect ones. Then they pack them in neat boxes, and they are stacked up ready for market.

But I suppose this is only the faintest part of the history of these murderous little objects. How many of them do you suppose will ever hook a fish? May be one in a hundred. Perhaps not one in five hundred. How many of them will slumber, the sport of the fishes, imbedded in some old log at the bottom of some pool or river where they have stuck and stuck, though tugged at and twitched at by the luckless little boy who hasn't caught anything yet, and who hasn't another to fasten on in their place! How many weary miles they must go, some of them, with hungry, wet, tired little fellows (and perhaps big fellows, too), innocent of any fish, and in having no bites save from mosquitoes. But here and there one shall thrust point and barb into some fish who with more appetite than discretion has failed to see the trap set for him, and out and up into the air has rushed, "his silver armor flashing useless in the sun," to make a supper for the lucky fisherman.—Wide Awake.

"Rock-a-bye Baby on the Tree Top."

One day last summer, down in Texas, there was a fearful storm. It was a wind storm. The wind was so strong that it carried roofs of houses, and such things, a great way.

When it was over, some men set out to follow the track of the storm. One of them told this true story. They thought they might find things that the wind had dropped; and they might find some one hurt and in need of help.

It was near night, and quite dark in the woods, when they heard a cry. They stopped to look about and listen. They heard the cry again; and then they saw some dark thing up in a tree.

"It is a panther!" said one. "Stand off! I will shoot!"

"No; stop!" said another; "it is not a panther. I will climb up and see what it is."

Up he went; and what do you think he found, lodged in the tree?

A cradle with a dear little baby in it! The fearful wind had blown down the baby's home. It had carried off baby, cradle and all. The cradle was caught by a branch of the high tree.

Then the wind blew against it so hard that the cradle was wedged in a crotch of the tree. It was so fast that the men had to saw away the boughs to get it down.

There was the dear baby, all safe and sound, in its cradle nest. No one knew where the baby's friends were, or where its home had been. The men carried it to their home, and a kind woman took care of it.—Our Little Ones.

—Twenty-four young women of Nevada City, Cal., mocking the military boys of the place, organized a broom brigade. Their uniform consisted of muslin gowns trimmed with red calico, jaunty jackets of similar fabrics and blue caps. Each carried an ordinary broom, made fantastic with bits of red ribbon. Recently one of their number was married, and the broom brigade escorted the bride from her father's house to the railway station, the bride's broom, trimmed in mourning goods, being carried reversed at the head of the procession.—Chicago Herald.