...OUD CHIEF.

M. L. THOMAS, Publisher.

RED CLOUD, - - NEBRASKA.

UNDER HER CHIN.

Tying her bonnet under her chin
She tied her raven ringlets in,
But not alone in the silken snare
Did she catch her lovely floating hair,
For tying her bonnet under her chin
She tied a young man's heart within.
—*Nora Perry.*

And many a time that little chin
He's heard from since, you bet and win!
And bonnets she's had for her raven hair,
And many a time he's been called a bear;
And now she is throwing her ringlets back,
And says she shall have a sealskin sacque!
—*Courier-Journal.*

Buttoning the sealskin up to her chin,
She glideth out and she glideth in,
And the eyes of women with envy are green;
But the cest young fellow is seldom seen,
For in a dark office he labors like sin,
For the fairy who tied and roped him in.
—*Chicago World.*

Tying her bonnet under her chin
Is not where the harm to that youth comes in.
Nor an office dark; but a big, airy hall,
With green-covered table and cue and ball—
Some friends, a supper, and a little gin—
There's where the harm to that youth comes in.

If a man can enjoy the good things of life,
Why should he growl at the wants of his wife,
And fume and scold, and tear and rear,
And lay all the ills of the world at her door?
And why should the fairy have *roped* him in,
By tying her bonnet under her chin?
—*One of the Girls.*

HANNAH'S OFFER.

"Josiah," said old Mrs. Conner, "if you're not too busy I'd like you to step over to the Barkers' and take a message for me."

"All right, mother," said Josiah. "What is it?"

"Why, I'd like to have Hannah's help while the boarders are here," said Mrs. Conner. "And if you'll ask her ma to let her come, and tell her I'll give twelve dollars a month, I shall feel settled. If Hannah Barker won't come Sarah Smiley will. But Sarah has to be told everything, and Hannah, she just sees what's to be done and does it. Come right out about the offer. I don't want to be thought to be asking favors of my neighbors' daughters; and Hannah is practical."

Josiah Conner, who had been hoeing the garden, put his hoe in the corner and went into the house. He took off his gray flannel shirt and put on a white one, a linen coat and a straw hat with a blue ribbon around it. He further sacrificed to the graces by tying his most becoming neck-tie around his throat under a stiff, new collar. His mother noticed this, but made no remark. She was rather pleased that he should be particular for reasons which she kept to herself.

She watched him go down the road with a certain pride, for she thought him very good-looking, indeed. "Not the sort of man for an old bachelor," she thought, "but he's five-and-thirty to-morrow, and I can't see as he's taken a shine to any one yet."

She sighed as the thought crossed her mind. For though when a son desires to marry, his mother generally opposes it, when he does not she is always anxious that he should.

"Hannah Barker is a capable, savin' girl," she said to her milk-pan, as she rubbed it. "But beauty is all young men ever think of, and Hannah isn't pretty."

And just as these words passed her lips Josiah entered the Barker's gate.

Mrs. Barker, a very fat and very stupid old lady, was sitting on the porch shelling peas. She had a reputation for making a mistake whenever it was possible, and Josiah knew it.

"Likely enough, if I'm not careful, she'll think mother wants Hannah to help her for nothing," he said to himself, "so I'll begin in plain words that she can't help understanding."

And then he made his bow and said: "Good morning. How is your health, Mrs. Barker?"

"Well," said Mrs. Barker, slowly, "it an't extry, but I ought to be thankful I an't worse." Mrs. Barker thought it ungenteel to be too well, and always answered in these terms to any inquiries regarding her health. "How's your poor ma?"

There was no one less to be pitied in the place than Mrs. Connor; but "your poor ma" was a form she invariably used in inquiring after any one's maternal parent.

"Mother is well," said Josiah, taking a seat on the lower step, "and she sent me over to make an offer to Hannah."

"Lor!" said Mrs. Barker, dropping her handful of pea-pods. "I want to know."

"You see we've got boarders. They're coming up Monday," said Josiah, twirling his straw hat, "and mother thinks Hannah beats every girl she knows. She considers her worth more than twelve dollars a month; but, at the same time, I was to make her that offer, and she'll consider it a favor if she'll accept it."

"Hannah is worth all that," said Mrs. Barker with a sigh. "I'm sure I don't know how I'll do without her myself. Still, I hadn't orter stand in her way, I know; and Melissa has made all the gingerbread and sponge-cake for two or three months, and Samuel can milk the cows."

"Why, yes. I milked four at Sam's age," said Josiah.

"I want to know!" said Mrs. Barker. Then she added, calmly: "I don't know when I was more surprised than by that offer you jest spoke of making to Hannah. I hadn't the least idea it was thought of, not for a minute; but girls are so sly now-a-days they don't tell anything to their poor mothers.

"Oh, it hasn't been mentioned before," said Josiah. "Hannah didn't know. Can I say it's settled?"

"For all *me* you may," said Mrs. Barker; "and her poor pa don't interfere often, and I don't see why he should now; but if Hannah don't know yet, it seems curious you should speak to me. You'd oughter ask her first, you know. I ain't a Turk. Their poor mas do sell them unbeknown, I'm told; but it an't my way."

"Where is Hannah, Mrs. Barker?" added Josiah. "I'll go and ask her now."

"She's down to New York, shopping," said Mrs. Barker, "and she *may* stay all day; most likely *will*. But to-morrow is Sunday, and I'll have the lamp lit in the parlor, and you can talk it over with her. I'll tell her you're coming, and why, and all. I couldn't keep it to myself. But faint heart never won fair lady, Josiah, and nobody couldn't expect a girl's poor ma to do their courting for um, you know, unless it *was* them Turk ladies the minister spoke of, poor dears. I should think she'd say yes. It's her first offer, only from old Deacon Slinkins. Though Morris Power *is* calling sort of irregular—and Hannah is twenty-one. You make your offer yourself, Josiah. That's the way to get a wife, if you want one."

Then Mrs. Barker arose and went into the house without further ceremony, and Josiah, who had come to a sudden comprehension of her mistake, stood staring after her, quite dazed and giddy. What should he do? Run after her and explain? That would be a dreadful thing to do. Perhaps his mother could help him out of the pickle; and with this faint hope he hurried home, and arrived red in the face and utterly breathless.

"Well, Betsy Barker has put on the cap sheaf now," said Mrs. Conner. "But, Josiah, I wish you didn't feel so about it. I wish you liked Hannah. She's a girl after my own heart."

"I do like her," said Josiah, sheepishly. "She's a splendid girl. I've often thought that if I was a man that had need to marry, I'd choose her."

"Then it's all right," said Mrs. Conner.

"Why, mother," growled Josiah, bashfully, "I wonder at you. Think of me having the impudence to go over and offer myself without a bit of courting! I wouldn't have that, thought of me for any money."

"Anyhow, you'd better go over and have the talk with Hannah," said Mrs. Conner. "She's got good sense, if her mother hasn't."

Poor Josiah suffered all sorts of mental torture that day and all the long Sunday, but when, in the evening, a light was seen to shine in the Barkers' parlor, he nerved himself for a great effort. He was utterly without vanity. The idea that Hannah could be pleased never occurred to him. It was to apologize for a seeming bit of impudence, not to get out of an unintended offer, that he was going. His whole thought was: "What can Hannah think of such a piece of business?"

It was a very miserable young man who sat on the new green rep sofa in the Barkers' parlor at last, waiting for Hannah's coming.

At last a step crossed the sill, and he looked up. Hannah, in a becoming buff muslin, with an amber comb in her black hair, stood before him. She laughed and showed her white teeth.

"How do you do, Josiah?" she said. "What is this dreadful mistake that ma has been making now? Don't blame her. She'll be dreadfully ashamed of it, I know. The idea! We might be cousins, or almost brother and sister. Oh, what would you have done, Josiah, if I had believed that you come here to-day to make me an offer?"

Hannah looked very bright and natty. Her cheeks were pink and her eyes shone. Afterward her mother said that Josiah must have been inspired to do as well as he did, but it was a very natural sort of inspiration.

What he answered was this, though he had not been able to think what he should say as he came along:

"I wish to goodness you had believed it, Hannah, for now I shall have to do it all over again, and may be get the mitten."

"It's almost too dreadful to joke about, after all," said Hannah. "Ma will be so ashamed. I am."

"I'm not joking *now*, anyhow," said Josiah. "Hannah Barker, I haven't quite as much brass and impudence as your mother thought I had, but I have enough to get on with, after all. I always have loved you, but I never could see that you liked me. Will you try to? Will you marry me? Don't say no, Hannah, or I shall think it is out of revenge for my mistake."

"It was mother's mistake," said Hannah. "Don't make one now, Josiah. There ought to be a great deal of love before people marry."

"There is on my side," said Josiah.

He had risen from the sofa, and they stood looking at each other now. They sat down in two chairs, one on each side of the window. The moon was rising over the hills. The shaded lamp was not obtrusive. After a while Josiah took Hannah's hand. Then his arm stole about her waist.

It was twelve o'clock when he got home, but his mother was sitting up for him. She looked at him inquiringly as he began to wind the clock furiously. When he had finished he went toward the stairs, but half way up paused a moment to say:

"Mother, I guess you'll have to put up with Sarah Smiley for a month. It will take Hannah as long as that to get ready, she says. I suppose she'll want to make a silk dress and some other things."

But from these words it was plain to Mrs. Conner that Hannah Barker had really had her offer.—*Mary Kyle Dallas, in N. Y. Ledger.*

The Ways of the Clothes-Moth.

Many a vigilant housekeeper would be spared much vexation of spirit, if she understood the domestic arrangements of the moths as well as she does her own. She suspects everything *Lepidopterous* of being "the moth," and every insect of that kind that enters the house, no matter what its size or kind, must be killed lest it "eat holes in the clothing. It will surprise these watchful persons to be told that the moth itself is harmless, and eats nothing. The proper clothes-moth has a spread of wing of only about half an inch; it flits about so quietly, and is so small, as often to escape notice, while insects many times larger are suspected of being dangerous. The small size of the true clothes-moth, its delicate buff color, satiny luster, and especially the silky fringe upon the edges of the wings, distinguish it from other moths. In saying the moth is harmless, we would not be understood that it is not the cause of mischief. The only part assigned to this creature, in its beautiful winged state, is to lay eggs. The round of its changes is as follows: The egg, from which hatches the larva or caterpillar; this does all the feeding, and is the destructive form of the insect; the chrysalis, in which state it is dormant for about three weeks, and finally the winged state or moth, just described. Observe that the moth increases only from eggs laid by the flying insect. The feeding moth, or caterpillar, does not increase its numbers. The caterpillars feed upon woolen fabrics and furs, and they also use the minute fragments of them to make themselves a case or shield, a circular roll, which they carry about with them as they feed, and enlarge as their growth requires. In the Northern States, the moth begins to fly in May, but earlier in warmer climates, and their eggs are laid in May and June, when the insect dies. It will be seen that, to preserve articles from injury, we must place them where the parent moth can not reach them. The insect is small, and can slip through narrow cracks. Whatever will hold liquids will keep out moths, hence furs and woolens may be placed in whisky and other barrels. If the articles are placed in brown linen and sewed up, or in paper and pasted up, they will be perfectly protected. There must be no eggs or moths in the articles when put away, and the wrapping should be thorough, without any crevice through which the parent moth can crawl.—*American Agriculturist.*

Dummy Money.

The "dummy" money in the window of a broker's office on Kearney street is proving a dear advertisement to the proprietor. A fortnight since two enterprising young thieves smashed the plate-glass window with a brick and grabbed a lot of counterfeit greenbacks, under the impression that they were good money. Yesterday afternoon a glazier charged Mr. Anthony something like seventy dollars for putting in a new pane of glass. The job was finished last evening, and at 7:45 a young thief named James Neary, alias Nealy, alias Ryan, demolished it with a cobble slung in a pocket-handkerchief. Through the aperture thus created he grabbed a pile of neatly-turned brass discs of the size of twenty-dollar pieces, the top one being a bona-fide double eagle. As he thrust his hand in he toppled the pile over, losing the twenty dollars and only securing twenty-three of the brass counterfeits.—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

—Fuller, in his "Small Fruit Culturist," says: "I do not believe that there is one acre of strawberries in a thousand, cultivated in this country, that yields over one half that it would if the ground was properly prepared before planting." Here is a valuable hint for horticulturists.

Some Liar.

THE WEATHER LIAR.

There are many kinds of the lie family, but the best known is the weather liar. The older he is the greater his license to indulge in his favorite pastime. Every day of the year furnishes him with an excuse, and all he asks is for somebody to talk to. The weather liar remembers that the winter of 1879 was exactly like that of 1491; the spring of 1882 puts him in mind of the spring of 1624; the cold waves of the past winter didn't begin with those in 1774. He can remember winters when not a flake of snow fell, and summers when there was a frost every other night for three months. He has seen the thermometer drop to forty-seven degrees below in January, and climb to 130 degrees in August. He remembers one year when cherries were ripe in May, and another when they could not be picked until November. No matter what the weather is, the weather liar has always seen worse. If it snows for two days he has seen it snow for four. If it rains for a week, he can remember when it poured down without a break for three. If you have seen it hot enough to fry eggs on a stone sidewalk, he has seen an ax melt on top of a lump of ice.

THE FISH LIAR

ranks second on the list. He goes fishing about once in five years and spends the rest of the time in lying about what occurred. He caught a bass weighing fourteen pounds, but the hook broke and let him escape. He had a bite from a pickerel four feet long, but stubbed his toe and couldn't pull up at the proper moment. He began fishing with minnows for bait, but the fish bit so greedily that he finally tied a horn button to the hook and pulled 'em out as fast as he could drop the line. He caught an even tubful, but while he was eating luncheon the wharf gave way and let tub and fish into the water. The fish liar can be found sitting on the counter at the grocery of an evening, all wound up and ready to begin business, and nothing lets the sunshine into his life so quick as to get hold of some one who will gasp out occasionally: "My stars! but is that possible?"

THE HORSE LIAR

stands third on the list. He is a man who has had a horse which could go in 2.20. He hasn't got him now, but that doesn't make any difference. He has driven that horse in a race with an express train, and taken first money. And he also had a running horse which once made a dash of twenty-five miles on a bet of $5,000. He hasn't the horse or the money at the present time, but he can give you the name of a dozen leading bank presidents and Chief-Justices who saw that dash.

The horse-liar doesn't stop at lying about his own horses, but he is ready to put in his best licks on animals he never saw. He is in the confidence of the owners of all the celebrated equines. In his opinion such a track is short and such a track is long. He doesn't believe Rarus was ever much of a horse, and he feels that he could drive Goldsmith Maid in three seconds faster than she ever recorded. He is the identical man who first saw speed in Flora Temple, and if he had wanted to be mean about it, he could have bought her for ten dollars and an old plow, and made $5,000 out of the trade. He knows all about spavins, ring-bones, poll-evil, pink-eye and glanders, and he has a sure cure for each one. His seat is on the head of the second cracker-barrel from the stove each evening through the winter, and when he can come across some one who has invested fifteen dollars and a cross-cut saw in an old plug of a horse to use in a cider-mill, he is in his glory. He knows all about horse; been an awful good stepper; saw him run away once, and killed two women; Rarey tried to tame him, but had to give it up; reckon he could go out now and give most of the boys the dust; and so on until the grocer rubs his sleepy eyes, and regretfully says:

"Come, you liars, it's time to lock up and go home.—*Detroit Free Press.*

A Chinese Fishing Village in California.

It was close on the edge of the water, where a little inlet rounded in, below high hills. As we drew near it, the odor of fish came up over the hills, like a smell from something cooking in a vast caldron. The fences, the rocks, the ground—all were covered with shining little fishes, spread out to dry; those on the ground being laid on frames of wooden slats. There was only one narrow lane running through the village, and hardly room on that to step between the frames of drying fish. On the roofs of the hovels, even, poles were set up, and stretched from corner to corner; and on them long lines of fish fluttered in the air, like clothes hung out to dry. Chinamen were running about, emptying big baskets of fish; other Chinamen were spreading them, turning them, raking them apart, gathering up the dry ones, and packing them into baskets. The place fairly swarmed with laborers and their implements; but all the workers kept steadily on, as regardless of our presence as though they had been ants on an ant-hill. Every man, woman and child was hard at work; children that were too small for anything else had babies strapped on their backs, and were carrying them about. Little girls, not more than eight or ten years old, were at work industriously cleaning the fish, to prepare them for drying. This was a disagreeable sight; it was done in open sheds, where the floor was black and dripping wet with water and the slimy offal of the fish. Here the women sat on high stools, in a squatting posture, with their feet curled up under them, cutting and slashing, stripping the fish, and dropping them into the baskets with as swift a motion as if they were shelling peas. They had the fingers of the left hand rolled up thickly in black rags, to protect them against a chance slip of the sharp knife. They chatted and laughed as if they were engaged in the most agreeable occupation in the world. There did not seem to be an idle pair of hands in the village. Old men were mending nets, old women putting bait on hooks. The only unemployed creature we saw was one small baby.

It would not be possible to give any idea of the way in which the houses, sheds, boats, barrels, poles, nets, baskets, scaffoldings and lumber of all sorts were huddled together on one narrow alley not wide enough for two wagons to drive abreast. There was not a foot of open ground. Looking down from the hill on the roofs of the houses, one would think they all belonged to a single set of walls, roofed at different heights and angles. It was a squalid and filthy spot; it would seem impossible for human beings to breathe such air, and sleep in such dark, unventilated hovels for any length of time, without being made ill. Yet there are in this little village nearly two hundred people, many of whom have lived there for thirty years in good health. They are divided into three companies, each company having its leader, who pays wages to the men and women, and has the charge of selling and sending away the fish.—*St. Nicholas.*

—Frederick N. Crouch, the composer of "Kathleen Mavourneen," is a gray haired man, who lives on poor fare in Baltimore. A tattered coat of Confederate gray keeps some of the cold out. He is now out of employment and too old to help himself. He has a wife and five children. He tries to smile cheerily at fate; but admits that he needs help.—*Indianapolis Journal.*

PERSONAL AND LITERARY.

—Rev. Dr. Morgan Dix, of New York, has written a life of his father, the late General John A. Dix.

—*Blackwood* says the influx of American magazines has surprised the British public by the beauty and extent of their illustrations and the freshness of their literary matter.

—The daughter of George Francis Train says she is now the only one with whom he will speak. Formerly he refused to shake hands with people, but now he will not even speak.—*N. Y. Sun.*

—Foster, the author of "Old Folks at Home," it is said' received $15,000 for his share in the sale. Mrs. Akers-Allen received five dollars for "Rock Me to Sleep," but the publishers made several thousands on it.

—When General Spinner was asked by a Florida man a few days ago how old he was, and if he was in good health yet, he said: "I am eighty-one years of age, still in good health, and believe I can whip men of my size yet."

—Prof. Henry Croft, of the Toronto University, who died in Texas recently, had filled the chair of chemistry and experimental philosophy in that institution for more than thirty years. He was noted for rare skill as a manipulator of chemical experiments, and was for many years the chief and almost only authority cited in cases of suspected poisoning.

—The Washington *Post* says of the new Treasurer of the United States, Mr. Wyman: "In person he is slightly above the medium height, well formed, and apparently about fifty-five years of age, his iron-gray hair and beard adding to his attractiveness. Personally he is a genial gentleman, much esteemed by all who know him, his subordinates speaking of him only in terms of the highest regard."

—Mrs. Frank Leslie, the lady manager of ten periodicals and four hundred employes, has recently returned from a tour in the South, where, as she is of Southern birth, she met a cordial reception. I wonder how many people know that the elegant house at Saratoga was built by Frank Leslie in three weeks in consequence of his fiancee's promise to marry him as soon as it was done? The workmen toiled day and night, and at last, on the arrival of the bride and groom, nothing was lacking but candles, there not being a light in the house.—*New York Star.*

HUMOROUS.

—A relic hunter—A fellow endeavoring to capture a widow.

—The Shah of Persia believes in a stable government. He has four hundred horses.

—The man who has lived through the past winter and isn't thankful for it ought to break a leg.—*Detroit Free Press.*

—"Ma, are we cannibals?" asked a little girl of her mother the other morning. "Why, my child, what do you mean?" "Oh, nothing, only I heard you say to Bridget, boy legs for breakfast."

—The old superstitious notion that crocodiles weep has been exploded by the scientists; but it is pretty generally acknowledged that sailors have repeatedly seen whales' blubber.—*National Baptist.*

—"Julia, my little cherub, when does your sister Bertha return?" "I don't know." "Didn't she say anything before she went away?" "She said, if you came to see her she'd be gone till doomsday."

—Young Slowtocatch recently had cause to borrow a pair of rubber shoes, and after putting them on remarked: "They're immense; they fit me to a T;" and then he could not tell why the people smiled.—*Chaff.*

—A lady in a neighboring city, whose husband had remodeled the front of their residence, while the rear was badly dilapidated, said the front of her house was Queen Ann and the rear Crazy Jane style.—*Boston Commercial Bulletin.*

—Two men got into a wordy controversy which waxed quite hot, and finally one challenged the other to a square fight. But the other refused. "Not that I am a coward," he said, "or that I am afraid of you; but I am always unlucky in a fight."

—"No, sir," said an old Indian, down in Maine, "I don't have my boy taught arithmetic. I learned it, and the curse of my life has been the remarks of people who thought themselves funny, to the effect that I was very pleasant because I was an Indian summer."

—"No," he said, "I am not a bad-tempered man, but when somebody takes my tooth-brush and puts in place of it another that has been used to apply hair dye, and I get hold of it in the dark and use it, I think it's not surprising that I said: 'Gosh durn it!'"—*Boston Post.*

—Why she was weary! "Oh, dear, I'm all tired out," exclaimed Mrs. Shoppingham; "you can't have parcels sent to the depot now without paying, you know, and in an economical fit I've been lugging this all about the city." And with a great sigh of relief she took a spool of cotton out of her pocket and deposited it on the table.—*Chicago Herald.*

Senile Softening of the Brain.

This is one of the most frequent diseases of the brain in advanced life. A portion of the brain undergoes fatty degeneration.

The softened mass varies in character and consistency at different stages, but at one stage it resembles moist gelatine. In another form of it the mass is as fluid as cream.

Its most common cause is an obstruction in the neighboring arteries, which cuts off the supply of blood to the part. Such an obstruction is often attributed to embolism—a small particle swept from the heart to some capillary and lodged there; or to thrombosis—a larger bit (perhaps of clot) thus swept along and lodged in some artery; to a tumor pressing on an artery; to a flow of blood from a ruptured vessel already affected with degeneration.

Sometimes a feeble heart, unable to send the blood to all the capillaries of the brain, may give rise to it. It is often remotely due to prolonged intellectual efforts, strong and continued emotions, blows on the head, alcohol, or to disease of the heart, caused by acute rheumatism.

Softening of the brain may be either acute or chronic. The former is fatal within ten days. More commonly there are no premonitory symptoms, and the attack resembles that of paralysis. When premonitory symptoms occur there may be pricking sensations, cramps, blunted touch, diminished power of motion, increasing weakness of the affected side and clumsiness of the fingers, hands and feet, and a tottering gait.

Some of the symptoms of *chronic* softening are increasing feebleness, loss of memory, fretfulness, fits of uncontrollable weeping, dull pains in the head, a sense of confusion, thickness of speech, gradual loss of muscular power, listlessness, and later, paralysis of one side, childishness, helplessness, disposition to sleep most of the time. The appetite and the weight may remain good.

When there are premonitory symptoms, the diet must be rigidly simple, nourishing and of easy digestion. Milk is the best. Nothing should be allowed tending to increase the action of the heart.—*Youth's Companion.*

Our Young Readers.

TO WHAT KINGDOM?

The Kaiser would go to the Orphanage,
Upon a Summer day;
And the children braided their flaxen hair
And tied it with ribbons gay.
They tied it with ribbons pink and blue,
And each wore her dress of white,
And the Kaiser said he thought no man
Could see a lovelier sight.

Then he took his plumed hat off his head,
And they courtesied to him low.
He said: "God bless you, children dear,
And make you in wisdom grow."
He called to his side a blue-eyed girl
(She was fair as a child could be),
And he said: "Stand here, then little one,
And answer me questions three.

"This lily, so fair and white and sweet,
To what kingdom does it belong?"
"To the vegetable kingdom, Sire;"
And her voice was like a song.
"And this little toy of purest gold?"
(He showed her a mimic lyre)
And she looked up with a smile, and said:
"To the mineral kingdom, Sire."

"Now tell me, my clever little maid,
To what kingdom do *I* belong?"
She thought of lions, of cows, and sheep,
The *animal*, sure is wrong.
She looked at his kingly air and dress
(She was but a child of eleven),
And said, with a still and solemn air;
"I think—to the *Kingdom of Heaven.*"

The Kaiser looked down, and then looked up,
And his eyes were full of tears.
"The wisdom of Heaven dwells," he said,
"In the child of tender years."
He felt as if by an angel taught,
And his soul to its depth was stirred;
So he left a royal largess there,
For the little damsel's word.
—*Mary A. Barr, in N. Y. Independent.*

"THE LOVELIEST APRIL-FOOL."

Gray clouds drifted across the sky, and a chill wind swept over the fields, and whistled round the corner of the old red school-house; but the group of children, clustered about the door-step, noticed neither, so interested were they in some object that they were examining.

"It will be the greatest fun, alive!" exclaimed a large boy, in a muffler.

"Indeed it will!" assented a rosy-cheeked girl, whom her companion called Maggie.

"And how she will jump!" squeaked little Tommy Green, who had a cold in his head.

"There comes Nellie Lawson," cried two or three, as a sweet-faced maiden emerged from the school-house; "let us tell her about it."

"What are you all talking and laughing about?" asked the new-comer; "can't I know the joke?"

"Of course you can," said Maggie. "Just see this rat, that Ben Mott has caught," and the boy with the muffler swung a gray rat round by the tail.

Nellie gave a half-suppressed scream, and then, seeing that the animal was dead, asked: "What are you going to do with it?"

"Why, to-morrow is the first of April," explained Ben, "and we intend to play a trick on that shabby Ruth Baker."

"She is dreadfully afraid of rats and mice," continued Maggie, "almost goes into a fit, at the sight of one—so we are going to do this fellow up in a nice parcel, and put it in her desk. She will think it is something Auntie Piper has sent her by Miss Allis, and it will be fun to see her scared when she opens it—don't you think so?"

"No, I don't!" responded Nellie, while her cheeks glowed, and her eyes flashed; "and I think it is mean to treat a poor girl like Ruth so. She is smarter than any of us, if she does wear patched clothes, and live in a tumble-down old shanty, and it might do her a great deal of harm."

"Nonsense!" shouted Ben angrily; for he had a grudge against Ruth for going above him in the spelling class. "You needn't preach to us, Nellie Lawson, and we shan't ask your consent to the trick."

"No, indeed!" said most of the group, who did not care to lose their sport.

"And if you give Ruth a hint beforehand, we will have nothing more to do with you," added Maggie.

"I'm no tell-tale," answered Nellie, with some spirit, as she turned off down the road, leaving the mischievous youngsters to prepare this unkind surprise for their schoolmate.

That same afternoon, as Miss Allis, the school-teacher, was wending her way toward her boarding-place, at Auntie Piper's, she was overtaken by her pet pupil, Nellie Lawson, who, with her scarlet hood falling back on her shoulders, and her fair hair streaming in the wind, came running down a side path to meet her. "Oh, Miss Allis," she panted, quite breathless, "I was so afraid I might miss you; and I want to ask a favor."

"What is it, Nellie?" inquired the teacher.

"Only to lend me the school-house key until to-morrow morning, when I will be sure and bring it very early."

"But what can you want of it?"

"It is a secret, Miss Allis; but, truly, I will do no harm."

The teacher smiled at the girl's earnestness, as she drew the key from her pocket, saying: "I think I can trust you, Nellie; but don't fail to be on hand in good season."

"Oh no, indeed! and thank you so very much!" and with a kiss, and a wise shake of her little head Nellie bade her teacher "good-bye," and started towards home.

The Widow Baker's home was a miserable place, the cold air pouring through the wide cracks in the boards, and laughing at the wee bit of fire on the hearth, that seemed too timid, even to crackle.

"This is a poor shelter," groaned Mrs. Baker; "but I fear we may even have less, for not a penny's rent have I paid for three months, and farmer Mott has threatened to turn us out."

So it was with a sad heart that Ruth started for school, trying to plan some means by which she could earn money, at least to keep starvation from the door. The scholars were all in their places when she entered. Opening her desk, she saw a package in one corner, and—not observing the boys nudging each other, and the girls giggling behind their "readers"—supposed Auntie Piper had kindly sent her a turnover, as she occasionally did. Carefully she untied the string, and unfolded the paper. Ben Mott stole up behind, and peeped over her shoulder, while the others watched eagerly. They were not disappointed, for the girl uttered a startled "Oh!" sat down suddenly, and covered her face with her hands; but they were surprised, when, in place of the repulsive rat, they beheld a dainty lunch, neatly packed in a box, and on top a netted purse, through which might be seen the gleam of silver, while on a slip of paper were written the two words: "April-Fool."

"This is some of Nellie Lawson's work, I know!" exclaimed Ben, angrily; but none of the others echoed his tone, as they caught a sight of Ruth's grateful face, and Nellie said, softly: "Yes, I know I have rather turned the laugh against the school, but I am sure you will enjoy my joke more than the one that you planned, even if you have all been April-fooled;" and going to Ruth's side, pressed her to taste the good things, "for I know by your looks you need them," she whispered.

"Let me take some home to the children," begged the girl, and she explained, in a few words, the sad condition of her family.

The well-fed boys and girls instantly scattered in every direction, each tried to out-do the other in bringing from their own lunch-baskets, sandwiches, biscuits, pies, cake, etc., to heap upon Ruth's desk, until there was much more than she could carry—and she fairly sobbed from excitement. Miss Allis, watching the proceedings, forgot to ring the bell until long after time.

That afternoon, as Mrs. Baker stood by the window, she uttered a cry of despair at the sight of Farmer Mott's wagon coming down the road. "For," she said to Peter, the oldest boy, "he has come to turn us out, and where we shall go, Heaven only knows!"

Sure enough, Mr. Mott soon appeared on the threshold. "See here!" he shouted, "have you some money for me?"

"N-n-no, sir!" stammered the poor widow—"but——"

"Well, that's all right, for it's April-fool's day, you know; but what do you mean by allowing any of my tenants to freeze and starve? Here is a cord of wood; don't you dare to bring me any rent until that young man is old enough to earn it."

And with these words, the bluff farmer hurried off, leaving Mrs. Baker speechless. She was roused by the entrance of Ruth, followed by a procession of boys and girls, bearing baskets and pails, and who in a twinkling set to work, like a band of good fairies, making up a roaring fire, spreading the table, with Ben Mott, the leader of them all, while his face fairly beamed with satisfaction. Fun and jollity prevailed on all sides, and Nellie, hugging Ruth rapturously, exclaimed: "Isn't it just the loveliest April-fool that ever was heard of?"

As the twilight shadows fell softly over the country-side, and the happy children—leaving the Bakers sitting by a cheerful fireside—wended their way to their own comfortable homes, Ben Mott whispered to Miss Allis: "Nellie Lawson's 'fooling' is worth twenty of my stupid rat tricks."—*Agnes Carr, in American Agriculturist.*

Curious Insects.

When Australia was first discovered by the English, as many strange stories were told about the wonderful things to be found there as we used to hear in the early days of California. Among other thing it was said that the leaves of a certain tree had a habit of descending from their proper place and walking along the ground.

A party of English sailors had left their ship to roam along the coast and "see what they could see." They were resting under a tree, lying on their backs probably, and naturally gazing upward, when a sudden breeze shook down a number of leaves, which turned somersaults in the air, after the manner of leaves generally, and then floated to the ground. The sailors were surprised at this shower, because it was not the fall of the year, but midsummer, and these falling leaves looked fresh and green. It was strange to see leaves deserting the tree without any sort of reason; but this was nothing to what followed.

After a short rest these able-bodied leaves began crawling along on the ground toward the trunk of the tree from which they came, and the amazed sailors started up in terror. They probably knew from experience that people who come in contact with the ground may also expect to come in contact with various crawling insects, but walking leaves were something altogether out of the common way; and they took to their heels at once, and lost no time in getting on board the vessel. The land was certainly bewitched, and one of the men said, in relating their adventure, that he expected every minute to see the trees step out and dance a regular jig.

Fortunately this singular phenomenon has been fully explained by later travelers who were not too much frightened to stop and examine the matter. It was discovered that these queer leaves are really insects that live upon the trees, and are of the same color as the foliage. They have very thin, flat bodies, and their wings are like large leaves. When anything disturbs them—like a breeze, for instance—they fold their legs away under their bodies, and then the leaf-like shape, with stem and all, is complete.

Not only are they of a bright green in summer, like the foliage of the trees at that time, but they actually change when the leaves do to the dull brown produced by frost. Another peculiarity of these leaf-insects is that, although they have a generous supply of wings, they seldom use them, but when they have been shaken to the ground, after lying there for a few minutes as if they were really leaves, they crawl toward the tree, and ascend the trunk without seeming to know that they have the power of getting back to their quarters in a much quicker and easier way.—*Harper's Young People.*

A Strange Funeral.

Not many weeks since, a gentleman well known in Cincinnati lost his wife by consumption. A simple announcement was made in the newspapers when she died, but no notice was given as to when the funeral would take place. It seems that it was omitted at the special request of his wife, often made before her demise, as she only desired her most intimate friends to attend that ceremony. She said she had a horror of her house being crowded with people upon such an occasion, who really cared little or nothing for her. She only wanted certain ones present whom she knew well, and whom she felt sure would regret her death, and these were notified to attend at a particular hour on a given day.

This departure from the usual custom was hardly made more conspicuous than that of her husband officiating in the place of a minister, which was also done at his wife's request. After the friends had assembled to the number of twenty-five or thirty, the husband, who was sitting beside her coffin, with head bowed in grief upon it, rose up and delivered the following address:

"DEAR FRIENDS: It was the dying request of my dear companion that no minister should be called upon to officiate at her obsequies, but that I should speak a few words to her special friends who would be invited to be present. I need not say that I do so with reluctance, and I can hardly find words to express my sorrow and grief at the loss I have sustained by her death. This request was not made by her because of want of faith in religion or in holy things, but simply because neither of us was a member of any Christian church, and have not been in the habit of attending religious services, and we knew no minister upon whom we could call, and she did not think it meet or proper, under the circumstances, to have some one come here and deliver a sermon who did not know her.

"I need not tell you that Clara was a faithful wife and a loving mother, and that she possessed every trait of character necessary to constitute a child of God. She made no professions of religion, but she showed by her daily life and walk that her every impulse was pure and good. I never saw her turn the needy away from her door without a gift, and I never heard her speak lightly of her friends. She made her home her palace, and she was always the happiest when she was surprising me with some special manifestation of her love. She has now gone to her reward, and if I can train up our little daughter to follow in the footsteps of her mother I shall have accomplished my mission upon earth. The flower of love shall ever bloom in my memory, and, whether I live long or die soon, her sweet influence will follow me to my grave. I can scarcely realize that she whom I loved so passionately now lies within the narrow confines of this coffin, and that I shall never again hear her voice nor see her at the window on my return home, giving me a welcome such as was her custom. But, though she has gone never to return, her influence will be felt, and will be as enduring as life itself.

"You will all please come forward and take a last farewell, after which we will sing her favorite hymn:

"'I would not live alway,
I ask not to stay.'"

A gentleman who was present and witnessed the proceedings says they were exceedingly impressive, the ladies being especially demonstrative in their grief. The singing was led by a particular lady friend, who also played the organ.

This funeral may be regarded as a decided new departure, and it would not be surprising if others followed the example.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

Temperance Reading.

TELLING FORTUNES.

I'll tell you two fortunes, my fine little lad,
For you to accept or refuse;
The one of them good, the other one bad;
Now hear them, and say which you choose.

I see by my gifts within reach of my hand,
A fortune right fair to behold;
A house and a hundred good acres of land,
With harvest fields yellow as gold.

I see a great orchard with boughs hanging down
With apples, russet and red;
I see dozens of cattle, some white and some brown,
But all of them sleek and well fed.

I see droves of swallows about the barn door,
See the fanning mill whirling so fast;
I see them threshing wheat on the floor;
And now the bright picture is past.

And I see rising dimmily up in the place
Of the beautiful house and the land,
A man with a frowsed nose on his face,
And a little brown jug in his hand.

Oh! if you behold him, my lad, you would wish
That he were less wretched to see;
For his boots it is gape like the mouth of a fish,
And his trousers are out at the knees.

In walking he staggers, now this way, now that,
And his eyes they stand out like a bug's;
And he wears an old coat and a battered-in hat,
And I think that the fault is the jug's.

For the text says the drunkard shall come to be poor,
And that drunkenness clothes men with rags;
And he doesn't look like a man, I am sure,
Who has honest hard cash in his bags.

Now which will you have? To be thrifty and sober,
And be right side up with your dish,
Or go with your eyes like the eyes of a bug,
And your shoes like the mouth of a fish?
—*New Corp.*

The Boy Who Drinks.

A mother residing in a small city at the North writes to know if the Sun can't say something that will induce her daughter to quit keeping company with a young man who gets drunk every time he takes the girl to a party. If a mother can not say anything that will induce the daughter to give up an escort who insults her, a poor, weak newspaper can not do any good. The girl has got the fever too bad, if she will not break off an engagement with such a young man. The girl should look about her and make inquiries and see if she can find a case in the experience of her friends where such a young man ever made a decent husband. She will never find such a case. The mere fact of a young man taking a girl to a party, or a sleigh ride, and getting drunk and humiliating her, and causing her to depend upon others for her escort to her home is one evidence that he has no respect for her, and she should break off her engagement and cut him entirely. If she puts up with such insult now, before she is married, when she is his wife he will be liable to leave her to look out for herself, and he will get drunk from habit. Twenty years ago there were hundreds of young fellows in this State who thought it was smart to take respectable girls to dances and get drunk, and let the girls ride home with somebody who kept sober. The girls would be vexed at the time, but as the boys were rich, and went in good society, the girls got to looking upon the sprees as good jokes, and they would laugh about it. We know some of those girls to-day who are earning a living for several little children by hard work, while the smart fellows that got drunk have filled drunkards graves, or have left their wives and are wanderers on the face of the earth. If a young man loves a girl as he should love her to marry her, a look of disapprobation from her, at any act of his, will be enough to break him of any habit that he has that she does not like. If the words: "Please don't drink, Charley," from the lips of Charley's girl, is not enough to spoil his appetite for benzine,