

Mother Joe

HE had four children and a baby in arms. The names and ages of the children were respectively Anna Maria, aged 7; Minnie Kate, aged 6; Albert, aged 4½; Maud Harriet, aged 3, and the baby, Sarah Ellen, just turned 1 year.

He himself rejoiced in the name of Joseph Webber, and believed himself to be about 8, but his mother was never quite sure. They all lived at the top of a narrow, tumble down house, and Mrs. Webber always spoke of herself as a "widdler." Her first husband had died "in 'ole Hengland," the second here.

Mrs. Webber got her living by churning, and as long as she was sober always managed to secure enough work, but she was an improvident, thriftless woman, and any extra money she might secure either went for drink or was spent on indigestible food, such as tinned salmon and pineapple or shell fish, which often made the poor baby ill for weeks later. She took little interest in her family, save now and then for a fit of maudlin sentiment over her orphans, but on the other hand was seldom violent except after an extra heavy bout of drinking, when the children carefully kept out of the way, being taken in and given shelter by kindly neighbors.

Her one idea of responsibility was to try to lock her family in before starting off for work, "to keep 'em out of mischief," as she said, "for she wasn't goin' to have her Jimmy's children, rest his soul, brought up on the streets an' kap'n' low company?"

But since Joe had been 5 years old he had nearly always evaded this maternal forethought, which was not difficult, as his mother slept heavily, and before she could open her eyes and

really feel uneasy, as he was convinced they had no real intention of stopping away from school.

"I won't let ma beat you. I'll bite 'er legs if she do!" a little voice said by his side. He looked down gratefully. It was Mauie Harriet.

"Yer allus was a good little un," he said; then added, with precocious knowledge, "but, then, they gen'rally is good when they's kiddies. It's when they gets older they gets so rough. I mind Minnikite and Annermiria jest like lambs."

"Like me?" asked Albert, looking up from his mud pies.

"Now, you're jest a fat puddin' 'ead. Put yer cap on at once or I'll soon make yer mind!"

The baby began to whimper, and he folded her close in his arms and kissed the little shriveled face. "Shoo, go ter sleep, Sairey Ellen," he whispered softly, "it's a long time 'fore you'll grow up and git rough and saucy."

Some hours later and the children sat shivering at the top of the drafty stairs for their mother to come home and unlock the door.

"She's lite t'-night," Anna Maria said, leaning over the broken down rail. But even as she spoke a heavy step came up the stairs. The children listened anxiously, and Joe at last observed:

"She 'asn't 'ed much. Guess we'll be 'er orphans to-night."

In a few moments a woman's heavy, bloated face appeared, followed by an unwieldy body.

"Lite t'-night," she said, rather thickly, feeling for her key. "O, well, turn over noo leaf ter-morrer."

When she had lit a lamp on the table, she sat down on the one sound chair and began to cry.

"Gimme me biby," she said at last; "me little orphan biby—me Jimmy's chile."

She fell to kissing it, and it woke with a feeble, peevish cry.

With an oath she pushed it from her, and Joe just caught it as it almost fell from her lap.

"Take it," she said, "there'll be better company ter-morrer."

He walked up and down until the child slept again with its tiny head against his neck, while the woman snored heavily in her chair. The early winter light was just filtering through the unshuttered window when Joe awoke and sat up. His mother had not slept in the bed. He blinked his eyes and looked towards the chair, but it was empty. With a little cry he sprang out of bed and rushed towards the door, but she had outwitted him this time, and it was locked.

That morning went slowly by, while the children fought and wrangled and the baby wailed and would not be comforted. Towards evening Joe was leaning out of the window showing the baby some sparrows fighting on an opposite roof, when there was a shrill scream behind him. He turned, and, to his horror, saw Albert standing shrieking, with a lighted newspaper in his hand.

"Let go, yer fool!" he shouted. The child let go his hold, and the lighted paper fluttered against some rotten clothing hanging against the wall, and the next moment the whole room seemed full of smoke and flames. Joe sprang to the door and kicked with all his might, but it would not yield to his puny efforts, and the smoke stifled him. There was no water in the room, and the woodwork had already caught and begun to crackle. He ran to the window and gazed out. By the side of the window on one side there was about four feet of broken stone ledge about a foot and a half wide; on the other side it had crumbled away.

"Git out of the winder on to this!" he shouted to Minnikite. She climbed on to the stone work as best she could and clung to the side like a little rat. Anna Maria followed, and Albert holding Maudie between them. There was no room for more.

A crowd had gathered below, and a man was trying frantically to kick down the stout oak door, which old Eli Mathews, the only other then inmate of the house, always locked when he went out. Joe watched him with a sickening fear in his heart and moistened his lips. The heat of the fire inside was scorching him, and black smoke came belching out above his head.

"I'm fallin'!" shouted Minnikite, shrill with agony. "I'm fallin'." O, Joel! Joel!

The crowd heard her, and yelled hoarsely: "Hold on! The ladders are coming! Don't move! Hold the little one up!"

Albert and Maudie crouched huddled up together on the ledge, and kept their eyes fixed in almost despairing trust on Joe's face. Their breath came and went in quick, convulsive sobs.

"O, Joel! O-Joel!"

"It's all right," he said steadily. He had the baby in his arms, with a shawl well wrapped over its head to keep out the smoke. Next moment there was a yell from the crowd below.

"The hook an' ladder! Here it comes!"

"O, Gawd!" said Joe, between his closed teeth, "O, Gawd!"

But even as he spoke there came a thrilling burst of smoke and flame, followed by one shrill scream of agony, when he could see distinctly again the whole ledge had broken away, and



"YER JEST TRUSS JOE."

struggle to her feet in the morning the children were all up and away, taking with them enough money from her purse to pay for their dinner.

In vain she swore and thrashed them at nights when she remembered; it was no use, and the same little scene was enacted every morning. The first thing Joe did on ushering his little brood into the open air was to take them to a covered passage leading into a little blind alley; here they sat down and shared the bread and "scrape," or sometimes the bread without the scrape, which he had prepared. The baby had its milk, and then they finished up their repast with a drink of water—alas, never a wash.

After this the serious work of the day began for little Mother Joe. How to get the girls to school, and with the least amount of friction; that was always the puzzling question. When they were younger threats always served him, but now they were long legged and nimble and shrill, and he had to resort to bribes and cunning.

"It's high yer time, ain't it, Minnikite?" he remarked blandly, this particular morning, as he wiped the baby's mouth with his sleeve, "and I know yer'll want to be punkshell and beat that Eddie Cox with her reg'lar 'tendance."

Minnikite leant back and smiled at him with long wicked green eyes, and then she slowly put out her tongue.

"I 'appens to know," he continued, with weary patience, and dusting the baby's head as he spoke, "that there's a noo law pest 'bout children's bein' sent prison for not goin' to school reg'lar."

"What price, boys?" asked Anna Maria, with her head on one side.

"I allus go when I can," he replied, fitting on the cap where it was meant, "and you know I goes every time Mrs. Beet 'as no washin' and can mind the biby."

"Well, ma ses she'll wallop yer ter death nex' time the 'spector comes arter 'er 'bout you. So now."

"Well, sadly, 'there'll be no one to mind yer if she does."

"Yah! oo wants mindin'? Go and put yer 'ead in a bag and keep it there! Come along, Annermiria, let's go fer a walk in the park. We'll 'ave a good ole time, won't we?"

"Yer won't get a bit fer yer dinner li yer do. But don't upset yourselves; there'll be more for Albert an' Maudie, 'Annet and me!"

"Yah! bury yourself!" was the polite retort, as the young ladies disappeared round the corner. But Joe did not

disappeared into the crowd below. He drew in his breath. The baby's shawl was already ablaze, and one of his legs had been scorched black in the fire. He clambered on to the sill while the crowd shrieked to him in despair.

"O, Gawd," said Joe. "If yer can, will yer ketch us? O, Gawd! O, Gawd!" and he hugged the baby closer.

"Leastw'y it's better'n burnin'," he whispered, and jumped.

But he with whom not "a sparrow falls to the ground without their father," had given his angels charge over them to keep them in all their ways, and they brought them to him. —Chicago Tribune.

LIFE IN THE SEA.

The Curious Things that Thrive in an Aquarium.

Mr. Spencer, the superintendent of the New York Aquarium, a few days ago was busy himself by picking a lot of sand fleas from a dipper and dropping them into a jar of anemones. As they fell into the water they straightened themselves out and then slowly dropped to the bottom, kicking as they fell. A few of them alighted on the body of an anemone, which promptly closed up. One, unfortunately, found himself, when he had settled, on the tentacles of one of the anemones. These began to serve the purpose for which they were bestowed upon the anemone, and the flea, or scud, suddenly found himself inside the capacious maw of the anemone, and the life was soon squeezed out of him.

"All is grist that comes to our mill," quoted Mr. Spencer. "These were of a lot of mussels which came in a little while ago I thought I would save them. There is life everywhere in the water. Look at this!" He held up a dozen mussels, held together by what appeared to be a vegetable growth. "That is an animal growth known as sertularia," said he. "In this bunch you will find all sorts of animal life. There are scuds, or sand fleas, and rock crabs. Look!" He held up one of the valves of a mussel shell. On it was a sea anemone. "No dice that reddish coating, part of which has flaked off. Look at it closely. Doesn't it look like lace work? That is the bryozoa coral, the lowest form of mollusk coral. You will find life on nearly everything that comes from the sea. Here's one of the rock crabs." He took out of the nest of mussels a little crab, about the size of one's finger nail, and dropped it into a jar of water.—New York Tribune.

"LOST MONDAY."

Popular Fete in Belgium the Origin of Which is a Mystery.

The first Monday after Epiphany is a fete day throughout Belgium. "Lost Monday" it is called here; exactly why no one seems able to explain. The origin of the fete is lost in the legends of the middle ages, but the modern acceptance of the day is certainly lost to no one here. Like Mardi Gras, Lost Monday is a day of general merrymaking; every cafe and restaurant in Brussels keeps "open house," and free fare is on hand for all patrons of the establishment, and as a matter of fact for many others as well who are not regular patrons.

On Black Monday, then, as it is ironically called by some of King Leopold's subjects not overenchanted with the day, the streets of Brussels are given over to the people, and the adventurous foreigner who, ignorant of the country's customs, ventures out is apt to find that the Belgian populace is no respecter of persons. On this day the shopkeepers, sighing behind their counters, find themselves compelled to hand over to their customers' servants a forced contribution, amounting to a certain percentage of the year's purchases, while the bakers, too, have a contribution to offer in the shape of cakes specially made for the occasion, and offered as gifts to their clientele.

In this manner, says the Brussels correspondent of the New York Times, the unique fete is perpetuated, though the calendar does not note in any particular manner the first Monday after Epiphany.

The Power of Imagination.

An English physician made an interesting experiment not long ago for the purpose of determining the relative power of imagination of the sexes. He dosed 100 of his hospital patients with sweetened water, and soon afterward entered the room, in great apparent agitation, saying that by mistake he had administered a powerful medicine. In a few minutes four-fifths of the patients, mainly men, responded to the supposed emetic. Not a woman was affected.

Something of Real Value.

"I notice in the horrid newspapers that some person orvord on the continent has discovered the microbe of hydrophobia, don't you know."

"Deah me, how stwange! But, wealky, that doesn't concern me nearly so much as would the discovery of some means to counteract, don't you know, the effect that is produced on a blood-dog by biting common persons. My little Fluo was quite ill the last time he bit an ordinary child on the street, don't you know."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Ideal Snugglers.

"Say, Weary?"

"Well, what?"

"How would you like to be a bug in that \$38,000 rug?"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Some men pay small debts for the purpose of contracting large ones.

Having a good time is the most strenuous undertaking a man can attempt.

WHEN A WOMAN BUYS CIGARS.

One Who Was Particular to Have Them Match Her Wall Paper.

'Twas just a few days before his birthday. She walked into the smokers' emporium with nervous diffidence.

"I would like to get a skin of cigars."

"You mean a box, I suppose?"

"Yes, if that is how you sell them."

"Do you wish anything special?"

"No, nothing special; but they're for smoking, you know."

The salesman smiled.

"Do you desire a strong or a mild cigar?"

"Very strong. I want them to last. The box I bought a year ago commenced to fall apart after my husband had them about nine months. I think they were too weak."

The young man took a few boxes from the case and opened them for the woman's inspection.

"Are these the only shades you have?"

"I would like something lighter, to match our wall paper."

The salesman picked out box after box, until the counter looked like an Egyptian pyramid. At last she selected a box, saying:

"These won't fade, will they?"

"Again the young man smiled.

"No, ma'am; they are made of the purest Havana tobacco."

"Do you think I could have my husband's monogram engraved on each cigar?"

"No, lady; the cigar wouldn't draw."

"Wouldn't draw what?"

"I mean it wouldn't pull well."

"But I don't want them to pull anything. I want them for my husband to smoke."

The man behind the counter grew impatient.

"Haven't you a box with a prettier picture on it? Let me see that one with the forget-me-nots on a Japanese fan."

"But, madam, your husband isn't going to smoke the box."

"I am aware of that, sir; but it looks horrible to have some Spanish general's picture or some ballet dancer's physiognomy lying on the library table. I like this picture."

"But that is a different brand of cigars."

"Couldn't you put these cigars in that box, and the cigars in that box you could put—"

"No, no; we are not permitted to do any such 'presto-change' work in this shop. Here is a pretty box marked 'Henry Clay.'"

"But that is such a commonplace name. Haven't you any called 'Vivian de Haven' or 'Reginald Vere de Vere,' or some name of a higher rank?"

"No, madam, we do not sell rank cigars in this place. There are no such brands. Do you wish the box you have in your hand?"

"I hardly know which cigars to take. These have such a strong scent. Haven't you any that emit a sweeter aroma?"

"No; can I sell you anything?"

"Well, I'll tell you what I'll do; if you will just give me a sample of each, I'll let you know."

But just then the man slammed the boxes back into their place, told the woman that she was in a cigar shop, and not at a drapery establishment, and advised her to go to some pork butcher's and get a few hams for her husband to smoke.

The woman went out to get a policeman, but evidently got lost.—Tit-Bits.

"SCRAPPIN' FOR PENNIES."

Clever Venture of Two Street Gamblers Which Pays Good Returns.

"Biff! Bang! That's it. Hit 'im again! Bet on the young one!"

Such were the cries heard by those who happened to pass "Board of Trade court" about 2:30 one afternoon a few weeks ago. In the midst of a crowd of about forty people composed of members, clerks, messenger boys and visitors, were two ragged urchins fighting for all they were worth.

The larger of the two was about 13 years old and about 4 feet 4 inches tall, while the other, though probably as old, was considerably smaller.

For the first five or six minutes they fought quite evenly, until the smaller, apparently finding the opening he was looking for, landed a hard right swing on his opponent's jaw. This was followed by a few more, and while the larger boy made his way out of the crowd the smaller was greeted with a shower of pennies, nickels and dimes, which he quickly gathered up and was seen no more.

In an alley two blocks east two boys met, one rubbing his chin.

"How much?" he eagerly inquired of a smaller boy.

"Two dollars an' twelve cents; lemme see—dat's one dollar and six cents each."

"Dat's all right; city hall next; lots of sports dere—only don't come in so strong at the finish."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Free Homesteads of 160 Acres Plentiful, the only charge being \$10 for entry. Abundance of water and fuel, cheap building material, good grass for pasture and hay, a fertile soil, a sufficient rainfall, and a moderate temperature for an Atlas and other fruits, and also for certificate giving your return on investment. Cattle, Cows, or Horses, the authorized Canadian Government Agent.

Yield, 1908—117, 928, 754 bu.

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If winter left you "all run down," wind up with

Hires Rootbeer

That will "set you going."

Five gallons for 25 cents.

Charles E. Hires Co., Malvern, Pa.

When a man runs short in his accounts he is apt to run long in his travels.

Surinam, in Dutch Guiana, has the smallest range of temperature of any place in the world. In summer the average is 73 degrees and in winter 71½ degrees.

The interior of a gold bearing rock was inspected in an Oregon town by means of the Roentgen rays, and veins of gold were as plainly visible as if they were on the surface.

"I'm Miss Mears. I didn't know as you recall me," said a coquettish elderly spinster, approaching him in the post office the day after her arrival.

The ready heart-warmer turned with his most beaming smile and wrung her hand.

"Recall you?" he echoed, reproachfully. "As if one could help it, Miss Mears! Why, you are one of the landmarks of the town!"

After all, peace is about the only thing worth fighting for.



Mrs. F. Wright, of Oelwein, Iowa, is another one of the million women who have been restored to health by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

A Young New York Lady Tells of a Wonderful Cure:

"My trouble was with the ovaries; I am tall, and the doctor said I grew too fast for my strength. I suffered dreadfully from inflammation and doctored continually, but got no help. I suffered from terrible dragging sensations with the most awful pains low down in the side and pains in the back, and the most agonizing headaches. No one knows what I endured. Often I was sick to the stomach, and every little while I would be too sick to go to work, for three or four days; I work in a large store, and I suppose standing on my feet all day made me worse."

"At the suggestion of a friend of my mother's I began to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and it is simply wonderful. I felt better after the first two or three doses; it seemed as though a weight was taken off my shoulders; I continued its use until now I can truthfully say I am entirely cured. Young girls who are always paying doctor's bills without getting any help as I did, ought to take your medicine. It costs so much less, and it is sure to cure them.—Yours truly, ADELAIDE FAHRL, 174 St. Ann's Ave., New York City. \$5.00 for first original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced."

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To prove the healing and cleansing power of Paxtine Toilet Antiseptic we will mail a large trial package with book of instructions absolutely free. This is not a tiny sample, but a large package, enough to convince anyone of its value. Women all over the country are praising Paxtine for what it has done in the treatment of female ills, curing all inflammation and discharges, wonderful as a cleansing vaginal douche, for sore throat, nasal catarrh, as a mouth wash, and to remove tartar and whiten the teeth. Send to-day; a postal card will do.

Free by drugists or sent postpaid by us, 50 cents, large box. Satisfaction guaranteed.

PAXTINE TOILET

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Capsicum Vaseline

Put Up in Collapsible Tubes.

A substitute for and superior to Mustard or any other plaster, and will not blister the most delicate skin. The pain relieving and curative qualities of this article are wonderful. It will stop the toothache at once, and relieve headache and sciatica. We recommend it as the best and safest external counter-irritant known, also as an external remedy for pains in the chest and stomach, and all rheumatic, neuralgic and gouty complaints.

A trial will prove what we claim for it, and it will be found to be invaluable in the household. Many people say "It is the best of all your preparations."

Price 15 cents, at all druggists, or other dealers, or by sending this amount to us in postage stamps, we will send you a tube by mail.

No article should be recognized by the public unless the same carries our label, as otherwise it is not genuine.

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WESTERN CANADA

Grain Growing. Mixed Farming.

THE REASON WHY more wheat is grown in Western Canada in a few short months, is because vegetation grows in proportion to the sunlight. There for 62 pounds per bushel in the Fall standard as 60 pounds in the Fall 1,907, 850 acres.

Yield, 1908—117, 928, 754 bu.

Free Homesteads of 160 Acres Plentiful, the only charge being \$10 for entry. Abundance of water and fuel, cheap building material, good grass for pasture and hay, a fertile soil, a sufficient rainfall, and a moderate temperature for an Atlas and other fruits, and also for certificate giving your return on investment. Cattle, Cows, or Horses, the authorized Canadian Government Agent.

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NEVER SAW SUCH LABOR YIELDS.

The Climate Is Healthy—The Winters Are Pleasant—in Western Canada.

Writing from Stirling, Alberta, to one of the agents representing the Canadian Government Free Homestead Lands, Mr. M. Pickrell, formerly of Beechwood, Ky., says of Western Canada:

"In the first place we will say that the summer season is just lovely indeed. As to the winter, well, we never experienced finer weather than we are now enjoying. We have just returned from Northern Alberta and will say that we found the weather to be very mild, the air dry, fresh and invigorating. Considering everything we can say that the winters here are most pleasant, healthy and enjoyable to what they are in the States. Here it gets cold and continues so till spring—there are no disagreeable winds. In South Alberta it is some warmer—two to four inches of snow may fall and in a few hours a Chinook wind come along, evaporating the entire snow, leaving terra firma perfectly dry, in fact, we did not believe this part until we came and saw for ourselves and we now know what we herein write to be just as we write it. There has not been a day this winter that I could not work outdoors. Farmers here are calculating on starting the plough the first of March.

"As to farm wages, we would not advise a man to come here with the expectation of living by his day's work, but all who do want a home I advise to have nerve enough to get up and come, for there never has been, and may never be again, such a grand opportunity for a man to get a home almost free.

"As to the crops, I have been in the fields before harvest, saw the grass put up and the grain harvested, and I never saw such large yields. I saw oats near Edmonton over six feet tall that yielded 80 bushels per acre, and I talked to a farmer near St. Albert who had a field year before last that averaged 110 bushels per acre, and weighed 43 pounds to the bushel. All other crops would run in proportion—as to potatoes and vegetables, the turnout was enormous. I have such reports as the above from all sections that I have visited, and that has been every community between the Edmonton district and Raymond in the Lethbridge district.

"As to stock raising, I would advise a man to locate in this place, or any place, in South Alberta, but for mixed farming, I would say go further north, say near Lacombe, Wetaskiwin or Edmonton, where it is not quite so dry and where there is some timber to be had. I will say that nowhere have I ever seen a better opportunity for a man, whether he has money or not, to obtain a home. Nowhere can be found a more productive soil, better water and a better governed country than Western Canada affords. Inducements to the homeseeker are unexcelled. I met two men near Ponoka on the C. & E. R., who borrowed the money to pay for their homestead and in four years those two men sold their farms—one for \$2,500, the other for \$3,000. I met a man near Wetaskiwin who landed here with 25 cents six years ago. He is now worth \$8,000. The advantages for ranching are excellent, in fact, I do not believe this section can be beat. Markets are good; as to living, a family can live as cheap here as they can in the States. The average yield of oats in this neighborhood, last year, was 70 bushels per acre; wheat averaged 35, barley 40, and the beet crop was good. In consequence of the successful cultivation of the beet, a large beet sugar factory is being erected at Raymond, seven miles from here.

"In conclusion I will say that N. W. T., from Manitoba to a long distance north of Edmonton, produces most wonderful crops. Lakes and rivers abound with fish, and game is plentiful. And that this is unquestionably the country for a man to come to if he desires to better his condition in life, I would advise the prospective settler to look over the Lethbridge, Lacombe, Wetaskiwin and Edmonton districts before locating.

"I will locate in the Edmonton district next fall and several families from the States will locate with me. In the meantime, I will receive my mail here and will be pleased to give the interested all the information desired."

For information as to railway rates, etc., apply to any agent of the Canadian Government, whose names appear elsewhere in this paper.

In some of the hotels of Switzerland there are two wine-lists—one for Germans, and the other for Americans and Englishmen. The German list is thirty-three per cent cheaper than the higher priced list.

Chemistry students in the Heidelberg University are compelled, by the rules of that institution, to insure their lives. Even those who merely attend the lectures, and do not experiment, must insure.

Taking a tumble and taking a drop are not synonymous, but one often leads to the other.

Working for relatives is about as satisfactory as eating soup with a fork.

By means of an ingenious instrument, the hydroscope, the human eyesight can penetrate the ocean depths and clearly distinguish object over a mile below the surface. The inventor is Signor Fino, an Italian, a school mate of Marconi.

Just what it was 25 years ago,

St. Jacobs Oil

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The prompt, sure cure for

SORENESS AND STIFFNESS

Price, 25c. and 50c.