The Children's Week

Seven Stories for Seven Days
A Merry Christmas

To

Minnie H. Bennett

with love from

Papa

Dec `93
Marie lay down on the floor, with her face over the stove-pipe hole. In this way she could get a good view of the whole store.
CHILDREN'S WEEK

SEVEN STORIES

SEVEN DAYS,

BY

R.W. RAYMOND

NEW YORK

J.B. FORD & CO.
THE CHILDREN'S WEEK:

Seven Stories for Seven Days.

BY

R. W. RAYMOND.

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THE CHILDREN'S WEEK.

INTRODUCTORY.

WHAT they called the children's week at Nutwood was the week between Christmas and New Year's day. Then there was a great gathering of the members of the family from all parts of the country. Uncle John and all his folks came, and Brother Charles, the married brother, with his children, who were almost as big and old as some of their younger uncles and aunts; for the original family was a large one, and when Charles got married, his youngest sister was a baby. Well, it was the rule for that week, that whatever the children unanimously desired they could have, provided it would not harm them. So on Saturday, which was the day before Christmas, sixteen children held a meeting in the library, to decide upon a programme for the week. Uncle John’s Harry was chairman, and
pounded on the table a good deal during the proceedings. Our Allan was secretary, and used more ink than was necessary, for he distributed it upon his fingers, and here and there in blots on the paper. And the remaining fourteen were the speakers of the occasion, and took the floor all at once, with great unanimity.

I shall not undertake to report all the proceedings. Sufficient to say, that after all sorts of propositions had been thrown out and tossed up together, some one took advantage of a moment's lull to say, "I move we have stories, any-how." This speech brought down the house, and produced a compromise among the good-natured factions, some of which had been going in for a Christmas-tree, and some for hanging up stockings, some for a celebration Saturday night, because that was Christmas eve, and some for a celebration Monday night. It was soon unanimously determined that there should be a story every night, before bedtime, Sunday not excepted; that the stories should begin that very night; and that Saturday's, Sunday's, and Monday's should all be stories about Christmas, so as to celebrate all three days, and suit everybody.
INTRODUCTORY.

Allan drew up the programme in due form, after it had been decided upon, and posted it in the front hall, for the information of all concerned. It ran as follows: —

THE CHILDREN'S WEEK.

It is hereby resolved that the children's week begins to-day instead of to-morrow. Exercises will be as follows, besides such other entertainment as the children shall resolve.

Saturday, December 24.
Christmas Story, by Father.

Sunday, December 25.
Christmas Story, by Uncle John, because he's a Minister.

Monday, December 26.
Christmas Story, by Mother.

Tuesday, December 27.
Wonder Story, by Brother Charles.

Wednesday, December 28.
Fairy Story, by Grandmother.

Thursday, December 29.
Story of Adventures, by Grandfather.

Friday, December 30.
Story, by Sister Helen.
That was the programme, and, for a wonder, it went off very well. I think the children were a little disappointed in one or two of the stories, especially the fairy story of Grandmother. In fact, the old lady could spin real fairy-stories by the hour; so it was almost too bad for her to give them one that was n’t real at all, but a delusion from beginning to end. However, the older children, and especially Maud, who was sixteen and had a sweetheart, liked the end of it very much.

When the children’s week was over there was another meeting in the library,—a much quieter one, for the party was about to break up. The same officers presided, and the proceedings consisted of the passage of a hearty vote of thanks to “our esteemed parents and relatives, for the unsurpassed entertainment which they have so generously provided for us,” and a resolution, requesting that “copies of the said narratives be furnished for publication.”

Nobody thought the children would really get the stories published; but Harry and Allan sent the manuscript to me, begging me to arrange it for printing, and how could I refuse?

R. W. R.
CHAPTER I.

Saturday, — Father's Christmas Story.

HOYTY-TOYTY; OR, THE WAYS OF THE WORLD.

I. — The Bernards.

It was just before Christmas, and Father Bernard had made ready his little shop for a lively holiday trade. The great boxes of goods packed in straw had been brought up from the basement, and their pretty contents were now attractively displayed on the shelves and counter. Old Bernard was a Swiss; and in his youth he lived in the valleys where all the people, old and young, skilfully manufacture dainty carvings and playthings for the world. When a child, he used to be so busy making toys for the children of other countries, that he had very little opportunity to play himself; but he entertained himself with thinking how much pleasure some one far away would derive from the work of his hands. When he packed a pretty doll, or a nut-cracker, or a troop of magnificent
wooden soldiers to send them away to the city, he would imagine a group of happy children, dressing and undressing their dolls, or cracking nuts by the fire, or having great battles on the parlor floor. Now that he was old, he knew very well what pleased the young folks best; and all the folks liked to go to Bernard's store, because they always found there just what they wanted.

Little Marie was at home for the vacation, to cheer her grandfather with her presence, and to help him wait on the crowds of customers. It was hard to say which was pleasanter, to buy of the old man, whose white hair and kindly look made him seem like Christmas himself, or of Marie, with her brown locks so neatly braided, and her clear gray eyes, and her sweet smile, that would have excused mistakes in giving change,—if she had ever made any. But she did not make mistakes, except that sometimes a little boy or girl got a penny too much. On such occasions Marie would call out to her grandfather, "One!" And the old man would smile, and put a penny from his pocket into the till, so as to make the account even. How
happy they would be this year, if Brother Karl were only with them! But Karl was at sea, and no one knew when he would return. He and Marie were all the relatives left to Father Bernard in this world.

II.—_The Stove-Pipe Hole._

Marie and her grandfather lived over the store, in two little back rooms. In the floor of her room there was an old stove-pipe hole. Once a workman was putting a pane of glass in her window, and, stepping back to admire his work, thrust his foot and leg through the floor, smashing a beautiful paper kite that was suspended from the ceiling below, and astonishing all the customers. So after that the hole was closed with a tin lid, to prevent accidents; but Marie used to take off the lid every night, just before going to bed, in order to hear if all was quiet in the store. Now on this particular night of which I speak she was waked up by an odd confusion of noises, coming up through the stove-pipe hole,—a chattering and scolding, and tittering and pip-
ing, and barking and squealing, and whinnying and drumming, and bubbling and rolling, and thumping and rattling, and scraping and hissing, with other kinds of racket too numerous to mention. At first she thought it was thieves; but she remembered that thieves would not make a noise if they could help it; and as the hubbub continued, she crept out of bed, and lay down on the floor, with her face over the stove-pipe hole. In this way she could get a good view of the whole store. To her surprise, it was brilliantly lighted; but when she looked more closely, she saw that the gas was not burning. Wonderful to relate, six dozen little candles for Christmas-trees, which she had laid on a shelf that very day, had hopped down and somehow lit themselves, and there they stood in a shining row, all round the store, looking very handsome, with their taper waists and their waxen complexions.

But that was not so wonderful as the rest that she saw; for everything in the store had waked up and was exhibiting its gifts and graces. All the dolls were active. Those that had joints were practising calisthenics on the top of the
show-case; the gutta-percha dolls were tumbling on the floor, to show that they could not be broken like other dolls; a whole line of fashionable ladies, with waterfalls, were solemnly opening and shutting their eyes with a little click; three or four who knew how to cry were practising in different keys; and a vast multitude of stiff, cheap little things were standing on their heads because that was all they could do. There were two shelves filled with dolls’ heads, that looked like the cherubs in pictures; and these could only gaze placidly at the general fun, for their bodies were all packed away in the cellar.

The great Noah’s ark had opened by the roof, just as all Noah’s arks do, and Noah and his wife, and his sons and their wives, followed by elephants, camels, and roosters, two and two, were walking in grand procession, like a young ladies’ boarding-school, along the counter. A backgammon-board was the scene of a great quarrel; the white men were accused by the black men of cheating, and taking people up by main force when they were not exposed; and the dice were all throwing double sixes as loud
as ever they could, to show that they understood
the matter. Two swords were fighting in a
corner,—a tin sword and an iron one. The tin
sword was getting the worst of it, and it was
high time for the seconds to interfere; but the
drumsticks, who were to act as seconds, had got
up a scrimmage of their own on the top of the
drum, where they were rolling over and over in
a rough-and-tumble way, now one and now the
other being uppermost. A woolly dog on
wheels went trundling around, and barking
whenever anybody stepped on him. A dan-
cing Jack hung mournfully on a nail, with his
head, arms, and legs drooping. Poor fellow!
he wanted very much to dance, but he could n’t
untie his neck, and everybody was too busy to
come and pull the string that made his limbs
go. The books did not join in the general
row-de-row. They were too refined and aris-
tocratic, and said to themselves, “We titled peo-
ple, that have pages, must not mix with the
vulgar rabble.” And down under the counter
a boxful of valentines were sound asleep. No-
body noticed them; they were of no account
till February. Perhaps the most comical sight
of all was a little india-rubber dwarf, who had undertaken to waddle across the store and got caught under the rocker of a huge, prancing hobby-horse. The expression of the dwarf's countenance, when the hobby-horse flattened it, was so changed that his own mother in India wouldn't have known him. Marie almost laughed outright when her eye fell on him; but she restrained herself, for fear of betraying her presence, and continued to look and listen, with all her might.

Now it happened that Karl, before he went to sea, used to play in a band; and his trombone, kept bright and clean by loving hands, always hung, in memory of him, over Father Bernard's desk. In the midst of the uproar the trombone spoke out, so gruffly and loud that everything stopped to hear. "You silly greenhorns," said the trombone, "what do you know about life? You have only just come out of the dark, and the straw is sticking to you yet. Look at me; I have seen the world! It is full of operas, and target excursions, and concerts with trombone solos. Life is a great thing, and if you want to talk sensibly about it, just wait till you have had
some sense blown into you. Come back here a week after New-Year's, and compare notes!" At this rude speech some of the tin trumpets squeaked to one another, "What brazen impertinence!" but the trombone's remarks produced on the whole a profound impression, especially as his ponderous breath blew out all the candles. There was considerable bustle occasioned by the different articles trying to return in the dark to their old places; but silence soon prevailed; and Marie was glad to get back to her warm bed.

Next morning the store looked exactly as usual, except that there were little spots of wax everywhere, and the india-rubber dwarf had not quite recovered his usual elasticity of temperament. If it had not been for these signs, Marie would have thought she had been dreaming merely; but now she was sure that everything had really happened; and she looked forward with great interest to know whether the suggestion of the trombone would be acted upon, and the toys would return after the holidays to compare notes and relate their experience of life.
III.—How the Toys went.

Almost as soon as the store was open, a richly dressed lady came in, leading a little boy. She showed him everything, and tried to find out what he would like best. But the little boy was sulky and ill-natured, and said he was tired of such things; he had had so many, and they always went and broke themselves; he hated books, and wanted a real pistol, that would shoot; and if he could n't have a pistol, he would smash a looking-glass when he got home. Finally, to pacify him, the lady bought a number of candy dogs and other animals, one of which he put in his mouth, and so forgot the pistol, and allowed himself to be taken home. A few hours after, the lady came back alone, and, to Marie's surprise, bought the big rocking-horse, a sled, a drum, a sword, a Noah's ark, and the barking woolly dog. She even looked up at the trombone; but Father Bernard said, hastily, "That is not for sale, madam," so she contented herself with one of the tin trumpets. "I thought your little boy did not like any of these things," said
Marie, as she tied up the packages, to be sent by the express-wagon to the lady's house in Fifth Avenue. "O, that is only his way; he will be very angry if he does not get them." Marie could not help wondering what kind of a home it could be that was so splendid and yet made people so discontented. "These playthings will have something interesting to tell," thought she, "when they come back after New-Year's." But she did not expect the candy dogs to return; for, between you and me, animals of that class are not well fitted to explore life. They are sweet-tempered, but not firm; and after they start on their travels, they are never heard of again. Unlike other dogs, if they once get bitten, that is the end of them. Only one breed of them ever bites back; and that contains pepper, and is not popular.

By and by a gentleman came, and looked about, quite bewildered, among the toys. He was in a great hurry; and said, half to himself: "The child must have something. Christmas is such a nuisance! I suppose a doll will be the correct thing." With that he bought the largest and most expensive doll in the whole
collection,—a stuck-up, waxy French thing, with blond hair and movable eyes, and an arrangement for crying under its corsets, and no end of flounces and furbelows. Then he went off, muttering, “There, that’s done!”

It quite saddened Marie to have people buying presents for their children in such a spirit; but she smiled brightly again as a quiet boy of about twelve years came in. “If you please,” said he, “I should like to look at some broken toys that you could sell cheap. My little brother is a cripple, and lies in bed all day; and he thinks so much of toys. I thought perhaps I could mend up some old ones for him.” “Why don’t your father buy something for the child?” said old Bernard, turning his back upon the boy, and rummaging busily in a pile of pasteboard boxes. The lad’s eyes filled with tears as he said slowly: “Father and mother are both dead; and I take care of Jamie.” “H’m!” said the old man, turning around, with a small flat package in his hand, “I thought as much! I’ve heard of you. We don’t break things here, and then sell them cheap to such fellows as you!” O, how hard the grandfather
tried to look stern and severe! but it was of no use. He couldn’t deceive Marie, nor prevent a smile and a tear on his own face; so he gave up trying, and added, in a very different tone: “God bless you, my boy! Take these to Jamie, with an old man’s love.” And what do you think? it was a box of paints! I could not possibly tell you how grateful the cripple’s brother was. He tried to tell, but he could not say anything; so why should I undertake it? But, after all, he did not seem to be perfectly satisfied; and presently he murmured, “I wish they had some broken toys!” Marie heard him and understood him at once; so she said, “You wanted to give Jamie something your own self, did n’t you?” “O yes,” said he, “this is just what he will like best; but it is not my work, nor my present. Besides, there are a great many poor children in our street; and Jamie and I were going to give them a Christmas party. You see,”—and by this time he had got back his courage and his tongue,—“we have got a tree; and Jamie has made ever so many dolls out of paper; and the peanut-man is coming, with a whole quart of peanuts; and I wanted to
help too. I've got a knife and some glue; and I know how to mend things beautifully. Jamie says so. If we only had some broken toys, I could mend them, and he could paint them, and we could hang them on the tree, just as, once before, a long time ago, father and mother—"

"Look here, Marie," called Father Bernard, "these wax tapers have all been half burned! Nobody will buy them now. How unfortunate! I really think we must throw them away, unless this young gentleman will consent to stick them on his Christmas-tree! And, by the way, there's that lady in Fifth Avenue says all the things she bought last year are spoilt and broken, and heaped up in the garret. She'll give them to any boy that will carry them away. So there's a chance for you, my boy!"

Marie had just time to give the happy boy the box of tapers and the lady's address, when new customers arrived, in the persons of a pleasant couple, who were evidently husband and wife, and who, as one might see from the happy mixture of love and care in their faces, had a troop of little ones at home. They spent a good
while looking at various things, and asking their prices. The work of selection was evidently a matter of importance to them, and they took great pleasure as well as pains with it. At last the wife said: "My dear, everything is so expensive this year; don't you think we had better get something that will entertain us all? That we can afford to have of the best kind." The husband looked admiringly at her for this sensible suggestion, which he said was "just like her"; and finally they selected the backgammon-board, together with a box of ninepins for the younger children and the baby. "Though, after all," laughed the good man, "I don't know but I shall want to play ninepins a good deal myself." Marie offered to send the bundles home; but they said no; it was much pleasanter to carry one's own packages at Christmas-time. Having paid for their purchases, they still lingered, each making innocent excuses to detain the other, and both quite willing to be detained. Presently the husband sauntered to the back part of the store, and, gleefully chuckling to find that his wife did not follow, hurriedly bought of Marie a beautiful work-box, upon which he
had already cast many a glance. At the very same moment the wife, in the sliest possible manner, purchased of Father Bernard a writing-desk. If you had stood just half-way down the store, between the two, you would have heard on either side a whisper, “I guess you can send that home; it is almost too heavy to carry.” And then you would have seen the affectionate couple depart, with happy secrets weighing on their hearts, saying to one another, “The children will be so well pleased, and we shall enjoy their presents so much, that we shall not mind going without, ourselves—hey?”

After this, a great, fat, rich, jolly old bachelor came in, and was greeted as a well-known friend by the grandfather. “Look here, Bernard,” said he, “believe your shop will be the ruin of me! Can’t get by your windows to save my life. Never saw such windows! Everybody stops to look at ’em; and they are flattening the noses of all the children in town. Pretty lot of snubs the next generation will have, at this rate! Well, well! here’s my missionary fund; smaller than usual, this year; hard times, never should know it, though, if I wasn’t told; you know
what to do with it; give a thingamy to every little heathen that comes along!” He laid a twenty-dollar note on the counter, winked merrily at Marie, and went across the street to the poultry-shop.

But I cannot stop to describe all the people that came to buy. There were crowds of them, and Bernard did a very handsome business. By New-Year’s the shelves were half empty, the rush had ceased, and the old man and his granddaughter were glad to rest.

IV. — How the Toys returned.

Marie was so busy during the holidays that she gradually ceased to think of the queer events related in the second chapter of this history; and, although she had not really forgotten the suggestion of the trombone, it happened that she went to bed on the 8th of January without having it in mind. But at midnight she was aroused by a bustle in the room below, and a knocking and scratching at the front door. Quickly she betook herself to her post of observation at the stove-pipe hole; but this time she
KARL'S RETURN.

"The toys all rushed out pell-mell, while a man's voice said, Why, the door opened of itself! and what a draught of wind!" — Page 38.
was thoughtful enough to dress herself, and to roll herself up, besides, in a blanket, so that she might watch and listen at her ease. The shop was dark, and the trombone was saying, in a supernatural whisper, "There they are; has anybody got a light?" There was no answer at first; but presently a parlor match remarked "that if anybody would hoist him up, he would n't mind lighting the gas, for once in his life." Thereupon a patent fish-pole hopped out of the corner, done up in a bag, like a Scotchman in a sack-race, and said he would hoist. "You! you are not tall enough," cried several voices. "Just untie the top of this bag," said the fish-pole, "and I 'll show you." So a clothespin kindly untied the neck of the bag, and the fish-pole rapidly put his joints together, and shot upwards to the ceiling. "Ah!" said he, "one gets cramped by being doubled up so long, and needs to stretch one's self." Then the clothespin climbed nimbly up the pole, and seated himself astride of the gas-pipe; the parlor match perched himself on the point of the fish-hook, and the reel wound up the line, until he came opposite the burner. When all was ready the
clothes-pin turned on the gas, and the match, after considerable scratching, managed to light it; but immediately lost his balance, and fell to the floor, quite black in the face. This unfortunate occurrence caused some dismay. The body of the victim was found to be quite cold. Sandpaper had no effect upon him; and the attempt to resuscitate him was given up, on the remark of a wise old broom, who said: "It's no use; that sort of thing is hereditary with the family. They always die, sooner or later, in this way. I have had to pick up hundreds of them, and send them to the dust-pan."

All this time the knocking continued at the door; and as soon as order was partially restored, the trombone called out, "Somebody pull back that bolt!" To this the bolt replied, "You needn't lay hands on me! I won't be pulled back by anybody." And then, for fear its boast might be falsified (for the tongs and screwdriver and a whole box of tools were already making lively preparations), it flew back of its own accord, and the door burst open, admitting a queer procession.

First of all came the rocking-horse, but, ah!
how changed! His flowing tail had been, I assure you, literally pulled out by the roots; his mane was all tied up in hard knots, to make it curl; there was a great gash whittled in his handsome neck, where somebody had bled him, on the pretence that he was sick; and the color of his once fiery mouth and nostrils showed that on the same occasion he had been physicked from an ink-bottle. His saddle, which wasn’t meant to come off, had been taken off by main force, bringing the skin with it; and, to crown all, his new owner, getting tired of his original fine dapple-gray color, had determined to make a blue horse of him, but after daubing him with indigo on one side had got tired of that too, and left him in disgust. He seemed quite dispirited, and meekly drew behind him the sled, which was considerably the worse for wear, having had several collisions with those rude sleds which vulgar boys make for themselves out of plank, and which are as vicious as they are ugly, and always smash what they run into. On the front of the sled sat sadly what was once the woolly dog; but somebody had torn off his pneumatic attachment, to see what made him bark; and
then because he couldn't bark any more, had made believe he was a sheep, and sheared him. The drum had had his hamstrings cut, and a hole punched in his head, in which hole a solitary drum-stick was now standing. The sword was terribly rusty from having been used to cut apples, and the scabbard was lost in a molasses-hogshead. A shapeless mass of tin was all that remained of the tin trumpet, who had been thrown at a cat from a third-story window. All these returned wanderers were in such wretched condition as to be unable to give any account of themselves. The sled could only groan over his feeble frame; the hole in the drum's head showed it to be perfectly empty, so his silence was a mercy; the sword, who had formerly been a keen young blade, was too dull to enter into conversation; the tin trumpet had had the breath squeezed out of him, and was now a mere useless ornament to society. As for the woolly dog, his lungs were absolutely gone, and it was a wonder that he lived at all. The big rocking-horse could still speak; but his woe seemed to affect his wits, for when they asked him if he could tell his experience, he feebly
replied, “Nay”; and as he adhered to this reply, whatever was said to him, the attempt to get a story out of him was soon given up. It was fortunate for history that Noah and his family were not all destroyed, though the ark had lost its roof and all the paint from its side, and few of its inmates had escaped injury, more or less severe. Silence reigned in the shop, as the mournful procession emerged from the ark. The usual discipline was maintained, though the couples had to be in many cases rearranged, on account of missing parties. Thus, Noah walked with Japhet’s wife, and two widowers, an elephant and a gander, were paired off together, since, having both lost their legs as well as their mates, they were nearly alike in shape and size. Having marched them once round the ark, Noah assumed an oratorical position, with his hands close to his sides, and made a few remarks in Hebrew, which were kindly translated to the company by a jewsharp.

He began with an account of the flood; but his ideas on that subject seemed to be quite confused; and Marie, after listening closely for a while, said to herself, “Why, the old fool is
describing a bath-tub, with the hot and cold water running for forty days and forty nights. I wonder if he calls that a flood!” But Noah, not hearing this sarcastic criticism, went on to complain of the ark as leaky, and to relate how it finally filled and went to the bottom, so that they all had to open the roof and swim for their lives. After bobbing about for weeks, according to his account, they were fished out, and put before a fire to dry; but O, this wicked world! that terrible boy broke off the arms and legs of one animal after another, and then threw the bodies in the fire. “Such a family government!” said Noah. “In my day, children were not allowed to kick, and howl, and disobey their parents. But this boy’s father and mother were as bad as he, snapping, and quarrelling, and scolding the servants, whipping the boy to make him cry, and then coaxing him with candy to stop crying. This world is n’t a bit like your description, Mr. Trombone; it’s a wicked, unhappy, noisy world, and it ought to be drowned over again.”

Just then who should come in but the “Life of George Washington!” At least that was the
title; but on opening itself it turned out to be the backgammon-board. In a merry way the dice rattled off their story, to the effect that the work-box and the writing-desk had been so busy that they purposed not to come; in fact, they were better off where they were. “We only came ourselves,” put in the white and black men, “because we promised; and we mean to get back.” “Gammon!” said Noah, who did n’t believe a word of it, “I saw a lot just like you, all scattered and dirty, in the ash-barrel, where I accidentally fell myself, by mistake.” “There is some misunderstanding about that,” replied the jolly men. “One of us fell down the cellar grating, to be sure; but the whole family hunted for him, and brought him back. We are appreciated where we live! Such lively games! Last night one of the boys backgammoned the other three times running; and all so good-naturedly, you would n’t have known which beat! It’s a pleasant world!” “That’s so,” said the ninepins, who came hopping in, “and there are nice babies in it, that everybody loves and plays with.” “Well, I never!” muttered Noah, as he marshalled his
decimated family back into the dilapidated ark.

But who could this be, who now entered with such a bedraggled mien and decrepit step? It was the gorgeous French doll, who courtesied to the company with a remnant of her former grace, and said, plaintively: "You know, my friends, that which I was; you see that which I am. Alas! it is a perfidious world. I am purchased by a charming gentleman, who carried me home under his arm, whispering compliments to me all the way, of my beauty and my preciousness." "Come, now," said the trombone, bluntly, "none of your fine French fibs. What did he say?" The doll was too wretched to take offence, so she continued meekly: "I thought he said I was very dear to him, and he should never want another as long as he lived; but possibly I misunderstood him. One last effort she made to practise her accomplishment of rolling up her fine eyes, but her optic nerves were out of order, and the eyes stuck fast, half-way, giving her a ludicrous instead of a pathetic expression. But she went on talking. "When I arrive at the mansion, I am put in a dark
drawer till to-morrow. When to-morrow comes, a sweet, pale little girl, very finely dressed, and with the true Parisian manners, receives me—no, I am displayed to her; and the mamma says, 'No, my dear; you might hurt it; and, besides, you must not play on the floor; it is not lady-like.' The little girl looks at me, and says, 'Please, mamma, may I have a rag-baby?' And the mamma says, 'Now, my child, you are ungrateful. Sophie, take mademoiselle to the nursery, and put this doll away in the drawer!' O how I pity the little girl and myself! But when we are out of the room Sophie says to the little girl, 'Your mother is a cruel woman, but I love you and I will be good to you. You shall have the doll to play with all the afternoon, and we shall not tell my lady anything about it; and I am going out for a while, to see my cousin, and we shall not tell her that either. The little girl says, 'My old nurse, who was here before I came, used to say it was wrong to do things secretly, and I would rather not'; but Sophie shakes her a little and calls her in French a few names, and the child wants to play with me so much that she yields, of which
I am so glad for the moment! But before Sophie comes back from her walk, my nose is melted away by being put to sleep behind the stove, and my delicate chest is let to tumble over on the floor and break. Then mademoiselle is frightened of being found out, and Sophie finds her crying, and says to her, 'The ugly, naughty doll! We will throw it out of the window, and tell your mother it was the housemaid who stole it.' I do not hear what the little girl says, for I am brutally seized and thrown through the air. I strike in the gutter and break my side-bone, and a great deal of sawdust bleeds out from me before I can creep away and hide. It takes me two weeks to get here, for I am ashamed to travel by day, and I lose so much sawdust at every step that I cannot go far. The world is triste, and I intend to take the veil and retire into a convent, unless I shall die first of hemorrhage.” Here the unfortunate Parisian lady fainted away.

A rush of cold air revived her, as the door was again flung open, and a great crowd of toys of all sorts entered, all laughing and talking at once. Some of them were more or less crip-
pled, but they did not seem to care. “Yes,” said a jolly little drummer, “I’ve lost an arm; but I don’t mind it much. One must see life! Besides, little Bob Maguire, who broke it off, cried over me like a baby; and the other boys in the street told him to save the arm, and Jamie’s big brother would put it on again, as good as new. I see you’ve lost your nose, ma’am,” continued the little drummer, touching his cap with his drum-stick (which he never laid down, although for the present he could not drum), “I shouldn’t wonder if they could give you an artificial nose, made of wax, which looks quite natural, I assure you. It’s a wonderful world!” This light-hearted fellow and his companions had been presented by Bernard, at the fat old bachelor’s desire, to the poor children of the neighborhood; and I must confess they looked and felt a great deal better than the unfortunate beings who had been sent up to Fifth Avenue. Each of them had a story to tell, but they all talked at once, and the only thing to be gathered from their merry confusion was the fact that they had made everybody happy where they went. I suspect that was the
reason they felt so happy themselves; but this is a great secret, and must not be mentioned on any account.

Once more the door opened, and in came another crowd, dragging a little cart, in which was a beautiful Christmas-tree. All over the tree were perched the wax-tapers. They had lost a good deal of flesh since they left the shop a fortnight before; but on the whole they seemed well preserved, and their feathers of flame waved over their heads proudly. All the rest of this throng seemed to be strangers, until the trombone, who had lived in the shop two years, in fact, ever since Karl went to sea, shouted, "Why, I thought you were all dead and gone long go! Where did you get your new coats, and how happened you to be looking so well and hearty?" Then it came out that these were second-hand toys, collected and repaired by Jamie's brother, and painted by Jamie himself, so that they were handsomer than they ever had been before; and the celebration of Christmas, at which they had assisted, was the most brilliant thing ever seen. The tree was so magnificent that all the children cried for joy
when they saw it; and it had been lit up for
five minutes every night since Christmas, and
every night a new set of visitors had been in-
vited. Once it was the newsboys; and they
clubbed together and presented Jamie with a
year’s subscription to Harper’s Magazine, in
token of their thanks. Once it was the class in
the Sunday school to which Jamie belonged,
before he was so ill; and they hung up over the
foot of his bed a splendid illuminated card, with
the words, “Faith, Hope, Love; but the greatest
of these is Love.” Another night came the
shoeblacks; and after they had received Jamie’s
cheerful greetings, and seen the tree, and each
received some little gift from his entertainers,
they held a meeting in the entry, and passed
resolutions of thanks, in which Jamie and his
brother were alluded to as their “distinguished
fellow-citizens,” and it was declared that no
member of the Shoeblacks’ Co-operative Asso-
ciation should ever accept any remuneration for
blacking their shoes. You may think this was
not particularly munificent, but if so, you
haven’t much experience. For my part, I
think to black a man’s shoes for nothing is a
sign of great affection and respect. I only do it for one person in the world, and that is myself. But, to return to the subject of the Christmas-tree, it certainly did seem, judging from the accounts of these last comers, as if nothing had ever before given so much pleasure to so many people. There would have been apparently no end to their wonderful stories, had not suddenly a double-knock sounded on the door. Instantly the lights went out, the door opened, and the toys all rushed out pell-mell, while a man's voice said, "Why, the door opened of itself! and what a draught of wind. It almost knocked me over." Marie started up as she heard the voice, and eagerly listened for more. But the stranger did not speak again. A moment after, however, she heard a step in the store; then all was silent, and then, O then the trombone began to play softly the Ranz des Vaches. Marie sprung up, rushed down stairs, crying, "Karl! Karl!" and was locked in her brother's arms!

Presently Father Bernard appeared with a light, for the Ranz des Vaches was a tune he could not hear and keep quiet. It was his favorite Swiss air, and he had taught it to Karl's
father and to Karl. How happy was the old man to find it was Karl’s own self who played the dear old melody! And who cares where Karl had been, or how he happened to land and come home at midnight? Father Bernard and Marie forgot all about the past, in their joy that Karl was once more at home; and if they did not ask questions at first, it is of course none of our business.

It was my intention, in writing out this story for publication, to wind up with a moral; but you children are so apt to skip the story, and read the moral only, that I have changed my mind, and sprinkled it all along at intervals in the story itself. As for the Bernard family, when they have lived the remainder of their lives, it will be time enough to complete their history. That sort of thing cannot be safely done beforehand.
CHAPTER II.

Sunday,—Uncle John's Christmas Story.

THE CHRISTMAS ANGEL.

Once upon a time a little princess, whose name was Theodosia, awoke early in the morning, and as she lay in her soft bed she heard the chiming of bells, and she clapped her hands, and said, "How glad I am! I know what the bells are saying. It is Christmas morning!" And she was so eager that she forgot to say her prayers, and she forgot to call good morning to the king her father, and the queen her mother, and she slipped quickly out of bed, and ran barefooted down the marble stairs into the great palace drawing-rooms, to find what gifts the Christmas had brought her. As she pushed open the heavy door, she heard a sound like the rustling of wings, and it frightened her for a minute; but the Christmas bells rang clearly outside, and that gave her courage again; so she went boldly
THE SECRET DISCOVERED.

"I have found the secret now!" — Page 49.
in. Ah, that was a beautiful sight! It was not yet broad day, but there was a soft light in the vast room, that seemed to come from a great white pearl that hung from the centre of the ceiling, and to be reflected from the broad mirrors on every wall.

“Ah!” thought Theodosia, “how I wish my present might be pearls!” Then she looked again, and saw around the hall tablets with golden letters, and on each was a name. There was the king’s name, and the queen’s name, and the name of every one in the royal household; and under each was a heap of beautiful gifts. Her own name she could scarcely see, for it was far at the other end of the long hall; but she ran toward it, saying to herself, “I don’t care what other folks are going to have, I want to see my pretty gifts.” So at last she came to the tablet on which her name appeared; but, alas! there was nothing under it,—only a black leather bag, and upon it these words, “This is for selfish Theodosia.”

Still she thought that perhaps it might contain something beautiful for her, and she quickly raised it from the floor. But it was locked, and
there was no key, and all she found by looking carefully was another inscription, engraved in small, fine letters, in the steel of the lock,—"I am worth much to him who can open me!"
The poor little princess stamped her bare feet on the cold floor with vexation and rage, and was ready to cry, only she was too proud; when suddenly she saw in one of the mirrors a dazzling and beautiful angel, standing behind her. She was not frightened; for even in the glass she could see that he was kind and gentle. His garments were white as snow, and his face was fairer than the fairest picture ever thought of in a dream. Little Theodosia began to grow calmer as she saw his soft, clear eyes fixed upon her, and she turned herself to him at once, and said, "I know who you are; you are the Christmas angel." And, strange to say, at that moment she perceived that the great pearl no longer hung from the centre of the ceiling, but shone upon the angel’s brow. And he smiled a smile like sunshine, and then grew very grave and sad, and said to her, "Poor child! you do not know the secret that unlocks all treasures! But if you will come with me, we will find
some one who can tell us!" Then he held out his hand, and Theodosia put her hand in it at once, for she had no fear of him. Out through the door they went (it opened and shut of itself), and out through the great archway of the palace, into the wide, wide world. It seemed to Theodosia that her feet scarcely touched the ground, and she did not feel the cold, for the warm hand of the angel sent a delicious thrill through all her limbs. In one hand she grasped tightly the mysterious bag, and every little while she looked up at the beautiful face of the angel, upon whose brow the great pearl shone serenely like a star.

As they passed through the quiet streets they saw few people stirring. Here and there some good Christian hastened to the early Christmas service, and high up in the cathedral tower was a bright light, where the old sexton still rang merrily the Christmas bells. And as they walked the angel began to tell her the old, sweet story of the first Christmas day, and the Christmas gift of the child Jesus, which the dear God made to the world he loved, and how the kings and wise men came from far coun-
tries with rich offerings in their hands, and how the very beasts of the stable and the field were moved with strange reverence, and how the angels sang for joy. Theodosia looked up and said timidly, "And were you there?" The angel seemed to be looking at some fair vision a long way off, as he said, low and sweetly, "Yes, I was there." And with that he went on to tell how lovely was the child Jesus, so that all who looked upon him loved him, and began straightway to love one another also, and blessed the day when they saw the Babe of Bethlehem. And finally he stopped and said: "Little Theodosia, do you know the meaning of Christmas?" Theodosia was silent, for she knew that she had forgotten all this in her eagerness for her own pleasure; but she presently took courage, and said, "I know it means that Christ is born into the world."

And the Christmas bells sounded, and sounded, and seemed to say, "Peace on earth and good-will toward men."

By and by the angel stopped at a low cottage, and opened the door. They went into the poor, cheerless room, but they were not seen,
for one cannot see the spirits of heaven, when they choose to be invisible. As for Theodosia, the angel covered her with the corner of his robe. There was a tallow candle dimly burning on the table, and a pale woman sat by it, sewing fast on a piece of work she had risen early to accomplish. A little boy, crying silently from cold and hunger, had crawled from his miserable bed in the corner, and was trying to light a fire of chips and cinders gathered in the street. And the pale woman lifted her eyes to heaven, murmuring over and over again, as if it were the only prayer she could remember, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Theodosia had never heard of such misery before; all her little troubles melted away from her mind, and she thought, “O, why can I not do something to help these poor people!” She could not bear to wait until she could ask the king to help them. Just then she looked down, and behold the bag had opened a little way of itself, and she saw the gleam of silver money in it. In an instant, and before it shut together again, without stopping to think, she scattered a handful of the money in the room.
But wonderful to tell, the silver shower never struck the floor, but seemed to vanish in mid-air; and lo! a bright fire went leaping up the chimney, and on the table was food in plenty, and the little boy and his happy mother were thanking God, and blessing their unknown benefactor. Theodosia felt happy, too; and as the angel led her away, she thought the Christmas bells were saying: "Naked, and ye clothed me; hungry, and ye gave me meat; Verily I say unto you, ye did it unto me!"

Presently they found themselves in an upper chamber, in another part of the city. It was broad daylight now. There were a dozen little children in the room, with scraps of newspapers and one or two tattered books, from which they were learning to read and spell. And in the midst stood the teacher, a poor young factory-girl, who taught the little ones of the neighborhood every morning at daybreak, before going to her work, because she would not let them go ignorant for want of her help. And Theodosia heard her say, "Now, let us get through with our lessons quickly, and then we will all go and
have a Christmas holiday, looking at the fine things in the stores and the pretty ladies on the street. Who knows, perhaps the king and the queen and the princess may ride by!” When Theodosia heard that, she thought, “How I should like to help these little ones! They have no pleasure but in looking at the pleasure of other people!” And the bag opened half-way of itself, and she saw there was gold in it. For a moment she hesitated, saying to herself, “With this gold I could buy myself the necklace of pearls that I wish so much to have!” But just then the bag began slowly to shut up again, and she gave one look at the little children, and quickly drew from it all the gold, which she scattered in the room. And the room changed by magic into a beautiful school-room, and the happy children were wreathing it in green, and the teacher, no longer a poor factory-girl, but a fair and gentle woman, was just about to distribute to them their Christmas gifts, and Theodosia wished so much to stay; but the angel drew her away. When they were once more in the street, the angel said, “Do you know the secret now?” And
Theodosia said nothing, but the Christmas bells rang out:

"Not what we get, but what we give,
Makes up our treasure while we live!"

This time the angel lifted her from the earth, and carried her swiftly over the whole land, and over many other lands. And she saw how many people there were who did not yet know what Christmas meant; yes, many thousands of them had never heard of Christ who was born in Bethlehem. And her heart, that was so warm now with the Christmas love, could not bear to think of so much sin and sorrow; and this time she put her hand on the lock of the bag, saying to herself, "If there is any more of the magical money in it, I will throw it down upon this poor, unhappy, wicked world." The bag opened very easily, but there was nothing in it save a magnificent necklace of pearls! In vain she looked for silver and gold; she must either give up the necklace of pearls or nothing. So she took one look more at the beautiful gems, and then flung them down upon the earth; and the necklace broke as it fell, scatter-
ing the pearls far and wide; and where every pearl fell, behold there arose by magic a church or a mission school, and in all languages were heard the songs of thanksgiving from children and from old people. And the angel said to her, “Now see, your bag is empty; are you not sorry?” But she looked straight into his kind eyes, and said, “I have found the secret now!” And the Christmas bells rang out, “It is more blessed to give than to receive!”

Then the angel caught her to his bosom with great joy, and flying swiftly through the air, he brought her back to the palace of the king; and lo! in the great hall were all the gifts still piled, and the king and the queen had not yet come. So he carried Theodosia to the place where her name was, and behold! when she looked, there lay the black bag wide open and full of gifts innumerable, and on each gift some curious inscription. A beautiful bouquet of flowers bore the words, “These are the prayers of the poor”; and upon a crystal goblet, “The disciple’s reward”; but most lovely of all was the necklace of pearls that hung from the tablet, every pearl bearing a single name, like
Patience, Gentleness, Truth, Innocence; and three pearls larger than the rest, and on the largest pearl, which was the very copy of the starry one upon the angel's brow, she read, "The greatest of these is Charity." Then she knew what was the true name of the Christmas angel; and he vanished away and she saw him no more. And she saw also that the black bag was like her own heart, which, when closed to charity, was of no use; but when opened for the sake of others, grew richer in treasure all the time. And the Christmas bells rang once more: "God so loved the world!" and again, "Beloved, if God so loved us, then ought we to love one another."

May the Christmas angel dwell with every one of us, round and round the whole year!
"So the queer old man sat down and took one leg on the other knee, in a comfortable way, while the Dream took his place on the floor, and listened over his shoulder." — Page 54.
CHAPTER III.

Monday, — Mother’s Christmas Story.

THE PALACE OF THE DAYS.

LITTLE Philip went to bed early, the night before Christmas, because he was so tired of waiting. As he lay in his trundle-bed, he thought how the mornings come first in the east, and move with the sun over land and sea, while the nights follow after, but never can catch them. “I guess Christmas has come already to some of the little children across the sea,” thought Philip to himself, “and he is hurrying this way as fast as he can. I hope he will not be tired and stop before he gets to me!” Meanwhile Philip grew sleepier and sleepier, and at last his bright little eyes shut so quickly that you could almost hear them snap.

Then the door softly opened, and in came a queer little fellow with wings. Did you ever see a Dream? Nobody ever did, to my knowl-
edge. They are cunning chaps, and they never come near you until you are too fast asleep to see them. Day-dreams belong to a different family, and are not good for much. The most curious thing about real, useful dreams is, that they visit everybody, and carry people everywhere, and show them all sorts of pictures, and tell them all sorts of stories; and when they are gone, people wake up and rub their eyes, and find themselves just where they were when they fell asleep, and won't believe they have been anywhere, or seen anything. This Dream that I speak of stole across the room and held one hand over Philip's eyes, to keep them shut, while he whispered in his ear, "Come! let us go to the Great House where the Days live!" With that he lifted Philip out of bed, and away they floated through the window, and over the hills, and the rivers, and the great sea, higher and higher, until they came into the clouds; and right in the middle of Cloudland they came to the Palace of Days.

That was a splendid hall! It was so large that you could scarcely see from one end to the other; and there were three hundred and sixty-
six beds in it, and tables and chairs in proportion, one for every day in the year. This is where the Days lived, when they were not at work on the world. Every Day took his turn once a year, and generally got so tired walking round the world, that he went straight to bed as soon as he got back, and slept till his turn came again. "Great sleepers, I tell you!" said the Dream to Philip, "but they don't sleep very soundly. What they call History down there in the world is nothing but the echo of these old fellows, snoring and muttering in their sleep." Sure enough, there were most of the Days in bed, with their names above their heads. There was the First of April, with a fool's cap for a nightcap, and the Fourth of July, with a star-spangled banner for his bedquilt; and there was the Twenty-third of December, a short, little fat fellow,—the shortest day in the year. He had only just got home, had his supper and gone to bed. The next bed was empty; for the Twenty-fourth of December was out on his travels. One lively fellow came up to Philip and said, "I'm the Twenty-ninth of February! I march only once in four years, so you see I'm
So the queer old man sat down, and took one leg on the other knee, in a comfortable way, while the Dream took his place on the floor, and listened over his shoulder. Then Philip asked what the Days did while they travelled round the world. "Why, don't you know?" said the Twenty-ninth of February. "We walk by the side of the Sun; and while he holds his great lantern to light the world, we scatter the gifts of the King in all countries, and remember everything that we see, to tell it to the Recorder. There he sits." Then Philip looked, and saw a man sitting behind a great book, and writing all the time. Everything that ever happened was written in that great Book of the King, and the Recorder neither rested nor grew weary. Indeed, he could not pause, for things kept happening all the time.

Presently a messenger with a torch ran swiftly through the hall, and, stopping by one of the beds, touched the Day who was sleeping there.

"That is the Morning Star," said the Twenty-ninth of February. "It is his business to wake
the Days. He is come for Christmas now. The Twenty-fourth—Christmas Eve, we nickname him—will be in presently, and one goes as the other comes; else, something might happen that we did not see."

Christmas, a cheerful old man, with a long white beard, made haste to rise and get ready for his journey. He nodded kindly to Philip, and put out his hand, saying, "Would you like to go with me? A long road, but pleasant. Nobody has so pleasant a road as I have!"

Philip loved him at once; so bidding farewell to his new acquaintance, and casting one look at the solemn Recorder, who was just beginning a new page, he took the old man’s hand, and they went out of the palace together. At the threshold they met another old man coming in. "Ah, brother Christmas," said he, "I have left fine weather for you! The world is getting old and dirty; but I carried along a bag full of snow, and whitened it wherever I could!" And with that he hurried in to tell his story to the Recorder, and then to sleep for another year.

A moment more, and they met the Sun. He was not tired. The Sun and the Recorder never
are tired. What a glorious face he had! and the light in his hand was so brilliant, that it shone for millions of miles.

They began their journey far away in the east, where all the people bowed down and worshipped the Sun, but paid no attention to Christmas. "That is because they do not know me yet," said the old man. "When they know me, they will welcome us both as friends, but worship the King only. Every time I travel through this part of the world, I look to see if any one has taught them better. I could tell them a story, if I had time, that would open their eyes to the truth, and make them happy and wise. But my business is only to see what happens, and tell the Recorder. Some time or other, I shall have it to tell, that all men know me, and worship the King. That will be the best news! The Recorder will stop writing for very joy; but not until then."

As they came westward with the Sun, they heard everywhere the sound of chiming bells; and crowds of people were seen, greeting each other merrily and with good wishes, and gathering to give thanks to the King. The face of
Christmas brightened, and the Sun made his light as clear as it could be. "These are all friends of mine," said Christmas, "and they worship the King. Every time I come, I find more and more of them. It was not always so,—for thousands of years I was not Christmas at all. The time when I got my name was the happiest time of my life; and the story that I told the Recorder then is written on the most beautiful page of his book, and the King reads it very often. That was the time when the Prince Emanuel came down into the world with me. Ever since then I have been Merry Christmas. Do you not think I have good reason to be glad that I, of all the Days in the Palace, should bring the Prince into the world, and hear the angels sing Peace on Earth and Good-will to men!"

While they were thus talking they passed swiftly over many lands, and everywhere the people welcomed them with great joy. The merry smiles of Christmas were reflected in all faces. The chiming of the bells, and the shouts and laughter of the children, and the greetings of neighbors and friends, and happy thanksgiv-
ings to the King, filled the air with music. Everywhere the temples and houses were wreathed with green boughs and crosses, and stars of green were set up to remind men of the Prince Emanuel, and the bright morning star that shone over Bethlehem. Old Christmas grew merrier and merrier. He laughed and sang, and scattered gifts among the people; and they, in their gladness, gave to one another and to the poor; but sweeter than the loudest glee was the tone in which the old man everywhere said, "Remember the Prince and the King, and the Glad Tidings." Then they crossed the great sea; and Christmas went on board of every ship they met to bless the sailors, and to say, "Remember who made the storm to cease. The Prince was once a sailor too!"

At last they reached the shores of the new land in the West. It was covered with snow, so pure and white that it looked like the new page on which the Recorder will one day write that all men know and serve the King. Presently Philip saw the house where he lived; and before he could bid Christmas good by, that mischievous little winged Dream, which had
been with him invisibly all the time, lifted him lightly and flew with him right through the window into his own room. And, lo! his mother stood by him, saying, “Wake up, little boy! Christmas is here.”

“O ho!” said Philip, “I guess I know that! I have been round the world with him!”

Whether he really had been journeying or not, I should like to see the philosopher who could tell. But one thing I know, that I mean to do all I can to spread the Glad Tidings, so that, very soon, Father Christmas, in his travels round the world, shall find that all men know him and worship the King; when the Recorder shall cease writing for very joy; and the mirth, and love, and charity of Christmas shall fill also every day in the whole year.
CHAPTER IV.

Tuesday, — Brother Charles's Wonder Story.

KARL THE FIDDLER.

This is a story of strange old times, when beasts and birds could talk, — as they can still, for all I know, — and men (that is to say, children) could understand what they said, which I regret to confess has now become impossible. There are a great many respects in which the world has improved, no doubt; but the fact is, the locomotives and factories and water-wheels keep up such a clatter that we cannot hear any more what flowers and winds whisper, or birds gossip about among the leaves in the sociable twilight, or cattle gravely discuss between meals. Things have changed and do change wonderfully in this world, and it is a comfort to remember that goodness and kindness and happiness do not alter, — as you will see, dear children, from the story of Karl the Fiddler.
THE FIDDLER BEFORE THE KING.

"Everybody was delighted, and the king above all, who, in a few seconds, might be seen nodding his head to keep time with the music." — Page 70.
Once upon a time, between the age of Abraham and the election of General Grant, there was a boy whose name was Karl, and he fiddled for a living. He used to play such lively tunes, and nod his head so gayly while he played, that no one could hear him without desiring to dance; and whenever he had played for five minutes, you could hear all the toes and heels of the audience rapping out the tune. He was accustomed to travel from one place to another, and to pay for his lodging and his meals with his violin. He was welcome everywhere. When the children of any village saw him coming along the road with his green bag, they used to leave their play and run to meet him; and the old women that sat spinning in the doorways, and the old men that were smoking their pipes in the sun, greeted him kindly. The pastor, who was a white-haired man and loved all children, but especially good ones, often said that Karl was the best boy he knew, for he was honest and industrious, and kind to all. “He deserves,” said the pastor, “to be rich as the Baron, powerful as the Emperor, and happy as a lark at sunrise.” Then Karl would laugh and
answer, "I want nothing of your Barons and Emperors. As for the lark, he and I know one another already. I often watch his nest in the morning, when the lady-lark and all the little larks make the beds and put everything in order, while he flies up into the dawn and sings down to them how beautiful is the world. I understand their language, too; for every one who lives twelve years without doing harm to any living thing will have his ears open to hear what birds and beasts and trees say. And I heard the wise mother-lark say to the little ones yesterday, when they had finished reciting their lessons, "Take note of this, my children, for in this we are more sensible than men. To be rich is to have food and shelter; to be powerful is to do good; to be happy is to love all things and sing."

"So you see," Karl would add, "according to the philosophy of the larks, I am rich and powerful and happy. Only I do not sing; but my violin does that for me." Then he would go merrily on his way.

One day, in the middle of winter, Karl left the inn where he had spent the night before, to
go to the great city, miles away, beyond the woods. The guests all came to the door to bid him farewell, and the storm seemed so dreadful to them that they said, "You must not go today, Karl; you will never find your way through the wood. You will never get there alive." But he shook his curly head, laughing and saying, "The cold world is a warm world to me; I am not afraid." Then the landlady put a little bundle of food in his hand, for fear he might lose the path and be hungry; and he slung his green bag over his shoulder, and went on his way. The winds blew terribly, and as they rushed by him he heard them say, "Is that you, Karl? We are very sorry to knock you about so roughly, but the fact is we are on a race from the North Pole to the Equator; and we have taken such a long start, and got a-going so fast, that we can't stop. Next summer we'll come back and play with you among the roses." And with that away they went, so fast that Karl could not answer them. The snow fell furiously, so that he could hardly see; but as the crystal flakes went by, he heard them whisper, "We are so sorry, Karl, to get in your way; but
the fact is, we were sitting just now on the edge of a cloud up there, and those rough winds came by and jostled us, and we fell off; and we have been falling so far that we cannot stop." Karl laughed and said, "No matter; next summer I shall find you in the brook, and we'll have good times with the frogs and speckled trout."

Presently he got into the wood. There the wind was not so strong, but the snow was very deep. Before long he knew that he had lost his way. At first he was not frightened, but went bravely on, expecting soon to get out of the forest. At last it began to grow dark and he was very cold and tired; so he sat down in the snow, by the side of a great tree. But the snow was so deep that he sunk in out of sight. So he worked away till he had scooped out a little cave in it. Into that he crawled, and ate the supper which the good landlady had given him. After supper he felt both numb and sleepy; and, as he did not know how to get any warmer, he thought he would go to sleep. Just as he was almost asleep he heard the snow-crystals whispering to him, "Karl, Karl! do not sleep here! We are doing our best to keep you
warm; but the closer we keep to you the colder you grow, and we fear we shall freeze you to death!” When Karl heard that, he resolved not to sleep. So, to keep himself awake, he took out his violin and began with his numb fingers to play a lively tune. Was not that a strange thing,—a boy playing a tune on the violin, at the bottom of a snow-drift, in the middle of a forest, on a stormy winter’s night! Not half as strange as the next thing that happened; for just as he was growing so faint with cold that he could not play much longer, a big, gruff voice said, “Karl, is that you?”

Karl scrambled out of his cavern, and looked about in vain to see who had spoken. There was nothing but the silent trees, reaching up from the white snow to the black sky, like pillars on a marble floor, holding up an iron roof. Presently the voice said again, “Karl, come in and get warm!” And this time it certainly came from the tree near which he had been lying; but it could not be the tree that spoke, for the voice used not tree-language, but animal-language, which is as different as can be; and besides, in the winter the trees are so cold that
they cannot talk at all, but only shiver and chatter their branches, as people that are cold chatter their teeth. While he looked at the tree and wondered what this could mean, he saw that it was hollow, and the hole at the bottom was stopped with a great snow-ball; but the snow-ball was strangely agitated, as if trying of itself to get away. He ran to the spot, and helped with all his might; and when the ball was a little moved, so that he could pass by, he crawled into the hole with his violin as quickly as he could, and the ball rolled back into its place.

Now who should be in the tree but a bear,—a great black bear,—who growled out very kindly to him, with a long yawn, "You have spoiled my winter nap for me, Karl; I have n’t slept more than six weeks, and here you come fiddling under my very nose! Well, never mind! I ’m glad to meet you again. Here, snuggle up, and warm yourself. I have n’t forgotten how good you were to me, when you played the violin for me to dance in the menagerie."

They had a great deal to say about old times, but unfortunately they did not say it; for just as
the bear was about to relate how he happened to forsake the menagerie business and take to the woods, he gave a great snore, and went to sleep for the rest of the winter. That is a most remarkable thing. I have often seen people go to sleep while I was talking, but never when it was their own turn. But bears are peculiar; and Karl, understanding their ways, nestled close to his old friend and fell asleep himself. In the morning he slipped out, without disturbing the bear, and found the storm was over. Stepping lightly on the tops of the drifts, he found his way before long out of the wood, and at last into the great city.

Now the king of that country was a terrible tyrant. Every one knew it but himself; and as no one dared to tell him, and he was not acquainted with any other kings who could set him a good example and make him ashamed of himself, he actually considered himself the best and wisest of mankind. Every day he held a court in the great hall of his palace, and executed what he called “justice.” He would listen to each case that was brought before him, until he either understood the matter, or (what
was much the same thing) got tired of trying to understand it, and then he would either turn his head from side to side, or nod it up and down. If the first, the petition was denied, and the petitioner was immediately removed, to have his head cut off. If it was a nod, the petition was granted, and the petitioner hurried away as fast as he could, for fear there was some mistake about it. In either case, all was over in a few seconds; and as the next applicant for justice was called in directly, and no time was lost, the amount of business the king would get through with in one forenoon was something quite astonishing.

As Karl stood in the crowd at one side of the great hall, looking on, the first case for that morning was called. An Egyptian merchant came forward and fell at the feet of the king, declaring his petition. He claimed as his slave a poor girl, who was also brought before the throne, but in chains. The cruel merchant told a false story, but he felt secure of triumph; for he had previously bribed the prime minister, and even sent a handsome sacred cat from Thebes to the king himself. This cat, which was now
walking about the hall, was pure white all over, with flaming eyes. As it came near Karl, he overheard it purring to itself, “How that villain lies! I am not from Thebes at all; and as for this poor girl, she used to live in the same street with me, and I know she is no slave.” When Karl heard that, he was so impressed with the wickedness of mankind, that, forgetting where he stood, he gave a long whistle. Everybody turned that way, to see who could be so daring,—the king among the rest; and the obedient guards, who were already watching for the slightest sign of the royal decision, when they saw the king’s head turn aside in that style, at once seized the Egyptian merchant, dragged him out of the royal presence, and before he could have said Jack Robinson (if he had tried to do so, which he didn’t) cut off his ugly head. As for the poor girl, you may well believe she did not stop long to see what had saved her.

But for Karl the situation was embarrassing. He thought he would try the effect of a little fiddling upon the company; and, just as the soldiers were about to take hold of him, he began a lively tune.Everybody was delighted; and
the king above all, who, in a few seconds, might be seen nodding his head to keep time with the music. Now the officers kept bringing in new cases for judgment; and there was the king nodding assent to every one. The first was a distressed widow, asking protection against her husband’s brother; and she got what she wanted so quickly that a host of other afflicted and oppressed persons, who had been afraid to come before the king, crowded at the foot of the throne. That was a great morning for business! By the time the tune was over, and the king stopped nodding, no less than two hundred and seventy-three poor people had got real justice done them.

A great shouting was then heard from before the palace; and when the king went out upon the balcony, lo, there was the population of the city, full of gladness and praise, because of the merciful and fatherly conduct of their sovereign. This set the king a-thinking. He wondered at first what it all meant; but after several days of deep meditation, he began to suspect that he had been a tyrant and a fool. So he rang the bell for the prime minister, and said to him that
his services were no longer required. Then he rang again for the chief of police, and to him he said, “Bring me the fiddler!”

That’s the way Karl the fiddler came to be prime minister; but how on earth it happened that the lovely, lovely daughter of the king fell in love with him, and he with her, I never could tell. Everything else can be explained, in one way or another; but that sort of thing is quite incomprehensible. It is certain, however, that, a few years after the period to which I now allude, a portly King Karl used to sit with his peerless bride by his royal side; and a fair-haired little prince used to write with great pains in his copy-book the following excellent maxim, composed, it is said, by his royal sire:

“I am rich, but have only food and shelter;
Powerful, but only to do good;
Happy, but only because I love all things.”
CHAPTER V.

Wednesday, — Grandmother’s Fairy Story.

GLORIOSO.

THOMAS lived in a beautiful house in the country, and had everything that was in his heart could wish. His father was a lawyer of fame, and was absent in town a good deal of the time. His mother died when he was a baby. So Thomas was left a good deal to himself; and spent most of his time reading fairy stories and learning how to behave in dealing with enchanted castles, fiery dragons, and wicked genii and sorcerers. At the time of this story he was twelve years old; and being perfectly versed in this kind of learning, he resolved to go out into the wide world to seek his fortune. He found in the geography a fine large kingdom, about half-way round the globe, directly east from where he lived, and resolved to journey towards the sunrise until he reached the place; for, you see, it was part of his plan
"The fact is, he was so charmed with the face of the princess, that he wanted to keep it in the moonlight all the time, and did not pay proper attention to other matters." — Page 88.
to marry the king's daughter, and of course there was no chance of that in a country without a king.

He changed his name at once to Glorioso, in order to make it fit his princely title, when he should win one. And, early one morning, when the stage came by his father's cottage, bound for the east, he "hooked on behind," and rode eight or ten miles before they found him out. Then he had to jump off in a hurry, to escape the driver's long lash, and he couldn't help feeling this method of travelling beneath the dignity of a prince; but nobody would know of it, so he sat down quite contentedly under a hedge, and began to resolve what to do next. While he was resolving he fell asleep, as a good many other people do under the same circumstances. Resolving is a tiresome business. Besides, he had spent the night before in resolving and preparing. So he slept all day. Towards evening he awoke, feeling quite hungry, and thought it was time for some adventure which would bring him a supper. Of course something would happen. It always did in the stories, and it always does, when people are seeking their for-
tunes. In fact, it is a universal rule, fit to be written in copy-books, that, wherever one is, something is sure to happen, though it is not always a supper. In this case it was an old man who came trudging along the road, carrying a large bag. The moment Glorioso saw him he knew it was a magician, against whom he must be on his guard. So when the old man asked him his name and whither he was going, he concealed his real name of Glorioso, and replied that he was called Thomas, and was going to the next town to get work. The old man looked at him keenly, and said, “You’ll do; you had better come along with me. I have work for you.” At these words, our hero congratulated himself on his penetration; for this was exactly the way a disguised magician would talk. He consented at once, remembering that it is necessary first to serve a magician faithfully, until you get his secret, then take him unawares, and bind him with his own most powerful charm deep in the lowest dungeon of his dark castle, and refuse to let him go, until he has secured for you the hand of the princess. So they trudged along together. Presently the old man
said, "Thomas is a vulgar name. What is your other name?" This startled him a little; but there was no use in trying to deceive a magician; so he said, "Glorioso." "Capital," exclaimed the old man; "it could n't have been better if you had chosen it for yourself! Your fortune is made!"

At this, Glorioso could not forbear showing that he was no ordinary, ignorant boy; so he said, acutely, "I suppose you mean to take me into your service, Mr. Magician." The old man started, and looked at him sharply, then laughed, and replied, "Well, since you know I am a magician, I suppose there is no use in denying it. But we don't like to be recognized until we get our robes on, and everything ready. It interferes with our plans. If I employ you, you must not tell anybody that you are connected with me, or know me." Glorioso promised, and no more was said until they drew near the town, just at dark.

"Go to the nearest inn," said the wizard, "and get your supper and lodging. Here is money to pay for them. But after everybody is asleep, you must get up quietly, and come out
here to meet me, and get your instructions for to-morrow.’” Glorioso accordingly went to the nearest inn, and there he found supper just ready. This seemed to be another proof of the magician’s wisdom, that he should know when supper was ready at that particular place; but the fact is, as I think best to confess here, that the magician knew when supper-time came by long experience, and not by magic at all.

At the supper-table Glorioso overheard the people talking about the great wizard who was expected in town the next day. “In fact,” said one, “I should not wonder if he is here already. Only nobody knows him by sight.” “How about the princess?” said another. “O, she must be here too. The giant has got her locked up somewhere.” If Glorioso had not read all the story-books, this conversation would probably have startled him somewhat; but he was prepared for it beforehand by his studies, and so he only said to himself, “So I have the magician and the giant and the captive princess. Now I must wait till I find the good fairy. She cannot be far away!”

At midnight Glorioso stole out of his bed-
room, and went to the edge of the town to meet his master, the wizard. To his surprise he found a large tent in the field where they had parted a few hours before. It was divided into a room of considerable size, and two smaller ones. In one of the smaller rooms, on a camp-stool, sat the magician, smoking a pipe, and stirring something in a dish, over a charcoal furnace. Through the open space, from which a curtain had been drawn back, Glorioso saw that the large room contained a platform, in which there was a trap-door. On a pile of hay behind the wizard lay a huge form, snoring heavily, which he at once recognized as the giant. A helmet and a heavy club were on the ground at his side. Glorioso thought for an instant of pouring the mysterious broth on the magician, so as to scald him to death, and then hitting the giant over the head with his own club. But he gave up the idea, recollecting that it is not safe to play such games as that, without the assistance of a fairy or the wife of the ogre. Besides, he had not yet seen the princess; and a good deal would depend upon the question whether she was pretty or not; for Glorioso had
a good heart, and had resolved, crown or no crown, not to marry without love, and whether he loved the princess, how could he tell without seeing her?

The magician looked up as he entered, and nodded kindly, saying, "Wait a few minutes, till I get through with my porridge. Hunting up the giant and the princess, and erecting the Temple of Sorcery here, has made my supper late, and given me an appetite. While I am eating you can go into the Temple and dress yourself. You are a prince, you know; and yonder is your court dress." This was a new proof of the wizard's wonderful knowledge; for how should he know that Glorioso was a prince, when nobody had told him? As for our hero himself, he took it all very coolly, being quite prepared for it, though his head might well have been turned at this sudden realization of his ambition. Only one day away from home, and a prince already.

He went into the Temple of Sorcery, which looked barren and gloomy enough, being only illuminated by the candle burning in the magician's apartment, and by the misty moonlight,
streaming in through an opening at the farther end. Here he put on the clothes which had been given him, and found that they fitted him exactly, as of course they would, being provided by a sorcerer. They were of bright colors, and flashed with jewels, evidently of the most precious varieties. There was also a diamond-hilted sword, just suitable for a prince, though it would not come out of its scabbard; and finally, there was a velvet cap with a long feather, which Glorioso placed upon his head, and which made him feel, as well as look, several inches taller. When he was fully equipped, he turned around, as if to admire himself on all sides, though, as there was no looking-glasses, I am sure I don't see how turning around could help him any, since his eyes turned with the rest of him. But when his revolution had brought his face towards the apartment corresponding to that of the magician, he saw that the curtain separating it from the Temple had been lifted; and lo! there stood the loveliest little being imaginable, with golden hair and blue eyes, all dressed in white. She was looking at him and smiling; and he heard her say, “So that is the
new prince; he is very handsome!" And with that, seeing the prince's eyes fixed upon her, she dropped the curtain in a hurry and disappeared.

Glorioso's heart rapped loudly at his ribs, as if saying, "That is she; O let me get out and run after her." But just then the sorcerer called out to the giant, "Come, Lazybones, stir yourself! We must try this youngster. Wake up! or you'll get no wages from me!"

With that, the giant arose slowly, and undoubled and stretched himself, until it seemed as if he would poke his head through the roof, yawning at the same time as though he would swallow the whole Temple. "Hang the youngster," he grumbled, "what have I got to do with him? I know what I have to do, well enough. The girl is my business. I thought, when the last prince ran away, you would not try any more of that nonsense."

"Be quiet, you fool," replied the other, "he will hear you. I must have a prince, I tell you, for the last grand act, where you carry them both off, one under each arm. I mean to shoot him too. That always has a fine effect."
Glorioso trembled just a little, when he overheard this terrible conversation; but he took courage when he remembered that all these schemes would certainly fail, because the innocence and beauty of the princess, and the bravery and ingenuity of the prince, and the power and friendship of the good fairy, are always too much for their malignant foes. In a moment more the giant and the magician entered the Temple of Sorcery. "Pick him up," said the wizard, "and see if you can swing him." With that the prince found himself, by a strong hand grasping his waistband, suddenly lifted from the ground, and swung rapidly several times around the giant's head. Then he was set down, dizzy and indignant. He immediately resolved upon vengeance, which, however, he thought it prudent to postpone. But now the magician said to him, in a quick and peremptory way, "Jump upon the platform, and let me see whether you can stand fire. Here! I will show you what you are to do. You must take this bullet, and put it in your mouth. Then, when I fire at you, you must hold the bullet firmly between your teeth, so that it can be seen. That is the
whole secret." So Glorioso stood on the platform, while the magician loaded a pistol, took aim, and fired at him. He did not flinch at all; and his new master, well pleased, said the lesson was over, and they would all go to bed. So the giant returned to his heap of hay, and Glorioso was told to put on his old clothes again and return to the inn, since he had already paid for his lodging there, and might as well get the worth of his money. Then the magician also, blowing out the candle, lay down opposite the giant, and fell asleep immediately.

The prince could not basely go back to bed and leave in captivity the lovely being whom he had seen and admired for one instant, and was determined to serve all his life. So, instead of returning to the town, he stole softly around the outside of the tent, until he was opposite the apartment of the princess. He regretted greatly that he possessed no guitar,—I would say, lute,—and that he could not have played upon such a thing if he had it; for this was the proper occasion for a serenade, at the sound of which the princess would come forth, relate her woes, and resolve to fly, fly with her devoted cham-
pion. But while he wondered whether a little judicious sighing, or perhaps singing, might not awake the lady without disturbing her guardians, behold the curtain of the tent was raised, and the princess stood before him. She now wore a crown, in which gleamed gems of the most extraordinary size; her neck was hung with heavy chains of gold, and the amount of gorgeous silk, velvet, and ermine displayed in her dress was quite astonishing. Smiling in a frank and fearless way,—and oh, what white teeth she showed when she smiled!—she came out into the moonlight, and held out her hand.

"Are you going to stay," said she, "or will you steal and run away, like the last one? I am glad he is gone. I did not like him; he used to pinch me when we played together, and step on my toes in the Spanish dance. When he ran away, he wanted me to go too, but I would not; and when they found he was gone, they went after him and caught him and put him in prison. Yesterday the old man went over and got the things he stole, and brought them back in a bag. While he was gone, the giant—he is very good to me, though he hurts me sometimes—
brought us here in the wagon. I had a great mind to run away myself, before the old man got back, but I was afraid, and Bridget said no."

"Who is Bridget?" asked Glorioso. "O, she is the giant's wife. Before they came, I had a hard life. The old man used to keep bears and monkeys, and I had to go into the dens. But Bridget says, when the time comes, she will help me to get away and find my parents."

"Fair princess," said Glorioso, recalling as much as he could of the manner in which the chivalrous young princes generally addressed their ladies, "who are thy parents, and where do they dwell? And by what name may I call thee?"

"You need n't talk to me now in that way," said she, laughing quite like a little girl, "we shall have plenty of that, and you will get tired of it, as I am. They call me the Princess Favolletta in public, but you can call me Pet, if you like. That was my name at home, far away in another country, across the sea. I was stolen and carried away, and brought across the ocean, and sold to this old man. He is not very cruel
now, though he makes me work hard and travel about all the time. I have had to sit up all this evening until now, to make and fit my new dress for to-morrow."

"How splendid it is!" cried Glorioso; "what magnificent jewels!"

"Pshaw!" said Pet, "don't be foolish. They are nothing but trash."

Glorioso thought nobody but a princess could speak in that way of diamonds and pearls. "Princess, I mean Pet," said he, "let us both run away from this odious place to-night. I know the country where your royal father resides. We will fly hither; only we must have a fairy to keep back the magician from pursuing us."

"Is it a fairy ye want?" said a rough but kindly voice from the tent, "sure I'll be yer fairy, if that's all, an' I'll kape the ould man back till well into the mornin'. Av ye make good time, ye'll get out of the way intirely. Is it yerself, young man, as comes from my little gurl's father? Faith, yer a small body for a big business; but ye've managed it purty well so far, an' that's the truth."
"That's Bridget," said the princess. "O Bridget! I am going home to my father!" And with that she cried a little, just for joy, and looked more lovely than ever.

Thomas—bless me! I mean Glorioso—could not contain himself for pride and pleasure. The fairy was disguised as an ugly old woman in a broad frilled cap, but of course she could assume her own beautiful form whenever she chose; and at any rate, she looked beautiful already to him, because she was so friendly, and promised her help in the rescue of the Princess Favoletta. He grew more and more confident, and protested that he was the only person destined to convey her home. He was even anxious to start at once, but the fairy Bridget told them they must leave the handsome clothes behind. "Av ye carry off wan o' thim thrifles," said she, evidently trying to speak like a common person, though it was of no use, since he had recognized her at once, by virtue of his perfect acquaintance with fairy matters,—"av ye carry off wan o' thim thrifles, sure he'll follow yez to the ind o' the wurruld."

So Glorioso went softly back and doffed his
fine feathers. Then he returned and waited impatiently outside until the princess had changed her clothes likewise. When she reappeared in a plain brown dress, with a little hood of the same color over her bright hair, she seemed, if possible, more charming than ever. At the last moment the fairy almost changed her mind about letting them go. She began to cry like any mortal, and sobbed that she never should hear of her darling again. “You can come to us at any time, you know,” said Glorioso. “Indade I could,” said she, “anywhere on this side of the say, but not in thim ould counthries, barrin’ it’s Ireland.” Then Glorioso recalled that every fairy has her sphere, and possesses no power or knowledge outside of it. So, on the spur of the moment, he whispered to her the name and address of his father, adding, “He is my—that is, he is a very worthy man, who manages some affairs for me, and I will let him know what happens to us. So you need only go there to find out how the princess is getting along.” Thereupon they bade her good by, and hurried away, the giant and the magician snoring a fine duet as they passed.
They took a road that led away to one side of the town, as they wished to avoid meeting anybody, and when this led them into another road, Glorioso, who did not wish to appear igno-

rant, boldly strode off toward the quarter where the moon was shining, which happened to be the west. The fact is, he was so charmed with the face of the princess, that he wanted to keep it in the moonlight all the time, and did not pay proper attention to other matters. This is frequently the effect of the moon under such circumstances.

It requires great strength of mind to es-
cort a lovely princess home by moonlight, and not take the longest road. Glorioso, how-
ever, thought, “Presently we shall come to a lake, and on it there will be a boat, which will begin to go of itself as soon as we get into it.” But they came instead, after walking several hours, into a deep, dark wood. However, this also was provided for in the story-books. “Never fear, dear princess,” spoke the brave Glorioso, “in the midst of this wood dwells a venerable hermit with a long gray beard, who will hospitably entertain us, and direct us to his
brother, a hundred years older than he, who will
tell us all we desire to know."

You may think this was too confident; but
you must bear in mind that up to this time
everything had turned out, from the beginning,
just as he expected. But now his faith was
sorely tried; for the princess grew very tired,
and the way seemed as if it would never end.
At last, when they despaired of finding the hut
of the venerable hermit, they saw the end of the
wood close before them and the open country
beyond. The moon had set, and it was now
quite dark; so the princess said she would sit
down under the last trees on the brow of the
hill, to rest until morning.

Glorioso was glad to consent, for he too was
very weary. "Fair lady," said he, "recline
upon these gathered leaves, until the dawn,
which is not far off, shall appear. It is indeed a
sorry couch for one of your rank."

Now the fair lady, being so tired, was a little
cross, and snapped him up sharply. "I wish
you would stop that nonsense. Now that we
have got away from it, I want to forget all about
it; but you keep pretending and pretending, just
to tease me. One would suppose you thought me a real princess, instead of a make-believe.”

Glorioso could scarcely believe his ears. “Are you not, then?” he began.

“Of course not,” said she; “who ever said I was? I am nothing but a wretched girl, stolen away from her father—”

“The king,” put in Glorioso.

“The fiddle-de-dee!” said Pet, pettishly; and then suddenly turning towards him she cried out, “I don’t believe you know my father at all, and you cannot take me home. Why did I leave Bridget? O dear, O dear!” and she sobbed as if her heart would break.

For a few moments nothing was said. Nothing can be said to a woman while she is crying. But at last she wiped away her tears, and proceeded more calmly. “You will take me back in the morning, won’t you? I know you are kind and good, and meant to help me, though I cannot understand it at all. But you will take me back—”

“To the magician?” asked Glorioso.

“T

To the travelling juggler, who exhibits the Irish giant and the Spanish Princess Favoletta
—fiddlestick,” said she; “why can’t you stop talking so? Don’t you see it makes me cry?”

Glorioso—no, this time I shall say Thomas—made no answer for several minutes. If I should write down all that he thought during that time, it would fill a book. The substance of it, however, was neatly expressed in his first words, “I believe I am the biggest fool that ever lived. I want to go home.”

“Heigh-ho! so do I,” exclaimed Pet; “but where is my home? Have you been stolen away too?” And with that, like a dear, sweet, good maiden as she was, she began to pity him so much that she forgot her own sorrows. “What is your name, and where do you live? How selfish I was not to ask before!”

“My name is Gl—Thomas,” said he; “don’t let’s talk about that. Look here, Pet, you know a great deal more than I do; won’t you tell me something? Are there not real magicians and giants and fairies?”

“I never saw any,” replied she; “they are all in the story-books, I suppose.”

“But there are kingdoms and princesses?” continued Thomas.
"O yes; there were princesses in my country; I saw one of them one day; she looked just like any other girl, only she looked quite sad. People said she was going to marry an old duke, and didn't like him."

"Don't the princesses marry the young champions that save their lives, or rescue them from giants?" asked Thomas, unwilling even yet to give up his dream.

"No," said the maiden, with a little shy laugh, "not the real princesses." (Fie, Pet! only ten years old, and a coquette already!)

Then Thomas cried out boldly, "I am glad you are not a princess!" And when she blushed, and asked him what he meant by that, he blushed also, and refused to tell.

By this time it was quite day; and when they lifted their eyes, behold a beautiful wide landscape lay beneath them, beautiful in the first rays of the sun. There were patches of forest, and smooth green or brown fields, and white houses embowered in trees, scattered here and there, or clustered in quiet villages, with gleaming church-spires. The maiden clapped her hands. "O how lovely!" said she; "if I can-
not find my own home, I should like to live here!"

At these words Thomas sprang to his feet. "Why, this is Chipmonk Hill," he shouted, "and down there is my father's house! We have been coming back all the time. Come, come, I know you will be welcome!" And without waiting for any further explanations, he caught her hand and hurried her down the hill.

The house where Thomas lived was a handsome country residence, with a wide veranda. As the two wanderers approached, they saw that, notwithstanding the early hour, the door was open, and a considerable group of people were gathered around it. As they drew nearer they were greeted with shouts of, "Here they are!" and a tall, handsome gentleman rushed down the walk towards them. When little Pet saw him, she flew to meet him, crying and laughing, and sprang into his arms.

To explain all this I must go back a little in my story. It seems that Pet's father had tracked her step by step, from England, where he resided, to this country, and had found out that she was in the possession of the juggler and his
travelling show. After visiting several places where they had exhibited, and arriving, each time, after his little bird had flown, he finally caught the show at the town where Thomas had joined it; and about an hour after the two fugitives had escaped he arrived in hot haste at the Temple of Sorcery, and roused the inmates. Then there was a storm, I promise you! The juggler was angry and frightened, the giant was stupid and frightened, the poor father was distracted, and Bridget was the victim of it all. But she behaved nobly. She wouldn't tell a thing until she found that this was really the father of Pet. Then she said, "Sure, the child was gone off with the foine by ye sent for her!" That made matters a great deal worse; but the father cared for nothing but to find his child, and cut short all explanations, promising to overlook everything, and pay a reward besides, if they would help him in the pursuit. Then Bridget bethought herself of the address which Thomas had given her, and away the whole party went, to Thomas's father's house. There they found the lawyer and all his family up and dressed, and filled with anxiety. Thomas had
been missing since morning, and the whole neighborhood had been searched for him in vain. The two parents mingled their woes in sympathy, and were considerably consoled; for it was now evident that the children could come to no great harm, and that it would not be a very difficult matter to find them. But nothing could be done until daylight, which was now close at hand. So the intervening time was spent in hearing the story of the juggler, which I shall not introduce here, but from which it appeared that he had nothing to do with the stealing of the little girl, two years before, and that he had made some endeavors to find her parents, but without success. He hoped nothing further would be said about the matter, and offered a fair share of the profits of his tour to pay for the services of the Princess Favoletta. But Pet’s father laughed at that, and put him quite at his ease, promising to give him also a considerable sum of money, to be divided equally between himself, the giant, and Bridget.

Just after sunrise the whole party went out upon the veranda to look up and down the road, and then it was that they saw Pet and her cham-
pion hastening across the fields. Everybody was overjoyed at this happy termination of an anxious and miserable night. Tom’s folly was not alluded to. In fact, no one understood it but the princess, and she had promised not to tell; and all curiosity on the subject was swallowed up in the joy of meeting.

I need not describe the scene further. Pet and her father remained for some weeks as guests at the lawyer’s mansion. The two parents became very intimate friends, and their children liked one another better and better every day. Tom confided to Pet his determination to study hard and prepare himself for some great deeds. “If there are no more sorcerers and giants,” said he, “there must be other ways of being brave and generous, and rescuing the innocent. My father says that lawyers are the champions of right nowadays, and I mean to be a lawyer.”

Not long after this conversation the guests took their departure. Just before they went away, Pet went up to Tom, who was standing sadly apart, and held out her hand, saying, “Good by, Tom. I hope you’ll find a prin-
cess, some day.” This was intended for gentle satire; but Pet could n’t keep it up in that tone; for she burst out, “Dear Tom, I will never forget you as long as I live.” Tom answered nothing. His heart was in his throat, choking him.

“Well, have n’t you anything to say?” asked she, vexed, and patting the garden walk with her little foot.

“I can’t,” gasped Tom.

“You need n’t say anything, then,” replied Pet, with an odd emphasis, at which Tom looked up suddenly, and—well, there is no use in disguising it, for the two fathers saw it from the front door—Tom kissed her, and she threw her arms about his neck for an instant, and then ran away as fast as she could. At which the two fathers nodded and smiled, and appeared to understand one another perfectly.

All this happened when Tom was twelve and Pet ten. You see, girls grow faster than boys at first, and Pet was quite a little woman in her ways and moods, while Tom had not got out of jackets, and was merely a good-natured, clumsy,
bewildered boy. He could have talked gorgeously as Prince Glorioso, but he had n't a word to say in his proper character of Thomas, to a pretty girl.

But ten years make a great difference. At twenty-two Tom was a handsome fellow with a fine mustache, who had been through college, and studied at a German university, and was now travelling in England, before returning to this country to go into partnership with his father. And one day he was standing in a grand conservatory among the japonicas and white lilies with a charming young lady of twenty,—in fact, of course it was Pet. He had been a guest of Pet's father for several weeks, and he was just going away. The young lady had just made some small remark, to which he replied, "Yes, Miss Pet." She broke out, with the most bewitching imitation of the manner of the little Princess Favolella, years and years before, under the dark trees, showing that she had n't forgotten a single minute of that eventful night: "Why don't you stop talking such nonsense, and call me Pet. One would think you believed me to be a real princess!"
Well, now, I really cannot undertake to report Tom's next speech; all I know is, that at the end of it Pet stood silent, with her face turned away a little, and her eyes cast down. Then the cruel fellow actually mimicked her dear, dear, never-forgotten parting speech, using her own words, "Well, have n't you anything to say? You need n't say anything, you know!"

"Take back your old kiss," says Pet, half in fun and all in earnest; and here is another blank in my story, which skips over five minutes to the final remark in the conversation:—

"And now, Mr. Prince Glorioso Tom, I think you had better stay over till the next train, or possibly a little longer, and talk to my royal father!"
CHAPTER VI.

Thursday, — Grandfather’s Story of Adventure.

UNDER LAND AND SEA.

WHEN I was a boy about eight years old, I used to swim in the bay that ran up from the sea near our house. I was not at all afraid of the water; I could dive and stay out of sight a long time, and then come up to the surface, snorting and puffing, and strike out for the shore. There was one place in the bay so deep that none of the boys had ever reached the bottom by diving. They used to try every day; but before they got to the bottom the force of their spring would be spent, and the water would buoy them back again to the surface. It was said that a ship had sunk there, with ever so much money on board; and we all longed to get down and see if it was so. After thinking over the matter a great deal, I determined to attempt it in a new way. So one day, when a number of us were
"When I opened my eyes again I was lying on the deck of a ship, and the lobster was bathing my face with a bottle of cologne-water." — Page 103.
in the water together, I took a heavy stone in my two hands, and jumped overboard from the old scow that we used to have with us. You see, I meant to let the weight of the stone carry me to the bottom, and then, when I wanted to rise again, I could drop the stone, and come up without difficulty.

It seemed to me that I was a long time going down. I held my breath, of course; but I kept my eyes open, and could see quite well. The water overhead was at first of a lovely light green color, which grew darker and darker as I got further away from the light of heaven. The pressure of the water increased till it made my head ache; and in spite of my resolution, I had almost resolved to let go the weight and give up my adventure, when my feet touched the bottom. Sure enough, there was the wreck of a schooner. The masts had been cut away, but the hull was there, lying on one side. I had no time to make any further explorations; for I felt unable to hold my breath any longer. So I dropped the stones from my hands, in order to ascend to daylight and air. Alas! something held my feet, so that I could not rise. Looking
down I saw an immense lobster. He had got each foot in a pair of his jaw-nippers, and taken a double turn of his tail around a piece of rock. His eyes stuck out of his head half an inch on each side with glee, and he wriggled them at me in the most horrible manner. That is the only way in which lobsters can wink, you know.

I was in great fear, as you may well believe; but in a few seconds my pain was even greater than my fear. I could not open my mouth to speak, but I tugged fiercely to get away, and cried loudly within myself, without making any noise at all, just as people do in the nightmare. I felt a dreadful pressure on my head; I was choking for want of breath; everything whirled about me. In the midst of my anguish I heard the fiendish old lobster say, “It will all be over in twenty seconds more. He’s a tough one, and it takes him a good while to get acclimated; but nobody stays in these parts more than three minutes without getting used to it. His head is swimming already.” With that he laughed a horrid laugh, and I swooned away.

When I opened my eyes again I was lying on
the deck of the ship, and the lobster was bathing my face with a bottle of cologne-water. ["O grandfather! we don't believe that!"] "I remember it very well, my dears; it was a bottle he found in the cabin of the wreck. Half of it he had put on my face, and half he had drunk, and it made him very jolly."] "There," said he, as I sat up, "now you will do nicely. Let's see you walk. So; that's pretty well, only you should sidle gracefully, as I do.'

Indeed, I found to my surprise that I felt quite well. I could move freely, and speak; and I felt no necessity of breathing at all. At once I sprang upwards, intending to return to the surface of the bay; but the lobster was too quick for me. In an instant he had me by the foot again. "Let me go!" said I.

"Certainly," said he; "you may go if you like; but you must listen to me first, and then choose." So he made me sit down again, and sat down on his tail by my side, putting one of his flippers around my arm in a friendly but firm fashion.

"You see, young man, you are what they call drowned. That is to say, you have got used to
living under water, and if you return to the surface you’ll probably die. I’ll tell you just what your chances are. You will rise and float about on the top of the water. If your friends happen to see you, they will pull you out, wrap you in blankets, pound on you, roll you over, blow into you with a bellows, and finally give it up, and bury you. If they don’t happen to see you, then we get you again.”

“What do you do with folks when you get ’em again?” I asked.

“Salad,” replied the lobster, with a leer. “They make excellent salad. I’m almost sorry I told you anything about it; but you see I have been drinking, and when a lobster is in liquor it makes him good-natured, that is, any liquor but hot water. Now, if you choose to try it, you can go up and take your chances. Perhaps they may get air into you again with that bellows flummery, but it is n’t very likely. On the other hand, if you stay down here, you ’ll have lots of fun.

“Can I never get back to the dry land again?” I asked.

“Well,” replied the lobster, “there ’s a way, I
believe; but you’ll have to find it out from somebody that knows it. The turtles are the best ones to tell you.” After a little more conversation I promised to stay awhile with my new acquaintance and be introduced to his friends, though I made a strong resolution to return to mankind and breathe air again, as soon as I could find out how to do it safely.

Just at this point a white body appeared above us, swiftly descending through the water. I saw at once that it was one of my companions, diving to see what had become of me. The lobster started up eagerly, made a spring, and caught my friend by the foot; but either because he was tipsy, or because he was in such a hurry, he forgot to belay his tail; and in an instant the swimmer shot upward, carrying the unfortunate lobster with him. These crusty fellows never have the wit to let go of anything after they have once taken hold; and my acquaintance was less discreet than usual. So he let himself be dragged up, like a fool. But I shall never forget his despairing shriek when he perceived that he was going to pot.

I was now left alone; but the fear of being
found drowned if I should ascend to the surface made me decide to stay below for a while at least, and study the ways of the water-folk, until I could discover the proper manner of returning. First of all, I descended into the cabin of the wreck. There were no bodies there. Evidently the crew had escaped. The boxes and cupboards were open, and a good many things were heaped on the floor ready to be removed; but they had been all left behind. So the crew must have escaped in a hurry after all. Probably their boat was destroyed in trying to launch it, and they had to take to spars and planks. The things they left behind were damaged by the water and filled with slime; but I rinsed out a light waterproof shirt and trousers, which I put on; because, even under water, one should wear something,—if not scales or a shell, then clothes.

I found also a great chest full of money and precious stones. It was my first impulse to fill my pockets with them; but I reflected that I could have no use for them where I was, nor take more than an extremely small portion of them in that way; so I resolved to leave this
wealth where I had found it, and go after it in the future, if I should ever be so happy as to return to the upper world. But I put a jackknife in my pocket.

After satisfying my curiosity as to the contents of the cabin, I returned to the deck, and feeling rather lonesome I tried to open conversation with a row of young lady oysters, who sat along the bulwarks, like girls at a dance, waiting for partners. But I soon found that they did n’t know how to do anything but smile. That they did in a startling way, opening their mouths back to their ears, and further too, and displaying their pearls. Nothing that I could say induced them to talk. They just smiled in that empty-headed way until they got tired of my attentions, and then they yawned. So I took the hint and left them to their own company, while I wandered away in search of more sensible acquaintances.

These I soon found, in a crowd of fish, who were playing tag, leap-frog, and follow-my-leader, in the liveliest manner. Addressing myself to one of the brightest looking, who had withdrawn a moment to wipe the perspiration
from his scales, and take an accidental kink out of his back-fin, I inquired of him concerning the party.

"O, this is the annual picnic of our school," he said. "We belong to the celebrated blue-coat school, so called on account of the uniform."

"But if this is a picnic," said I, "where are your refreshments?"

"Our what?" asked the bluefish, opening his gills with astonishment.

"Your refreshments,—things to eat."

"O, grub," replied he, with a dull twinkle in his eye; "that's what you mean. Well, for the matter of that, we find it as we go along. Principally small fry, you know. A nibble at a minnow now and then, at the mouth of a river, is very delicate and wholesome diet. And once in a while we thin out."

"What do you mean by that?" I asked.

"Eat up a certain number of the scholars," he answered, as if it was a matter of course. "You see, when there are too many of us, if nobody will come to thin us out, we thin ourselves out. It is the only way I know. You
know we are not so able to support ourselves as those aristocrats that own the banks.”

“What aristocrats and what banks?” said I.

“The codfish aristocracy and the banks of Newfoundland,” replied my new friend.

[“O grandfather, you made that up yourself!”

“On the contrary, I remember it very well, my dears; and, moreover, I could not possibly have made it up; for it is a poor joke, only worthy of a sprained bluefish.”]

At this interesting point in the conversation I began to be afraid these ferocious fellows would take the notion to eat me, although, as there was only one of me, I could not fairly be accused of being too numerous. Fortunately, however, just as I was glancing with some apprehension on a throng of hungry-looking members of the school, who had surrounded me and were smelling and nosing me in a grub-thirsty way, I observed a great commotion among them. They turned tail with one accord, and, squeaking, “Shark, shark!” sculled away as fast as possible. In another moment I beheld the brown coat, light vest, and fine, prominent features of a shark, who was eagerly
pursuing the flying blues. As he shot swiftly by me, I got one gleam of inquiry from his small, cruel eyes, and this seemed to arouse his curiosity and wonder; for, horrible to relate, he paused in his headlong course, turned, and came slowly back towards me.

I pulled out my jack-knife, and prepared to fight. I was not much frightened, for I saw very soon that this was not a "man-eater," and, though he might possibly attack me, he could not, like one of his bigger-mouthed cousins, bite me in two at one snap, and swallow me in two gulps. I would have made a good many mouthfuls for him. But I had no desire to lose even so much as a nose or a finger in the fight. I resolved to attempt, by a well-directed blow, to drive my knife through his eye, into his brain. But, unfortunately, sharks are so made that their noses travel some distance ahead of their eyes. When they want to bite, they have to turn sideways, so as to give their mouths a chance. So this shark's nose was close upon me before I got a chance to strike at his eye. At that instant he turned up his ugly mouth, and took a nip at me as he passed. I struck, but missed his eye, and
my knife stuck fast in his tough old skull, and was jerked out of my hand. I had lost my weapon, and not hurt my enemy to speak of, while he had got a considerable piece out of my chin. You can see the scar yet.

["O grandfather, that’s nothing but a dimple. We’ve all got dimples just like it!"

"Very likely, my dears; when a wound of that kind gets into a family, it is apt to become hereditary! But if you don’t believe my story, this is a good place to stop."

"O, please, grandfather!"]

Well, where was I? Ah, I remember! No, on the whole I don’t exactly remember what happened next. I never could quite explain it even to myself. I think I must have sprung upwards some distance with the pain, and the shark must have turned quickly and made another lunge at the place where I had been; for the first thing I saw was the ferocious villain right under me; and the next thing, I had dropped astride of his back, just behind the neck, and was hanging on for dear life. Wasn’t that a pretty fix! My steed did n’t know what to make of it. He writhed and splashed and
snapped; but I stuck close, and his efforts were of no avail. Finally he turned and put out to sea as fast as ever he could. I knew that sooner or later he would find another shark, and that the two would be more than a match for me. My knife still stuck in his forehead, not quite out of my reach; but I dared not let go my hold and lean forward after it, for fear of being dismounted. Presently, however, I chanced to do the very thing which a natural philosopher would have done under the circumstances. Looking about for the best place to hold on by, I noticed on each side of the shark's head five little holes in a row. Into these I dug my fingers and thumbs, and found that in this way I obtained a secure hold. But presently I noticed that this produced an extraordinary effect upon the shark. In fact, it was not long before he gasped out, "Look here, I beg!"

"What's the matter," said I.

"Matter enough," said he, looking very squalid and miserable, "you've stopped up my breathing holes, and I am strangling to death. A fellow can't live if he isn't allowed to let out the water he breathes."
“That’s true,” said I, pushing my fingers in tighter than ever.

And sure enough, the shark grew weaker and weaker, and his pleading voice died away to a mere whisper. Suddenly I bethought myself that it would be better to make use of him than to kill him; for I was now several miles from the bay; and who knew what monsters I might meet in trying to get back alone. I might even lose my way, and wander about on the bed of the Atlantic the rest of my life, with no way of sending word to my friends. For, you see, my dears, in those days we had no ocean cable, nor indeed any telegraph at all.

So I took my fingers out of his blow-holes, and waited for him to recover his strength, taking the opportunity, meanwhile, to get back my knife, which I put crosswise in my teeth, so as to have it ready for use, if required, and yet leave my hands free. It was not long before I had made a bargain with my shark, who was now quite tame and meek, to spare his life, if he behaved himself properly and carried me safely back into the bay.

“I want to go where there are turtles,” said I.
"They're not good to eat," said the shark.
"Now, I'll have none of your advice," replied I; "you have only to go where I order you."

So we started back; and a very pleasant ride I had of it. I could steer perfectly by applying my hand to the blow-holes on either side; for the shark would immediately turn in the other direction, to escape the pressure. But in general I depended on him to find the way; for I knew he was anxious enough to get rid of me.

I laughed to see, as we sped along, how all the inhabitants of the bay fled away on either side, leaving a clear path before us. It seemed but a few moments before I saw again the light green color which indicated shallow water; and in a few seconds more my steed ran his long nose into the mud, completely throwing me over his head. Before I could fairly recover myself, he had turned tail and put out to sea again in a tremendous hurry, without so much as saying good by. I never saw him again; and, what is still more remarkable, there has n't been a shark heard of in the bay from that day to this. You
see this chap told the rest, and they thought it best to avoid the neighborhood!

Well, when I looked about me, sure enough, there were a family of turtles. I tried to enter into conversation with some of them; but I found it a difficult matter. The young ladies of this family are not even so affable and smiling as the oyster; they just take in their heads when you speak to them, and will not say a word, no matter how long you rap at their shells. And the old maids are so snappish that there is no peace with them. But after a while I found one very old gentleman, who had been quarrelling with his wife. She had turned him on his back and left him, in her spite, quite unable to get right side up again. This was a good chance for me; so, cordially shaking his flipper, I promised to restore him at once to his proper position in society, if he would answer a few questions for me.

This he agreed to do, apologizing at the same time for the awkward position in which I found him. He had eaten a little too much green soup at a public dinner, and so he could not float nor manage his limbs, even in the water.
“Capital hotel, that June Puddle,” said he, “but the living is a little too rich for us saltwater fellows. We are too easily upset.”

When I had turned him over like a flapjack, he peered cautiously around to see if his angry spouse was anywhere near, and then, having recovered his courage and somewhat arranged his ideas, he said pompously, “Well, young person, what can I do for you?”

“O grandfather! you are ever so much bigger than a turtle. He wouldn’t talk so to you!”

“Aha! my dears, he was a doctor and a member of the Board of Health, and that made him feel bigger than anybody. Why this very meeting where he had eaten so much was a grand convention to discuss the alarming prevalence of unwholesome dry land, and to devise means for increasing the number and size of nutritious and health-breeding puddles! O, he was big enough, I promise you!”

I told him that I had got accustomed to living under water, and desired to know how I could recover the power to breathe air, so as to return to the world I had left.

“Earth, air, water, fire!” said the old doctor, in a solemn and mysterious way; “Hm! air you
did, water you do, fire you can't, earth you must! Those are your symptoms, sir."

"Do you mean," said I, "that I must go through the earth to get back to the air?"

But the turtle had retired into his shell, and wouldn’t speak another word. However, I knew his weak point; and in a jiffy I had him sprawling on his back, and begging my pardon. This time I did not let him up until he had told me all I wanted to know. He said that once in a while a sea-turtle disappeared into a certain cleft in the rocks near by, and never returned. But they had been heard from, far in the interior, where they had set up as land-turtles, and were doing well. "Our profoundest thinkers," added he, "are of the opinion that they partake in their subterranean passage of some gaseous water, which forms, as it were, a perforation for the breathing of air." At once I knew that it must be something like a natural soda-water spring, and I saw how probable was the explanation of the turtle. Eager to put my new discovery into practice, I bid my venerable friend good by, not forgetting first to set him on his feet, and to hang about his neck as a slight
token of my gratitude a handsome pasteboard medal, which he said he should wear with pride as long as he lived. The inscription was, "Served up to-day at one o'clock!"

"Now, grandfather! that's what they put on the turtles in front of the eating-houses. We don't believe a word of it. Where could you get it?"

"Well, my dears, you must excuse me if I remark that there are some questions which little folks should not ask, and which old folks are unable—I mean disinclined—to answer."

Well, I started at once for the cleft in the rock, and, to my great joy, found it large enough to admit my body, though in some places it squeezed me pretty tightly. I crawled and wriggled forward for a good while, and found the water growing less and less salt. There was a strong current of it, setting against me, and I grew quite weary in attempting to stem it, after all my other fatigue. It was pitch dark all about me, and I supposed it was night, though, for that matter, I found out afterwards that it was quite as dark in the daytime also at this particular place. So I resolved to go to sleep.
To be sure I had not eaten any supper; but the fact is, I was afraid to do that. You see I had got my lungs accustomed to the water, and even that was costing me a great deal of trouble to undo again. If I went on to eat and drink like a fish, perhaps it would be quite impossible to recover the human way of living again. So I thought I would rather go hungry as long as possible.

I lay down at the bottom of the stream, with a stone under my head for a pillow, and pulled another, a great flat one, over my body for a coverlid, to prevent me from being carried away; and in this curious position I fell asleep, as soundly as if I had been tucked up by a Lord High Chamberlain in a gorgeous Imperial couch, upon eider-down pillows and beneath embroidered silken curtains. Indeed, I used to sleep in just such a bed when I was Sultan of Cathay.

["Now you need n't cry out 'O grandfather!' for I remember it very well, and some other time I will tell you all about it."]

I was waked by something nibbling at my toes, and, making a swift spring, I plunged my hand into a crowd of little fish, one of whom I
caught by the tail. It was so dark that I could not see what he was like; and it was some time before I could make the struggling, frightened little thing speak to me. When at last he found courage to answer my questions in a little squeaky voice, he said he lived in a cave, and had run away for fun with a lot of others, and they had all lost their way and were being carried by the current, they did not know where.

"I know where!" said I, sternly, to punish him for his naughtiness; "you were drifting down to the sea, to be eaten up, as you deserve. Serve you right! A fish with eyes in his head has no business to lose his way."

To this the little fellow replied, plaintively, "I don't know what you are talking about," and began to weep; and, strange to say, he wept at his ears, for he had n't any eyes at all, and never had heard of such a thing. But that I found out afterwards.

Well, I told him to trust to me, and I would bring him safely home; so tucking him tenderly into my pocket, I began again to crawl up stream. Pretty soon I found it was not actually dark. There were little bits of light here and
there in the water,—pieces of daylight, I suppose, that had got caught in it long before, and could n’t get away; and as I proceeded my path was occasionally illuminated by precious stones, clustered in the gloomy rocks, and shedding a beautiful lustre through the water.

Presently the stream widened into a still, deep pool, and the little fish, with a wriggle of joy, jumped out of my pocket and scuttled away. So this was the cave, I thought. For a long time I walked around on the bottom of the little lake, feeling the rocks with my hand, and wondering at their strange shapes. They seemed to be carved into all kinds of objects, such as tables and chairs, tall, straight columns, and flights of stairs. Finally I climbed up one of these, nearly to the surface of the water, and put out my head for an instant, just to see how the air would feel. It made me gasp so that I quickly pulled it in again. Then I laid myself upon a kind of shelf just under the dark water, and felt very tired and hungry and miserable. My courage seemed to give way all at once. I gazed up into the gloomy space above, which I knew was air, and O, how I wished I had never
been drowned! I hope you will never try it, my dears; it is curious, but it is very uncomfortable. And if you do get drowned you had better go right back to the surface, and let your friends pull you out and bring you back to life. Trying to get back the way I did is not to be recommended.

I thought of all this, and a great deal more, as I lay on my shelf; and I was quite ready to wish myself back again in the bay, to take my chances with the sharks and the lobsters, rather than starve there in the dark. For now, even if I had made up my mind to eat, there was absolutely nothing to be had. I believe if one of you had come along at that moment, and dropped in a pin, with a good fat worm on it, you might have caught me!

But wonders never will cease; that is, they never would, when I was young! As I lay mourning my desperate condition, what should I see but a line of starry lights, that came nearer and nearer, until I perceived that they were candles, held by human beings. Before I could distinguish the persons, however, I could not help noticing, in spite of my excitement, the
wonderful splendor of the cave. The dazzling white pillars rose on all sides to the roof, almost out of sight, and great icicles of stone hung half-way down, flashing in the light, and throwing long, fantastic shadows upon the walls. But I soon forgot this as I saw the party approach, and heard them talk. There was a rough-looking man, whom they called the guide, and a handsome old gentleman with a white necktie, and a boy of about my age, and a little girl a year or two younger. The children were walking very carefully, holding the hands of the older people, and exclaiming with every step at the loveliness of the cave.

They came close to the edge of the lake where I was lying, and the guide said, “Here’s a good place to take your lunch, sir; right by the edge of this lake.” So they all sat down, close by me; and I was on the point of popping my head right out of the water amongst the company; but experience had made me prudent, and I reflected that by such a course I would only frighten them, and perhaps kill myself; so I lay still and listened to the conversation. The children asked where the water came from and
where it went to, and whether there were any fish in it; to which the guide replied that nobody knew where it came from, but it probably went underground to the sea; and that there were plenty of fish in the lake, only they had no eyes. Then the little girl, who was the prettiest little girl that I ever saw,—you look like her, my dear,—pityed the fish, and said it was dreadful for anybody to live in such dark, cold water.

"Yes, it is cold," said the guide; "you might jest set your bottle of soda-water down here in this flat, shallow place, and keep it nice and cool till you want to use it." The little girl bent her beautiful bright face over me without seeing me, and set the bottle on the shelf close by my hand. But, alas! in doing so she lost her balance and fell beyond me, into the deep water. Instantly I slipped off my shelf, caught her by the dress, and lifted her with all my might, almost throwing her out upon the edge. The guide was quick enough to catch her, and in a moment she had recovered her breath enough to say, "I am not hurt, papa!" But of course everybody was very much excited; and as soon
as possible they wrapped her up in a shawl, and carried her away, leaving the lunch half eaten and quite forgotten. As they were going the guide said to himself, as it were, "Curious thing; never see anything like it. That child came back out the water most as if she was threwed back!" In a moment more they were gone, and the place was dark again.

For a good while I felt so stunned that I could not think. Then I realized that with the beautiful little girl and her friend and their candles all my hopes had gone. Disconsolately I climbed back to my old shelf, when suddenly my hand struck upon the bottle of soda-water. Hurrah! this was exactly what Dr. Turtle pronounced to be necessary for my recovery. You may believe that I opened it very quickly, but with great care. First I vigorously blew out all the water from my lungs, and then I fired the soda-water (cork and all, so as not to lose a drop) into my mouth, boldly putting my head above water as I did so. The first effect was a series of tremendous sneezes; then I felt that curious sensation in the nose which soda-water always causes in well-regulated persons; and by
that I knew that I was a boy again, as I had so often wished to be. Quickly I climbed out of the water and seated myself on the bank, where I remained for some time, simply enjoying the pleasure of breathing. Breathing is a great blessing; if you don't believe it, just try to get along without it.

Pretty soon my hand accidentally fell on a box of sardines, which had been part of the lunch of the party of travellers. Hungry as I was, I did not feel like eating fish; I had so recently been all but a fish myself. So I groped a little farther and found the sandwiches. When I tell you that I ate up the whole lunch of four people, you will believe that I had a pretty good appetite. I even hunted in the dark for more; but I found what was still better, namely, the candle of the little girl, and a box of matches, both of which had been left behind in the general confusion.

Now, is n't that a fine story?

["Why, grandfather, that is n't all; you know that is n't all! You have n't told us how long it took you to get out, and whether you ever found the little girl, and what your folks said when you got
home, and how you got the money from the wreck, and ever so much more!"

No, there is n't much more to tell. It took me just fifteen years to get out of the cave and find that girl again,—half an hour to get out, and all the rest of the time to find her. I am afraid there was some mistake about the money on that ship. At least nobody ever could discover it again. The fact is, when I got home it was night, and I crawled quietly to bed, without being seen. When I awoke again there was my whole family standing by the bed, rubbing and thumping me; and just as I opened my eyes my father hastily hid a pair of bellows behind him!

"Hallo!" said I; "you need n't try that on me; I've had hard enough work coming back by the other way."

"The boy's flighty," said my father; and when I went on and told my story, they all shook their heads sadly, and assured me that I had been pulled out of the water and supposed to be drowned, an hour before.

"Drowned! of course I was drowned," said I; "have n't I told you? But I was fool enough
to let an old lobster persuade me not to come up to the surface."

It was all of no use; they would not believe my story; and, in fact, I became at last so influenced by their obstinacy that I doubted it myself. But fifteen years afterwards I found the little girl again, and that convinced me that it was all true. How did I know it was the same little girl? Because she was so pretty; that's the way I recognized her. Did she remember falling into the dark water? Well, no, my dears, I regret to say that your grandmother and I never could agree on that point. She said she never had been in a cave in all her life; but, you see, I knew better, for I remembered her very well!
FELIX AND THE IDEA.

"When he had turned himself, he got a better view of his visitor than before, and noticed him more closely, remarking his close-fitting jacket, boots over his pantaloons, jaunty cap, and bright, merry face." — Page 135.
CHAPTER VII.

Friday,—Sister Helen's Story.

THE IDEA THAT FLEW OUT OF THE FIRE.

This story is not merely a true one. Some people seem to think that if a thing really happened, that is reason enough for telling it; but I am not one of them. This story is truer than true. It applies to everybody that ever lived, from Adam down to our little baby, who was born this morning at half past four,—or, for that matter, down to our baby's great-great-great-grandchildren, if he should ever have any. But if it applies to everybody, then, according to the rules of algebra, it applies to Felix Graham,—and that is an important point; for the very first word in the story is his name, as you will immediately see, unless you lose the place, and can't find it again.

Felix Graham was thirteen years old, and knew a great deal. I cannot tell you how many things he knew, but among them were skating,
and snow-balling, and sliding down hill, and spinning tops, and playing ball, and flying kites, and turning somersets, and shooting marbles. These accomplishments are not very useful, perhaps, to grown-up folks, but they are quite proper and necessary to boys. Certainly Felix's mother had none of them; so you perceive he knew more than his mother, which is just what he thought himself. These mothers are so ignorant!

It was very provoking, therefore, when, one Saturday, Felix was not allowed to go skating because there had been a thaw, and his mother thought the ice would be too thin and weak. Did n't all the boys say it would "bear"? The thaw had spoilt the sliding, too; and, to make matters worse, it began to rain during the forenoon, so that Felix was forced to stay in doors altogether, and see his holiday melt away like the snow in the yard, without doing him any good. He was sitting alone in the parlor, before the blazing fire, in what he thought was a manly attitude, with his legs astride of the chair-seat and his arms folded upon the top of the back; and as he looked into the fire, he made up his
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mind that life was exceedingly disappointing and disagreeable, and his mother very unreasonable. If she had let him go skating, just as like as not it would n't have rained at all. She began it, and now it was too bad! Boys of thirteen years often reason in this way. I think it comes of turning too many somersets, and walking too much on their hands.

All at once he saw the oddest little face just at the tiptop of the dancing flame in the fireplace; and looking closer, he thought he perceived a body belonging to it. It looked like a man, seen through the wrong end of an opera-glass. Felix used to take his mother's opera-glass and look at his feet that way. If you never tried it, you would better do so. It is highly extraordinary, and makes you feel as if you had been pulled like molasses-candy. But this little man was sitting with his knees drawn up under his chin, and his hands clasped around them, and seemed to be perfectly comfortable, although the fire kept tossing him up and down, so that the eye could scarcely follow him. Besides he was apparently white-hot all over.

"Hullo!" said Felix, "who are you?"
The small chap in the fire evidently answered something, but he could not be heard in the crackling and roaring.

"Come out of that," said Felix, "and get somewhere where I can see you and hear you."

With one jump the stranger flew out of the fireplace, for all the world just like a spark, and lit on the marble top of a table. Gracefully standing near a book-rack which happened to be there, he gradually turned red-hot, and then bluish, finally assuming natural colors, such as everybody has. "Lucky I didn't light on a chair," said he, in a voice that sounded like a trumpet, a long way off, "I should have scorched it some, I promise you. Who am I? I'm an Idea. Don't you know what that is? Poor fellow! don't get an Idea very often, do you?" and with that he laughed like a baby's rattle.

"I have Ideas a plenty, I tell you," said Felix, rather vexed, "but I never saw one before."

"Yes," said the little stranger, with great scorn, "you do have Ideas, but what Ideas! Contemptible, ragged, surly, sour, selfish fellows! See 'em? Of course not. You don't
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suppose such vagabonds would let you see 'em? But I saw one sitting in your ear a minute ago."

Felix put his hand quickly to his ear, at which the merry fellow on the table gave another shrill laugh, and shouted in his silvery way, "O, he's gone; those low people never stay where one of our set comes! Look at me! Do I look as if such vile Ideas could associate with me?" With that he drew himself up to his full height, which was about six inches, put his hand on his hip, and began to grow red-hot again.

Felix did not know whether to be amused or frightened; but he felt as though there could be no danger from such a tiny opponent, unless, indeed, he should "fire up" and go flying about like a spark; so he addressed him in a respectful tone, at which the little man's wrath slowly faded away. "What makes you get so hot?" said Felix.

"That's our way," replied his visitor. "We Ideas are not very powerful unless we come hot. Sometimes we visit a person to play with him or to put him to sleep; and very often we get used to a person and dwell with him almost all the time. Then, of course, we don't make such a
fuss about coming; but when we undertake to make a call where those vulgar, selfish Ideas have been staying, then, I tell you, we come hot. You see, about ten minutes ago we got a telegram at the central office, saying, 'Boy infested with wicked Ideas, despises mother, grumbles at weather, tired of life, says things are too bad. Detail one respectable Idea instantly to take possession of him.' That was the despatch; and they detailed me, and you had better believe I came hot. Rather! That rowdy crew that had you when I arrived are the worst gang I ever saw in my life. They haven’t gone far away, now; they are waiting to see whether I take possession or not.”

“That’s all nonsense!” said Felix; “how are you going to get possession? What’s your name? Where did you come from? How long will you stay?”

“One question at a time,” said the queer little stranger. “But I’ll answer them all in my own order. As for my name, I am called Cheerfulgratitude,—not Cheerful without the Gratitude, nor Gratitude without the Cheerful. It’s Cheerfulgratitude, all one word, five syllables.
Don’t you try to separate it in the middle; it can’t be separated. I came from the central office. If you don’t know where that is, ask your mother; she’ll know; she often sends messages there. I am going to stay as long as I think best; and that depends upon whether I get possession of you. And I shall not tell you how I mean to do that, for fear you will spoil my plan. If you have any more questions, bring them along, and I’ll answer them! Only stop kicking your heels on the floor, and turn around and sit up like a gentleman. People that sit astride of chairs in that way don’t get any Ideas!"

Felix did as he was bidden, almost without thinking, he was so interested in the impudent, airy little wight on the table. When he had turned himself, he got a better view of his visitor than before, and noticed him more closely, remarking his close-fitting jacket, boots over his pantaloons, jaunty cap, and bright, merry face. “Why, you are dressed just like me!” said Felix.

“That’s our way,” was the reply; “we always wear clothes like the people we stay
with. If I get possession of you I shall not only dress like you, but look like you,—or, rather, you will look like me, which is the same thing, only a great deal better. Now, what more do you want to know?"

Felix had by this time almost forgotten his discontent; but he remembered what he had been thinking of when Mr. Cheerfulgratitude made his appearance, and resolving not to give up so easily his belief that he was an unjustly treated victim of Providence and his mother, he said, in tones that were not half as mournful as he tried to make them, "Well, then, if you know so much, I wish you'd just tell me why nothing ever goes as I would have it, and why I never have anything I want."

"Poor little outcast boy," said the small voice from the table, "he has no home, nor friends, nor clothing, nor food, nor fire!"

"O, you know well enough what I mean," said Felix; "I don't mean those ordinary things."

"Ordinary!" said the Idea, very indignantly. "I'll give you a taste of something extraordinary!" And with that the fire went out like a candle, without leaving a single spark, and the
The wind and sleet came down the chimney together. The window flew open, and the storm raged around the room as if it did not know the difference between in doors and out. Felix began to shiver with cold.

"There!" said he, "what did I tell you! now the fire is out. That's always my luck."

"But you have a good many things left to be thankful for," said the voice from the table, "food, and clothes, and home, and parents."

"What's the use of talking that way?" said Felix, half crying: "don't you see the fire is out, and I am cold?"

"Very well," said Mr. Cheerfulgratitude. "I suppose you know that people have no right to any blessing until they have paid for it in thanks." And instantly Felix found himself stripped of his fine warm clothes, and sitting before the chilling fireplace and in the driving storm, with nothing on his limbs but a ragged shirt and pantaloons, which barely covered him, but could not begin to keep him warm. His suffering soon was more than he could endure; and he would have hastened to find his mother and get relief from her sympathy and care; but
he recalled to mind how lately he had said that he "didn’t want women interfering in his affairs," and he was still too proud to confess his need of her assistance; so he sat, moaning and shivering, and felt that he was the most miserable boy in the whole world. "Nothing could be worse than this," he murmured. But, alas! he soon found that there were sharper pains than cold; for a fierce hunger seized him, and he grew as weak in one moment for the want of food, as though he had been fasting for days. Then his head began to ache, and dreadful pangs to shoot through all his limbs. It was not long before his pride gave way, as his fortitude had done already, and he staggered to the door, calling piteously, "Mother!" But a voice close by his ear replied: "The boy that was not content with his mother’s watchful tenderness, and thought she was always spoiling his fun, must do without a mother now. She is gone."

This was more terrible than all the rest. Felix burst into loud crying, and almost forgot his other sorrows in this overwhelming one. He really did love his mother. All boys do; though they frequently have queer ways of showing it.
You may think it strange that Felix did not wonder how so many afflictions could have come upon him all at once, and at least suspect that they were merely sent to try him, and to teach him some important lesson. But Felix was no more stupid than you or I, or everybody. When we are in trouble, we only think of the trouble itself; and if the minister tells us that our sorrows are meant to do us good, we find it very hard to believe, and very likely feel that he has no sympathy, and does not understand our case at all. So Felix just threw himself on the floor, and cried for his mother, and really was at last, as he had fancied he was before, one of the most miserable boys in the whole world. As for little Mr. Cheerfulgratitude, who seemed to have behaved not at all like his name, he disappeared up the chimney, having done all the mischief he could.

What would have become of Felix, if he had been left alone much longer, I cannot say. He felt that he could not bear his dreadful lot, and, having exhausted himself with crying, lay still, with a crushed feeling, as if the whole round world had been rolled upon him.
Just then he heard a step in the room, and a voice said, "Why, my dear boy, what are you doing here?" O how gladly he sprang up and threw his arms about his mother's neck, sobbing again for joy!

"My darling, darling mother! you have come back, and you won't go away to leave me again, will you? I'll never be selfish and disobedient to you any more; indeed and indeed I will not!"

His mother could not understand such a tempest of tears and joy; for she did not know, as you and I do, the sufferings through which he had passed. She only said, "You are wet and cold; and you must be hungry, too; for it is long past dinner-time. Let me go for dry clothes, and bring you something to eat. See, you have let the fire go out, and the storm has blown open the window and beaten upon you. My dear child, you should be more careful; I fear you have caught a bad cold. Your head is hot, and you seem to be in pain."

But he answered, "O no, it is not that; I don't feel the pain nor hunger now,—that is, I would rather feel them than have you go away."
Do not leave me again!” And he clung to her more closely than ever.

She did not ask him any questions just then; but with gentle persuasion she overcame his fears, and soon she had him wrapped in warm, dry clothing, and placed before him a tea-tray with such nice things upon it as folks prepare for invalids. At first he only watched her moving around him, and repeated softly to himself, over and over again, “How glad I am that I have such a dear, sweet mother!” but he could n’t help saying, as the warmth came back to him, “How pleasant it is to have warm clothes!” and as he began to enjoy his food, “I never thought eating was such a blessing before!” When he was quite comfortable, he said, “Now, mother, let me tell you all about it.”

His mother replied with a smile, “I think I know pretty well already. You dropped asleep here on your chair; and the storm came in at the window, and wet you through and through, and you fell upon the floor, and had bad dreams!” And with that she began to stir up the fire, and make it burn again.

But Felix told her the whole story; and as
he told it, the moral of it came into his mind all at once. He looked eagerly upon the table and into the fire, saying: "Where is Mr. Cheerfulgratitude? O, I wish he would come back now, and take possession of me! I see what it was all about; but I will never be so wicked again. Those vulgar, discontented Ideas shall not stay with me!"

Just then a white spark shot from the fire, and Felix shouted, "There he comes, white-hot!" But no; it was nothing but an ordinary spark; and, strange to say, Felix never saw that Mr. Cheerfulgratitude again, though he often sat in front of the fire and watched for him. What do you suppose was the reason? I'll tell you what I think; for certainly I don't believe that nonsense about its being all a dream. I think that Mr. Cheerfulgratitude had really got possession of him, and dwelt in him; and people cannot see what is inside of them, can they? How absurd! of course not.

THE END.