THE KINDERKINS

STORY BY FRANCES MARGARET FOX

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THE KINDERKINS

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By

FRANCES MARGARET FOX

Author of "Doings of Little Bear"
and "Adventures of Sonny Bear"

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The Continent
When the Little Cats Told
A Night in an Indian Camp

Little Folks
Grandma's Alarm Clock
The Doll That Slept under the Stars

Woman's Home Companion
How the Beaver Children Comb Their Hair

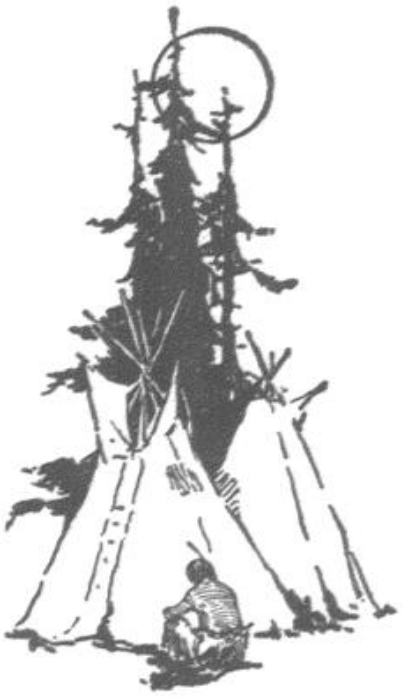
Sunday School Times
The Little Bird That Was Forgotten

The Youth's Companion
The Pincushion Doll

To

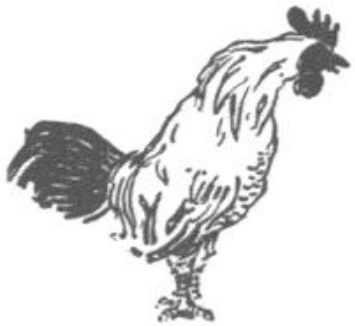
My dear little friend

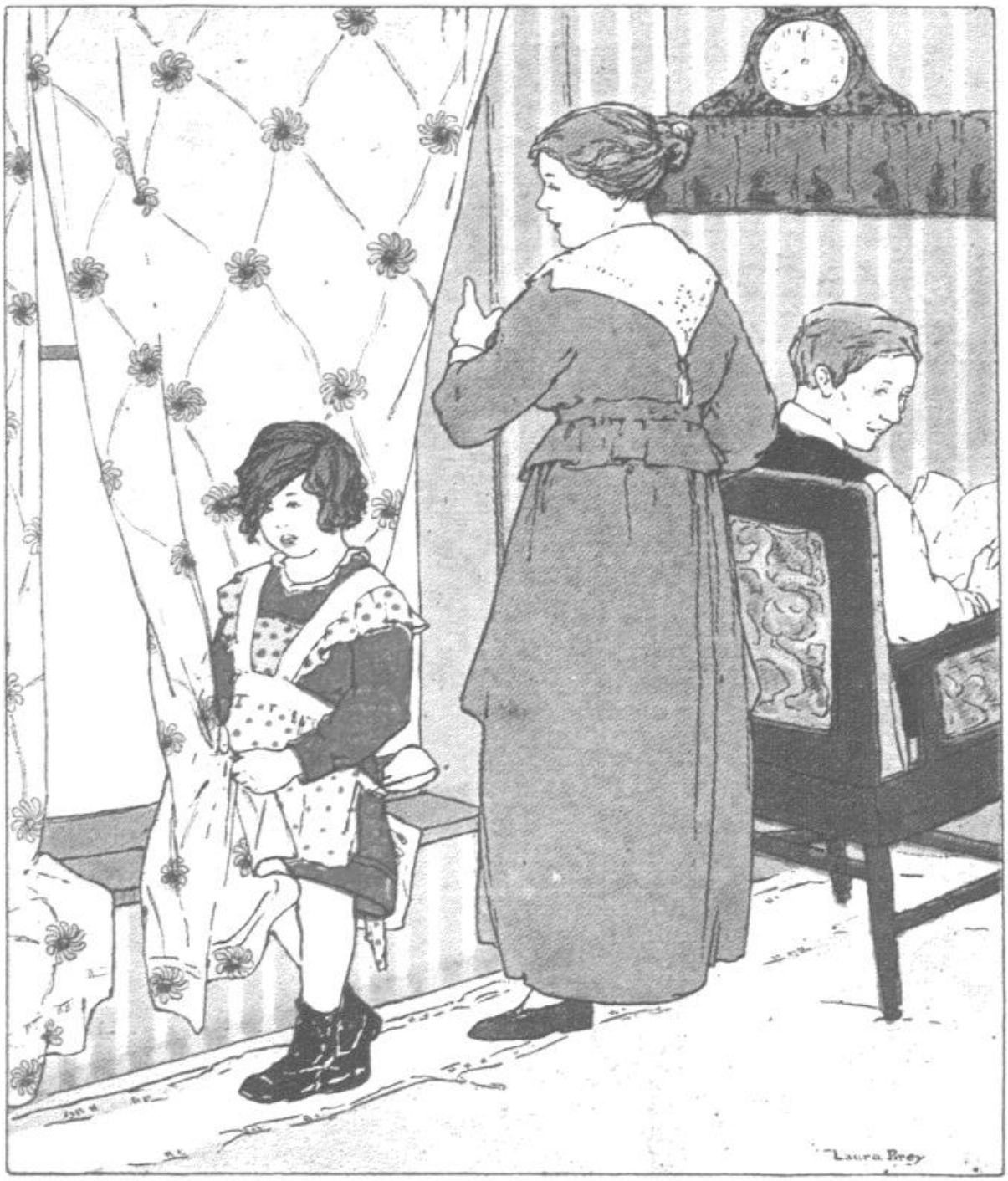
Lucile McDonald



CONTENTS

COLORED ILLUSTRATIONS





"Oh, dear, I don't like to comb my hair!"

THE KINDERKINS

HOW THE BEAVER CHILDREN COMB THEIR HAIR

Once there was a little girl who did n't like to comb her hair; she was eight years old and her hair was short. Little girl made a fuss one morning when her mother said, "Time to comb your hair, Elizabeth."

"Oh, dear, I don't like to comb my hair! I wish I never had to comb my hair!" Elizabeth grumbled, as she stood pouting by the window.

"Let me see your comb, sister," said Uncle Jim the trapper, who had that very day come on the train from the North Woods.

Elizabeth straightway brought her comb and pretty white brush.

"Why, that is a good comb!" observed Uncle Jim, as if he felt greatly surprised.

"The comb is all right," agreed Elizabeth, looking a little ashamed.

"How would you like to comb your hair with your claws?" demanded Uncle Jim. in big bear tones.

"I have n't any claws!"

"You have toes, though, and suppose you had nothing but toes to comb your hair with? How would you like that?"

"I should n't like it; but you see, Uncle Jim, if I had no comb I should n't have to comb my hair. Who ever heard of such a thing!"

"I have, Miss Elizabeth! I know a family in the woods who have no combs, and the children are obliged to comb their long, shaggy hair with their claws."

By this time Elizabeth was smiling. "Go on," she said.

"They are the beavers," the trapper uncle explained.

"Beavers?" interrupted Elizabeth. "I have seen beaver fur, Uncle Jim, and it is soft and short without any hair in it!"

"You never saw beaver fur on a beaver," declared Uncle Jim. "When beavers wear their own coats the fur is full of long, shaggy hair. When men trap them they sell the skins to other men, who pull out the long, shaggy hair and leave only the soft under-fur. The beaver children have to comb their own hair and they do it, Miss Elizabeth, with their claws. I never heard beaver children complain about combing their hair, either. They sit on their tails and patiently comb and comb their hair with the claws of their hind paws, exactly as the father beavers and the mother beavers sit on their tails and comb their hair with the claws of their hind paws. To see beaver children on a log combing their hair is one of the funniest sights in the woods."

Beaver children sitting on their tails and combing their hair

"How I should like to see the beaver children comb their hair!" exclaimed Elizabeth.

"And how I should like to see a little girl comb her hair!" exclaimed Uncle Jim.

Next minute the trapper uncle saw a little girl comb her hair, and he looked pleased. So did her mother.

After that the little girl never made any more fuss at hair-combing time, except once in a while, because she remembered the beaver children sitting on their flat tails combing their hair with the claws of their hind paws, with no friends well enough acquainted with the family to offer them a strong white comb.

WHEN THE LITTLE CATS TOLD

It was the last week of vacation; more than that, it was next to the last day of the last week. Mother Gray knew nothing of vacations. She did n't understand why she and her kittens were brought in a basket from the city to the seashore one day in June, nor why, one week in September, the children in the family made more fuss than usual about going to bed at night. In other words, she believed that it made no difference to her whether school kept or not.

Jimmy knew that it did make a difference to Mother Gray that the family were about to return to their city home. He could n't easily forget when every morning of that last week his mother said, "Jimmy, you must n't forget the kittens."

Jimmy did n't intend to forget the kittens. He was glad as he could be that the miller would give them a good home and call them by their names—Sea Anemone, Sea Urchin, Sea Moss, Seaweed, and Crab. But it was understood that the miller, being a busy man, might shorten the names if he wished.

It was hard for a stranger to tell one kitten from another until he knew them pretty well, because they were all maltese and white. Little Crab was a good-natured kitten, and was given that name only because of his ridiculous fashion of scuttling sidewise, crab fashion, instead of running straight ahead like Mother Gray.

"Jimmy, you must n't forget the kittens!"

Jimmy's duty it was to take the kittens over the hills to the miller, because his sisters were little girls three and five years old, while his only brother was n't really of much account as a brother, owing to his age. He was six months old and called "Baby," although his name was John Richard.

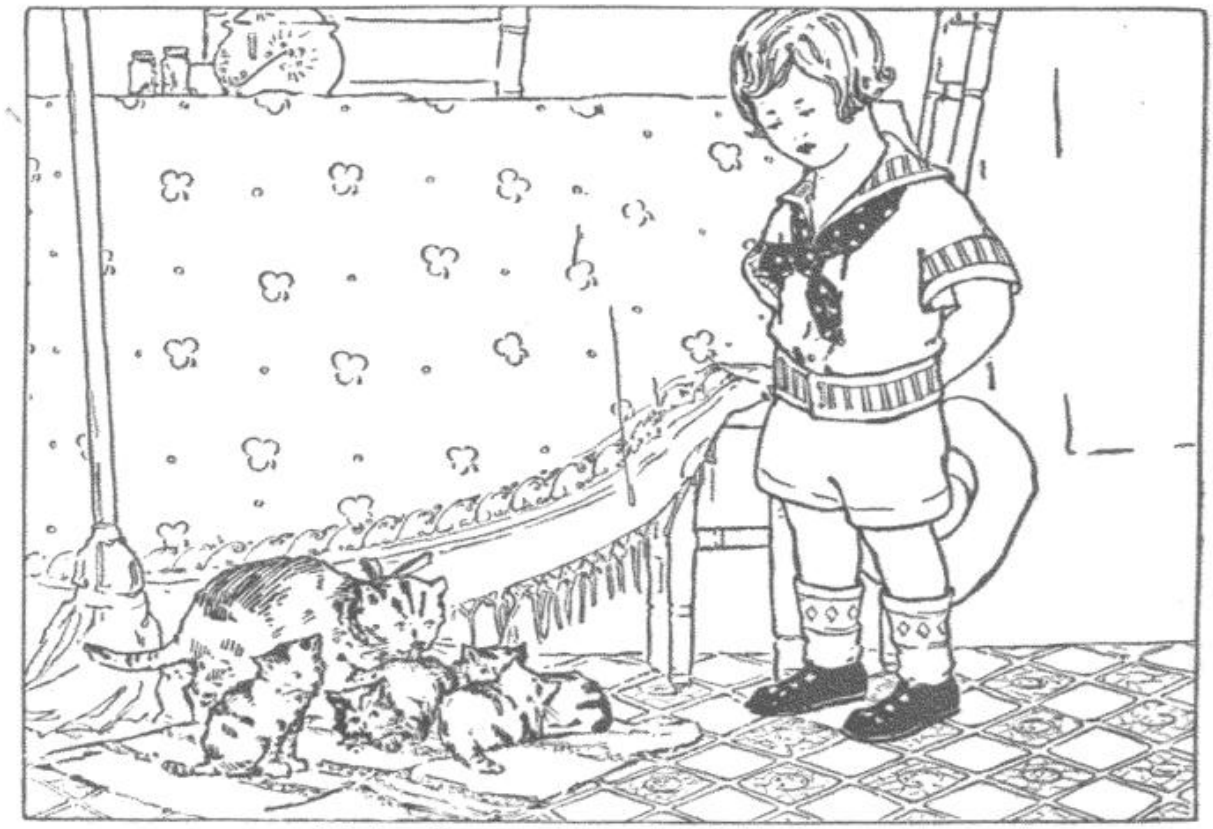
Unless you have lived in a cottage at the seashore the last week of vacation, you know nothing about how much there is to do and how short are the days. Every morning Jimmy said to himself, "To-day I must take the kittens to the miller." But he put it off and put it off until, before any one knew what had become of the time, the day was Friday of the last week.

That morning Mother began as usual: "Jimmy, you must n't forget the—"

"I know it, Mother; I won't forget. I'd go now, only the Brown boys and I want to build one more fort on the sands while the tide is low, and we're going to play pirate after that; but of course I'll surely take the kittens to the miller's before night. Oh, see Mother Gray washing their coats and getting them all cleaned up! I think we ought not to separate them sooner'n we have to."

Mother smiled. It certainly looked as if cat and kittens would be together until she should be obliged to say, "Jimmy, go now to the miller's!"

At three o'clock that afternoon Jimmy rushed into the cottage and breathlessly asked if he might go sailing with his father.



Mother Gray washing the children's coats

"What time is he going?" Mother asked.

"Half past four, and he told me to meet him at the wharf on time. If you say 'Yes,' I'm going back this minute and sit right there and wait."

"I can't say 'Yes,' Jimmy, until after you have taken the kittens to the miller's."

"Well, I'll go now," offered Jimmy. "There'll be just about time."

Mother placed the kittens in the basket, kissed Jimmy, told him not to hurry, there was plenty of time before half

past four, and then made him promise to come back to the cottage before going to the wharf.

There was a short cut to the miller's, but, although the kittens were heavy, Mother advised Jimmy to follow the road. He might get lost the other way.

Finally the little fellow reached the top of the last hill. Just below was the miller's house and there was the old wheel of the flour mill turning round and round — whirr — whirr — whirr.

"Now, kittens," Jimmy advised, "you scamper right down there to your new home and save me fifteen minutes."

Without waiting to hear what the kittens might say, Jimmy opened the basket, turned five noses in the direction of the old mill, and started toward home.

Before he reached the cottage Jimmy stopped several times to talk with boys, to get a drink of water at the spring, and to play a game of jackstraws with Bennie Smith.

"I am home, Mother," Jimmy called at last, opening the door wide enough to admit his face.

"My child," Mother replied, "come in. Some old friends of yours are waiting for you in the kitchen."

When the door was open, Jimmy beheld five kittens: Sea Anemone, Sea Urchin, Sea Moss, Seaweed, and Crab. Each kitten straightway lifted up its voice and said: "Mew!" "Mew!" "Mew!" "Mew!" "Mew!"

"So they came short cut and told, did they?" demanded Jimmy.

Jimmy opened the basket and turned five noses toward the old mill

"Why did n't the miller lock them up?" inquired Mother.

Instantly Jimmy knew that the little cats had told only what they could. One minute he hesitated, then out came the truth.

"What shall we do now?" Mother inquired.

"I s'pose I 'll have to take them back again," said Jimmy.

"I don't see any other way," agreed his mother.

"I should think our cat would teach her children to do as they are told," grumbled Jimmy, wiping away tears that would not stay out of sight.

"Perhaps she tried," suggested Mother, and at that Jimmy blushed.

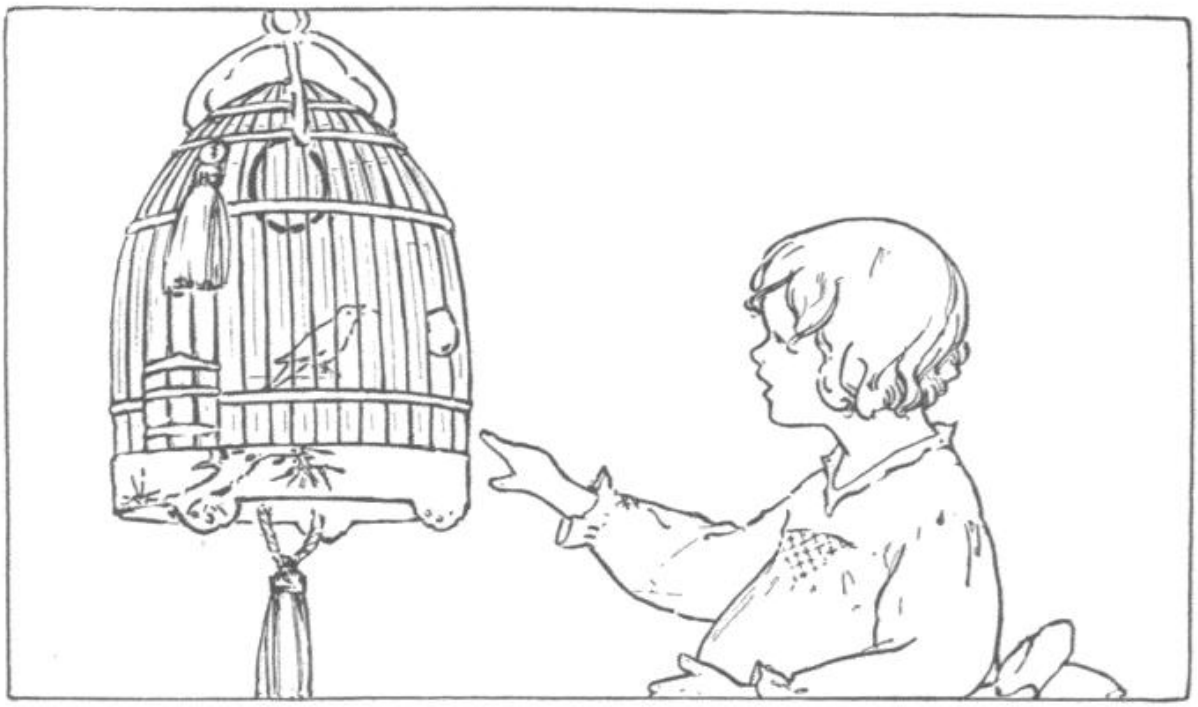
The wind must have been sorry for Jimmy. Anyway, it stopped blowing soon after he started once more over the hills to the miller's. Not a sail stirred on the bay.

Sea Anemone, Sea Urchin, Sea Moss, Seaweed, and Crab were asleep in the hay in the miller's barn when Jimmy appeared on the wharf, where his father was waiting for a breeze.

Soon came the wind once more, flapping the sails, and away flew the yacht Sea Bird with Jimmy and his father on board.

"And the moral, my son," Father began when Jimmy had finished telling his troubles with the kittens, "the moral is, never leave until the eleventh hour what—"

"Oh!" begged the boy, looking away out to sea, "please let's not talk about the morals!"



THE LITTLE BIRD THAT WAS FORGOTTEN

He was Mary Elizabeth's little bird, and it was Mary Elizabeth who said to him over and over, "Sing a happy song, little bird."

In summer, while the cage hung on the porch outdoors, many a man and woman smiled when they heard the happy song of that little bird. In winter, sad-looking friends who came to call sometimes forgot the troubles that made them sad when they heard the wee pet's bubbling song. It did seem as if that particular bird would never be forgotten.

There came a time, however, when Mary Elizabeth went to Europe with her father and mother. She could n't take the bird. A neighbor who had no cats offered to

keep him until Mary Elizabeth's return. Before the child sailed, she gave her pet a bit of advice:

"Always sing a happy song, little bird."

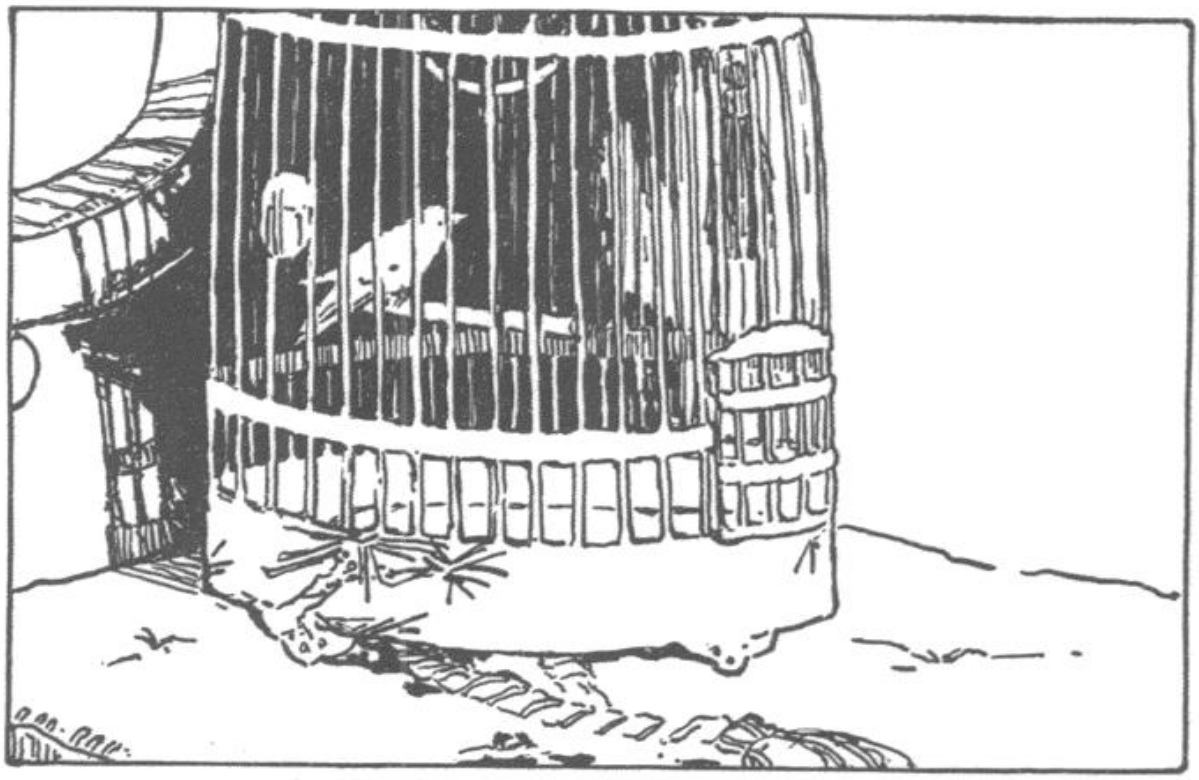
At first it was easy for the little bird to sing a happy song; but one day his kind friend was obliged to leave town for a week, and he was left with strangers who promised to take good care of him.

"Always sing a happy song, little bird," were the last words the neighbor said at parting.

Soon after there was a children's entertainment in the church, to which birds were invited. Mary Elizabeth's pet was taken in his cage, and of all the glad songs that day his was the sweetest. He enjoyed the entertainment thoroughly, and when night came he tucked his head under his wing and went to sleep without fear. He did n't know, poor little fellow, that one by one the birds had been taken from the church, and he had been forgotten.

Next morning the little bird awoke, sang a happy song, ate his breakfast, and sang a happy song. His cage was in a pew where a little girl had left him. He could n't see the sunshine streaming through stained glass windows, but while waiting for his bath he sang a happy song. No one came to give him his bath, so he sang another happy song.

This is the part of the story Mary Elizabeth never liked to think of for a minute: how the little bird sang until his seed was gone and not a drop of water in his cup; how two days passed and the little fellow tucked his head under his wing, and knew that he was forgotten.



The little bird did n't know that he had been forgotten

The third day the organist came to practice on the pipe organ. The little bird lifted his head when music pealed through the church. He had never heard anything like it, so sweet, so solemn. When it was over the weak little bird must have remembered Mary Elizabeth's advice:

"Sing a happy song, little bird."

As the organist was passing to the outer door she heard a happy song. And Mary Elizabeth's pet was found before it was too late.

Mary Elizabeth is a big girl in high school now, but when she is discouraged, and everything seems to go wrong, she remembers the advice she used to give a wee canary.

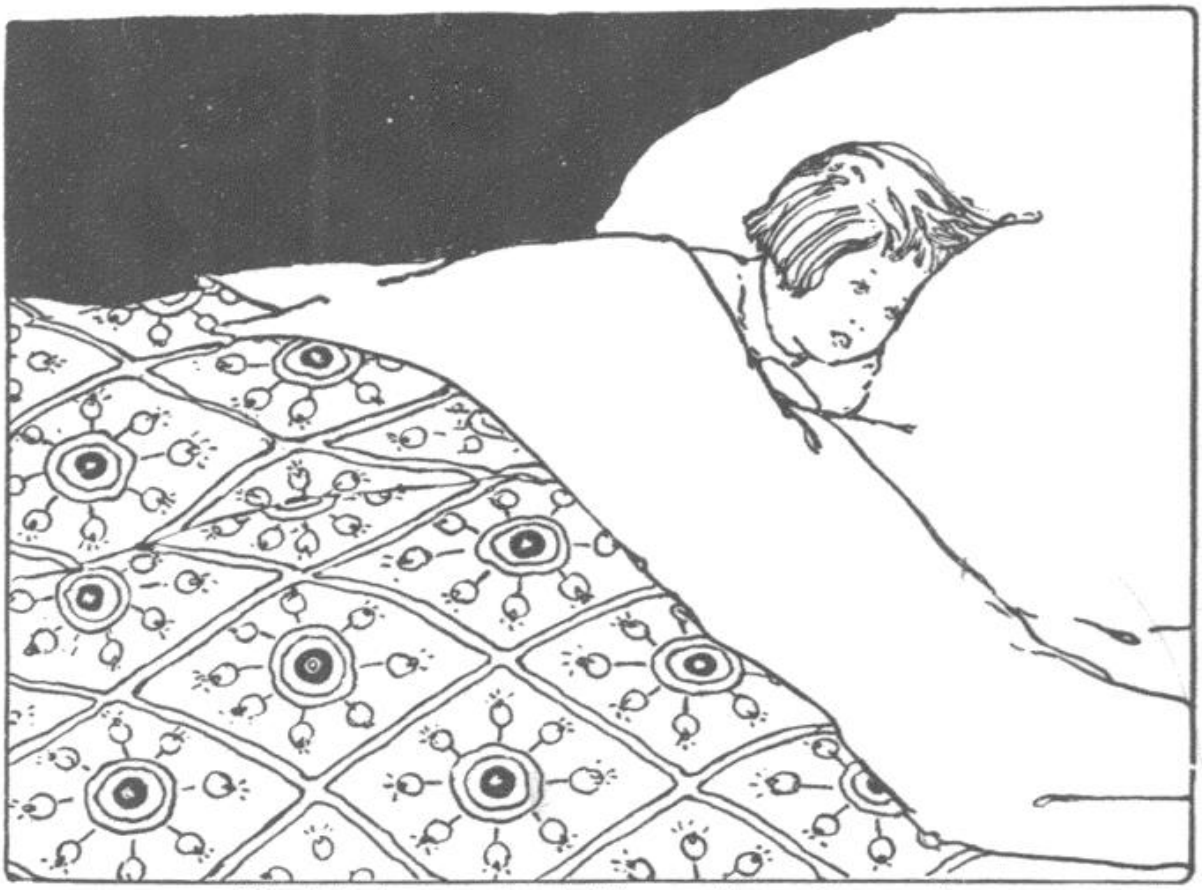
A LITTLE JOKE ON RICHARD

If Richard cried the least bit after his grandmother kissed him and left him in the big bed in the front room upstairs, it is n't surprising. He had never been away from his mother before, and the wonder is that he cried so softly nobody heard him.

Richard, though, remembered what his mother had told him the last minute before she put him on board the train that morning. She had said, "Richard, dear, be a little man at Grandma's, and don't make her a bit of trouble if you can help it. You are a big boy now—almost big enough to go to school. Just remember that, and Mother will be proud of you."

Richard buried his face in the pillow, and tried to stop crying. He did wish he had his own little pillow; the ones at Grandma's were so big they made his neck ache. It was lonely in the big front room, and it was n't nice to be away from home at night anyway. Richard was sorry he had ever thought of going visiting without his mother. She was n't to come until two days later—oh, what a long time!

The little boy began to wonder if it would ever be morning. That made him think of something else his mother had said. She had told him to be sure to get up and dress himself the minute Grandma called him, so he would n't be late to breakfast. That was the last thing Richard had in his mind when he went to sleep. He did n't lie awake



The little boy wondered if it would ever be morning

more than a few minutes, though he thought it several hours—the dear little boy!

Early, early in the morning, Richard awoke suddenly. He sat straight up in bed and listened. "Guess I was dreaming," he said at last, then cuddled down again. The big pillow was on the floor. Scarcely had the child closed his eyes, when he again heard the sound that had awakened him:

"Tap, tap, tap!"

A queer way to call a boy! Why did n't Grandma speak? Richard crept out of bed and looked down the long hall. Then he peeped into two rooms near by, and saw his cousins, who were visiting at the farm, lying in their beds, sound asleep.

Richard looked puzzled. If the folks in the house were not up, surely he ought not to get dressed, or make a bit of noise. He thought about it a little while, and then went back to bed.

Again came a loud "Tap, tap, tap!" that sounded so near Richard was frightened.

"Yes, Grandma; I hear you," he said.

If she had such a queer way of calling folks, why did n't she call his cousins, too?

After a while Richard fell asleep, only to be again awakened by the tapping.

"Sounds's if she'd got all out of patience," whispered Richard, "so I guess I'd better hurry." Another minute, and another "Tap, tap, tap, tap, tap!" made Richard dress as quickly as he knew how.

It seemed strange to the child that the house was so quiet. After he was dressed, he went on tiptoe down the hall, wondering if his cousins had dressed and gone to breakfast. Instead, they were sleeping as peacefully as ever.

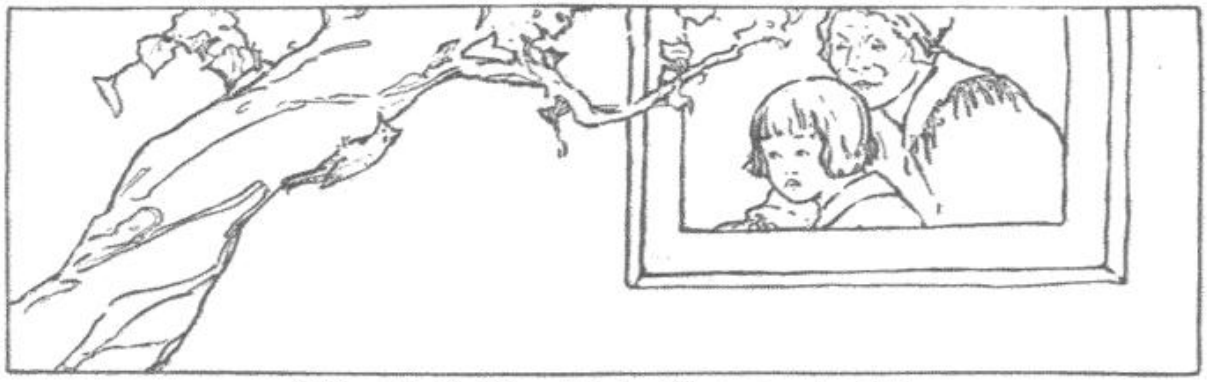
Poor Richard returned to his room, to stay until his cousins should wake up and be ready to go downstairs. He felt so homesick and lonesome he did n't know what

Richard crept out of bed and looked down the hall

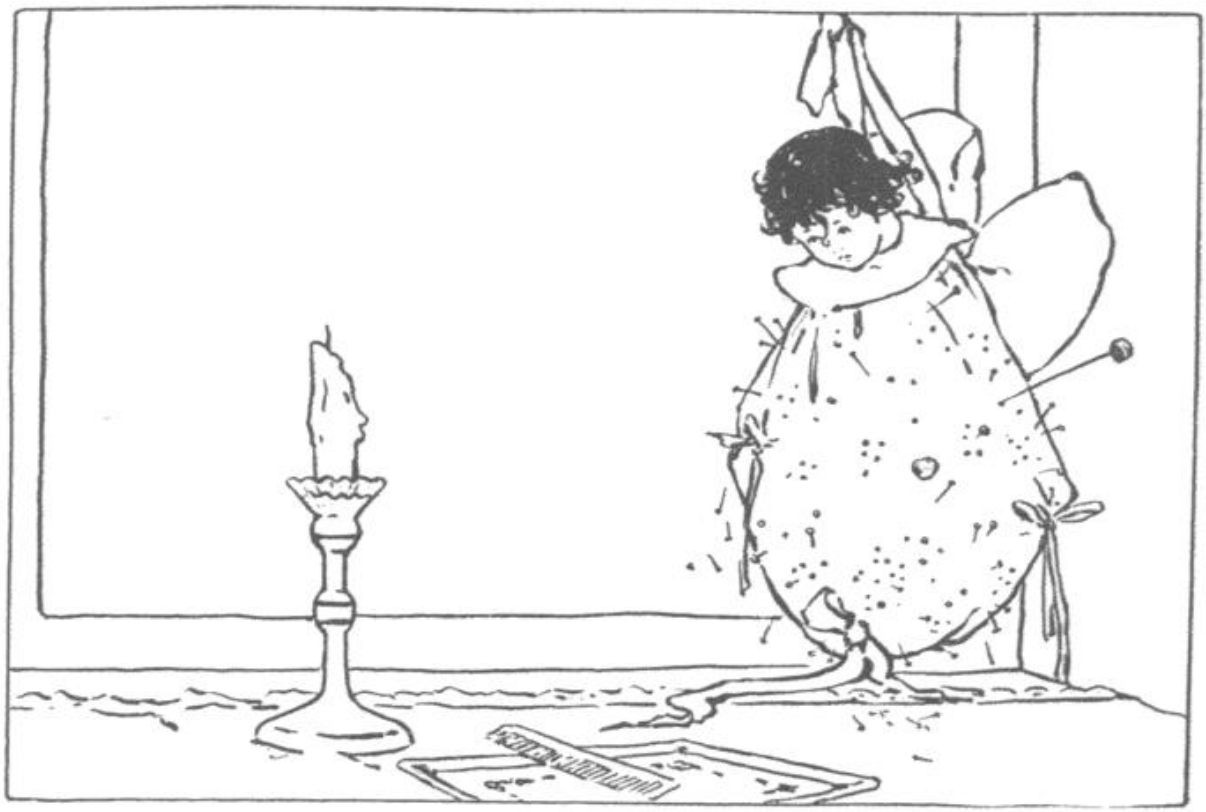
to do. The birds were singing as Richard had never heard birds sing before. He sat by the low, broad sill of an open window to hear the sweet music. There Grandma found him, sound asleep, when she came to help him dress, two hours later.

"Richard, dear," she said, taking the little fellow in her arms and kissing him, "wake up, and see who is looking at you. That's our red-headed woodpecker, and I guess he's as much surprised as Grandma is to see you dressed so early. You thought I called you? No; I have been up only a little while myself. In this old oak tree close by the window, Richard, is the woodpecker's nest. Now watch, and you'll see how he gets worms for his family. He makes a hammer of his bill. See him? Hear him?—'Tap, tap, tap!' He's after his children's breakfast."

Then Richard knew that the red-headed woodpecker had played a joke on him. He laughed merrily when he told his mother about it after breakfast, but the rest of the folks laughed because Richard's mother had followed him to Grandma's on the early morning train.



"See him? Hear him?—'Tap, tap, tap!'"



THE PINCUSHION DOLL

Once upon a time there was a pincushion that wished to be a doll. It belonged to the mother of two little girls whose names were Laura and Mary Anna. Day after day the pincushion saw the little sisters hugging and cuddling their dolls, singing to them, and playing with them from morning until night. The pincushion did not dream that she could be a doll herself until she discovered that almost anything will do for a doll: a doll was sometimes a towel rolled up, or a pillow case, or a little old dress—it made no difference to the babies; they were all cuddled and loved.

When the pincushion noticed that, she began to fidget. She squirmed pins loose, soiled her dress, and untied her bows; she was a long pincushion, with a soft, soft doll heart. She began to tumble toward the front of the dressing table, and she hoped and hoped that the babies would see her.

At last the pincushion had her wish. It was the day of the evening party that Laura and Mary Anna's mother noticed that her pretty pincushion was soiled. "We must wash this pincushion cover and press the ribbon," said she. "Everything in the whole house must be fresh and spotless."

When Mother sat down to undress the pincushion, Laura and Mary Anna stood by her side and watched. The pincushion kept saying over and over in its soft heart, "Oh, let me be a doll, little girls! Oh, let me be a doll!"

Straightway the wonder happened. "Why, it is a doll!" exclaimed Mary Anna, and she ran away for a moment. She came back with the bisque doll's muslin bonnet, which exactly fitted the pincushion's head.

"Now wrap something round it," begged the little sister.

Straightway the pincushion was wrapped in a towel, and became a doll in Mary Anna's soft, round arms. You can understand how happy Mary Anna was, but unless you have been a pincushion you can have no idea how happy the new doll felt as Mary Anna rocked and cuddled it, and cuddled and rocked it.

After awhile Mary Anna let Laura hold the doll, and Laura sang kindergarten songs to it, all about the old owl

Laura sang kindergarten songs to the doll

that lived in the tree, the shoemaker, and ever so many others.

At noon, when the little girls went to luncheon, they put the pincushion to bed, bonnet and all. You may be sure that the doll did not sleep, but lay there wide awake, thinking and thinking what a beautiful thing it is to be a doll.

About three o'clock that afternoon mother began to hunt for the pincushion. She wished to put on the fresh cover.

So Laura and Mary Anna carried the pincushion to their mother.

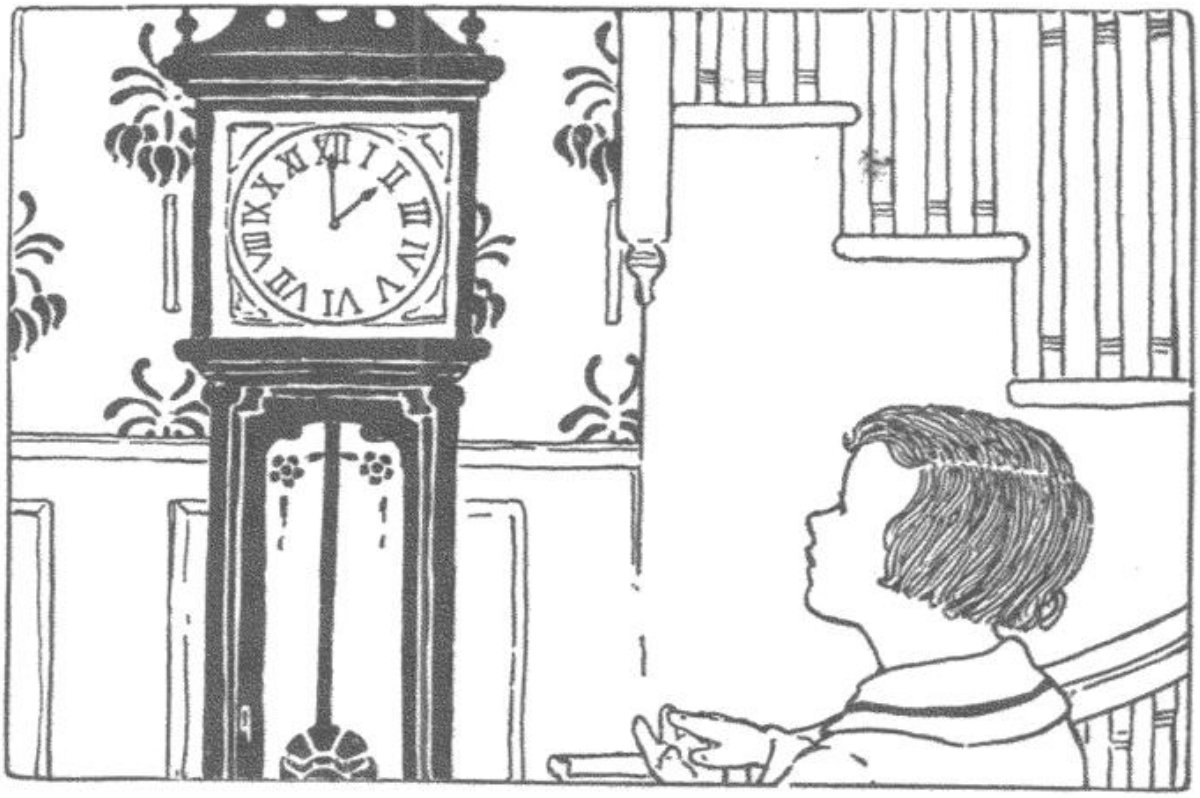
Mother had to go to the telephone, and when she came back, the cushion was nowhere to be seen. No one could find it for a long, long time.

You see, the pincushion was trying the magic of hiding in plain sight. It did not wish to be a pincushion again, and that was why it tried the hiding magic. In every room mother and Laura and Mary Anna searched for that pincushion; high and low they hunted; in chairs and under chairs, on beds and under beds they looked, until at last they found it on the arm of mother's wicker rocking-chair.

"It does n't like to be a pincushion," said the little girls. "It wishes to be a doll."

"That is sad, I am sure," said their mother.

And so ever since that happy day the pincushion has been a doll; it wears a muslin bonnet and a starched plaid gingham dress, and is loved and cuddled by two little girls.



GRANDMA'S ALARM CLOCK

Grandma looked at the clock. The short hand was at two, the long hand was at twelve.

"It is two o'clock, Grandma," said little John, who could tell what time it was by that big clock in the hall, although watches were still a puzzle.

Just then the clock struck: "One, two." Grandma smiled; John smiled.

"I was wondering," said Grandma, with another glance at the clock, "I was wondering if I have time to take a wee nap."

Little John began to feel uncomfortable. He was afraid Grandma really meant that *he* should take a nap. When Mother had gone away, that morning, with the baby and the two older children, she had told John that if he would be a good boy and stay home to take care of Grandma, he need n't go to sleep after luncheon. John was sure Grandma would n't make him take a nap after Mother had said that, but she might ask him if he would like to have a little rest with her. John was a polite little boy, and Grandma was so much more beautiful than any other grandma he ever saw, it was easier for a boy to do what she wished than to do as he wished himself. John was sure he would *have* to lie down and close his eyes if Grandma asked him, so he looked at the clock again and frowned.

"Why, I forgot to give my little bantam rooster his dinner!" declared little John. "When you said you would tell me stories so I would n't get lonesome, it made me forget my little rooster. Now don't worry about me, Grandma! If you want to take a nap, you just take it. I'll have to feed the rooster, and then I'll play with my new engine out on the back porch."

Grandma smiled and rubbed her glasses. "Very well," she answered. "And, John, dear, you need n't keep too quiet, because I must n't take a long nap this afternoon."

Sometimes when Grandma went to sleep after luncheon, she did n't wake up for two or three hours; so John was glad she did n't intend to take a long nap that day, because the house seemed lonely. He decided that as Grandma

Grandma smiled and rubbed her glasses

said she must n't take a long nap, he would play that his engine was obliged to be noisy when it was about time for the clock to strike three.

If Grandma had told John that she did n't intend to sleep more than fifteen minutes, how he would have stared. He did n't know a word about the beautiful surprise in store for him.

When Mother had left home that morning she had told John that she was going to Aunt Mary's in the city; that she intended to leave the children with Aunt Mary, and do some shopping before luncheon. John had wished to go, too, but Mother had explained that some one must stay with Grandma.

After her boy went to feed the little rooster, Grandma looked at the clock again, and shook her head. "What if I should oversleep?" said she.

Norah, the housemaid, was gone for the afternoon. The house was perfectly still.

"Let me see," Grandma continued aloud. "If we meet my daughters and the children at the station in time for the three o'clock car for the beach, John and I must leave here at half past two. We shall need only fifteen minutes to get ready, which leaves me fifteen minutes for a cat nap." Grandma usually called a short sleep a cat nap.

"I don't know," Grandma said to herself, as she settled down among her cushions on the couch, "I don't feel sure that I ought to do this without an alarm clock on the chair beside me."

John did n't know a word about the surprise in store for him

Yet she closed her eyes and quickly fell asleep.

The big clock in the hall ticked, ticked, ticked away the minutes. Grandma was sound, sound asleep. Five minutes passed, ten minutes, eleven minutes, twelve minutes; then Grandma dreamed that she awoke.

Thirteen minutes, and she dreamed that she washed John's face and combed his hair.

Thirteen minutes and seven seconds; Grandma dreamed she was telling John about the beautiful surprise: how they were to meet mother, Aunt Mary, and the children at the city station, and go on the three o'clock car, the latest car

for the seashore, where they were to have a picnic dinner and come home by moonlight.

Fourteen minutes; Grandma dreamed that she and John were skimming along the country to the seashore—bumpety-bump, bumpety-bump—such a beautiful, peaceful ride—bumpety-bump, bumpety-bump—over the rails.

The fact is, Grandma was so sound asleep she might have slept until five o'clock if something unusual had n't happened.

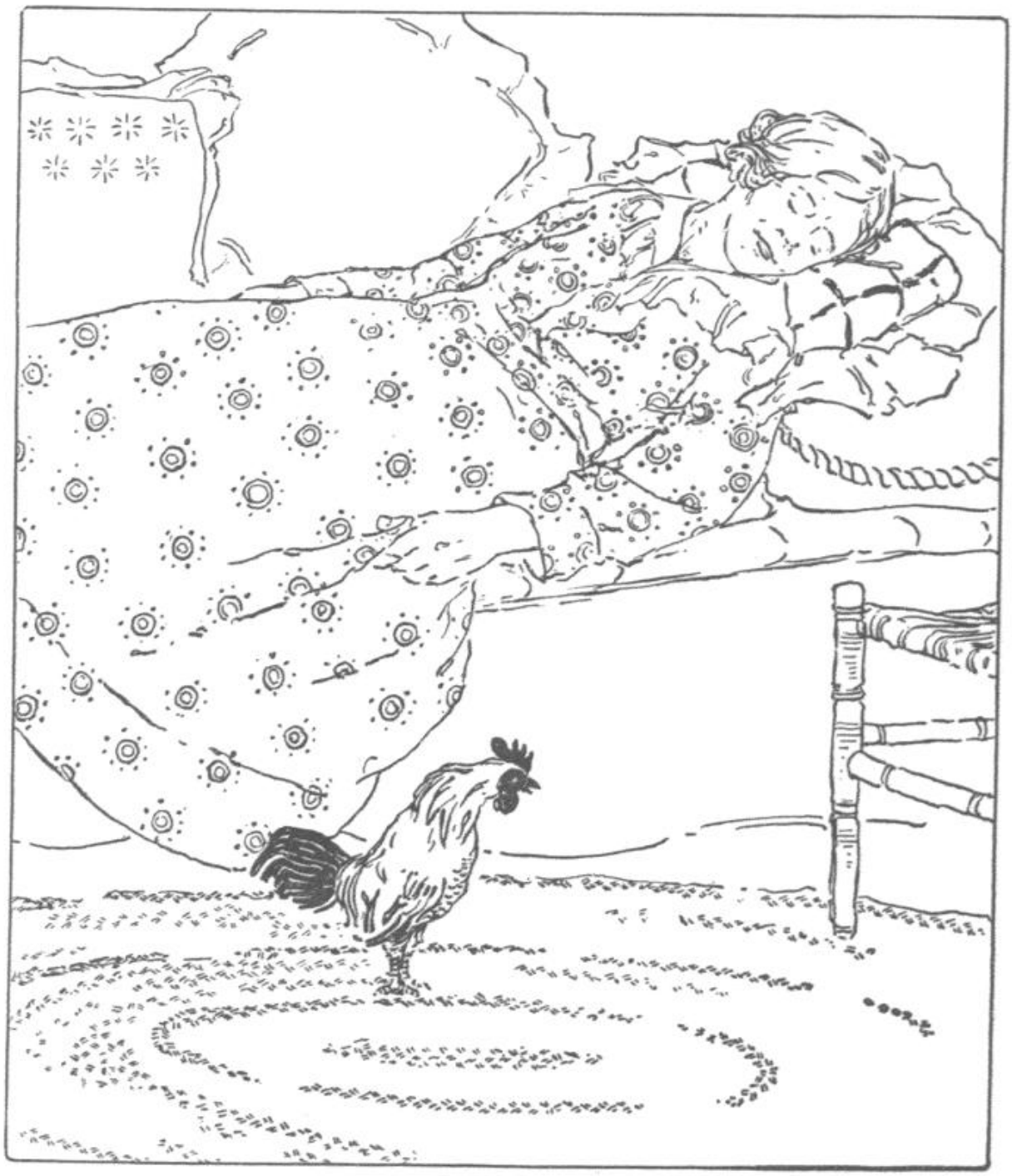
Norah had left the side screen door open. The little rooster, having eaten his dinner and smoothed his feathers, went for a walk when little John began to play cars. He reached the side porch, hopped up the steps, and, if you will believe it, walked right through the open door. To be sure, he paused politely a moment, with his head cocked on one side, as if waiting for some one to say, "Come right in and take a chair."

But no one appeared, so the little rooster walked into the sitting-room, where Grandma lay dreaming that she and John were going bumpety-bump, bumpety-bump, over the rails to the seashore.

At last, just as the big clock in the hall said fifteen minutes after two, the bantam rooster crowed, "Oo—oo—ooh—ooh, *ooh—ooh—oooh—oooh!*" in his shrillest tones.

Grandma stirred uneasily. She dreamed that the car was whistling for the seaside station. She did n't like to get off the car.

Again came the long, shrill whistle. Grandma sat up



The bantam rooster crowed in his shrillest tones

Grandma gave the bantam rooster a piece of custard pie

and got ready to leave the car. She really sat straight up on the couch and opened her eyes in a dazed, "Where-am-I?" fashion.

There stood the little rooster on the rug, arching his pretty neck ready to crow a third time, and crow he did.

"There, there!" cried Grandma, with a glance at the clock, "that's enough. I'm awake, thank you, sir, just in time. You come into the kitchen with me and I'll give you a piece of custard pie. You deserve it."

Grandma did give the little bantam rooster a piece of custard pie, and she did n't make him eat the crust, either.

"We should n't be here if it was n't for our little rooster," said John, when he and Grandma met mother, Aunt Mary, and the children in the city station at three o'clock.

THE RUBBERS THAT RAN AWAY

Baby Jean was three years old, and Grandpa was seventy-three. Baby Jean was tiny, but Grandpa was almost a giant, he was so broad and tall. Strangers always looked amused when the two walked down the street together, because it was so far from the top of Baby Jean's sunbonnet to the top of Grandpa's silk hat.

The two were great friends, and when they went to pass the summer in a cottage by the seashore, even Baby Jean's mother could n't keep them apart. Where one went the other was sure to go.

Early in the season there was a Sunday-school picnic at Mount Nebo, two miles away. None of Baby Jean's family wanted to go except Grandpa, and he said he would n't go a step unless he could take Baby Jean. It happened that big, white clouds covered the sky the morning of the picnic, and Baby Jean's mother said she was afraid it might rain, and if it did, Baby Jean would get her feet wet and Grandpa would get his feet wet, too, as she knew they would both walk around in the wet grass.

"We'll take our rubbers," said Grandpa; so he hunted for his big, big rubbers, while Baby Jean found her tiny, tiny rubbers; and the tiny rubbers were so small they slid into the toes of the big rubbers, making all the family laugh.

Soon Baby Jean and Grandpa were riding in the wagon on their way to the picnic, while snuggled down in the

hay, where no one could see, rode the big rubbers and the tiny rubbers.

When the picnic wagon reached Mount Nebo the wind had blown away every cloud from the sky, and the sun shone bright and warm.

"We won't need our rubbers, after all," said Grandpa; "so scamper away, Baby Jean, and we'll have a jolly time in this merry crowd."

It does seem as if the four rubbers in the bottom of the picnic wagon must have heard what Grandpa said, because a little while after, when the horses trotted farther on, the big rubbers took the tiny rubbers and ran away, though they did n't like dry grass half so well as they liked grass that was dripping wet. It is natural for rubbers to prefer rain to sunshine.

More than once that day the laughing Baby Jean and her grandpa almost stepped on their own rubbers; but somehow the rubbers managed to keep themselves out of sight. Baby Jean and Grandpa scarcely saw the ground anyway, and when it was time to go home all they could think of or talk about was the happy time at the picnic.

The next day it rained. It poured! Grandpa wanted to go to the post office, and Baby Jean wished to go, too.

"But it rains," said Baby Jean's mother, "and you will get your feet wet."

"We'll wear our rubbers," announced Baby Jean.

"Sure enough!" added Grandpa. Then he remembered something he had forgotten.

More than once that day Baby Jean and her grandpa almost stepped on their own rubbers

"Here, Dick," he called to Baby Jean's big brother, "won't you run over to the barn, where the picnic wagon is kept, and get our rubbers? They are in the hay."

Dick could n't find the rubbers; they were not in the wagon.

"Then I guess we'll have to buy new ones," said Grandpa, and he sent Brother Dick to the village store with money to buy the rubbers. In a little while Dick came back, grinning. He said there were n't any rubbers in town big enough for Grandpa nor tiny enough for Baby Jean.

Sunday, the next day, it still rained.

"Dear me," said Grandpa, early in the morning, "Baby Jean and I can't go to Sunday school to-day, just because my feet are too big and her feet are too little! Dear, dear! It's too bad we lost our rubbers!"

"Dear, dear!" echoed Baby Jean. "It's too bad we lost our rubbers!"

Long before church time a little, barefooted, ragged girl, with a big bundle under her arm, came up the path and rang the bell.

"Here," said she, when Grandpa went to the door, followed by Baby Jean, "I found these rubbers on Mount Nebo, where you had a picnic. I was there yesterday huckleberrying."

"How do you know they belong to us?" asked Grandpa, as he took the wrappings off the precious bundle. "I did n't see you at the picnic."

A little, barefooted, ragged girl rang the bell

" 'Course not; I was n't there," answered the little girl, "but when I found the rubbers I knew there was n't anybody on earth that has such big feet as you have, and I knew the little ones belonged to the baby 'count of her always being with you. Anyway, they did n't fit our family."

"Oh, ho, I see!" replied Baby Jean's grandpa. "Well, little girl, you come here to-morrow morning, and Baby Jean and I will take you to the store and buy you a pair of nice new rubbers."

The little girl said that rubbers would n't be of any use to her.

"Why not?" asked Grandpa.

" 'Count of not having any shoes to wear 'em on," was the reply.

"Then we'll buy you a pair of shoes, too," Grandpa promised.

"Stockings, too?" asked the barefooted one in an eager voice.

"Stockings, too," added Grandpa, "for now, thanks to you, Baby Jean and I can go to Sunday school."

"Perhaps the little girl will go next Sunday if she has new shoes and stockings," suggested Baby Jean's mother, who had been listening to all that was being said, "especially if I get her a new dress and a new hat to-morrow morning."

Oh, how the ragged little girl smiled, and how glad she was many times during that long, happy summer that the big rubbers ran away with the tiny rubbers!

The rubbers themselves must have been thankful they were not left up on the mountain, for they never could have found their way home alone, and it is surely true that neither the big rubbers nor the tiny rubbers ever again tried to run away from Grandpa and Baby Jean.

THE DOLL THAT SLEPT UNDER THE STARS

No one had ever loved the Doll.

The little girl in Europe who helped get her ready for the trip to America was tired of dolls. She had put shoes and stockings on hundreds and hundreds of them, but that was work, not play. The child did n't even look at the Doll's sweet face as she put her down and picked up another.

The voyage across the Atlantic was a stormy one. Every time the ship rose and fell the Doll was obliged to open and close her eyes. It must have made her head ache, even though she was n't seasick. And when the Doll landed there was no one to welcome her but a man with a wagon,

and he did n't seem any more pleased to see her than he would have been if she and her companions in the big box had been clothespins.

One week before Christmas the Doll was put in the window of a big store. Grown folks and children stopped to admire her, and at last Loraine Bradley's Aunt Harriet bought her for five dollars and took her home in a carriage.

There were no children in Aunt Harriet's beautiful house, which was a disappointment to the Doll. When the housekeeper and the maids saw her they called her the prettiest doll in town—that was all.

Aunt Harriet carried the Doll to the sewing room, where a dressmaker was at work.

"You may lay aside what you are doing," said she, "and dress this doll for Loraine. It is so hard to find a Christmas gift for a child who has everything!"

So the Doll was dressed in a beautiful way. And early on Christmas morning Aunt Harriet drove to Loraine's home, carrying the Doll in her arms.

"Oh, is it for me?" cried the dearest little girl the Doll had ever seen. "How pretty it is! Thank you, Aunt Harriet."

The Doll expected to be cuddled. She thought the little girl would hug and kiss her and be so pleased. Instead of that, Loraine put her on the couch beside a table piled with Christmas gifts, and turned away. The Doll, feeling too unhappy to sit up, dropped over on her face and closed her eyes. After that she must have fallen asleep,

Loraine put the doll on the couch and turned away

for the very next thing she knew there was no one in the room but Loraine, who lifted her with both hands, held her at a distance, gave her a shake, and said,

"I've got dolls enough already! Why were n't you a gold locket?"

It is well that dolls from Europe sleep soundly. The Doll, unloved and lonesome, was laid away in a closet, and did n't waken until July.

"Which of my dolls shall I take?" Loraine was saying. "I think I'll carry this one Aunt Harriet gave me last Christmas, since it's her picnic."

The Doll never knew how far from the city she went that summer morning. But by train and by steamboat they

journeyed, a merry crowd out for a day in the woods. At last they rested in a green valley where wild birds sang in the treetops.

Dolls were quite forgotten as the little girls explored the woods, picked flowers, or played romping games. Late in the afternoon the luncheon baskets and dolls were gathered up by the older folk and carried to the steamboat. The little girls were too busy to look after their own belongings, or Loraine's doll might not have been left behind in the woods when the whistle sounded and the picnickers sailed away.

Slowly faded the daylight. One by one the living things that loved the sunshine went to their resting places, and one by one the creatures of the night came forth.

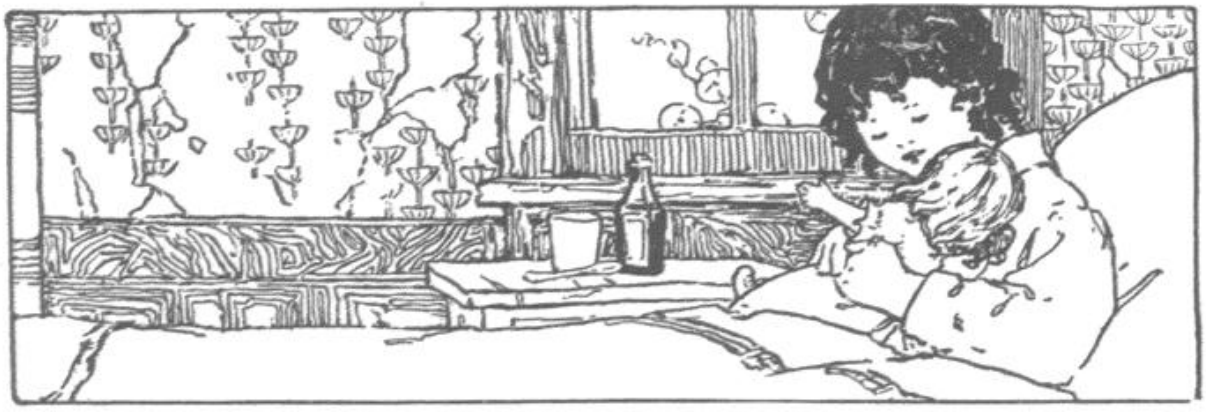
Then a dog ran through the valley, found the doll, dragged her into a clearing where the stars shone full upon her, and left her sitting up with her back against a tree.

Moths touched her softly in passing. A whippoorwill sang at her feet. Katydids played on their fiddles. Bats hovered near.

Through the long evening the Doll looked over the valley, fearless but lonely. One by one she saw the lights go out in the houses on the opposite hillside, until but one bright window remained. Then the Doll fell asleep; but the light in the window shone steadily all night, while the stars above kept watch.

Soon after dawn a boy walked slowly through the valley, carrying a dinner pail. His face was sad and full of trouble,

A dog found the doll and dragged her into a clearing where the stars shone upon her



At last the doll was loved and cuddled

until he saw the Doll. Then, with a joyous cry, he snatched her from the ground and ran, fast, faster, up the hillside to the house of the bright window.

There for the first time loving arms opened to receive the Doll, and for the first time in days the boy's little sister smiled. She was ill with fever, and the bright window had shone through the darkness of many a long night.

The boy returned whistling into the valley on his way to work. The little sister was happy.

Happy, too, was the Doll. At last she was loved and cuddled! And when the little girl was better, and able to sit up at the sunny window, she rocked her dear dolly and sang to her hours at a time.

And after that, whenever a child was ill in any other poor home on the hillside, the Doll was sent to that child with a message of comfort and cheer. Thus it came about, as the years went by, that the Doll who had so longed to be loved was loved by more children than any other doll ever sent over the sea!

A JOKE ON A LITTLE PIG

Strange as it may seem, there was once a little boy who was at the same time a little pig. His father and his mother were ashamed of him, and never liked to take him with them when they went visiting. The boy did n't look like a pig,—oh, not in the least!—because his mother kept him ever so clean, and his hair was soft and curly.

When he was asleep, one would never have dreamed that he was a pig; and sometimes, when his mother tucked him in bed at night, the tears came to her eyes as she thought how badly her only child acted when he was wide awake.

That boy wanted the best of everything—the biggest orange, the largest piece of pie or cake, the most candy; in fact, he acted exactly like a pig (though, as he grew older, he reminded one of a polite pig, if there ever was such an animal). When he was a very little fellow, he used to squeal and fight if he could n't have what he wanted, but his father cured him of that habit before he was three years old.

The little boy was seven when his Aunt Augusta Arlington gave a house party and invited all the relatives. Aunt Augusta Arlington lived in the country, and the boy was delighted when the invitation came, until his mother shook her head and said that her family would better stay at home. He knew why she did n't want to go, and he promised his mother that he would try to be unselfish

if she would only trust him. So they went to the house party.

The very first night at Aunt Augusta Arlington's the little boy was tempted. On the supper table was a plate of cake exactly in front of him. The boy liked cake. He liked it so well he could scarcely eat his bread and butter, thinking how much he wanted the largest piece. Finally, after he had thought and thought about it, the boy noticed that the largest piece of cake on the plate was the one nearest to him. Then he was glad, because his mother had taught him that, when anything was passed, he must take the nearest piece.

Only one thing troubled the boy. The cake might not be passed to him first. As it happened, Aunt Augusta Arlington saw the boy looking longingly at the cake, and told him to help himself, and pass the plate. Although the boy's mother was looking at him from across the table, he made up his mind to take the biggest piece and to tell her afterward that he had to, because it was the nearest to him.

It was a queer-shaped piece of cake, curiously large at one end and small at the other. It was really two pieces close together, but the boy did n't notice that until it was too late. Such a happy smile lighted the mother's face when she saw her boy take the tiniest piece of cake on the plate! Of course, she did n't know that it was a mistake, and, in a moment, when the boy recovered from his surprise, he smiled back at his mother.

Exactly in front of the boy was a plate of cake

Some way that tiny piece of cake tasted unusually good. The boy ate it slowly. It was so pleasant to have pleased his mother, even though he did it by mistake! The little boy decided that it was nicer than having the biggest piece of anything.

Before the party was over, Aunt Augusta Arlington called her nieces and nephews a flock of little lambs. She said that she had found there was n't a single pig among them.

A LITTLE KITTEN'S PUZZLE

Grandma was sorry she ever thought of giving the black kitten to Janey and Carolyn when she learned that they quarreled about its name. Janey wished to name the kitten "Midnight" because it was so black; and because it was so black, Carolyn insisted upon calling it "Jetty." But both little sisters agreed upon its color. It was surely black.

Janey wished the kitten to be fed nothing but milk, and begged to keep its bed in the kitchen. Carolyn tried to teach the kitten to eat everything, even oranges, and she was glad Mother said it must sleep in the woodshed. It did seem as if the little black kitten made more trouble in the family than anything that had ever happened — even measles. Mother said that if they did not stop quarreling about the kitten she would send it back to the farm to live with its mother cat and with Grandma and Grandpa.

While Mother, Father, Grandma, and Grandpa were feeling so badly because Janey and Carolyn quarreled about their pet, no one stopped to think that the kitten was much troubled himself. You see, he did n't know whether he was Midnight or Jetty. Sometimes he thought he was Midnight, and liked nothing but milk to drink; again, he was sure he was Jetty, who liked bits of beefsteak for dinner better than anything else. It was very, very puzzling.

The kitten had listened to this many times before

One day something happened that never had happened before.

Said Janey, "Its name is Midnight, I tell you."

Said Carolyn, "And I tell you, its name is Jetty."

The kitten had listened to this many times before, but when Janey made a face at Carolyn and Carolyn that very minute made a face at Janey, the kitten ran away.

One day passed, two days passed, and the kitten had not returned. Janey waited with saucers of fresh milk. Carolyn waited with a feast spread on the woodshed steps.

At last Janey cried. "I am afraid something has happened to our dear kitten," she said. "Oh, if it will only come back, we will call it 'Jetty!'"

"Don't speak of it," answered Carolyn; "if it ever comes back, I shall be only too glad to call it 'Midnight.' I am afraid it has been killed by dogs."

"Or run over by an automobile," wailed Janey.

"And it is all our own fault," whimpered Carolyn. "If we had even said, 'Come back, Kitty, Kitty, Kitty,' that day, I am sure it would have stayed at home."

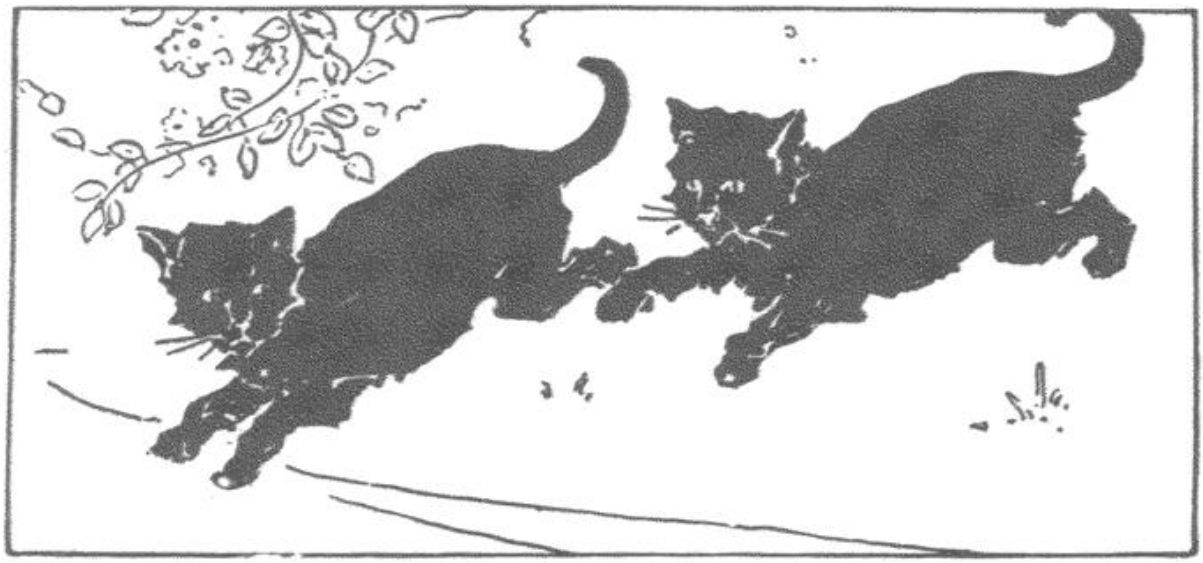
"Instead of doing that," moaned Janey, "I called, 'Come, Midnight, Midnight, Midnight,' and it mewed and ran fast."

"Yes," added Carolyn; "and when I called, 'Come Jetty, Jetty, Jetty,' it mewed and ran faster than ever. I believe that kitten knew more'n we supposed."

"Oh, I often saw the little thing wash its face and think at the same time!" said Janey.

One moonlight evening, when Janey and Carolyn were sitting on the front steps, with their arms around each other, who should come walking up the garden path but one black kitten followed by a second black kitten! Midnight and Jetty had come home, but which is which neither Janey nor Carolyn knows to this day. All they

Who should come walking up the garden path but two black kittens!



The black kitten has a game of "tag" with his twin

do know is that Grandma's kitten from the country came home with a twin so exactly like himself that even Grandma can't tell which one is the farm kitten.

The kitten himself knows which one he is, because once in a great while when Janey and Carolyn talk over the past and promise never to quarrel over anything again, one kitten winks at the little girls. Before Janey and Carolyn get over their surprise, the kitten quickly has a game of "tag" with his twin, and three seconds after that no one can tell which kitten winked, because they look so exactly alike and so pleasant.

Perhaps all kittens would do nothing but purr cheerfully and never mew if they lived with such loving little sisters as Janey and Carolyn have been ever since their black kitten left home long enough to think of a way out of his puzzle.

A NIGHT IN AN INDIAN CAMP

A True Story

Her name was Mary, and her home was near Toledo, in the days when Ohio was new. The house in which she lived was a log cabin her father had built with help from the neighbors.

Little Mary was a happy child and loved the wilderness. She helped her mother in the cabin and helped her father on the farm. She could n't do what the older children did, but it is surprising how busy even the smallest children were kept in pioneer times.

Big brothers and sisters did the hard work, but bringing the cows home at night was left for little Mary and her younger brother. The pioneers thought that was a very easy task.

Every morning the cows were turned loose to find their pasture wherever they chose, and every afternoon Mary and her little brother went after them to bring them home.

One day in spring all the pioneers were clearing land by cutting down trees and brush, and even the little children helped with the big bonfires. Mary and the small brother thought it great fun to hear the crackling of these fires and see the flames leaping high. So happy were they that spring day, carrying sticks and bits of dead branches for the older ones to heap on the blazing pile,

that they forgot the cows until shadows were long in the forest.

"We must hurry," little Mary said to her brother.

It happened that day that the cows had wandered far from home. On and on and on the children walked, listening and longing for the sound of cowbells. At last, when twilight filled the woods with darkness, they heard the tinkle of a familiar bell.

"Our cows are on the other side of this clearing!" cried little Mary. "Come!" she urged her small brother, "we must go in there and drive them back to the road."

Mary called the spot a clearing because all the bushes and little trees were gone, not because it was like a pioneers' clearing, ready for the plow.

But the cows were farther back in the clearing than the children believed at first. Before they had gone many steps into the wood, little Mary saw something that frightened her, although she was a brave child.

"Look!" she whispered, pointing toward a maple tree, and, "Oh, look! look! look!" she repeated, pointing toward another, and another, and another.

One glance, and the little brother understood. "Indians!" he whispered, cuddling close beside his sister. "We must hide!"

What the children saw were little cups of birch bark, attached to maple trees. They were in an Indian camping ground, where Indians were making maple sugar.

"The only thing to do is to run," advised little Mary.

"Indians" he whispered, cuddling close beside his sister

"We 'll take hold of hands and run until we get out of this. Then we 'll drive the cows farther into the woods, and get them back to the road after awhile, down that way, nearer home."

But the young brother would n't run. "The only thing to do," he insisted, "is to stay right here all night and hide behind this big tree, or the Indians will get us. I won't go another step."

And he did n't. Little Mary had to stay in the woods with her brother all night, without supper or breakfast. It was the longest night she had ever spent. When darkness settled down, the Indians built fires, and the children could plainly see their dark forms moving about their wigwams, so many black figures outlined against the light.

The boy slept well, but little pioneer Mary was wide awake long after the Indian camp was dark and still. From time to time the cowbells tinkled faintly.

At dawn little Mary gently shook her brother. "Come," she said, "we must go now before the Indians are up. The birch bark dishes are full and running over with maple sap. The Indians will soon be here to empty them."

At the mention of Indians, little Mary's brother was soon wide awake. On tiptoe the two children crept away from camp, gathered the cows, and made them run deeper into the woods. When at last they reached the road with the surprised cows, neither child knew the way home.

But a farmer, driving early in the morning to Toledo, turned their feet in the right direction. It was nine o'clock when the children reached their own cabin. They were tired and oh, so hungry.

After she had listened to their story and given them a good breakfast, what do you think that pioneer mother said?

"That was nothing!"