

# LITTLE FOLKS

## The Raindrops' Journey.

'Some little drops of water,  
Whose home was in the sea,  
To go upon a journey  
Once happened to agree,  
A cloud they had for a carriage,  
Their horse a playful breeze,  
And over land and country  
They rode awhile at ease.  
'But ah! they were so many,  
At last the carriage broke,  
And to the ground came tumbling,  
These frightened little folk.  
And through the moss and grasses,  
They were compelled to roam,  
Until a brooklet found them  
And carried them all home.'

—Exchange.

## How They Camped Out.

(Alix Thorn, in 'Youth's Companion')

Pound, pound, thump, thump!  
A little camp was being made in  
the hemlock grove half-way up the  
hill, while two excited little boys  
watched the preparations, and did  
their best to help. What joy to  
sleep on a bed of fragrant, springy  
boughs, while the cool night wind  
blew around them! They could  
hardly wait for the time to come.

You see, papa and Uncle Frank  
had just returned from a camping  
trip in the Adirondacks, and as  
soon as Dick and his boy friend,  
Tom White, heard the delightful  
experiences they were most anxious  
to have a camp of their own, and  
sleep in the big out of doors, far  
from any cottage. Mamma herself  
made them some warm woollen  
sleeping-bags that were to be drawn  
up to the sunburned necks, leaving  
out only the curly heads.

That same evening Uncle Frank  
walked to the camp with the little  
boys, to see that they were com-  
fortably fixed for the night. He  
spread the spicy boughs evenly,  
gave a final pat to the woolly bags,  
and, blowing out the lantern, left  
them with only the bright, far-off  
stars to watch over two happy little  
lads.

Presently something stirred light-  
ly the green carpet; a soft sound  
broke the stillness not unlike a  
baby brook singing over the peb-  
bles. Then it became a plain purr,  
and, behold! there were three  
campers. It was the black kitten,

which followed Uncle Frank from  
the cottage, and now settled down  
very comfortably between the  
sleeping-bags, not meaning, evi-  
dently, to desert his two good  
friends.

Did they lie awake long, listen-  
ing to the noises of the wood? I  
think not, for the very first thing  
they knew it was daylight, and the  
east was brightening with the glory  
of sunrise. They straightway hur-  
ried to their separate cottages,  
where they awakened their sleepy  
friends to tell them they had slept  
splendidly, and wanted to spend  
'most every night' out of doors.

Sure enough, the very next even-  
ing, soon after sunset, two little  
figures might have been seen  
making their way up the hill to-  
ward the woods.

'Pooh!' said Dick, in a very big  
voice, 'I don't care if Uncle Frank  
couldn't come with us to-night. I  
guess we know everything about  
camping by this time.'

'Oh, yes,' replied Tom, as he  
strode along, swinging his lantern.  
'I'm sure there aren't any strange  
animals in these woods.'

'Tom,' continued Dick boldly,  
'it takes a good deal to frighten  
me. You couldn't tell me a story  
that would make me afraid. When  
I was eight, last summer, I wouldn't  
have come way up here to sleep.  
You see, I'm nine now.'

Longer grew the shadows. The  
lights began to twinkle in the cot-  
tages at the foot of the hill. The  
little camp became strangely quiet;  
it had grown quite dark. In the  
silence the two boys crept into their  
sleeping-bags. Queer how different  
the camp looked by night! In the  
bright sunshine this morning it  
seemed so very near home; now  
there was such a long, dark space  
between their friends and them-  
selves.

'I keep thinking, Tom,' said  
Dick, 'about that book I had for  
Christmas, 'Wild Animals I Have  
Known'—some kind of frightening  
stories in there. Do you own that  
book?'

No answer from the little form at  
his side. Tom had fallen asleep,  
to dream, perhaps, of wild animals  
he did not want to know. Oh,

would he, himself, ever go to sleep?  
Dick shut his brown eyes tightly  
and listened to the lonely murmur  
of the wind in the trees. What  
strange cracklings came from the  
deeper woods above them! Oh, for  
the sociable black pussy!

Well, it would be morning very  
soon. They must have been in  
bed hours already. What was his  
mother doing? Perhaps thinking  
of her little boy. Perhaps. A  
strange choking feeling came into  
Dick's throat. He turned and  
shook Tom vigorously.

'Tom,' he said, in an uncertain  
voice, 'Tom, I don't feel good, I  
don't. I've got a queer pain in my  
chest; and, when I have it, I must  
always see my mother.'

'Is it very bad?' asked Tom's  
sleepy voice.

'Awful!' in a hoarse whisper,  
'I'm going home.'

'So am I, then,' chimed in the  
other bold camper. Hastily pulling  
off the sleeping-bags, and pulling on  
sweaters, they lighted the big tin  
lantern, and were soon stumbling  
over sticks and stones on their home  
ward way. They separated at the  
grassy lane, Tom turning in, and  
Dick, minus the lantern, keeping on  
down to his cottage.

Softly opening the front door, he  
entered the hall. But what did  
this mean? The living-room was  
lighted. Was baby sick? And  
there sat mamma, reading by the  
open fire, looking dearer than ever  
in her pretty white gown.

'Why, my little camper!' she  
exclaimed. 'Home again?' And  
Dick, with both sturdy arms around  
her, told her all.

'O wise mamma! O understand-  
ing mamma! How comforting to a  
small son to learn that she had been  
thinking and wishing for him just  
at the time that he had been think-  
ing and wishing for her! It was  
well that he came back to this  
lonely little mother of his.'

Just as she tucked him up in his  
own soft bed Dick opened drowsy  
eyes to ask:

'And isn't it most morning,  
mamma?' And, smiling mamma  
answered:

No, dear, no. It's nearly nine  
o'clock.'