

how He, being a Jew, asked water from her, a woman of Samaria; and when He answered and told her, that had she known Who spoke to her she would have asked of Him, and He would have given her living water, she answered foolishly, 'Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then hast Thou that living water?' Jesus answered her, 'Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.' (John, iv., 11, 13, and 14th verses.)—'Sunday Reading.'

Jimmie Dickson's Dream Lesson.

(Charles Sloan Reid in the 'Advocate and Guardian'.)

Jimmie Dickson was a great little trapper, and the field of his operations embraced all the deep woods haunts of the rabbits. He had made a number of rabbit boxes, or 'gums,' as they were called by the old darkey who had taught him how to make them. These boxes had doors in the end of them, which were set by triggers, and inside of the boxes Jimmie would put such tempting bait as turnips, pieces of cabbage, apples and green corn, thus enticing the little creatures into the snares prepared for them.

He had his traps set at various points throughout the forest, and visited each one of them daily; and, unfortunately for the little four-footed innocents, scarcely a day passed that did not record a capture for the assiduous little trapper. He had a large pen in the rear of his father's barn, in which he kept his little prisoners, thus, though he fed them and gave them water regularly, depriving them of what was the dearest privilege of their lives, freedom to go at will among the forests and sedge fields.

One morning, when Jimmie was returning from his rounds with a mother rabbit in his hand, held carelessly by the hind legs, he was met at the edge of the forest by Parson Goodwarden, who stopped him with the question:

'What are you going to do with that poor creature, Jimmie?'

'Going to put her in my pen,' answered the boy.

'How many have you in your pen?'

'Oh, I don't know; maybe a dozen,' was the answer.

'Now let me ask you another question,' Parson Goodwarden went on. 'Suppose some great giant, say as tall as that huge pine across there, should come into the country and go to catching up the fathers and mothers of all your little friends and carrying them away to some prison, from which they might never come out alive. Suppose he should begin by taking little Bennie Brown's father, then your Aunt Polly Meadows and your Uncle Simon Crawford and all of the other good fathers and mothers around here, one after another, and should at last take away little Jimmie's father and mother, leaving little Jimmie and his brothers and sisters to die for want of some one to feed them. And suppose you had absolutely no way to destroy this great giant, or any manner prevent his capturing the people, wouldn't you think such a giant a most terrible monster, and that some terrible fate should overtake him?'

'Yes, sir,' faltered Jimmie; but the next moment he tightened his grip, as the rabbit struggled for freedom.

'Now, that is a mother rabbit,' continued the parson, 'and no doubt has some little ones somewhere in the woods that will die if she does not come back to them.'

Jimmie swallowed a little lump out of his throat, but began to back away from the parson, and was soon far enough away, he thought, to turn about and hurry on toward home, still holding his prisoner fast by the legs.

But the minister's parable bore fruit. That night Jimmie Dickson dreamed that he was making the usual rounds of his rabbit boxes, and had visited all of them but one, finding the doors of all standing open. But when he came in sight of the last one he saw that the door was down. This box was near an old dead pine, and was the one from which he had taken most of his prisoners. Jimmie hurriedly approached the box in his eagerness to have his hands on the prisoner. But, as

he ran forward and was about to stoop down in front of the box, the ground beneath his feet suddenly gave way, and he felt himself sinking swiftly into the earth until only his neck and head remained above the surface.

Then the loosened mould closed in upon him, pinning his arms to his sides. He struggled desperately to free himself, to extricate his body from the suffocating clasp of the earth, but every effort only lessened his strength and caused the mould to settle more firmly about him. He shouted for help, but only the echo of his own voice came ringing back to him out of the hollow of the deep woods. Again and again he cried out for help, but he was in the loneliest part of the forest, in a part which was seldom visited by any one except himself; and the awful horror of his situation filled him with the deepest despair.

Struggle as he might, he could gain absolutely nothing. Shout as loud as he could, his cries brought nothing back to his ears but echo's repetitions. Jimmie thought of his father and mother, and of each little brother and sister. How he longed to see them, just to touch their garments with his poor benumbed fingers! The tears coursed down his cheeks until his eyelids burned. It seemed that hours passed. He wondered if his father would ever think to search these old woods so far away from home, when his boy should be missed.

At last he ceased to struggle, ceased to shout, but the tears continued to flow, and they burned his eyelids severely. Now little Jim remained very quiet for a long time, then he became conscious of a pair of the softest round eyes gazing upon him through a small crack at the top of the door of his rabbit gum, and they were gazing, it seemed to Jim, reproachfully, yet so tenderly. The little trapper's tears increased, and sob after sob escaped his aching breast. But just when he had reached, it seemed to him, the last stage of despair, the sound of a low voice reached his ears, and he knew that it came from inside of the rabbit gum. He knew that the owner of those round, soft eyes was speaking, and he listened.

'Poor, dear, little boy,' said the voice, 'I am so sorry for you, yet I am powerless to give you that help which I would so willingly give could I but free myself from the prison I am in. I know your mother would be so thankful to an old mother rabbit for helping her child to freedom. I know how grief-stricken she will be when she learns how her boy perished in the woods, with no one to help him. I have three little ones at home, who have been watching for my return since last night, and will perish unless by some fortunate chance I am liberated from the prison into which I have fallen in my eagerness to get something with which to appease the hunger of those dear ones. I have attempted to gnaw my way out, but the thick boards defy my efforts. Could I but get out I would first help you to freedom, that your mother might be rejoiced at the safe return of her child, then I would hasten away to a little den in the sedge field, where three loved ones are waiting for me.'

Jimmie looked at the soft eyes which had never once taken their gaze from his face. Added to his despair was now the deep remorse that he felt for both his own and the poor mother rabbit's situations—and she had said that she would assist him to freedom.

At this moment a great hope suddenly filled his breast. Jimmie knew the weak points of his traps, and he wondered if he could make the rabbit understand him. He resolved to try. There were two little white-pine strips inside of the box which held the door in place. Jimmie knew that the sharp teeth of the rabbit could easily gnaw these away in a few moments if she only knew about their weakness; so he told her about it as clearly as he could. A moment later he heard the sounds of vigorous gnawing, and in a very few minutes afterward the little door of the trap fell inward, and the way of egress was open.

The mother rabbit, with a glad pat of her back feet, hopped out, and quickly advancing toward little Jim, the trapper, she began with all her might to scratch the earth away from about the boy's shoulders, which she soon uncovered to the elbows, once more giving him the free use of his hands. In a few moments he again stood on the ground, free from the cold clasp of the earth. Then the mother rabbit sprang away through the forest toward

the sedge field den to gladden the hearts of her little ones by her safe return.

Little Jim awoke and sat up in bed. He rubbed his eyes in order to think clearly, and at last he knew that it all had been a dream. But the boy hurriedly put on his clothes and went out to the rabbit pen behind the barn. He was thinking of his dream and of the parson's lecture the day before. With a strong resolution little Jim opened the door of the pen, and his four-footed prisoners were invited to come forth and once more go their ways in the full enjoyment of their freedom.

Nor was this all. Jimmie Dickson went around and collected his rabbit boxes, and Mrs. Dickson, the mother of Jim, kindled many kitchen fires with the fragments of those traps. The little trapper had learned a lesson through a dream which woke in his bosom kindness toward all dumb creatures, which was ever afterward a ruling principle of his life.

A Self-tamed Muskrat.

That so shy an animal as a muskrat should of his own choice become tame seems strange. Yet this happened at the home of a neighbor of mine, whose boys liked pets.

The family lived on the banks of a stream where the water flowed swiftly, free from ice, until it emptied into the pond near by. Along the shores of the pond the muskrats each season built their huts. In winter they frequently swam about in the open stream, and the boys threw apples into the water for them.

At length one rat ventured to climb up the steep bank and prowled about the house. Not being molested in his visits, one night he crawled under the floor and gnawed through into the kitchen. After that he was the pet of the family.

He took food from the boys' hands and allowed them to stroke his fur. He did not object to being taken into their laps. He preferred, however, to lie behind the stove; there he would stay for hours. The hole he gnawed was boarded up and he was taught to come and go through the door. When he wished to come in, he scratched at the door. At night he sometimes proved troublesome. If no one answered his call, he crawled under the house and began gnawing a new hole.

A queer pet he proved. He was not nearly so quick on land as in water. When he walked across the floor, his long, scaly tail dragged noisily after him. His favorite food was apples. While eating he 'scooped' on his haunches and held the food in his paws. When he had eaten enough he pushed the rest into a dark corner.

In the spring he went away. What became of him they never knew.—'C. E. World.'

How Major Helps Himself.

Major is one of the steers on the farm. He is a Holstein, dehorned and fairly gentle. He is often turned out to pasture, but is not allowed to roam at will. A brass ring is placed in his nostrils and tied to a rope, which is attached to an old waggon-wheel, to keep Major within bounds. The rope used is twenty feet long, and allows him but little liberty to browse.

To find new pasture, Major has been known to press his nose under the edge of the tire, forcing the wheel upright, then over, moving it the length of the wheel's circumference. Again, Major lifts the wheel upright, he presses his nose down one of the spokes to the hub; now he fails to know what to do, then he balances the wheel against his nose, for a moment appearing in rather a dazed condition. When Major rubs his nose around one side of the hub the wheel rolls to one side, and sometimes he has to drop it. In a short time, however, the wheel is moved a few feet into better pasture. In this way Major is able to feed all he desires.—'O. E. World.'

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