

But he showed them the piece of cookie that he had brought, and one taste of that made them quite crazy. One and all, they trooped out after him and Scamperfoot proudly led the way. Even his little lazy playmates ran along, too, and if you can believe it, they spent the whole time talking of the wonderful things they would have found themselves if they had not been too tired to go when he did! Did you ever hear of children like that? Well, when Scamperfoot led them to the cookie box the whole family tumbled in head first, and what a time those hungry folks did have! The people to whom the house belonged had gone away for the rest of the day, and, as it happened, none of them came out into the kitchen when they returned that night. But in the morning, what do you suppose they found? I can tell you, for I was one of those people, and, as I made the cookies myself, I ought to know!

The first thing that we noticed was a curious red line, entering at a crack under the kitchen door and leading up to the cookie box; and another, red and white line, leading along beside the red line from the cookie box out to the kitchen door. And when we looked closely we found that the red line was nothing in the world but ants, ants, ants, too, all hurrying off in the opposite direction and each with a crumb of cookie to stow away in his own house. For other families beside Scamperfoot's had joined in the raid, and all the neighboring antdom was busy and happy that morning.

And then, when we opened the box itself, we found regiments and regiments of ants doing nothing but breaking up the cookies into bits for their friends and neighbors to carry off. The whole thing was well planned and organized and nearly half the box of cookies had already disappeared. More than half of those remaining were all crumbled into bits, and so, making a virtue of necessity, we put the box out in the backyard and let them finish their work, which they did, most happily and promptly. It was necessary to bake more cookies for our own family, but it was a pleasure, after all, to know that there were hundreds of little red neighbors who would not be hungry again for many a day.

As for Scamperfoot, he became a hero in his tribe, but that did not matter so much as to know that he had done his best toward helping others.

### A Happy Family.

Several weeks ago, while visiting a friend's family, I saw one of the most interesting families I have ever seen—an old cat, a kitten, and two gray squirrels. The squirrels had been given to the cat when about three days old. Her kitten was about the same age. Mother cat does not seem to know any difference between the members of her family, washing their faces and nourishing them as if all were kittens. The squirrels are now about half grown, and run all over the house. While looking at this happy family I thought how Jesus adopts into his family boys and girls that come to him, and how anxious he is for all to come, and when they come, though they be helpless and blind, as the squirrels were, he cares for them, feeding them with just the spiritual food they need. He cares for them more tenderly than an earthly parent can, and makes them members of his family.—John G. Barkley, in 'Christian Observer.'

### Your Own Paper Free.

'Northern Messenger' subscribers may have their own subscriptions extended one year, free of charge, by remitting eighty cents for two new subscriptions.

### Talking in Their Sleep.

(Edith M. Thomas, in the 'Standard'.)

'You think I am dead,'  
The apple tree said,  
'Because I have never a leaf to show;  
Because I stoop,  
And my branches droop,  
And the dull gray mosses over me grow.  
But I am alive in trunk and shoot.  
The buds of next May  
I fold away—  
But I pity the withered grass at my root.'  
'You think I am dead,'  
The quick grass said,  
'Because I have parted with stem and blade.  
But under the ground  
I am safe and sound,  
With the snow's thick blanket over me laid,  
I'm all alive, and ready to shoot,  
Should the spring of the year  
Come dancing here—  
But I pity the flower without branch or root.'  
'You think I am dead,'  
A soft voice said,  
'Because not a branch or a root I own.  
I never have died,  
But close I hide  
In the plummy seed that the wind has sown.  
Patient I wait through the long winter hours.  
You will see me again—  
I shall laugh at you then,  
Out of the eyes of a hundred flowers.'

### Happy Evenings at Home.

A delightful way of spending an occasional evening is suggested by the following account of 'A Picture Social' taken from an exchange. A miscellaneous collection of persons may be taken, or one's special bent may be followed by making more than one set of pictures, grouping them under separate classes, as 'Sovereigns,' 'Scientists,' 'Authors,' 'Artists,' 'Missionaries,' 'Statesmen,' and the like. The particular leaning of a friend could be remembered by the gift of one of these home-made outfits for a social evening.

'Cut from magazines and papers a large number of pictures of prominent persons, and paste them upon cardboard. Trim the name from each one, and put a number upon it instead. Make a list of pictures with the corresponding numbers.

'Seat the guests in a circle about the room. Supply each one with a card having as many numbers along the edge as there are pictures. Each one who recognizes the picture that he holds writes down the name of the person he believes it to be opposite the corresponding number on his card, and then passes the picture on to his next neighbor on his left hand. At the same time he receives another picture from his next neighbor on the right, and so on until the pictures have gone around the circle. Each one then signs his name to his card, and they are gathered up. A prize is given to the one having the list most nearly complete.'

### A Boy's Whistle.

He was an odd-looking little figure as he came merrily whistling down the street the morning after the big snow. His nose was red, his hands were bare, his feet were in shoes several times too large and his hat was held in place by a roll of paper under the sweatband; but he piped away like a steam whistle and carried the big snow shovel much as a marching soldier carries his rifle.

'How much' from an imposing looking man, who was asked if he wanted his walks cleaned.

'Ten cents.'

'A nickel's enough.'

'It would be if I couldn't do no better; but I've got to do the best I can and business is rushing. Good morning,' and the merry whistle filled the air as the boy started away.

'Go ahead and clean 'em!' shouted the man, whose admiration and better nature had been aroused.

'Just see that little rascal make the snow fly!' he laughed to his wife, who stood at the window with him. 'Why, he's a regular snow-pough; and he does it well, too.'

'What a little mite! and how comical! I wonder if he's hungry?'

She called him in as soon as he had finished, but he would not take time for more than a cup of coffee.

'Too busy,' he said.

'What are you going to do with the money?' asked the man, as he insisted on settling for twenty-five cents.

'I'm going to get mother a shawl for Christmas. She's wearing one you can see through and it ain't right.'

On he went with glowing cheeks and his cherry whistle. But they had his name and address. It was the wife who took a shawl to the mother, and it was the husband who installed the sturdy little snow-shoveller as his office-boy in a bright new uniform and with permission to whistle when he felt like it.—Exchange.

### The Bible First.

That well-known writer, Julian Ralph, in his 'Making of a Journalist,' advises the candidate for journalism to study good literature, and practise constantly.

He gives a long list of models from Shakespeare to Hugo. But he remarks with emphasis, 'The Bible first.' 'If money be lacking, and books are hard to procure,' he adds, 'be content with the Bible, and "Robinson Crusoe."' But he puts the Bible first always, as the beginning of the candidate's studies.—'Christian Age.'

### Child Life in China.

The dusky, almond-eyed baby of the Flowery Land has by no means a cot of roses. Here are one or two of the ceremonies wrapped about his infancy—some lingering in remote parts of China, others in general use:

When three days old he is washed before the image of a special goddess of children, and a thank-offering is made to her. Then follows the binding of each tiny wrist with red string or cotton cord, to which is attached ancient cash, or, in some cases, silver toys. The cash disperses evil spirits, the toys indicate a desire for wealth and honor, while the cord prevents disobedience in after life.

'Didn't mamma bind your wrists?' is occasionally asked of a troublesome Chinese child.

He receives his first name—the 'ju-ming,' or 'milk name'—about a month after birth, when his head is shaved. Fanciful names are often given—a flower, 'a sister,' 'a gem,' for instance, in the case of a girl—but it is quite usual for parents to bestow such titles as 'dog,' 'hog,' 'puppy,' 'beggar,' or 'autumn kid,' under the idea that they will ward off the evil eye. The gods are not supposed to send sickness upon beggars or autumn kids. The giving of the name is celebrated by a feast.

Most comical of all ceremonies is one occurring at four months old, when the child is first taught to sit down. The maternal grandmother appears with presents, which include a chair and a quantity of molasses candy. The candy is spread on the seat of the chair, and baby is deposited thereon. He stays, perforce.