

Young Canada Club

By DIXIE PATTON

ANIMAL COMRADES

A curious little story is told about a little dog called "Fanny" who disappeared from her home. After four days anxious searching her mistress gave her up as lost, but on the fifth morning a big St. Bernard, who belonged to her neighbor, came to Mrs. Reed's home and dropped a bone on the doorstep. Several times the dog was driven away, but she always came back until Mrs. Reed decided to follow her and see where she would go, and sure enough she led her across the street to a house some distance away and around to the side piazza, where she again dropped the bone.

Under the floor of the piazza the lost pointer was found, and although weak from hunger she was able to show her delight at being restored to her mistress.

So kind and intelligent are dogs that it often seems absurd that certain human beings who are neither kind nor intelligent should have authority over them and the opportunity of abusing them.

DIXIE PATTON.

LITTLE JEAN

Once upon a time, so long ago that everybody has forgotten the date, there was a little boy whose name was Jean. He lived with his aunt in a tall, old house in a city, the name of which is so hard to pronounce that nobody can speak it. He was seven years old and he could not remember that he had ever seen his father or his mother. The old aunt who had the care of little Jean was very selfish and cross. She gave him dry bread to eat, of which there was never enough; and not more than once a year did she speak kindly to him.

But the poor boy loved this woman, for he had no one else to love, and there was never a day so dark that he did not think of the sunlight. Everybody knew that Jean's aunt owned a house and had a stocking full of gold under her bed, but even so, she did not dare to send the little boy to the school for the poor. Instead, a schoolmaster on the next street agreed to teach him for almost nothing; but whenever there was work to do he was kept at home.

The schoolmaster had an unkind feeling for little Jean because he brought him so little money and was dressed so poorly. And so the boy was punished very often, and many times he had to bear the blame for all the wrong that was done in school.

The little fellow was often very sad, and more than once he hid himself where he could not be seen and cried as if his heart would break. But at last Christmas came.

The night before Christmas there was to be singing in the church and the schoolmaster and his boys were all to be there. Everybody was to have a very happy time looking at the Christmas candles and listening to the sweet music.

Winter had set in very cold and rough and the ground was covered with snow, so the boys came to school with fur caps drawn down over their ears, and heavy coats and warm gloves and thick, high-topped boots.

But little Jean had no warm clothes. He came shivering in the thin coat which he wore on Sundays in summer; and there was nothing on his feet but coarse stockings, very full of holes, and a pair of heavy wooden shoes.

The other boys made many jokes about his sad look and worn-out clothes, but the poor child was so busy blowing his fingers and thumping his toes to keep them warm that he did not hear what was said. When the hour drew near, the whole company of boys, with the schoolmaster first, started to the church. It was fine in the church. Hundreds of wax candles were burning in their places and the air was so warm that Jean soon forgot his aching fingers. The boys sat still for a while, and then, while the singing was going on and the organ was making loud music, they began, in low voices, to talk to one another, and each told about the fine things that were going to be done at their homes on the morrow.

The mayor's son told of the monstrous goose that he had seen in the kitchen before he came away; it was all stuffed and stuck all over with cloves till it was as spotted as a leopard. Another boy whispered of a little fir tree in a

wooden box in his mother's parlor; its branches were full of fruits and nuts, candy and beautiful toys. He said that he was sure of a fine dinner, for the cook had pinned the two strings of her cap behind her back, as she always did when something wonderful was coming.

Then the children talked of what Santa Claus would bring them, and of what he would put in their shoes, which, of course, they would leave by the fireplace when they went to bed. The eyes of the little fellows danced with joy as they thought of the bags of candy and the lead soldiers and the grand jumping jacks which they would draw out in the morning.

But little Jean said nothing. He knew that his selfish old aunt would send him to bed without any supper, as she always did. But he felt in his heart that he had been all the year as good and kind as he could be and so he hoped that kind Santa Claus would not fail to see his wooden shoes which he would put in the ashes in the corner of the fireplace.

At last the singing stopped, the organ was silent and the Christmas music was ended. The boys arose in order and left the church two by two and the teacher walked in front.

Now, as he passed thru the door of the church, little Jean saw a child sitting on one of the stone steps and fast asleep in the midst of the snow. The child was thinly clad, and his feet, cold as it was, were bare.

In the pale light of the moon, the face of the little child, with its closed eyes, were full of sweetness, which is not of this earth, and his long locks of yellow hair seemed like a golden crown upon his head. But his poor bare feet, blue with the cold of that winter night, were sad to look upon.

The scholars, so warmly clad, passed before the strange child and did not so much as glance that way. Little Jean, however, who was the last to come out of the church, stopped, full of pity, before him.

"Ah, the poor child!" he said to himself. "How sad it is that he must go barefooted in such weather as this. And what is still worse, he has not a stocking or a wooden shoe to lay where Santa Claus can put something in it when he comes."

Jean did not stand long. He took off his shoes and put them in front of the strange boy. Then the boy went to his cheerless home.

"What have you done with your shoes?" his aunt asked.

Jean told her he gave them to a poor boy. She then told him that in the morning, if there was anything in his stockings, it would be a switch to whip him with for giving his shoes to a beggar, and his Christmas dinner would be a hard crust of bread to eat and cold water to drink.

Jean went to bed frightened and did not go to sleep till Christmas bells had rung. In the morning, when the old woman got up grumbling and went down stairs, instead of a switch in Jean's stockings, she found toys, candy and his shoes back again.

"Who put them there?"

Soon they heard somebody in the chapel reading: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these." Then they knew where they had come from. The boys who thought about the nice toys they saw found switches in their shoes instead.

They both knelt down together and thanked God for what He had done to reward the kindness of a little child.

IRENE THOMPSON.

Decker, Man., age 13.

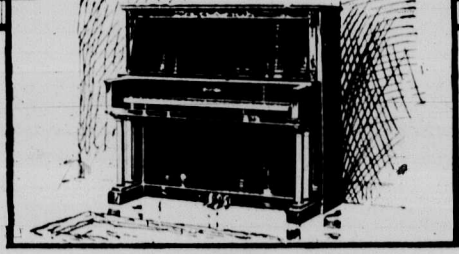
ECONOMICAL ETHEL

"Oh! Ethel, why don't you use your finger bowl?"

"What's the use o' wastin' this good jam, mother, when I can lick my fingers?"

STEP LIVELY

Yeast—Nothing will make a person walk so quickly as good cold weather. Crimsonbeak—Oh, I don't know. There's the dinner bell.



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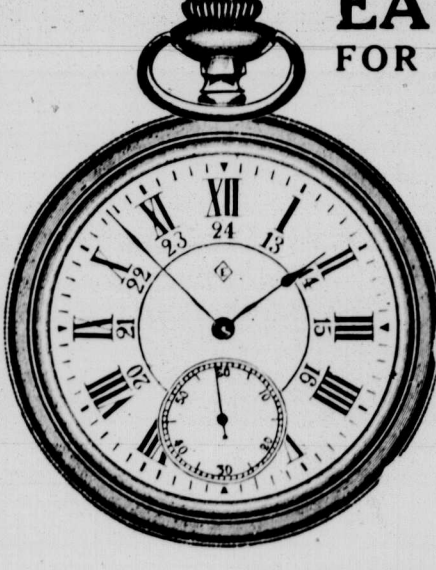


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