

The Nugget's Department for Children

The Miller's Four Boys.

Once upon a time there was a miller who had four sons, who could not be persuaded to work in their father's mill. The old miller felt very bad about this, for he loved his work and was very proud of the amount of flour he could grind in one day. He wanted all of his sons to help him, so that he could grind still more flour, for he wished to be known as having the largest mill in that country.

As soon as the boys were old enough to work the miller tried to teach them the business. The eldest son tried it for a time, but he said the flour got in his nose and made him sneeze, and that he did not like that kind of work anyway, so he came to a blacksmith. The next son said the flour got into his eyes and made him sleep, and that he could not bear that kind of work, anyway, and so he became a tailor. The third son said that the smell of the flour took away his appetite, and that he simply could not stand that kind of work, anyway, so he became a carpenter. The old man was fearfully disappointed in these three boys, but felt sure that his youngest son, Bruce, would make a miller when he grew old enough, for he did not like the noise of the forge, the confinement of a tailorshop or the lifting of heavy beams.

At last Bruce grew old enough to work, and his father started to teach him how to run the mill. After trying for a week Bruce said he did not like it one single bit, for the flour got on his clothes and made his hands dirty, and that he did not believe in any kind of work, anyway, for he wanted to be a gentleman. "The very idea!" cried his father. "The next thing you know you will be wanting to marry a beautiful princess and live happily ever after, like they do in the story books."

"That sounds nice," said Bruce. "I guess I would like that, now that you mention it. I never thought of that before."

"Well, never think of it again if you want to live in this concern," said his father in a very bad temper. But Bruce did think of it, and that evening at dinner, when his father asked him to pass the horseradish, Bruce said: "Yes, your High and Mighty Sweetness." This made the old man so mad that he gave Bruce a large piece of his mind, kicked him off the front porch and told him to go West and grow up with the country.

Bruce spent the night with his oldest brother, Jack, and in the morning Jack gave him a blacksmith's hammer and some good advice. He called on his other brothers, and the carpenter gave him a bunch of nails and the tailor gave him a needle and thread. These were not worth very much, but they each gave him some good advice, which they said was worth a good deal, and, besides, it did not cost them anything.

Bruce started alone up the road and walked until he was very tired without meeting anyone. He sat down by the roadside to rest, and was just beginning to get hungry when two robbers jumped out of the bushes and each pointed two pistols at him. "Surrender! or you are a dead man!" cried the robbers, and Bruce surrendered.

"Hand over your jewels, gold and other valuables!" cried the captain of the robbers. Bruce was frightened almost to death, but he said he never saw any jewels or gold in his life, and he was only a poor boy on his way to go west, where he could grow up with the country and be a gentleman and marry a beautiful princess like they did in story books. Then the captain said that they had better take Bruce to their camp and hold him for ransom. So they took him to their camp, and one of their hand-mounted guard over him to see that he did not escape.

The captain of the band sent a letter to Bruce's father and brothers, saying if they did not pay a ransom of 10,000 kopecks inside of three days Bruce would be lost to them forever. The brothers sent back word that if Bruce had taken their good advice he would not have been in his present fix, and they declined to be responsible for his foolishness. His father said that if they thought he was going to pay a ransom just to have Bruce come back and eat his bread they must take him for a pea green lump. This made the robbers very angry, and they all came and stood in a line in front of Bruce, scowling fearfully. "Prepare to die!" growled the captain, and all the robbers drew their snicker-sneezes and said, "Prepare to die!" just like the chorus of a comic opera.

"Don't be in such a hurry," said Bruce. "I don't see what you want to kill me for, anyway. You must be terribly desperate robbers."

"Desperate!" cried the captain of the robbers. "Why, we are just as

desperate as we can possibly be. We are so desperate that the King of this country has promised to marry the beautiful Princess, his daughter, to anyone who would take us to him in chains, and if any robbers were ever more desperate than that I would like to know it, that's all."

"There's my chance!" exclaimed Bruce. "Now, suppose you let me take you all to the king in chains, and then when I marry the beautiful Princess I will pay you the ransom of 10,000 kopecks and throw in a whole bunch of pearls and diamonds for luck."

"That would be an excellent scheme if we were all tired of life and wanted to provide for our families," said the captain, "but we haven't any families and we are not the least bit tired of life, so there you are! I think we had better go on with the execution."

"Not at all," said Bruce. "That would spoil everything. You can't expect a beautiful Princess to marry anyone that has been executed, can you? Besides, I will marry the Princess at once, and then I will be the heir to the throne and will par-



BRUCE STARTED OFF ALONE.

don you at once and appoint you all police captains in the city around the palace, and then you can get rich in a very short time." The robbers said that was something like, and they told Bruce to go ahead with his chains.

Bruce took the hammer and pounded the nails until they were bent just like the links in a chain, and then he tied them all together with his thread until they made a fine long chain. He fastened the robbers' neck and heel with this, and they helped him all they could to hurry things along. Bruce marched them along the road all that day, and everyone he met said that he must be just the bravest young fellow that ever lived to capture all those desperate robbers all by himself. When he arrived at the King's palace the King had heard of his coming, and had the court already to receive him. This made Bruce feel very proud, and he swelled up like the schoolmaster does when he presents the diplomas on graduation day.

The King said that Bruce must be as brave as brave could be, and that when he had married the Princess he should be given command of the army, and then while Bruce had his back turned, getting acquainted with

the beautiful Princess and finding out which her favorite flower was, the King had the executioner chop off the heads of all the robbers, although they said it wasn't fair and that they didn't come there to get beheaded. Of course, that wasn't Bruce's fault, for he had done the best he could, and he married the beautiful Princess and lived happily ever after, just as they do in the story books.

Little Cousin Bertha.

Take a walk with me through the pretty fields, Sophie dear. I've been going up and down these straight gravelled walks till I am tired, and I don't like the garden at all, besides, you promised to look for primroses in the hedges."

"But, Bertha, I'm very anxious to get these seeds sown before mamma comes home."

"Please leave the rest till tomorrow, and come while the sun is shining, or let me help you to sow."

"No, dear, you would not know how. I'd rather do it all myself."

"Well, may I go to the fields with-

out you?"

Sophie paused; she knew perfectly if her mother were at home Bertha would not be allowed out alone. Yet what could happen to her for a short time?

"I suppose you can't content yourself here, you'd better go to the fields," she answered, impatiently. "But don't wander far. I'll be after you when I've finished the seeds."

Little Bertha ran out of the garden delighted to escape from its confinement, while Sophie continued her work undisturbed by the child's prattle.

It was a bright day in early spring, and a shade of green had already spread over the fields and banks, though as yet the trees and hedges had not put forth a single leaf to tell of approaching summer. Here and there a stray daisy raised its open petals to greet the blue sky, and seemed to rejoice in the sunshine.

After taking several races over the short grass, Bertha walked slowly round the bank, searching for wild flowers; but not one was to be seen. A gap led into the next field, and passing through, she was rewarded by finding a clump of celandine in full bloom. Having gathered some of the starry flowers, she turned down a narrow lane, where a few primroses and violets peeped from behind the hedges, and crossed a stile to a green hill which sloped gently to the water's edge.

"Oh! the pretty river, how I love to watch it flowing!" exclaimed Bertha. "I'll just go and sit on the bank to wait for Sophie."

Soon she spied a large patch of green leaves and golden blossoms of the marsh marigold growing on the damp margin of the stream. "What lovely May-flowers! I must try and gather a few to show Sophie!" And leaning over the high bank, the child gazed down at the dark river—swollen far above its usual level by recent heavy rains—and considered how she could best manage to climb along the slippery bank, so as to reach the flowers below.

Meanwhile, Sophie spent a longer time gardening than she had intended, and being much interested in her work, was greatly surprised to find how dusk the evening had grown.

"I must go and look for Bertha. Mamma will soon be home, and we ought to be in to welcome her."

Hurrying from the garden, she crossed the first and second fields, and not seeing her little cousin, called loudly, "Bertha, Bertha, where are you?" but there was no reply. Hastily passing down the lane, and across the stile, the sound of wheels in the distance met her ear. "It must be mamma returning. Oh dear! how provoking, and we shall be quite late to receive her, for I can't go back till I find Bertha; why did she stray so far without me. Oh! here's a boy driving home the cows, I'll ask him. Will," she called out, "do you know where little Miss Bertha is?"

"She crossed the stile about an hour ago, and went down towards the river; I wondered to see her running through the fields alone, and hoped no harm would come to her, but I had to go about my own business; and that's all I know."

"The river!" exclaimed Sophie, "I never thought of that," and turning from Will, without another word, she hurried down the hill. On the brink of the river a boy was lying gazing at the water-lilies beneath him, but when asked by Sophie, he said he had not seen a little girl pass that way. The shades of evening were rapidly increasing, and there was sound of rushing water very unlike the usual quiet musical murmur of the stream. "How high the river is today, and how fast it runs. Oh! I think I see Bertha at last," and with a feeling of unspeakable relief, she darted for-

ward towards a little stunted thorn-bush which grew half way down the bank; but what was her horror on coming closer, to see that it was only a piece of Bertha's dress caught on a branch, and waving with every passing breeze like a flag of distress. The blood rushed back to Sophie's heart; trembling in every limb she leaned over the steep bank, and gazing down, saw the patch of marsh marigold. It was all too easily understood. Bertha, in her eager desire to reach the flowers, would be likely to attempt climbing down the steep slippery bank, miss her footing, roll into the water and be carried away by the violence of the current. To confirm this terrible fear, a few faded primrose and violet blossoms were scattered on the ground, as if the child had flung them from her hand before attempting her dangerous descent. For a moment Sophie stood like one paralysed, then turned to follow the course of the stream, peering into its dark waters as they rolled on towards a mill which stood at the opposite side of the river. Perhaps some one there might have seen and rescued Bertha. It was a gleam of hope. Quickening her pace, she was pleased to see the miller's wife leave her house and hasten down to the water's edge. It would be easy to call out to her across the stream. But what could Mrs. Wood be doing at that late hour stooping over the bank; yes, and drawing something to land, too? Sophie watched her for a moment in an agony of suspense, till she could distinguish, through the dusk of evening, a light-colored object laid on the grass, over which the woman bent tenderly; then no longer able to refrain from speaking, "Mrs. Wood, is there life? is there any hope?"

"Miss Sophie is that you?" said the woman, turning round in surprise. "No, indeed, there's no hope, the poor lamb is quite dead, and must have fallen in and been drowned a long while ago. Such a sad pity too, a fine little pet. But you ought to go home, Miss Sophie, it's very late for you to be out alone."

Then there was no doubt, no hope? Go home, indeed! No, she did not care where she turned, any place sooner than witness the sorrow she had caused. On, across the fields a long way, until a clump of trees and a little grassy dell recalled to her mind the thought that she was alone, and a good distance from home. It had been a favorite play-place in summer, full of wild flowers and little mossy nooks, but all that seemed, oh, so long ago! Seating herself on a large stone deep down in the dell, Sophie rested her head against the sloping bank, and tried to realize what had happened.

Was Bertha indeed gone? her mother's only child, her pet and darling. Little Cousin Bertha, who had been sent to them for change of air after an illness. How pale and delicate she had looked at first, and how bright and rosy she had lately grown. Sophie was to have gone back with her to town next week, to spend a short time with her aunt, but now, oh, how changed everything would be! Her sorrow and remorse seemed too great to bear. And yet, as Sophie sat there alone in the dark, listening to the mournful murmur of the distant stream, sounding like a low wail over the child that had struggled so lately with its cruel current, one short sentence came ringing in her ear—"The maid is not dead, but sleepeth." Had God sent the thought of comfort her? It was about a little girl Jesus had said these words. He loved and cared for little girls.

Perhaps He was watching over her now, in this sad hour of trouble, and might pity and forgive. She would ask Him.

After this, Sophie's thoughts became calmer, and she began to consider what was best to do. Mother would no doubt be anxious at her long absence: she must return and confess all.

It was very dark and dreary to walk so far alone, but as she proceeded the moon rose from behind a bank of cloud, and lighted up the way. Entering quietly by the garden door, which stood conveniently open, she gained her own room without meeting any one. All was very silent and Sophie wondered if Mrs. Wood had yet arrived, or if she herself must be the first to tell the sad tidings. "It would be better to wait here a few moments," thought the poor girl, "and consider how to break the news to mamma, for I know she will be terribly shocked."

There in the corner stood little Bertha's bed. Sophie glanced towards it, her eyes for the first time swimming with tears. Was it owing to the deceptive twilight, or could it really be occupied? Sophie rushed across the room in an agony of expectation. A bright moonbeam from the opposite window fell on Bertha's head, showing her beautiful golden hair falling in soft curls over the pillow. The blue eyes were tightly shut but a delicate pink color was on the cheek, and the breath came regularly from the half-closed lips. Sophie

gazed long and steadily—surely she could not be mistaken. "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth." Yet how could it be? Had she not seen Mrs. Wood draw a little drowned body from the mill-stream? Was it all a horrible dream? She touched the hand which lay on the coverlid; it was soft and warm. Sinking on her knees by the bed, she thanked God; then running downstairs with a lightened heart, found her mother in the dining-room. "Oh, mamma!" she cried, rushing into her arms, "how did Bertha recover?"

"My dear child, where have you been?" exclaimed her mother; "we were greatly frightened about you."

"Oh! nothing happened to me, do tell me of Bertha."

"She was brought back a good while ago by Farmer Rogers. He was walking along the river path, and saw her climbing down the bank in a very dangerous place. She clung to a branch of thorn till he came up and carried her home tired and frightened. We put her at once to bed. Then your father went to look for you, and heard at the mill that you had been speaking to Mrs. Wood some time ago across the river, but she could not give much information, for her attention was engaged about a pet lamb that had just been drowned, and she did not observe which way you took. He returned to give me even this much comfort, and is now gone to make further search. What induced you to stay out so late? and why was Bertha alone near the river?"

Then Sophie, kneeling down, and resting her head on her mother's knee, gave a full account of the whole matter. "But, oh! mother dear," she ended, "I was sure it was Bertha, instead of the pet lamb, that Mrs. Wood drew from the water, and you can't think what I suffered until I found her in the moonlight on her own little bed, 'not dead, but sleeping.'" S. T. A. R.

Puzzles.

WORD SQUARES.

**** A degenerate bear.
**** Therefore.
**** Time.
**** Missing.

**** A fruit.
**** Part of body.
**** Over.
**** Wandered.
**** Native of a foreign country.

How many nine digits be arranged in a rectangular form, so that the sum of any row, whether horizontal, vertical, or diagonal, shall equal 15?

Answers to puzzles, Feb. 8th—

CENTRAL ACROSTIC.

Hudson Bay.
Cross-words: 1, abhor; 2, cruel; 3, roddy; 4, dusky; 5, close; 6, panic.
JUMBLED LETTERS.
1, Victoria; 2, Canton, (Ohio); 3, Canton, (China).

Make one word out of "Red nuts and gin." Understanding.

Microbes For Everybody.

Carefully guarded and tended in one room in London there are enough microbes to kill every man, woman and child in the world. The room is in the Institute of Preventive Medicine building, situated in one of the most densely populated districts of the big city.

The microbes are there in thousands, millions, and even billions, and they are just yearning to be at their fell work upon human beings. They represent almost every known disease and are classified and kept in bottles, fed and developed, and surrounded by an atmosphere best suited to them, and they are nursed with as much care and tenderness as is given to the fairest and rarest of flowers.

The microbe establishment is maintained for the purpose of enabling medical men to become familiar with these "mighty atoms" of destruction. Here they have every opportunity to make a close study of the precise character, appearance and disposition of the different bacilli; to discover, in fact, everything that can possibly be discovered with a view to the prevention and cure of diseases that are caused by microbes. And one can easily conceive what a fascinating study bacilli afford.

An unformed stranger might walk through the incubator room of the institute without dreaming for a moment that he was in a hothouse of disease. He would more probably imagine that he was in a novel kind of bakery, where small bottles of variously colored fluids were stored to be in an even temperature, for around the room are arranged numerous oven-like incubators, with glass doors, through which one can perceive the long glass tubes containing the bacilli, whose way of egress from the tubes is barred by nothing more impenetrable than small wads of cotton. There quietly, almost invisibly, re-

poses a power great enough to shake the earth of human life. And the bacilli demand the most delicate attention, the most delicate care. Almost every different kind of disease has particular likes and dislikes which have to be carefully studied. One kind of bacilli likes to drink horses' blood, another of broth, a third will touch nothing but a peculiar kind of jelly, and so on through the list of diseases spread, though, luckily for the department of the establishment, few agree in having very delicate tastes.—Ex.

Lord Rosebery Favored.

New York, Jan. 30.—Lord Rosebery, lord rector of Aberdeen University has intimated, according to the London correspondent of the Tribune that the condition of his health and inability to devote attention to the duties of the position, caused him to decline to offer himself for election. The radical students agreed to invite Lord Rosebery to stand as lord rector in succession to Lord Strathcona.

Denver Wants the C. E.

Denver, Jan. 30.—John W. H. general secretary of the Christian Endeavor Union, who was in Denver yesterday, was bearing an enthusiastic message from the City of Denver to the city to hold its national convention here in 1903. Work will be done once to raise \$15,000 at the city to pay the expenses.

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SOCIETIES.

THE REGULAR COMMUNION Yukon Lodge, No. 78, A. F. & A. M. will be held at Masonic hall, 2nd street, monthly, Thursday, before full moon, at 8:00 p. m. G. H. WELLS, Sec'y. J. A. DONALD, Treas.

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