

JIM'S LUCK.

By SYDNEY DAVOLL.

"Barlow says he can't mend the old shoes no more, and he can't make me a new pair 'less I pays him two dollars in cash and the rest in work."

"Dear me, Jimmy!" Grandmother turned upon him a look as doleful as his own. "Then he wont let you work 'em all out?"

"No."

"That's cause you went to speak to him a Friday mornin'," said grandmother, shaking her head with an air of profound conviction of the truth of what she said. "I never in my life knowed no good to come o' doin' things a Friday."

"Like enough," said Jim gloomily. "But every day's goin' to be Friday to me if I've got to stay out o' school."

"You can have the egg money, Jimmy."

"That makes me think," said Jimmy."

"As I come by Mis' Lane's she told me she wanted four dozen eggs for settin', and wants 'em right off--this mornin'!"

"Not to set a Friday, eh, Jimmy?"

"Said she was goin' to set 'em this very mornin'."

"Somethin' 'll happen to 'em, sure as she lives," said grandmother solemnly. "I never in my life knowed a brood o' chickens to hatch that was set a Friday."

"Did you ever try it, gram'ther?"

"Try it? No, o' course I didn't. Do you think I'd have no more sense 'n to waste good eggs temptin' bad luck? But if Mis' Lane wants to it's no business of mine. That'll be forty cents towards your shoes, Jimmy."

"But it'll take a month to get enough eggs to make two dollars, and I want 'em next week."

Grandmother began packing the eggs into a market basket with many more remarks about Mrs. Lane's "ventur'someness" in daring to begin anything on Friday. The good old woman believed in signs and omens as she believed in her Bible--possibly a little more firmly. If she put on a garment wrong side out she wore it so all day, rather than run the risk of ill luck which was sure to follow the turning it right. If she spilled salt she burned a little or threw it over her head. If the scissors stuck up in the floor she

made ready for company. If she saw the moon over her left shoulder, or a snake or a lizard crossed her path, or a pin lay with its point toward her, it meant bad luck, and the first mishap which afterward befell was faithfully laid to it.

She never began anything on Friday, preferring rather to lose much valuable time. If she could not finish her stocking in time to set up the first stitch of another before bed-time on Thursday night it went over until Saturday; if seeds could not be planted on Thursday they must wait two days instead of one; and so with everything else. Many a day's work had Jim lost for the same reason, for it had never occurred to the boy to question his grandmother's opinion, and no one else had ever talked to him about bad and good luck. "There, now, if she will have 'em. You go straight over with 'em and straight back, Jimmy," said grandmother, giving him the basket. "Don't you set 'em down a single minute." If Mrs' Lane will have her eggs to-day I don't want the bad luck to come to 'em while they're in your hands."

Jim started on his long walk over the fields but before he was half way was attracted by the sight of a bird's nest.

"It's a tall tree, and mean to climb," said Jim, measuring it with his eye, "but perhaps I can get it."

The basket of eggs was set down under the tree, and Jim nearly reached the nest, when to his great dismay he saw a cow approaching with evident design of finding out what might be so carefully packed. "Get out, there!" he cried, climbing down in hot haste.

His hat fell into a little stream which ran under the tree, and he tore his clothes, but reached the ground just in time to save his eggs.

He followed his hat down stream, and, having climbed a fence which placed him beyond danger from the cow, waded into the water to recover it. But the stream was deeper than he expected and its bed was rough and stony. He cut his foot on a sharp stone, and, losing his balance, toppled over into the water.

"It's all 'cause it's Friday," he whimpered, as, smarting and shivering, for the May morning was cool, he regained the shore while his hat sailed on. "I wouldn't 'a' sent 'em at all if I'd 'a' been gram'ther."