

FOR THE CHILDREN.

Almost any child can work out this puzzle; in fact, its solution should be plain at first sight to your practiced eyes and minds. The drill you have had in puzzles has sharpened your wits so that you would readily undertake to solve the most difficult. It is only the lazy little lads or lassies to whom the sight of a puzzle is alarming; the bright ones fairly delight in it.

A mysterious loop is here presented threaded with a string to each end of which is fastened an oblong block. How can we disengage the string from the loop? First of all, make the loop of flexible leather in the shape pictured. Slash the piece of leather lengthwise at each side of the center, to form the loop, and cut a square hole in it below the loop; then adjust the string or thong of leather, and tie an oblong piece of leather to each end. If you use twine, oblongs of pasteboard may be substituted for the leather. Simply slip the string under the loop near the bottom and then slip each end into the square hole, as pictured at figure No. 1.

The string is shown freed from the loop at figure No. 2, and it is released in this wise: Pull the loop through the square hole and with it one end of the string with the oblong block attached to it. After this end has been slipped out, one tug will force the entire string through the loop, enough of which has been drawn through the square hole to admit the oblong easily. Remember that the leather must be pliant, for otherwise the string and loop will not work easily.

This is a particularly simple trick, which everybody can learn at the very first trial, though should any of you fail the first, or even the second, time you must not give up. The third trial will surely be successful. A lesson in patience will have been learned in the event of making repeated trials, besides a puzzle solved, and none of my little friends can too early learn the value of patience.

BED-TIME STORIES FROM GREEK MYTHOLOGY.

PHILEMON AND BAUCIS.

Somewhere in Greece on the margin of a great lake of dark and stagnant water stand an oak and a linden tree. They look to be nearly as old as the world itself, yet their boughs bend and sway towards each other continually, and sometimes when the wind blows whisperings are heard among the great branches. Where the lake is now a great city once stood, and the trees were two mortals, who on account of their piety were alone saved in a whole city full of people. For the city was destroyed for its wickedness. You have not forgotten Jupiter's disposition to leave his Olympian throne from time to time and amuse himself by prying about on earth in disguise? These visits to earth were often followed by severe punishments for the inhabitants of the locality in which it pleased the wise god to appear. Coming upon the people thus unawares Jupiter learned much that would otherwise have been concealed from him.

One day the god and his messenger, Mercury, both in disguise, approached a certain city as pilgrims and, knocking at

the door of every house, asked food and shelter. Every door was inhospitably closed in their faces until they reached an humble cottage in which lived a poor and aged couple, Philemon and his wife, Baucis. They bade the wanderers welcome and set before them the best they had. Baucis spread a coarse cloth over the stone seat, which served the purpose of a table, while Philemon gathered fruit and also pot herbs in the garden, which the wife prepared in an iron kettle. Soon the simple meal was ready, and the guests were invited to partake of it. The juice of grapes was served with the meal, and as fast as the pitcher became emptied it refilled itself of its own accord, to the astonishment of the aged couple. In amazement and awe they recognized their guests as gods from Olympus. Falling before them on their knees in terror they implored forgiveness for their poor entertainment.

In honor of their guests Philemon and Baucis had determined to sacrifice the goose which they had long kept to guard their house, as people nowadays keep dogs. But the bird, old as it was, was yet too agile to allow itself to be caught, and escaping the old people it claimed protection of the gods. Acknowledging who they were, the gods forbade the sacrifice, and commanded the old people to leave their home and follow them. They then prepared to punish the village for its inhospitality and evil ways, and so swift was the punishment that when the aged couple, who had now ascended the hill near their home, turned to look behind, instead of the city there appeared only a lake on the bank of which stood a single dwelling, which they recognized as their old home. But even while they looked and wept over the unhappy fate of the

people of the city, their house disappeared and a temple with marble columns and portico and gilded dome arose in its stead. Their astonishment grew even greater when Jupiter addressed them in kindly tones: "Excellent old man, and woman worthy of such a husband, speak, tell us your wishes; what favor have you to ask of us?" Philemon turned to Baucis, and found her greatest wish to be exactly like his own. And this he asked of Jupiter: That as priest and priestess they might be made guardians of the temple, serving in this way until it pleased the gods to take them from earth. They prayed also that when that time came life might be taken from them at the same moment.

Their wish was granted. They lived to a great age and kept faithful guard over Jupiter's temple. One day as Philemon and Baucis stood before the holy temple they each beheld a leafy crown forming about the other's head, and even as they gazed they became transformed into trees. They bade each other farewell at the same moment, just as the tough brown bark closed about them. Philemon was converted into a sturdy oak and Baucis into a linden. These great trees still remain and are the only pleasing sights for miles around, for the lake is never clear, and beyond the lake the ground is marshy and is a home for all sorts of ugly, winged and creeping creatures.

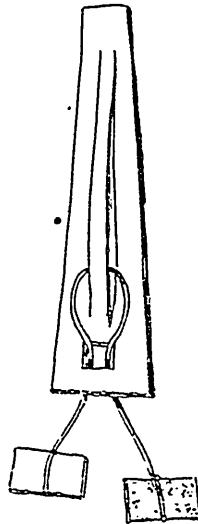


FIGURE NO. 1.

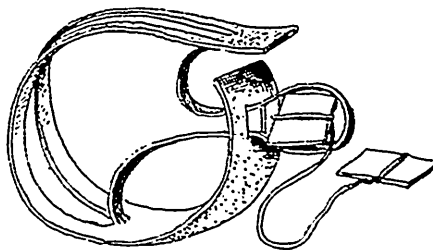


FIGURE NO. 2.

FIGURES NOS. 1 AND 2.—THE MYSTERIOUS LOOP.

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