

cows, now, Ben?" she asked with a yawn.

'Why, Polly Chester!' cried Ben, grabbing her in his arms. 'Have you been up there all this time?'

'Yes,' Polly replied gleefully. 'Did you try to find me, Ben? I made a nice nest in a corner and covered me all up with hay, only just my nose so I could breathe. It was lots of fun and I had a good nap. I thought I'd be right here all ready when you went after the cows.'

'Why, Ben, aren't you going?' she asked anxiously as he dashed out of the barn with her in his arms.

Polly was much surprised when everybody crowded around, hugging and kissing her, and at the tears on her mother's face. When she found what it was all about she was still more surprised.

'Why, I didn't s'pose I slept so long,' she laughed. 'But you didn't need to be scart about me. Course, I wouldn't be lost. I wish I'd woke up in time to help you go after the cows, though, Cousin Ben.'

'Well, I guess we all do,' Ben responded emphatically.

'And now let's have supper,' he added. 'I'm as hungry as a bear.'

'So I am,' too,' said Polly.

The Work of Ants.

In a pine forest, on a dry, sandy hillock, there was an ant heap, nearly as high as a child, with swarms of active little ants hurrying up from all sides and creeping into it. Why do you suppose the ants had built this high heap, and what were they so busy about? You may think it was a palace of pleasure, with dining halls and play rooms, and fine fun going on all day, for they were nearly all dragging into the heap something to feast upon, one tugging at a dead caterpillar, whilst another had a dried-up fly, or some other dainty.

Now, let me tell you, the ant heap is no holiday house, for the ants only built it for their little sisters. It is a big nursery, in which the young ants are nursed and brought up by the old ants, their sisters. They bring together pine needles, blades of grass, and wood splinters, lay them carefully on each other, stick them together

with mud and grains of sand, and and so make halls and passages, rooms, and closets. They cover the outside of this wonderful structure with leaves and pine needles, making a close, slanting roof, from which the rain runs off, leaving the inside warm and dry.

The ant mother lays tiny eggs, no bigger than fine grains of sand, and from each egg there will come a young ant. The old ants carry the delicate eggs deep down into the earth at night, into the lowest halls of the building. There they remain nice and warm throughout the night, and when the sun shines brightly on the heap by day, they drag the eggs up again into the topmost room, in which they are hatched by the sun's rays. But the ant eggs must not only be kept warm like the bird's eggs, to bring the young inside to life, they must also be tended. The old ants lick them daily, covering them with a sweet juice which they bring in, for without this the eggs would dry up and perish.

Out of the eggs slip little, white, helpless grubs, that can neither walk nor seek their own food. The old ants carry the little creatures up and down in the heap, in just the same manner they did the eggs, fetching them food from the wood and putting it into their mouths. The quite young grubs only get sweet honey, but as soon as they are big they get stronger food. The grubs are also carefully licked and cleaned every day, so that no speck of dust remains on them, otherwise they would sicken and die.

When they have grown up they weave a fine web round themselves and sleep in it as in a little bed. Even then they are carried up and down daily by their elder sisters, who always find the warmest places to lay them in. Should someone disturb the ant-heap so that a chrysalis lies uncovered, the ants never think of themselves, but in all haste seize it and carry it into safety, whilst others defend the little ones or try to catch the disturber of their peace and bite them viciously.

Inside the cocoon the grub becomes an ant. The elder sisters listen carefully every day to hear if the little one is moving and

ready to emerge, for she cannot get out of her web by herself. When they hear a knocking inside they cut the web open with their pincers and help the young sister to step out. Now look! This young ant has four delicate wings. In early autumn, when the weather is warm, thousands upon thousands of such winged ants come out of the earth. They buzz up into the air, dance about a while, and then sail far away like a cloud to make new ant-heaps in other places.

The industrious elder sisters can only sit and watch, but they have never expected thanks or reward from their young charges. They found their whole happiness in the care of their young sisters, and when the ant mother lays her eggs again next summer, they will take the same care of the new brood. —From 'Stories from Natural History.'

Just Come Here and Scratch.

A mother hen and her five chickens
Set out for a walk in the early
morning

Said the first little chick,

With a queer little squirm,

'I wish I could find a fat little
worm.'

And the next little chicken,

With an odd little shrug,

'I wish I could find a fat little bug.'

Said the third little chicken,

With a sharp little squeal,

'I wish I could find some nice
yellow meal.'

Said the fourth little chicken,

With a small sigh of grief,

'I wish I could find a green little
leaf.'

And the fifth little chicken,

With a faint little moan,

'I wish I had a wee gravel stone.'

'Now, see here,' said the mother,
From the green garden patch,

'If you want any breakfast,

Just come here and scratch.'

—Farm Journal.

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