

main long under such an influence. The chickens were "peeping" loudly, and she remembered that they were still without their dinner.

As she passed around the corner of the house with a dish of corn in her hand, the wind almost lifted her from the ground. It was certainly blowing with greater violence than during the morning.

Great tumble-weeds went flying by, turning over and over with almost lightning-like rapidity, then, pausing for an instant's rest, were caught by another gust and carried along mile after mile till some fence or other obstacle was reached, where they could pile up in great drifts, and wait till a brisk wind from an opposite direction should send them rolling and tumbling all the way back. But Lindy did not notice the tumble-weeds. The dish of corn had fallen from her hands and she stood looking straight ahead with wide-open, terrified eyes.

What was the sight that so frightened her?

Only a line of fire below the horizon. Only a line of fire, with forked flames darting high into the air and a cloud of smoke drifting away from them. A beautiful relief, this bright, changing spectacle, from the brown monotony of the prairie.

But the scene was without beauty for Lindy. Her heart had given one great bound when she first saw the red line, and then it seemed to quit beating. She had seen many prairie fires; had seen her father and other men fight them, and she knew at once the danger her home was in. What could she, a little girl, do to save it, and perhaps herself and her little brother, from the destroyer which the scuth wind was bringing right toward them?

Only for a moment Lindy stood, white and motionless; then with a bound she was at the well. Her course was decided upon. If only time and strength were given her! Drawing two pails of water, she laid a large bag in each, and then, getting some matches, hurried out beyond the stable. She must fight the fire with fire. That was her only hope; but a strong experienced man would have shrunk from starting a back fire in such a wind.

She fully realized the danger but it was possible escape from otherwise inevitable destruction, and she hesitated not an instant to attempt it. Cautiously starting a blaze, she stood with a wet bag ready to smother the first unruly flame.

The great fire to the southward was rapidly approaching. Prairie chickens and other birds, driven from their nests were flying over, uttering distressing cries. The air was full of smoke and burnt grass, and the crackling of the flames could plainly be heard. It was a trying moment. The increased roar of the advancing fire warned Lindy that she had but little time in which to complete the circle around the house and barn, still, if she hurried too much, she would lose control of the fire she had started, and with it all hope of safety.

The heat was intense, the smoke suffocating, the rapid swinging of the heavy bag most exhausting, but she was unconscious of these things. The extremity of the danger inspired her with wonderful strength and endurance. Instead of losing courage, she increased her almost superhuman exertions, and in another brief interval the task was completed. None too soon, either, for the swiftly advancing column had nearly reached the wavering, struggling, slowly moving line Lindy had sent out to meet it.

It was wild, fascinating, half-terrible, half-beautiful scene. The tongues of flame, leaping above each other with airy, fantastic grace, seemed, cat-like, to toy with their victims before devouring them.

A sudden, violent gust of wind, and then with a great crashing roar the two fires met, the flames shooting high into the air as they rushed together.

For one brief, glorious moment they remained there, lapping their fierce hot tongues; then suddenly dropping, they died quickly out; and where an instant before had been a wall of fire, was nothing now but a cloud of blue smoke rising from the blackened ground, and here and there a sickly flame finishing any obstinate tufts of grass. The fire on each side, meeting no obstacle, swept quickly by, and Lindy stood gazing, spellbound, after it as it darted and flashed in terrible zigzag lines farther and farther away.

"Oh, Lindy!" called a shrill little voice from the house. Elmer had just awakened.

"Yes, I'm coming," Lindy answered turning. But how very queer she felt! There was a roaring in her ears louder than the fire had made; everything whirled before her eyes, and the sun seemed suddenly to have ceased shining, all was so dark. Reaching the house by a great effort, she sank, faint, dizzy, and trembling, upon the bed by her brother's side.

Elmer, frightened and hardly awake, began to cry, and, as he

never did anything in a half-way manner, the result was quite wonderful. His frantic shrieks and furious cries roused his half-fainting sister as effectually as if he had poured a glass of brandy between her lips. She soon sat up, and by and by color began to return to the white face, and strength to the exhausted body. Her practical nature and strong will again asserted themselves, and instead of yielding to a feeling of weakness and prostration, she tied on her sun-bonnet firmly, and gave the chickens their long-delayed dinner.

But when half an hour later her father found her fast asleep, with the glow from the sky reflected on her weary little face, he looked out the window for a moment, pictured to himself the terrible scenes of the afternoon, and then down at his daughter. "A brave girl!" he murmured, smoothing the yellow hair with his hard, brown hand—"a brave girl."—*Charlotte A. Butts, in the August St. Nicholas.*

## THE ECHO-BOY.

A little boy once went home to his mother and said:—

"Mother, sister and I went out into the garden, and we were calling about, and there was some boy mocking us."

"How do you mean, Johnny?" said his mother.

"Why," said the child, "I was calling out 'Ho!' and this boy said 'Ho!' So I said to him 'Who are you?' and he answered 'Who are you?' I said, 'What is your name?' He said, 'What is your name?' And I said to him, 'Why don't you show yourself?' He said, 'Show yourself?' And I jumped over the ditch, and I went into the woods, and I could not find him, and I came back and said, 'If you don't come out I will punch your head!' and he said, 'I will punch your head!'"

So his mother said:—Ah! Johnny, if you had said, 'I love you,' he would have said 'I love you.' If you had said, 'Your voice is sweet,' he would have said, 'Your voice is sweet.' Whatever you said to him he would have said back to you." And the mother said:—"Now, Johnny, when you grow and get to be a man, whatever you say to others they will by-and-by say back to you." And his mother took him to the old text in the Scripture, "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again."—*Temperance Record.*

## A WASP IN THE PEAR.

It was near to the close of an autumn day  
When Willy ran into the orchard to play,  
Or rather to look if perchance there might be  
A pear that had dropped from his favorite tree.  
So thither he scampered, and presently found  
A beautiful one which lay there on the ground.  
Its colors were rich and he knew it was sweet;  
So he seized it with joy, and began to eat.  
Oh! how happy was he thus its juices to taste.  
But, alas! his enjoyment was speedily chased,  
For a wasp was concealed in the pulp of the pear,  
And Willy soon painfully found it was there;  
For, pressed in his mouth, the passionate thing  
Pierced his tongue and his lips with its venomous sting.  
With screams and with tears to his mother he ran,  
Who at once to reprove and relieve him began.  
And the means which a mother knows how to employ  
Soon abated the pain of her much-beloved boy.  
But she thought an event which such anguish had caused,  
Bestowed an occasion too good to be lost,  
For storing with cautions the mind of her son,  
Which might guide and preserve him as life should roll on.  
"Ah! Willy," she said, "there are hundreds of things  
That are lovely without, but within have their stings.  
When Pleasure allures thee take heed of her snare,  
Else oft thou wilt find there's a wasp in the pear.  
Thus the drink of the drunkard doth thousands entice;  
How short-lived the pleasure, how fearful its price!  
Health, money, friends, peace, are but part of the cost;  
Reputation and life, and the soul too, are lost.  
The joy of an hour or two, after it brings  
Guilt piercing the conscience with terrible stings.  
In this world the anguish is oftentimes great,  
But a doom far more dreadful doth drunkards await!  
Oh! then, Willy, when tempted to taste it, beware,  
And always remember *the wasp in the pear!*"

—Selected.