

WESTERN WIGWAM

PLAYING THE ORGAN

Dear Cousin Dorothy:—This is my first letter to your nice club. My father has taken THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE for about two years. I have five brothers and one sister. I am sending a two-cent stamp for a button. We have an organ and I am learning to play it.

Man. EVA GRANGER (1).

COME AGAIN AND TELL US MORE

Dear Editor:—I have been much interested in the letters in your paper in the Western Wigwam column, and being a Western girl, raised on the Western prairies, perhaps my experiences might interest the girls who live in the wheat country.

I ride to school every day on my white pony that I call General White. He is a little beauty, right up on the bit; and, talk about flying, he can just skim over the badger and gopher holes like a swallow. The reason I call him General White is because he was a little foal when General White was shut up in Ladysmith in South Africa during the Boer war, so my pony was called the General. I have also a little Shetland pony, Little Jim, but I am getting too big to ride a Shetland, and I can't very well help father punch cattle on a Shetland. They are too slow and not big enough to hold a good husky calf in the rope, as my brothers and I have to help gather at round-up time. Your prairie girls should just see the fun then. Talk about riding a bucking broncho! Why, some of the boys say some of them are harder to ride than a grindstone when it is being turned. We do not bother with any sidesaddle on this ranch. Father says they are too hard on the horse's withers; besides one cannot tie up anything to a sidesaddle, so stock saddles we all use and cinch them good and tight.

Alta. WESTERN COWGIRL (13).

The Green Paper Doll

"Oh Betty, I'm so upset!" exclaimed, Dorothy Bates, as she came into the McGuire library one afternoon in early May.

"What's the matter, Dotty?" asked Betty. "The party isn't off, is it?" "No; we're to go, all right; but Jeanette can't go. She has such a cold, her mother won't let her go away from home. And I've just come from there. She really is ill; isn't it too bad?"

"Yes, indeed it is! We would have had such a lovely time, all together."

"Well, we'll go, anyhow. And, Betty, as Irene expects three of us, I think it would be nice to ask someone to go in Jeanette's place. I'd like to ask Constance Harper, but I know you don't like her much."

"Oh, I like Constance well enough, but she doesn't like me."

Well, whichever way it is, you two never seem to get along very well together. But who else is there?"

Betty hesitated a minute, then she said:

"I'd like to ask Martha Taylor."

"Martha! Why, Betty, nobody likes Martha. And well—you know Martha, poor girl, has to count every penny, and—and she never seems quite at her ease—not that that's anything against her, but she wouldn't have pretty dresses and hats, and the people at Halstead House are often dressy and gay."

"I know it; but if Martha doesn't mind that, we needn't. And, Dorothy, you don't know Martha as well as I do. She never has any good times, and it's that that makes her shy and awkward. Oh, do ask her to go with us, if only for my sake."

"Betty, what a queer girl you are! I like Martha well enough, but I don't believe she'll go with us. I'll ask her, though, as you're so set upon it."

"What's this enthusiastic discussion all about?" asked Mrs. McGuire, paus-

ing at the library door, as she was passing through the hall.

"Oh, mother, come in!" cried Betty. "What do you think, Jeanette is quite ill and she can't go with us to the house-party at Irene Halstead's."

"That is too bad; I'm very sorry. Shall you ask anyone in her place, Dorothy?"

"That's just what we're talking about, Mrs. McGuire. Betty thinks it would be nice to ask Martha Taylor, but I don't think she quite fits in."

"But think how she'd enjoy it! Martha almost never gets invited to a lovely outing like this one you have in prospect. Why, she'd be overjoyed to go."

"Yes'm, I s'pose she would," admitted Dorothy; "but she's—she's so bashful, you know."

"That's mostly because you girls slight her. Now you've a fine opportunity to give her a pleasure, do it, and do it heartily and kindly. Let her feel that you really want her to go with you."

"Yes, do," said Betty; "and, truly, Dot, if you ask her as if you wanted her, and if you treat her cordially, you'll be surprised to see how gay and jolly Martha will be."

"All right," said Dorothy, agreeably; "I really do like her, and I'll do my best. Come on, Betty, let's go and ask her now."

Betty whisked away, and returned in a few minutes with her hat on, ready to start. It was but a short walk through the bright May sunshine to Martha's house, and they found her in the garden, watering some flower seeds she had just planted.

"Hello, Martha!" called the two girls, and she came running to meet them.

"Come, sit on the veranda," she said; "it's so pleasant there. I'm glad you came to see me."

"We've come to invite you to a party," said Dorothy, plunging into the subject at once.

"A party!" exclaimed Martha.

"Where?"

"Oh, Martha!" cried Betty, "it's more than a party—it's a house-party! At a lovely country place—Dorothy's cousin's—and we're to stay from Wednesday to Saturday! Isn't that grand?"

It was so grand that Martha could scarcely realize it.

"I go?" she said. "For three whole days! Oh! what a party!"

"Yes, it's going to be lovely," said Dorothy. "A May party on Friday and lots of picnics and things on the other days. Will you go with us, Martha?"

"Indeed, I will! I'm sure mother will let me. But, girls, I don't know if my clothes are good enough for such a grand place."

"Oh, pshaw!" said Betty. "Don't think about that. Just come on and have a good time, and never mind what you wear."

Mrs. Taylor was delighted to have Martha go with the other girls, and at once set about furnishing up her wardrobe as best she could.

And, indeed, when at last the day came to start, Martha, in her trim, neat travelling suit, looked almost as well-dressed as the other two. They were to travel in charge of Mr. Halstead, Dorothy's uncle, who was returning to his country home after a short trip to Boston.

He was a genial, affable sort of man, but after a little kindly conversation he left the girls to entertain themselves and became absorbed in his paper.

Martha was as happy as a bird. The prospect of the good time coming seemed to transform her, and she was so gay and merry that Dorothy concluded she had misjudged her, and that Betty was right about her.

When they at last reached Halstead House, Irene was on the veranda to greet them.

She kissed her cousin Dorothy and greeted her warmly, and then welcomed the other two as Dorothy introduced them.

Neither Betty nor Martha had ever met Irene before, but Mrs. Halstead had written for Dorothy to bring two friends with her, and so the girls were at once made welcome.

Two other girls were visiting Irene, so the house-party numbered six young people, and a gay flock they were.

(Continued next week)

BOYS' CLUB

A DANDY LETTER

Dear Editor:—You asked us to write before the busy season comes on and so I will do my best. This club does not seem to have many members so far, and I am wondering what is the age limit. I think the Ingle Nook page the most interesting in the paper—the letters are so long and interesting.

I remember one of the boys a good while ago asking where kingbirds built their nests. I have found one in a poplar about ten feet from the ground, and I know someone who found one in a thresher. I think they often build nests near farms, but their nests are hard to find generally.

We have a splendid place here for birds, and I take a great interest in them. Last year we had a small pond just in front of the stable and a couple of mallard ducks raised seven young ones on it. We had tame ducks on it too, but they did not often go together. This year the ducks came back, but have not built as the pond has dried up, owing to the hot weather. We also had a horned grebe, greater yellowlegs, plovers and sandpipers. A golden eagle has visited us twice from the Rockies, which are about sixty miles away, and stayed some days quite close to the house. Do any of the boys get humming birds in their gardens? We have been here three summers, and they have come every one and built here, although I have never been able to find their nests. We grow scarlet runner beans, and they like the flowers of them far better than anything else in the garden. They are very fond of the wild honeysuckle in the woods also. Last year we had heaps of flickers round the place and young ones got in the house; but this year and other years there are none closer than the creek, three miles off. Can anyone explain this?

We never shoot or disturb the birds, and they are getting more numerous every year. We had to shoot some magpies, because they were taking the very young chickens, but we leave the big hawks alone, as they do not worry us and they take the gophers. We found two young gophers in a hawk's nest once. I am not sure that it is not a mistake to leave the hawks alone altogether, as they are so very numerous (we can count twenty in the air in the evening often), and I know they destroy robins' and other birds' nests that I have been watching.

We are very lucky in the way of animals for the naturalist to study, but a lot of them are very destructive. We have seen coyotes, lynx, badgers, porcupines, mink, weasels and lots of others. A mountain lion came down here from the mountains four years ago, and a wolf or two was seen quite close here last winter.

All insects seem very common this year, especially butterflies. I expect the rain kills a lot of them most years. It is funny that the most uncommon sorts in the old country are the commonest here—Camberwell beauty, scarce swallowtail, tailed blue, white admiral (the red admiral is common there, but scarce here), pale-clouded yellow and lots of others.

At Banff, in the museum there is a grand collection of Alberta birds and animals, but not a very good one of eggs, and a very poor one of butterflies.

I must stop now or nobody will read to the end. I am very interested in natural history, but I don't know that the other boys are.

Alberta GOLDEN EAGLE.

(There are just forty-seven members of the Boys' Club yet. There isn't really a hard and fast age limit. Any boy is welcome who is old enough to be interesting and young enough in feelings—quite apart from years—to be interested in boys and their affairs. Your fine "bird" letter brings you into the club with three cheers and a tiger. I hope you will write again. I envy you your life among the wild, live things.—Ed.)

A Philadelphia physician, in declaring that insanity was frequently productive of sound logic tempered by wit, told the story of a patient he once met in an asylum.

He came across this patient while strolling through the grounds, and, stopping, spoke to him. After a brief conversation on conventional topics the physician said:

"Why are you here?"

"Simply a difference of opinion," replied the patient. "I said all men were mad, and all men said I was mad—and the majority won."

The Unexpected

IRVING THOMAS

PEETE came to us as an angel in disguise. It would have required a prophet to have foreseen his angelic qualities before they were actively exhibited, for when we first saw him they certainly were not in evidence. He was hitched to a Jewish peddler's wagon, and a more neglected, dilapidated, skinny and dejected looking mule I had never seen. He stood with head hanging and ears flopped down like those of a lop-eared rabbit, as though he lacked the strength to hold such enormous appendages in an upright position. They really seemed enormous in comparison with the rest of his body for in his best and fattest condition he never weighed more than eight hundred, and at that time he must have weighed a great deal less. He seemed to be nothing but a mule's hide stretched over a perfectly fleshless skeleton. The peddler explained that it was Pete's own fault that he was in such bad condition, and backed up his statement by calling attention to the fat, slick-coated mustang which made the other half of his team. It was his practice, he said, to camp wherever night overtook him and turn his team loose to graze by the roadside. If they behaved themselves this was all they needed, in addition to what they picked up along the fences while he bargained with his customers; but Pete could not be trusted, for he took advantage of the darkness of the night to conceal himself, so that at hitching time in the morning his owner was compelled to spend the forenoon hunting him instead of pursuing his business. He assured us, however, that if he had a fixed abode Pete would be a model mule, for outside of this habit of playing hide-and-seek with his owner he was without a fault. With no feed but the grass which he could reach within the length of his tether from a single fence post he could scarcely be expected to stay in condition, but with the run of a feed lot or pasture he would soon be a very different mule. This excellent creature was offered to us for the small sum of twenty-five dollars, because, though this was far less than he was worth, his owner knew where he could buy another which could be trusted to graze on the road for that amount.

It happened that just at that time we were trying to decide between a windmill and a tread-power for running the pump, churn, grinding stone, etc. The tread-power had an advantage over the windmill, in that it would always work whether the wind was blowing or not, and was movable; but the dog was not heavy enough to run it, and the horses were too heavy and too valuable to be put to such work. A twenty-five-dollar mule would be just the thing, provided he would work. A whiffletree could be attached to the tread-power and the mule could haul it about wherever it might be needed. We had misgivings as to Pete's willingness to work, but decided to risk the twenty-five dollars, as the plan seemed attractive, especially as our nearest neighbor, who had been so lucky as to get a windmill before we could afford it, had frequently been compelled to pump water for his stock by hand in the hottest weather of summer and on those still cold days of winter when the mercury hides itself in the bulb of the thermometer.

As standing in the stable with nothing to do would not be good for Pete we turned him loose in the barnyard, and threw him a few handfuls of oats and a forkful of hay at feeding time. He was not demonstrative and we were unable to determine whether or not he appreciated good treatment, but we liked him in a passive way, because he so thoroughly minded his own business, all of us except Dick, our hired man.

(Continued next week)