

confidently looked forward to. If there is rain in the atmosphere the snails may be seen to seek shelter up the stems of trees and shrubs, under leaves and, in fact, anywhere where they can be safely out of the wet. Only when all immediate danger of a recurrence of rain is over will they emerge again.

'A Bit Like a Heron's Legs.'

(J. W. H. H., in 'Friendly Greetings.')

It was a clumsy sort of parable, not by any means the polished sort that an author would produce, but it was a good parable for all that. Moreover, it was Jim's own production.

Jim and his mate were watching the folks pouring into a hall where things were to be acted, and songs to be sung—of a sort. Jim's mate felt inclined to enter, but Jim himself hung back.

heron comin' down—a big bird wi' tremendous legs. He put his feet down into the water gingerly and carefully, so as not to disturb the little fishes as came swimmin' by. He'd stand full five minutes i' one place. Presently up comes an old fish, he sees the legs, he knows they aren't reeds nor rushes nor sich like, an' he darts back. Then up comes a little fish without experience; he thinks the heron's legs is just two great grey reeds, they stand so silent and still. Maybe he's noticed them there five minutes back. So he goes floatin' through. Then the heron's beak comes down like a guillotine, and—snap! The little fish finds it's all up wi' it, i' more senses than one, eh mate?'

Jim's mate laughed good-naturedly. 'So thou thinks we'll get bitten,' he asked, 'if we go through them pillars over there?'

'Likely as not,' said Jim. 'Anyway, we might see and hear things as would be hard

and some are called by the very suggestive names, She-is-dead and We-die-for-Charlie. In Africa, at least, one may well echo Shakespeare and exclaim, 'What's in a name!'—'Missionary Review of the World.')

Told Around the Congo Fire.

How a Son tried to Outwit his Father.

(The Rev. John H. Weeks, in 'Wonderlands.')

This story seems to teach us that it is hopeless for a son to try to be as wise as his father.

One day a Son said to his Father: 'I will hide, and you will not be able to find me.' The Father replied: 'Hide where you like,' and then entered his house to rest.

The Son found a three-kernel peanut (often called monkey nuts), and changed himself into one of the kernels; a fowl, coming along, picked up the peanut and swallowed it; a wild bush-cat caught and ate the fowl; and a dog chased the bush-cat and ate it. After a little time the dog was swallowed by a large python, which, having eaten its meal, went to the river and was snared in a fish-trap.

The Father searched for his Son, and not seeing him went to look at his fish-trap. On pulling it to the river side he found a large python in it. He opened the python and saw a dog inside, in which he found a bush-cat and on opening that he discovered a fowl, from which he took a peanut, and breaking its shell there revealed his Son. And the Son was so dumbfounded that he never tried again to outwit his Father.

The Four Foolish Men.

A wizard out walking one day met a boy crying very bitterly. He asked him the reason of his tears, and the boy replied: 'I have lost my father's parrot, and if you can find it I will pay you well.'

The wizard called a hunter, a carpenter, and a thief, and told them about the loss and the promised reward. They decided to search for the parrot. 'Before starting, let us show our skill,' said one of the four. 'You, thief, go and steal an egg from that fowl without its knowledge.' The thief went and stole the egg, and the fowl did not move. The hunter put up the egg as a mark, went a long distance, and proved his skill by hitting the egg, after which the carpenter showed his skill by putting it together again.

They then turned to the wizard for him to give a proof of his cleverness. After a little time he said: 'The parrot has been stolen by the people on that vessel.' So all four entered their magic glass ship, and after a time caught up with the vessel. The thief went on board, and put them all to sleep by waving his charm. Then he laid the table and had a good feast, and when he had finished eating, he picked up the parrot and returned to his glass ship.

When the people in the vessel woke up and found the parrot gone, they gave chase to the glass ship. The captain of the vessel called down the rain, and it broke the glass ship; but the carpenter mended it, and the hunter fired at the rain and killed it. The captain called the lightning and it broke the ship, but the carpenter mended it again, and the hunter fired at and killed the lightning. So they reached the land and took the parrot to the chief's son and said: 'Here is your father's parrot.'

The lad was so glad to receive it that he told them to select what they liked from his wealth, 'even to the wonderful fowl which lays money or anything else you desire.' They chose the fowl and went their way, but then the wizard said: 'It is my fowl, for I told you where the parrot was.' The thief said: 'No, it is mine, for I stole the parrot from the vessel.' And the carpenter also claimed it, as he had twice mended the broken ship. Moreover, the hunter said: 'Of course it is mine, for I killed the rain and the lightning.'

Thus they argued long and angrily, and as they could not agree, they at last did a thing that was amazingly stupid. They killed the wonderful fowl, and divided it into four pieces, each taking his share.

Who out of these four foolish ones should have had the fowl? That is a question Congo boys argue about for a long time. What answer would 'you' give?



'I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK O' THEM PILLARS.'

'We've got plenty of brass,' said Jim's mate.

'Aye,' agreed Jim, jingling twopence in his trousers' pocket. He had silver higher up, in his waistcoat.

'Why not?' persisted Jim's mate.

'I don't like the look o' them pillars,' explained Jim—'them pillars in front that holds up the frontispiece o' the institution, so to speak.'

'What's wrong wi' 'em?' asked his mate, critically regarding the two lofty stone pillars that stood one on either side of the entrance.

'Seems to me,' said Jim mysteriously, 'they're a bit like heron's legs—'

'Heron's what?' roared his mate in derision.

'I'll tell you,' said Jim quietly. 'T'other day I were fishing i' the river, an' I saw a

to shake off. Let's play the part o' the old fish, mate, an' get away.'

Jim's mate was sufficiently impressed with the parable to readily agree.

Queer African Names.

When one hears a child's name in America one can almost immediately tell whether the child is a boy or a girl, but it is not so in Africa. No one can tell except by acquaintance to whom such names as Shilling, Sixpence, Penny, or Pound belong. One could hardly imagine that Donkey, In-the-way, Let-us-see, and Me could be names of children, but so goes the style in African nomenclature. With very little difficulty you might, perhaps, decide that England, Sunday, Waistcoat, Basket and Office are boys, and that Lea, Rose, Miriam and Ladywatch are girls. But even one learned in the art of naming children in Africa would be at a loss to pick out their owners by such names as In-the-sack, In-the-bush, Pine-town, To-tremble, and Watch-no-good. There are a few names common to both sexes, such as Charlie, Soap, and Table;

BOYS

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