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A CHILD'S WONDERMENT

What makes the water wet instead of dry?
What makes you laugh when most you want to cry?
What makes the horrid whiskers on the rye?
What makes you smile so brightly while you sigh?
And why do you count up instead of down?
And what makes kings fight just to get a crown?
And why are rivers always at a town?
What makes the blue skies smile unless they frown?
What makes some barks so smooth and others rough?
What makes some grasses tender, and others tough?
What makes the sunshine not quite bright enough?
What makes our Tabby give her puss a cuff?
And why won't "time and tide wait for a man?"
And does he always catch them when he can?
What makes it cooler when you use a fan?
And how would God be here 'fore time began?
What is it makes the breezy smell of hay?
What makes it always night unless it's day?
Why can't you answer all my questions—say?
I'd rather know the answers 'stead of play.
—Ex.

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ANDY, THE SHEEP HERDER

ANDY looked down into the valley, then off at the lofty mountains.

"It's a foin land, all right," muttered he, "but a bit lonesome. Niver did I see puttier sights in me life than sits on them mountains, but I'd give it all for a sight of the mither and children."

Two months had passed since Andy landed at Ellis Island; for a month he had been a sheep herder—a poor, lonely, solitary life; for companions only the stupid sheep and Dan, the dog.

The first twenty-five dollars he received seemed to more than compensate him for the desolate existence; compared with the poverty and wretchedness at home in Ireland, it appeared like wealth. Most of it he sent to the "mither" at home, and when his heart misgave him and his courage failed, he would take a scrap of soiled paper from his bosom and scan it carefully.

"Dear Son," it began—"The three-pound ten you sent came like a God-send. May heaven bless ye! The father got the top-coat he needed so badly (second-hand at Hooligan's); the childer, shoes; the mither, tea and sugar, and a bit o' it she'll use to drink your health in, me boy. Tom Riorty happened in, an' Jim an' Willum (they seed your father get the letter from the post); and we had enough to treat them all. It must be a foin place, that Americky! All send greetin' to ye.

"Your fond and proud,
"Mother."

The homesick boy sighed as he folded the paper and slipped it back into his shirt. Many times had he read and reread it.

"Poor mither! She'll never know how hard it is! It's a foin land, but it isn't home. What's a body all by himself?"

In a small, covered wagon on the lee side of the hill the boy slept, and cooked his lonely meals, kept his supplies and what clothes he possessed. Once a month the camp-mover came and hauled the wagon further up the valley, where the sheep could have fresh grounds. The camp-mover was a silent man, with nothing but contempt for the poor, lonely sheep herder.

"If they were any kind of human creatures they would not herd sheep." This sentiment showed in his harsh,

repellant manners and surly tones.

Nevertheless, his coming was an event, and Andy's eyes brightened as he saw him ride up. Few words passed between them as the wagon was changed and the supplies counted out.

The man glanced hastily up and down the valley, at the sheep nibbling the coarse grass, and then into the sunburned face of the boy.

"Have you a gun?" he asked, abruptly.

"No!"

"Milligan's sheep were stampeded last night, and the herder shot."

"Who did it?"

"Satan, I guess!"

At the man's belt hung a brace of pistols. It was a herd country; and human life of little value—much less than the sheep that nibble the grass on a thousand hills.

"I might leave you this—" pointing to a pistol.

"I don't want it," interrupted the boy; "I have me fist," and he bared his long, singewy arm. "I won the prize at the County Limerick Fair."

The man's loud, derisive laughter echoed through the valley. "This isn't the County Limerick Fair, boy, nor do they come to such close quarters. There is deadly hatred between the cattlemen and the herders; do ye know it?"

Andy shook his head. Beside the loneliness there was, then, this to contend with. His heart sank.

The man adjusted the stirrup as he spoke, and, swinging the rein over his horse's head, with a leap was in the saddle.

Andy watched the horse and rider thoughtfully as they disappeared down the valley. As he turned toward the wagon he stumbled over the camp-mover's pistol lying on the ground.

"He thinks I may need it," thought the lad.

That night he sat on the hillside and watched; only the silent stars came out to bear him company. Dan slept beside him, his nose between his paws. The next night he did the same, and the next. The fourth night he was glad to creep inside the wagon. The wind blew damp and cold from the east, and a drizzling rain set in.

He had some old magazines, over which he poured for a while. Soon his eyes grew weary, and he was too sleepy to see the print. The sheep were huddled together in the shelter of the hill. He threw himself down, and soon forgot everything.

How long he slept he could not tell; something awoke him. He sat up and rubbed his eyes, trying, sleepily, to remember things. Then he crept to the end of the wagon and looked out. It was still raining, but dawn was near; a hazy light illumined the east.

Dan stood near the wagon, his ears up, pointing toward a dark clump of woods. Andy saw nothing.

"The sheep! The sheep!" was his first thought. "Suppose they should run."

Once let them get started and there is nothing can stop them. On, on they will run, over briars and thorns,



stones and stubble, until the leader falls exhausted or vaults over a precipice. Hundreds pile upon hundreds, until they lie smothered and dying.

In the old days at home Andy read much Indian lore. It fascinated and held him, when his spirit would have rebelled against the weary, endless tasks on his father's little truck farm. Now as he stood watching he saw something move in the clump of woods. Seizing a piece of rope that lay on the ground he started on a run, crouching like an Indian, so as not to be seen in the dim light, or hiding for a second behind some tree. As he neared the woods he saw a horse, a fine, dark animal.

"Pshaw! Is that all I am running for?"

At that instant he saw the flash of a gun, and had only time to dodge behind a tall oak when a bullet whizzed by. Why had he not thought of the camp-mover's gun? All he had to fight with was a piece of rope and his own strong arms. Could he but get near enough to wrestle, he had confidence in his strength and skill.

The firing ceased, but he could see nothing in the darkness. Perhaps the object was to get him away from the sheep so they might be stampeded. What a fool he was! Fool he might be, but he was no knave. Not a drop of coward's blood flowed in his veins. Had not his ancestors fought in the border wars? For he had Scotch in him as well as Irish, and those sturdy Highlanders knew not what fear was.

Now, whatever was done must be done quickly. Aggressive as are the cattlemen, the sheep herders are, as a rule, the most submissive of men. They will submit to all sorts of in-



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