

Mystic Basket

"NOW, hurry home, Alice, for your mother will be expecting you," said grandma, as she kissed the little girl and thrust a bagful of cookies into her hand.

Alice placed upon her arm the basket which grandma was sending to mother, and with a last good-bye to her grandmother trudged down the lane.

But walking in the crisp autumn air soon put a keen edge on her appetite. She decided that she would rest awhile on the bank nearby and eat some of grandma's delicious cookies.

Just then she espied coming down the road toward her a favorite playmate, Bessie Brown.

"Bessie! Bessie!" cried she, "you



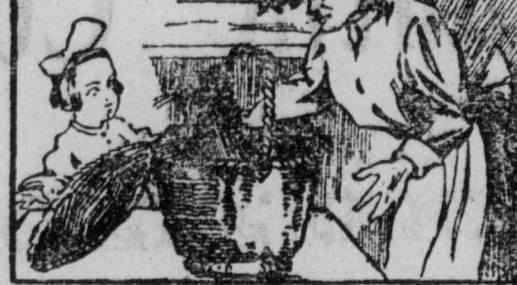
CREPT INSIDE.

should see what tempting cookies I have."

And Bessie did see, as well as taste them, as she sat with Alice a few minutes later on a knoll sloping from the roadside.

So good were the cakes, and so busy were the two little girls exchanging confidences that they did not observe a lean, hungry-looking cat approach the basket and eagerly sniff at the contents.

For did they see pussy pry open the lid with her paw and silently crawl



PUSSEY LEAPED OUT.

inside the basket. The lid closed again, and the cat made not the least noise. Their cookies eaten, Alice took up her basket again and continued on her way toward the village, while Bessie went in the opposite direction.

Alice wondered that the basket should seem so heavy now, but she thought she must have imagined this. And she did not know otherwise until she brought the basket into the presence of her mother, saying:

"I had a splendid time at grandma's, mummy, dear, and I've brought a nice chicken home for you."

No sooner had she raised the lid, however, than the cat leaped out and darted swiftly through the open door. Alice dropped the basket in dismay, and her mother raised her hands in astonishment. They were even more surprised when they looked inside the basket and discovered nothing but a few bones.

Alice is still of the belief that the cat must have entered the basket through magic. She has resolved, however, to watch her burdens more carefully hereafter when she lays them down.

Making them Even

"GRANDPA says we may feed the chickens all by ourselves. Won't it be fun?" shrieked little Margaret, running so fast into the room that her pudgy toes caught in the rug and she sprawled right into the arms of her brother.

"Feed it, will," said Roger, when he again found the breath which a blow from Margaret's elbow had made him lose.

And they really did find it great fun, for of all the pets of grandpa's big farm the "chickies" pleased them most. There were so many of them, too, that you had any number of nice ones to choose from.

"There, I've just counted two times two handfuls of whitties!" exclaimed Margaret in triumph. You see, she was



AMONG THE CHICKENS

fondlest of the white chickens, and since the tiny miss hadn't yet learned to count with numbers she had to count them off on her fingers.

Roger looked searchingly over the flock, but at last he was forced to reply, somewhat ruefully, "I haven't got nearly as many black ones."

Now, Margaret was such an unselfish little girl that she would gladly have given Roger some of her white chickens, but she knew he much preferred the black ones for pets. So she made up her mind she'd think of some other plan of making their favorites even in number.

The next day, as grandpa was walking toward the chicken yard, he was surprised to see a white chicken dashed with black, pushing squawking from the yard.

A moment later another followed, and he heard more angry squawking and flapping of wings as he drew nearer. He hastened his steps. Soon what should he see but Margaret, sitting on the ground and holding frantically to a

struggling, indignant hen! Bessie, her was a great bucket of black paint, which she had found in the barn.

"Come, help, grandpa!" Margaret gasped, as she heard grandpa approach. "I'm doing my very, very best to paint some of the white chickens black, so's Roger can have as many blackies as I have whitties, but the chickies don't want to be painted!"

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Thrilling Adventures of a Boy Soldier

Capturing an Impregnable Fort



TELLS THE MARSHAL HIS PLAN

DURING the Austrian campaign Emperor Napoleon instructed one of his marshals to capture a certain fort. Now, this fort was so strongly fortified as to be deemed almost impregnable. Naturally, therefore, it would be supposed that the marshal would be provided with all the engines of war in order that he might lay siege and take the fort. But for some reason Napoleon neglected to supply such equipment.

You may know that, consequently, the marshal was much embarrassed. Summoning the officers of his staff, he discussed the matter with them. None could suggest a way out of the difficulty.

One of the escort of the marshal was a young officer named Francois, who had gained rapid promotion through gallant service, though he was but a



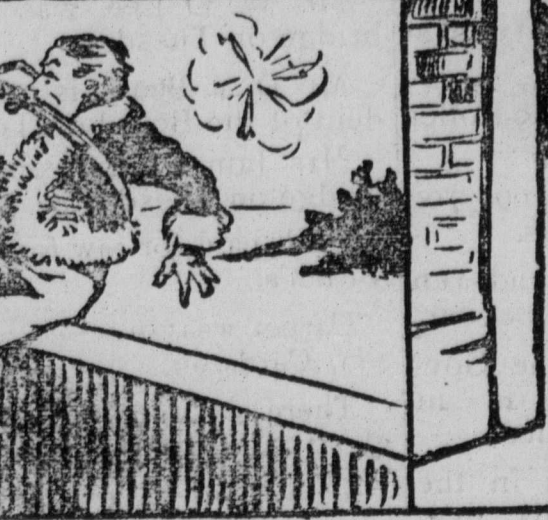
SWUNG ON THE TRAPEZE

boy. Francois was absent from the council of the marshal's staff, but upon his return he learned of the problem which confronted his general.

"Marshal," said Francois, the following day, "I have a splendid scheme

whereby the fort may be captured." Whereupon the two conversed in low tones for half an hour. At the end of that time the marshal said:

"I give you full power to carry out your plan. May you be successful!"



LANDED ON THE PARAPET

Francois immediately caused to be erected just outside the walls of the fort two high posts, between which he suspended a trapeze. Then he had several of the soldiers exercise upon it in order that all suspicions of the enemy



THREW OPEN THE GATES

would be allayed. That night, however, he set out under cover of the mantle of darkness. First

cover of the mantle of darkness. First he climbed to the top of the walls, then he suspended himself by his hands.

Once, twice, thrice he swung. Gaining impetus with each turn, finally he released his hold on the bar. Hurling through the air he went. A moment and he landed on the parapet of the fort.

With an exclamation of triumph he crept silently forward. Leaping upon the sentry, he made a deadly sword thrust before the soldier could make outcry.

Another guard he finished in the same way. Francois now rushed to the gates, threw them open and shouted for a company of his soldiers who were waiting outside. Without a second's hesitation the French soldiers swarmed into the fort. So surprised was the garrison that it could offer but little resistance. Soon the fort was in the hands of the enemy.

You may be sure that the gallant Francois was rewarded with another promotion. But at his request, he was still on the staff of the marshal.

Nor was it long before he engaged in another dangerous and thrilling exploit. This Polly Evans will describe next week.

Jungleville's Fire Brigade



RANG-OUTANG beat violently upon his hairy breast: Resounding through the forest boomed the warning to the rest.

Of Forest People restive 'neath the trees: Then Monarch Lion thunderously joined in the wild alarm. To which all creatures listened as they wondered what new harm

Themselves did menace, and their families. Again the cry resounded, and the animals quick knew The meaning of this signal, as together they now flew To lend assistance with a ready hand;

Screech-Owl reported fire amongst the huts not far away, And since with Men the beasts were friendly at this early day They rushed to give what aid lay at command.

The Jungleville fire lads' brigade sped rapidly to where Thatched cottages were burning; then each one did freely dare Most perilous of rescues, deeds most bold—

Rhinoceros ripped huts apart with his trunk fire-axe keen, Long Python and the Elephant sent water cracks between— Good hoses they both made, so I've been told.

And Monkeys grabbed up natives with their paws and tails, And so A-down the back of tall Giraffe they slid and dropped below

Upon the upturned shell of Turtleboy; Until, at last, all Men were safely resting on the ground, When to the brave fire lads' brigade the Human People found Much need for words of gratitude and joy.

The Land above the Pine Tree



THERE was once a king surrounded by courtiers who were continually calling one another wicked names and insisting that their acquaintances never told the truth.

"Gentlemen," the king would cry, "you must not accuse one another of falsehood and other vices, for people will soon begin to think I am ruling over a kingdom of knaves."

One day he added to this rebuke: "Gentlemen, take pattern after me. I never insult a person or accuse him of falsehood. Indeed, if any of you should find me doing such a thing I will bestow upon him the hand of my daughter."

Now, it so happened that the king was also fond of stories. Upon a certain afternoon he turned to a page who stood near him, and asked:

"Is there no tale you can give me, boy?"

"Yes, sire. A very strange adventure befell me once. With your permission I shall relate it."

"Gladly will I listen," replied the king. "Before I entered your service," began the lad, "I was hired by a miller. While I was tying the mouths of flour sacks, on a spring morning, I found a pine cone right at the top of one of the bags. Without thinking much about my discovery, I thrust the cone into my pocket and went about my business."

"Upon the next day, however, I strolled in the woods. Chancing to put my hand in my pocket, I found the cone. I drew it out and carefully threw it from me. All at once, to my amazement, a giant pine tree sprang up where the cone had fallen. Far into the sky it reached, completely out of sight."

"Eager for adventure, I started to climb this monster tree. Up and up I went, until I was above the clouds.



Though it may sound strange, sire, I finally reached the moon. And you would hardly believe the wonderful things I saw there. Hares charged one another in the same manner as do our goats and stags. When they met, so terrible was the force of the impact that they folded up like telescopes.

"While there, too, I slew a wolf. In the struggle, however, the beast tore off my head, so that I had considerable trouble in putting it on again. And no sooner did I accomplish this feat than it began to rain in torrents. While I was wandering around seeking shelter, a band of kindly elves suddenly appeared before me, and with their immense hands formed a shelter for me."

"I had an opportunity to marry the king's daughter there, also. She was very fond of sports, you know. And once she leaped so high in the air that she would surely have hurt herself when she landed on the ground. I sprang forward, however, and caught her as she descended. The king then offered me the hand of the princess, but I refused."

Here the king, who had been growing angrier each moment at the thought that the daring youth was making sport of him, cried out:

"Boy, thou'rt a fool and a liar!"

"I have won your daughter, sire," returned the youth, coolly.

"How now! What is this new insolence?" demanded the king, in great wrath.

Whereupon the boy reminded his royal master of the wager made a few days ago, when the princess was offered to any one who heard the king insult a person.

The king, being a man of honor, kept his word, and in due time the clever youth was married to the beautiful princess.



As he was about to draw in the net he was surprised to find a tiny lady walking toward him upon the sea. It was a fairy—the Fairy of the Brave Little Folk. She said to Jacques:

"You take the tiller while I fish for you."

And how she did fish! Glistening masses of silvery bass and mullets were lying in the boat, together with shrimps which sparkled and glistened as they reflected the sunlight. When the fairy could hold no more fish she took the tiller and murmured, as she prepared to take her flight:

"Now sail away home with your cargo of fish and tell your mother how a fairy rewarded a little boy for his bravery."

The curious townfolk who had amusedly observed the boy sail forth with his boat now clustered on the beach to witness his return. They were overawed with amazement when they saw the great load of fish—the fish! catch ever made off the coast. And, in their admiration, they hastened to buy from the lad.

"It was a good fairy, mother," explained, as he threw his arms about her and gave her the money which she had brought comfort into the little hut that had been so cheerless but a short time before.

And a married woman is always lapping on the fact that she earns more than she gets.

Take, with a grain of salt what a man says about his side of the case. Many an operation is due to the fact that the doctor needs the money.

Mrs. Caller—"Are your new neighbors refined?" Mrs. Next-door—"I should say so! Why, they never borrow anything from me but silver and cut glass!"

A good locomotive should, with ordinary care, last twelve years. Some of the beetles of Venezuela weigh as much as half a pound each.

The greatness that is thrust upon a man is apt to annoy his neighbors. A pigeon postal service has recently been organized in the French Congo.

Railway Superintendent (to car inspector)—"Any of the carriages out of order?" "Yes, No. 412 is unfit for service." "Well, use it only for excursions after this!"