



"THERE'S ONLY ONE THING AGAINST IT."

the little blue card in his hands, and saw those alluring words, "Bismarck Bicycle," he put it back.

"After all," he reasoned, "I'll never get it, so it won't be really gambling." By way of easing his conscience, he almost ceased talking about it with Johnny, taking particular care, also, not to remind him of the three tickets. He had not yet risen to the moral height of trying to convert Johnny to Aunt Jane's views.

So the Fourth of July dawned, and found Ted still with but one chance on the wheel. At the very first boom he was up, thoroughly bent on enjoying himself, and soon his home-made lead cannon rang out as loudly and defiantly as did Joe Butler's brass one up on the corner, and his firecrackers popped as merrily.

Of course Johnny was with Ted, and all went on smoothly until about eleven o'clock, when Johnny stared and gasped, "Whew! It's long after time for the bicycle 'draw'!"

"Sure," said Ted. "Let's hurry," and both scampered down the street.

"Wouldn't it be luck if you won it, eh, Ted?" Johnny exclaimed, as they approached the group gathered before the show-window.

"Oh, there's no danger of it; and, besides, I don't care much anyway," said Ted.

"Don't care! don't care!" echoed Johnny. "What—"

But before he could finish both were elbowing their way toward the front. There was a perfect babel of tongues, and in the midst of it, as he crowded in, Teddy heard some one say, "It's queer the fellow who's won it don't show up, ain't it? Why, the whole town's been here, and still she stands."

By this time Ted could see the shining handle-bars, and then, as some one moved away, the whole of the beautiful machine. A large sign-card, with four freshly-painted numbers on it, leaned against the front wheel.

The instant Ted's eyes fell on these numbers his heart gave a great thump, and then seemed to stand quite still, while a queer, smothering sensation came over him, until he felt so faint he could scarcely breathe. For this is what he read:

No. 2,081
" 392
" 114
" 855

"Number two thousand and eighty-one; number two thousand and eighty-one!" Teddy kept repeating it in a dazed way, until he found that Johnny had crowded in to his side.

"Number two thousand and eighty-one," Johnny read aloud. "Why, Ted, wasn't yours a number two thousand and something?"

Getting no response, he repeated his question, emphasizing it with a pinch on Teddy's arm.

"Why, what's the matter, Ted? Have they got you down there? Or—why—Ted!"

But Ted was no longer there. He had turned and forced his way through the crowd, and was running swiftly down the street, leaving his astonished chum gazing in open-mouthed wonder.

"Well, I never!" gasped Johnny, as soon as he could find words. "What's got into him now? Must 'a' just missed it, and it's clean broke him."

When Ted reached Aunt Jane's gate, instead of resuming his sport, he hurried around and out of sight, down back of the grape-arbor—his old retreat. Here, throwing himself on the ground, he began a violent, though scarcely audible, sobbing.

"Mine! mine!" he moaned. "A Bismarck bicycle mine! Oh, it ain't gambling—it can't be!"

There, outstretched in the grass throughout that long afternoon, poor Teddy lay, while again and again his slight form writhed and trembled under the emotions of his desperate struggle, with no other earthly witnesses save the birds in the branches of the old apple tree which sheltered him from the blazing sun.

The dinner-bell rang repeatedly, but in vain; Johnny's whistles and calls roused not Teddy; firecrackers popped and small cannon boomed until dark; crowds came and went, but the holder of No.

2,081 remained unknown, and great was the wonder thereof. Only one week was given for the holder of the first number to claim the wheel, after that period it would fall to the second on the list, and so on.

All this time poor Miss Jane had been getting very uneasy, and no wonder. Fourth of July,—the worst of all days in the year to her,—and "that boy" absent so long! Into what mischief? Who could tell? She had eaten her supper as she had her dinner, alone, and at half-past nine was still waiting. But just as the clock struck the half-hour she heard footsteps on the back stairs.

In an instant she was at the door. "Is that you, Teddy?"

The click of Teddy's door-latch was the only answer. She called again, but in vain.

Poor Miss Jane! How sorry she was to be, later, that she scolded Teddy, as she did the next morning, until he left the room in bitter silence. She always meant to do right, and could tolerate nothing else in those around her. Consequently she did not cease "worrying" the next few days, because, as she told her lifelong friend and cousin, Miss Alvira White, "Teddy's acting so strange

in the closet, when, lo! she found it locked and the key gone.

For a moment she was too much astonished to think; then all sorts of dark suspicions crowded upon her, and she hastened down the stairs, nearly upsetting Teddy at the foot.

"Ah, you're here!" she exclaimed. "I was just looking for you. How came that closet locked?"

"The closet! the closet!" stammered Teddy. "I—"

"Be careful, Teddy Watson! I've been watching you lately, and there's something wrong. Tell me, where is that key?" and her voice was very stern.

"It's in the garden. I—"

"The garden! the garden!"

"Yes'm; I throw it there so—so—" he faltered, growing very pale, "so I couldn't get it."

"Get it! What do you mean, Teddy Watson?"

"The bicycle ticket. I won it, and— and—O Aunt Jane, don't hold it against me, for I didn't want it after what you said, 'cause it was gambling; and so I locked the ticket up in the closet, desk and all, and threw the key away. But the week's up now, so it's Willy Blakey's, and—not—mine."

Poor Teddy could go no farther. He leaned against the railing with his face on his arm, while the hot tears fell thick and fast.

Tears, too, scalding tears, were beginning to run down Miss Jane's thin cheeks. In a moment she was down on the stairs with her arms about him.

"Teddy," she cried, "forgive me!"

But the bitter thoughts of how she had been misjudging him choked her, though how dearly she loved him then needed not words to tell. And there on the stairs together the "something" which had grated hardest between them rolled away.

A few days later Miss Jane and Miss Alvira were sitting together again.

"His birthday comes next Monday, Alvira, and I've been thinking what a nice present a bicycle would make. But I can't do it, for I've only that thirty-two dollars saved for the Boston trip we've talked about so long, and that wouldn't get a good one."

During the long silence which followed, Miss Alvira gazed intently at a certain figure in the carpet. Then she looked up.

"Jane," she said, "we can put that trip off another year. Let's go down and see what we can get one for between us, will you?"

And so, through the self-sacrifice of these two good women, Teddy had a bicycle that summer, after all.—Youth's Companion.

The Kinderdike.

BY JENNIE E. CROSS.

All quiet in the twilight lay
The little Friesland town,
Bathed in the sheen of setting day,
That turned to gold its roofs of brown.



CHILD AFLOAT IN A CRADLE.

—eating little, talking less, and moping somewhere down in the grape-vines all day, just as if he was guilty of something."

Miss Alvira nodded, and remarked, "He's most likely been up to one of his father's old capers, and 'twill all leak out soon."

But on Saturday morning, just a week after the Fourth, their fears were still unrealized. Then Miss Jane had occasion to go up to the spare room. She was in a hurry, and after hastily pulling open all the bureau drawers without adding what she wanted, turned to look

The broad, low fields that stretched afar,
That evening smiled in softest green;
No gathering tempest came to mar
The tranquil beauty of the scene.

The village maiden by the stile,
While lingering for her shepherd swain,
Heard the low sheep-bell's chime the while

With the deep surging of the main.
The lazy cows were driven home,
The milkmaid sang her merry lay;
And trooping by the children came,
In merry mood, their feet with play.

Behind the dike the weary sun
Sank slowly, slowly down to rest,
The stars came twinkling, one by one,
As daylight faded in the west.

No comet streamed his fiery tail
Athwart the sky, foreboding ill;
Nor swept the wind with bitter wall,
Around the hamlet hushed and still.

But brightly gleamed the silvery moon
Through many a vine-wreathed lattice-pane,
Whose inmates slept, nor dreamed that soon

Should sleep to never wake again.
That eve a mother kissed her child,
And laid her in her cradle-bed;

"May angels guard thy slumbers mild,
'Twould break my heart to find thee dead!"

Old pussy napping by the hearth,
Woke up as Gretchen breathed her prayer;

The babe she'd guarded from her birth,
With tender love and watchful care.

Now with a light, elastic bound,
She sprang close to the infant's feet;

The mother knew the purring sound,
And soon was wrapt in slumber sweet.
Dream on, dream on, young hearts and true!

Dream on, stout hearts and brave!
No thought of danger visits you,
No boding dread of watery grave.

The sailor on the treacherous deep,
May fear the coming tempest's power;
But to the village wrapped in sleep,
What ill can come at midnight's hour!

Alas! alas! fair Friesland town!
No warning bell rang out alarm;
No signal-gun was wafted down,
To tell thee of impending harm!

But still the sea with sullen roar,
Kept measure with the waning night,
And 'gainst the old dike evermore
Each time repelled, returned to fight.

That night, while all the village slept,
The dam gave way—the sea rolled in;—
They all were drowned ere they had wept
Or cried to heaven to pardon sin.

All, save the baby and the cat,
Who fearless in their cradle-boat
Sailed out to sea, nor wondered that
The bed which rocked should also float.

Next morning on an islet green,
Sole remnant of the ancient dam,
The cradle and its crew were seen,
Puss and her charge in slumber calm.

Old ocean sweeps o'er cottage home,
O'er pasture green, and hamlet brown,
Unfettered all his billows roam
Above the little Friesland town;—

But He who bids the waves be still,
Had heard that mother's evening prayer,
And guarded her sweet babe from ill,
While twenty thousand perished there.

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