

THE EVENING TIMES, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1906.

Pete the Peddler or A Boy's Start in Life



Pete's ears were wide open to the talk of the two women. He was forgotten for the moment, and the farmer's wife asked of Aunt Hannah: "But what did the man want of the old trunk?"

"Nobody knows. He said that it was an old family trunk and had been sold by mistake, but he probably lied about that."

"Jim Cumberford must have overhauled the trunk when he got it home."

"Of course he did. He's been dead these three years, but the moth-eaten clothes and that they had a great laugh at him because the trunk coat him a dollar. She knew it went to the barn, but she can't say who took it away."



"THE WIDOW CUMBERFORD, HERSELF, MET HIM AT THE DOOR."

"den in old trunks," said the farmer's wife after a while. "So have I. I'll bet there was something of the kind hidden in this one. If there wasn't why would anybody be hunting it up?"

"That was the end of the conversation. Before Pete went away he asked where the widow Cumberford lived, and was told that it was on his road and a mile away. After stopping at two houses he reached the Cumberford farm. The widow was a woman who liked to talk, and she also wanted to make a number of purchases. It was the noon hour, and she gave Pete a kindly invitation to eat with the family. There were three children, but all younger than the boy peddler. During the meal she asked him many questions, but nothing was said of the trunk until she had selected and paid for what she wanted and he was ready to go. Then Pete told her of the conversation he had heard and asked her for further particulars.

THE PIPE-STEM PUZZLE



In the clown's hand you will see what looks to be a difficult puzzle. Look at the solution on the left.

lugged it to the barn and filled it with hay and let the setting hens use it. I supposed it was there yet, but when a man came along the other day and wanted to know about it I could not find it."

"What sort of a man was he?" asked Pete. "He was a keen looking man and a slick talker. He said that it was a trunk brought over from Holland by his great grandmother, and he did not want to lose it. He was willing to pay ten dollars for it. Indeed, he would have found the trunk and had asked him double that I guess he would have paid it quick enough. He seemed terribly disappointed when I said I haven't the least idea. I can't see how it could have got out of the barn without Jim having sold it or given it away."

"And you couldn't tell this man where he might get trace of it?" "No more than I can you. It seems to me you are also asking a great many questions."

"Yes, but you see I go everywhere, and perhaps I may come across the trunk for you. You are pretty bright for a boy of your age. If you ever set eyes on that old trunk come and tell me and I'll give you half I make out of it."

"Then you must carefully describe it to me," replied Pete. The widow did so, and he had no doubt that it was the trunk the miser was looking for. When he got away from the house he sat down in a fence-corner to think things over. Mr. Mims had hunted for years and not found trace of the lost trunk. He had

been peddling for only three weeks and had heard of it. Right there was the barn where the trunk had been stored for three or four years, and now he must set himself to find out who had taken it away. He thought first of hastening back to Johnsville to give the miser the news, but what he had learned would not be good news. The trunk must be traced. And there was another matter that would trouble the old man. Some one else was hunting for that trunk, and some one else must know about the papers under the false bottom. It was no doubt one of the gang of old speculators that had robbed Mr. Mims. If they ever found the papers they would destroy the case against them. No; he would not go back to Johnsville until he had made further inquiries.

The boy tried to reason out how the trunk got away from the barn, but that was a matter that would have puzzled the head of a detective. Would a tramp steal it? No. Would a tin peddler buy it? It was possible but not likely. Would the farmer destroy it? No, not as long as it was in use. What then had become of it? After the boy had puzzled over the matter for a long time he rose up and moved on and tried to dissipate from his mind. That night was passed with a kind-hearted farmer, who refused to make any charge and gave

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And now stepped forth Father Long-tail, towering and majestic. "I call upon Father Sharp-tooth to do battle with me for possession of the territory lying around the Granary Hole! He is only a squatter. You can show me deeds by which he is entitled to keep the rest of us in poverty and subjection. Who is he that we should give honors to his pleasure and profit? One hour a week, forsooth! Come out, Father Long-tail, and let this be a battle of honor to the strongest." "Honor!" hissed Father Sharp-tooth, aroused to a fire of indignation. "Do you call it honor, an in-battle for my own? Am I accountable for the location of the granary? Honor!"

Bitterly Father Sharp-tooth ground these sharp teeth of his. "You may take your choice, said Father Long-tail calmly. "Either you fight with me, or I and my family, which numbers twice your own, will fall upon you and annihilate you—male, female, the aged and the infant—none shall be spared."

Pete much good advice. He asked the boy if he had met any tramps thus far, and he warned him that there were fellows who would not hesitate to knock him senseless and rob him of his all if they met him in a lonely spot. He told Pete to strike as hard as he could with his cudgel in case any one laid hands on him, and if he was overpowered to give the alarm at the nearest farm-house. He repeated his words in the morning when the boy was ready to depart, and before night Pete had cause to remember them. Half a dozen miles away an exciting adventure awaited him.

(To be Continued.)

FOR THE KINGSHIP OF RATLAND.

BY SARAH NOBLE IVES.

There was a fight on, tooth and nail; a great fight for the kingship of Ratland.

The parties contending were Long-tail and Sharp-tooth. The two families had long been hostile, and as they increased in numbers and over the time had come to decide which should rule in the domain of Andrus Barn.

The first trouble had grown out of a change of residence on the part of Long-tail. The Sharp-tooth family had located itself in a fine corner near the barn stable, and the building of a new granary beyond the very partition where Sharp-tooth had his front gate-way made the narrow passage a very difficult one.

It seemed absurd that the Sharp-tooths should get such a start in life when they were no better than the Long-tails. Indeed, they were not so good—could the Sharp-tooth family trace their ancestry back to the rats that came over in the Mayflower? Clearly, no. Therefore they must be put down from the pride of their nouveau-riche, and the Long-tails must do this thing.

The Sharp-tooth family, meanwhile, was ignorant of this growing jealousy, and on the night when the wheat was first stored in the completed granary it issued invitations to a gnawing bee, the results of the night's labor to be a hole leading from the granary to the house. Thereafter, those who assisted were to be allowed one hour a week in the wheat bin.

Every rat in the Andrus barn was there—big and little, gray and brown. All the smaller and less important families arrived punctually to the minute—the Long-tails came late. They stood aloof, tall, stalwart and gloomy, until the signs for gnawing began, then they fell to with a will. Father Sharp-tooth, looking out from under the sheltering hen-house, rejoiced. He crept away silently and said to the hidden rats that were waiting under the barn:

"Be glad with me, Father Long-tail is slain, and the Granary remains the property of the Sharp-tooth family." Then he fainted into his arms his friends.



THE FIGHT WAS ON, FOR LIFE OR DEATH.

A cheer went up from the crowd, and they fell to with renewed energy. Just as the sun rose the task was completed and the hole nicely concealed from the searching eyes of Farmer Andrus.

And now stepped forth Father Long-tail, towering and majestic. "I call upon Father Sharp-tooth to do battle with me for possession of the territory lying around the Granary Hole! He is only a squatter. You can show me deeds by which he is entitled to keep the rest of us in poverty and subjection. Who is he that we should give honors to his pleasure and profit? One hour a week, forsooth! Come out, Father Long-tail, and let this be a battle of honor to the strongest."

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Then arose Father Sharp-tooth, and his eye glittered. "Be it so!" he thundered forth: "I have not your size and muscle, but I have courage and my teeth are sharp, likewise my good sword. Let



AN AWFUL THING! The Dog-Days are here. And I tremble with fright. When I go for a walk. 'Cause I'm 'fraid of a bite!

the families not interested in this quarrel choose the arena and let them see that there is fair play."

The barn floor was hastily decided upon a ring was formed. Pale, but with nerves of steel, Father Sharp-tooth faced his burly opponent. A hint or two and the fight was on, for life or death.

Jaws clashed and claws clattered, fur flew and blood flowed. Little by little Father Long-tail forced the adversary toward the barn door. Through the door, out of the door they fought. Into the open yard, where the cows looked on in amazement. Then two other wondering spectators arrived—Jock and Jenny. With towed heads and shining eyes, just out of bed, they looked on from the barnyard gate. The other rats slunk away as these human children appeared, but not Father Long-tail and Father Sharp-tooth. Their eyes were filled with the blood of battle; they saw nothing but their own advantage and disadvantage.

Jock and Jenny came on and stood close by; the combatants saw them not. On, toward the hen-house wall Father Long-tail pushed his weakening opponent.

"Once I can get him behind that board fence where it is not so blindingly light I can see to make an end of him," muttered Father Long-tail. Father Sharp-tooth gave one separate lunge, and then turned and spaling eyes upward. Above him he saw Jock and Jenny, round-eyed and excited. Slowly he gave way and disappeared under the hen-house wall. Father Long-tail followed. "Ha, ha," panted the victor, "now I have you."

Jerk, jerk! What was that at his caudal appendage? Father Long-tail felt himself lifted, hoisted and swung in the air. He looked up and saw Jock, whose fingers gripped that long tail that he had left outside as he followed Father Sharp-tooth. He was caught as in a trap.

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CAPTURING GREAT EEL.

BY IRVING KING.

A Great Eel came up out of the sea and killed or drove away all the people in Songs-of-Victory Town. But, after a while, a man who had fled with his family returned, and, with his wife and ten children, began housekeeping in his old home.

There were nine boys and a girl in the family, and one day the eldest boy said to his father: "Why is it that nobody except ourselves lives in this village?"

Then the father told him the story of Great Eel, and how, at any time, the monster might return and devour them.

That night the boy told the story to his brothers, and said: "Come, let us go and kill that monster. I am big and strong, and you, pointing to the second brother, 'have medicine,' meaning by that that the second brother was gifted as a magician and could do all sorts of house-pocus work and sleight of hand."

But for a long time the boys could not find out where Great Eel lived, for their father did not know, and they met no man who could tell them when they went out fishing and hunting.

Finally one day they saw Old Man Heron sitting alone upon a rock on the shore, and said to him: "Ho, old Man Heron, you that are so wise, tell us where does Great Eel live, that we may go and destroy him."

"And how will you catch Great Eel?" asked Old Man Heron. "I will catch him with my hands," said Eldest Brother. "I will put medicine upon him," said Second Brother.

The third brother declared he would shoot him with an arrow, and so on, all the nine brothers had some way in which he would destroy Great Eel. But Old Man Heron laughed and said: "Go home and listen to what the little bird sings."

The next morning a wren perched upon the corner of the house and chirped "Sine-wal! Sine-wal!" "There," cried the sister. "Great

while King Crab and the Butterflies of the ocean held forth with the luminous Pholades and the Shark. The Electric Eel and Phosphorescent Algae added to the brilliancy of the scene.

During the height of the festivities, Count Oyster invited the host's daughter to take a stroll through Oyster Park. There he presented her with a beautiful pearl. Miss Whale was overjoyed; but the act caused a feeling of jealousy in the Fish family. They resented the attentions of the count, and the way he monopolized the balls of the evening.

The Annelides, Sea-Snails and Star-Fishes were sworn enemies of the Oyster family, and succeeded in drawing his fair companion away. There ensued a battle never to be forgotten. Count Oyster met death bravely. The news of the tragedy spread rapidly through the banquet hall, and instantly the festivities ceased.

The Sea-Fish and Sword-Fish family attacked the host and hostess, who were trying to throw oil on the troubled waters.

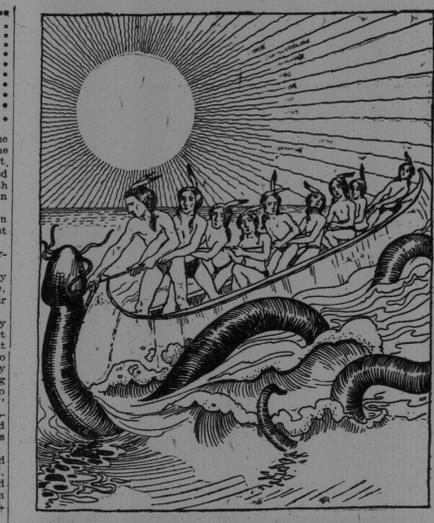
King Crab, followed by the Pikes, Pickereils and Mackerels, made their escape, as did the celebrated Fish family. The only one left to witness the affair was Mrs. Stickleback.

She, with her hostess, stood talking to Miss Perch when the trouble started. Miss Perch slipped in with the Pikes, but poor little Mrs. Stickleback crawled into a crevice

and remained there will a chance came to escape. Mrs. Stickleback returned home assisted with her means of conveyance, and vowed never more to leave a dwelling place of her ancestors among the seaweed.

To-day the Stickleback family can be seen ruling over the sea-grass and vegetables of the ocean. If you are near the shore at the close of day, listen attentively and you can hear a whizzing, and see the sea-grass moving.

It is the time when the elder Sticklebacks are relating the story of Mrs. Stickleback's remarkable escape from that famous Whale's banquet.



THEY PULLED THE HEAD OF GREAT EEL INTO THE CANOE.

Eel must be caught with a noose of sinews, and I must make the cord for the noose. Go shoot wrens and draw up their sinews for me."

So the boys went out and shot wrens, and after they had shot them the second brother put medicine upon them and the birds flew away as good as ever.

When the sister had completed the cord of sinews the boys were again to Old Man Heron and asked him what now they should do. "Go to Sealion Town," said Heron, "and there get the latest canoe—the row and which makes the ocean crack with its speed."

The boys went to Sealion Town. First, they tried Fast-Rainbow Trout's canoe Fast-Rainbow Trout stood in the middle of the canoe and

when the brothers paddled all together, he fired an arrow forward. It fell abreast of the canoe. Then they tried Stove-Head's canoe. He also fired an arrow from the middle of the canoe, forward, as they paddled, and the arrow fell into the water just astern of the canoe.

Still they did not think that was fast enough, and they borrowed Jellyfish's canoe. When the brothers paddled all together, Jellyfish had an arrow as Fast-Rainbow-Trout and the arrow fell back in the wake of the canoe. Then they paddled back to Old Man Heron, and said: "It is a fine day; tell us where the Great Eel lives, that we go and destroy him."

But Old Man Heron said: "No, brave men, it is a bad day," and the boys paddled home to Songs-of-Victory Town and told of their adventures.

Early the next day they went out in the canoe again to Old Man Heron and he shouted to them: "It is a good day, brave men! The mist will melt away with the sunshine."

Then he gave them directions how to find Great Eel, and said: "When it sleeps, then go to it. When it sleeps, phosphorescent light shines in its eyes. When there is no phosphorescent light in its eyes, then do not go to it."

They started off. After they had gone along for a while they came to the dwelling of Great Eel, and saw the phosphorescent light shine in his eyes.

Quickly Eldest Brother threw the noose over the head of the monster, and all the other brothers pulled away on the cord of sinews. They pulled the head of Great Eel into the canoe and cut it off.

Then they turned their canoe, and all together they paddled away for Songs-of-Victory Town.

But Great Eel was king of all the eels, and the eels came after them to avenge the killing of their king.

But they could not catch the magic canoe. As the brothers paddled, they increased in numbers and over flowed, so fast that it made cracks in the water. Into the cracks Second Brother poured blue hellebore, and the cracks closed up again.

The eels could not begin to catch them, and so they came in triumph to Songs-of-Victory Town, carrying the head of Great Eel, and stuck the head on a pole in the middle of the village.

When the pole who had fled from the village heard that Great Eel was dead his head stuck up on a pole they all came back again to their old homes, and Songs-of-Victory Town was inhabited once more.

The people were so pleased at what Eldest Brother had done that they made him chief, and the sister who had made the cord of sinews was married to the chief of Sealion Town.

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LAST WEEKS PUZZLE.

The name to be supplied in the blank spaces in the verse in last week's boy's name puzzle is ROB.

A BOY'S NAME PUZZLE.

"I KNOW A BOY NAMED ERT WHOUGH HE CALLS HIMSELF AND WHEN I THINK ABOUT HIM IT ALWAYS MAKES ME SOB."

"FOR HE'LL BE A ... IN'S NEST IT'S MEAN AS IT CAN BE AND THAT'S WHY I DON'T LIKE HIM THOUGH HE SAYS HE LIKES ME."

"FROM THE TIME HE RAISES MORNINGS TILL HE DIS ... ES AT NIGHT, HE'S ... ING HIS MISCHIEF WITH ALL HIS MAINS AND MIGHT."

"ONE DAY I TOOK THE BIRDS HE'D STOLEN FROM THEIR NEST AND PUT THEM IN A ... YER AND TOOK THEM TO THEIR NEST."

Supply the same boy's name in each of the blank spaces in the verse.