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### A Frog Concert.

BY RURIB.

"Listen!" said Tess, one moist, warm evening drooping down on the fresh grass where Tim and Jack were stretched at ease. "The concert's beginning."

"What concert?" demanded Tim, rising on one elbow.

"Why, the Frog Concert," responded Tess.

"A Frog Concert! Who ever heard of such a thing, I'd like to know?" said he, derisively.

"Well, you just keep still and listen, and you'll hear one now. There isn't that just the way the orchestra tune up before they start?"

The denizens of the pond did indeed suggest the ludicrous resemblance Tess had remarked. At first a single scrape was heard, then several of them uttered their notes at intervals, like the performers in an orchestra tuning their instruments; then they all, as if by one impulse, joined in the chorus, deep and loud, from the thinnest of shrill pipes to the booming base notes of the oldest bull-frog in the puddle, who filled in his parts with regular intervals of rest.

"My, doesn't that old fellow think he's got a voice!" said Tim. "He just spoils the whole thing, though."

"Do you know what the frogs say?" asked Jack, after a few minutes.

"No, do they say anything?" asked Tim, with sudden interest.

"Well, we boys used to think the little shrill fellows sang. 'Cut across! Cut across! Cut across!' and the old, wise ones piped, 'Go round! Go round! Go round!'"

"What does that old base frog say?" inquired Tess.

"Snakes! Snakes! Snakes!" said Jack.

"Why, what have frogs to do with snakes?" she asked, in astonishment.

"A great deal more than they like, often," laughed Jack. "Snakes never want any other food if they can get a nice live frog to swallow."

"Oh, Jack, they don't swallow it alive!"

"That's their favorite way of dining," he returned.

"I've often seen a snake with a frog's head and three legs projecting from its mouth, and they were gradually disappearing. Sometimes the frog is alive when it reaches the snake's stomach."

"How dreadful!" shuddered Tess. "Poor, poor frogs! No wonder the old ones croak 'Snakes!'"

"The frog himself subsists in his turn on slugs, snails, beetles, and such insects," went on Jack. "He can whip an insect down his throat like magic. You see, his sticky tongue points backward. He captures his prey by suddenly throwing the tip of the tongue forward upon the insect, covering it with this slime, and quickly drawing it back, tossing the insect down his throat so swiftly that it requires sharp eyes to see it."

"I saw a lot of frog's eggs in the pond one day," remarked Tim. "Little dark specks in queer, slimy stuff, like jelly."

"Yes, that dark color of the yolk attracts the heat of the sun, which hatches out the young tadpoles. The spawn is deposited at the bottom of the pond at first, but in a little while floats to the top."

"Oh, I saw some young ones yesterday," broke in Tess, eagerly. "Queer little black things with long tails, wriggling through the water. What happens to their tails, Jack? Do they drop off, or do they pull them off like the mosquitoes do their skins?"

"Neither," smiled Jack. "First, the hind legs appear, and a short time after the front ones grow out, and then the tail is gradually absorbed into the body. When this is completed, the young frog ventures for the first time to leave the water. It is during the breeding season that what Tess calls the 'Frog Concerts,' take place, when the males perform their loudest and most musical feats in croaking."

"Where do they stay all winter?" asked Tim.

"When winter approaches they all cuddle down together, embracing each other in the mud at the bottom of the pond so closely as to appear like one continuous mass. Here they remain in a torpid state until the ice breaks up in the spring. You know we have a saying in the country that the frogs must croak and be frozen under three times before Spring is really here."

"Are there many different kinds of frogs?" asked Tess.

"About a thousand species of frogs and toads," was the answer. "The changeable Tree-Frogs are interesting little fellows. One as green as a leaf to-day may be found all grey or spotted to-morrow. And there is a curious Flying Frog in Borneo, whose long webbed feet and forelegs bordered by membrane, and a body which can be much inflated, enable it to make a sort of slanting flight down from the tree-tops. The hind legs of the edible frog are considered quite a dainty."

"Tess," murmured Tim, sleepily. "I'm going to have frog's legs for our supper to-morrow night."

"You may eat them yourself, then, for I shan't," retorted that small maiden with some scorn. "Come indoors, or you'll dream you are a frog yourself before morning."—The Christian Guardian.

### The Reign of the Rose.

A door opened, and a painful of rubbish was thrown into the alley. It contained a tuft of green, feathery parsley, only a little wilted. Two children caught the flash of green at the same instant, and both sprang for it.

"Give it to me; I saw it first!" cried the little girl.

"But I got it first, and it's mine; ta-ta," said the boy, and, sticking the trophy into the buttonhole of his ragged jacket, he strutted away, leaving behind him a very angry and dirty little face which looked as if its owner was undecided whether to hurl after him opprobrious epithets or to sit down and cry.

A woman with a covered basket, coming through the alley, had seen the little skirmish and stopped by the side of the vanquished child. She had a gentle face, and wore a quaint little black bonnet with white ties.

"Do you like flowers? See, here is a pretty one," and, lifting the cover from her basket, she took out a great, dewy, pink rose, put it into the child's hand, and hurried away. Three or four little ragamuffins were on the scene immediately, crying, "O, lady, please give me a flower," but the deaconess had escaped what would soon have been a mob of clamoring children by turning into a side passage and shutting the door behind her. The child held the flower a moment, looking at it stupidly, and then, as faces and voices grew more numerous, and were turning toward her, she suddenly scud down the alley.

"O, mother, look! just look! A lady give it to me! She burst into a little foul-smelling, half-lighted room. The mother, sitting on the edge of a tumbled bed, regarded the rose with a mild interest.

"Ain't it a beauty! Put some water in a dish, Anette, an' set it on the table by the window so it'll keep fresh."

The dish indicated was a broken-nosed pitcher, none too clean, and the rose hung over the edge until only its outer petals and the green calyx were to be seen.

"Say, mother, don't yer think the rose 'ud look better in the glass?"

The "glass," the only tumbler the establishment contained, was stained with ancient beverages of a questionable character and opaque with the marks of dirty fingers. Anette took it to the hydrant, where she rinsed and polished it until it shone and brought it in clear and dripping. Then ten minutes were spent strengthening the stem of the rose with a hairpin, that it might stand at a proper angle to display all its beauties.

Never was a fairer rose—pale-tinted, beautifully cupped, crisply-curved, sweet-breathed; a dainty thing, looking as much out of place in that miserable dwelling as a golden-haired princess in a coal mine.

"Mother, don't you think the rose 'ud look prettier if they was sunthin' white under it—sunthin' clean and white?"

The woman looked at it considerably. She was very fat and very dirty. Almost unconsciously she pulled down the baggy folds of her limp calico dress, and with both hands smoothed her unkempt hair. Then she touched the rose with a stubby forefinger, as one would lift a baby's chin.

"I'll see if I kin find sunthin'."

She went to a broken trunk and began to turn over a heterogeneous collection of old rags. From somewhere near the bottom she produced a damask towel, worn and ragged, but tolerably clean—a relic of better days, perhaps, or included in some collection of old clothes from the charitably inclined. Anette took the towel and spread it on the table, folding it carefully, so that the ragged places were hidden. Exactly in the centre of this she placed the rose in its tumbler, where it stood like a queen in its little space of cleanliness and purity.

One little clean spot! But it acted like a magnet. The woman's eyes turned toward it continually, and as for Anette, she forgot everything else and gave herself up to the worship of the rose.

"Mother, let's wash up the dishes and put away these things on the table. They don't look nice with the rose."

"Good land! What's come over ye?" was the mother's only protest. But the dishes were washed, and the away of the rose extended over the entire table, which was reduced to a condition of comparative cleanliness and order.

Four days the rose stood in the fulness of its beauty, and each day extended its empire of purity. The room was swept, the window cleaned, and every day Anette washed her face and hands, and made a pretence at least of combing her tangled hair.

On the morning of the fifth day, without any sign of drooping or decay, the petals let go their hold and lay scattered like pink shells on the white cloth. Anette gathered them up, kissed them, and laid them away in a box that she bought of Sadie Jones for a cent.

The room had been cleaner and hearts gentler for those four days, and yet the rose had said nothing. It had only been sweet and pure and had not held itself aloof from anything.—Miss Isabel Horton, in The Sunday Advocate.

### By Keeping at It.

BY MISS JULIA D. COWLES.

"Mamma, I just can't do these examples in fractions," said Fred Vinton one afternoon, as he bent over a big sheet of paper filled with figures.

"How long have you been studying fractions?" his mother asked.

"We began them this week," Fred answered, "but I am sure I never shall be able to understand them."

"I will help you with a few examples," said Mrs. Vinton, "and then probably you can work those that your teacher has given you."

Fred made a place beside him for his mother, but his forehead did not lose its puckered appearance, although he worked perseveringly till his examples were at last all done. It was only the next day as he was playing with Rover in the yard that his mother heard him say:

"I don't believe I shall ever be able to teach Rover those tricks. It seems as though he never would learn, and yet I am sure he is as bright a dog as Charlie Kent's."

Mrs. Vinton did not appear to notice what Fred was saying, but she thought about it afterward, and remembered what he had said about his examples in fractions.

After school that same day, Fred was set to work at piling the wood which John had split. He had worked for perhaps fifteen minutes, when the wood slipped, and part of the pile came tumbling down.

"Oh, dear," exclaimed Fred, "I don't see how John piles this wood up so that it stays piled. I'm sure I can't."

Once more mamma happened to hear what Fred said, and this time she began thinking seriously, for she saw that Fred was forming a habit which would be sure to bring him trouble.

It was not long afterward that Fred came into the house, the wood was scarcely half piled, and sitting down upon the floor began to play jackstones.

He played away up through "fourteens" before he missed, and then he began at "ones" again to see if he could not play farther the next time before making a mistake.

"It seems to me that you can play jackstones pretty well," said Mrs. Vinton, stopping in her work to watch him.

Fred flushed a little at this bit of praise from his mother. "Yes," he said, "I play with the big boys at school and they won't let many of the boys in my room play because they miss so soon."

"I can remember when you couldn't catch 'ones,'" his mother said, "and it doesn't seem very long ago either."

"It wasn't long ago," Fred answered with a gay little laugh. "I learned pretty quick, I guess."

"How did you manage to do it?" Mrs. Vinton asked earnestly.

"Oh," said Fred, "I just kept pegging away every chance I got, and it wasn't but a day or two before I could do 'fives.'"

"Then there was no trick to learn or any magic moves to be acquired. It was only necessary that you should keep at it, in order to learn to play well?" Mrs. Vinton said in an enquiring tone.

"Yes," Fred replied, "that was just all there was to it."

"Well, Fred," said Mrs. Vinton, "if you were to apply the same principle, don't you suppose it would work as well with other things as it did with jackstones?"

Fred looked a little surprised at the turn the conversation had taken. He didn't quite catch his mother's meaning.

"Don't you think that if you just keep 'pegging away' you will soon learn to understand fractions; and if you keep on persevering, you will in time teach Rover those tricks you so much want him to learn, and—?"

But Fred had caught her meaning now, and he laughingly interrupted her to add:

"And if I keep on trying I will be able to pile wood so that the pile will stand up. Well, I shouldn't wonder anyway I'll go and try," and in a moment more he was in the yard working with an energy which was bound to bring success.—New York Observer.

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### Johnnie's Picnic.

AN INCIDENT FROM LIFE.

"Are you going to the picnic! Why, Johnnie, you've left your shoes at home!"

"Yes, I'm going, Billie," said Johnnie, bravely, as he hurried on toward the big waggon.

"Billie stopped to speak to Jimmie Wilson, and let Johnnie go on alone. When he thought he would not be overheard, he said to Jimmie:

"He wouldn't go if I were superintendent of the Sunday-school. It isn't nice for boys to go barefoot to pic-