

Grettel and rush mit dem to de street?"

"Why, Frau Mecklin, what do you mean? There is no fire, is there?"

"Dot is chust vot I vant to know. Your man he make von queek jomp down de stairs, and I tinks me dot he haf a fire somewhere, an dot he's gone on ring de alarm."

"Oh, no, Frau, he was just in a hurry to catch a friend he saw passing on the street, and never stopped to consider the noise he was making," said Mrs. Ned, scarcely able to control her voice, which was shaking with inward laughter. "I am so sorry he frightened you."

"Ach, Himmel! I am so glad me; but he is van heavy man for sure," said Frau Mecklin, smiling as she turned to go back to her little flat down-stairs.

In a very short time Mr. Harper returned with almost as much buoyancy as he went out with.

As he closed the door he caught his wife and waltzed her around the room, almost shouting as he did it. "It's all settled, Julia; settled to the King's taste. I have met Alladin's genius, and all we have to do now is set the day."

"Sit down, Ned, and behave sensibly," said his wife, trying to be severe, but failing in the attempt, so breathless was she from the excited waltz around the room.

"Tell me what you mean, and who that man was you were so eager to speak to that you scared poor Frau Mecklin so badly by your headlong rush down-stairs."

"I was Aladdin, my dear, and I've been rubbing the lamp, you know, and presto! we have our castle by the seaside, free transportation for the crowd, and we can stay three weeks; all the cost will be board for the crowd."

"I don't understand you, Ned; please explain!"

"Well, it's just this, Julia, that man was Findlater, who owns a lot of real-estate along the seashore. I have known him a long time, and when I saw him I said, here goes for our seaside camp! So I rushed out and laid the case before him, with the result that he has offered us the use of several large tents, and a large piece of ground to erect them on, or, rather, he will erect them for us. He is going down there to-day, and, best of all, he says he had chartered several autos to take down a party of people who intended purchasing cottage sites, and who have backed out and decided that it's the mountains for them instead. He says he may as well use them. The tents are there waiting for some workmen to come and start work on some cottages he has planned, but they can't come for three weeks, so we can have them for that time. Now, hurry on your hat and we'll take the first car out and tell the gang."

"No, Ned, don't let us tell them only that we are going with them all, the day Captain Ben goes for a day's outing. Such a surprise it will be for them. The hampers which they suppose to contain lunch for us all, can be packed with their clothing and all they will need. We'll have to take the parents' into our confidence, though, I am afraid."

When Uncle Ned and Aunt Julia arrived at the Harper farm and imparted the wonderful news that they were all going, such an excited skurrying here and there went on as the little Harpers ran to tell their friends of this unexpected good fortune.

A vein of excitement ran through the next few days. The children wondered what their mothers were washing and ironing for on such unusual days, and when the cook caught up the Harper baby in her arms, gave it a real bear hug, and said, "Bless yere heart, darlint, but we'll miss you shure as fate," set her down again as hurriedly and went into the kitchen with the tears starting to her eyes, the children looked at each other in surprise.

"Huh," said John contemptuously. "one would think we were going to be away for days, and besides, I did not think baby was coming with us." "I'll ask mother about it," said May, running into the little bedroom off the sitting-room where she heard her mother moving about.

In a few minutes she returned looking rather crest-fallen, as she said impatiently. "Mother only said, when I asked

her, 'So Uncle Ned says. Now, run away, dearie, I am busy just now. She would not even let me see what she was doing. What ever can it be all about, anyway?'

"I am sure I don't know," said Mildred Jones, who had just come in, "even our housekeeper seems to have been infected with the mysterious fever, and do you know she is actually washing and ironing—and, it Thursday—and instead of grumbling about it as usual, she is singing over it. And do you know she has a good voice. We must coax her to sing for us when we come back from the seaside. My, does not that sound important, though, just as if we were going for weeks instead of a day."

On Friday evening, "The Crowd," as they were now called, met at Captain Ben's cottage to tell them of the automobile drive in store for them on the morrow. Of course, it was no secret to Mrs. Webb and Miss Webb, but the children did not know that. They had decided not to tell Captain Ben where they were going, but let it come as a big surprise to him.

Next morning four big cars drove up to Captain Ben's door, and he and Mrs. Webb and his niece and nephew got into the first one, for were they not the guests of honor? Captain Ben jumped off his seat in astonishment as a squawky voice from underneath the seat said, "My, my, my! Oh, keep your feet off, keep your feet off!" The ladies looked frightened, too, until Uncle Ned said, "Oh, it's only Polly, my parrot. I was afraid the old girl would be lonely at home, so I brought her along, and her cage is under the seat."

Even Captain Ben joined in the laughter, as he said, "Bless my sea-legs, anyway! Now, why didn't I know a Poll-parrot's voice when I heard it. 'Tisn't as if I hadn't heard them often enough when I wuz to sea. Deary me, but 'tis a long time since I've seen the sea."

The big cars sped swiftly on, and all were enjoying themselves to the utmost when Polly suddenly squawked again, "Oh, get out, get out! I don't like dogs. Put him out! Put him out!"

A low growl and a sharp yelping bark coming right after it, made Captain Ben jump off his seat again and look underneath it. "Why, bless my soul, what's this?" he said excitedly. "Ef that dog ain't here under this very seat, and I locked 'im up myself this morning when I gave 'im his breakfast! How in all that queer did he get out and in here? Here, ye rascal, out ye go, an' find yer way home. Ef the bosses of these here automobiles saw us cartin' our dogs along they wouldn't like it overly well, I am thinkin'."

"No, no, Captain Ben," said Mr. Ned Harper, "he'd get lost. Let the poor dog enjoy his ride seeing that he was so cute as to get into this particular car all by himself." Anyone looking closely might have seen a knowing twinkle in his eye as he spoke.

Suddenly Captain Ben raised his head, sniffing audibly, and looking from side to side, said, "Sea water, salt water! I smell it, I smell it, surer than I am alive! Where are we, anyway? Where's this you're takin' us, anyway? he asked almost roughly, although it could be easily seen that he was trembling with excitement. There was no need to reply, for round a curve in the road they suddenly spun, and there was the sea in all its sparkling blueness, the little waves leaping over one another in play.

Captain Ben seemed to have forgotten all the others. He stretched out his hands towards it and said, "I could almost fancy I see the Nancy right out there. Aye, 'tis a long while since I've seen the Nancy," he said wistfully.

In a very few minutes they stopped right by the big tents, and the children gazed at them in wide-eyed astonishment. What were they all for, anyway? But when they saw Uncle Ned's parrot lifted out of the automobile, and his cage hung in the doorway of the biggest tent, they gathered around Uncle Ned and wanted to know what it was all about.

"What is it all about?" said Uncle Ned gaily. "Why, nothing at all except that our homes will be these tents for the next three weeks if we care to stay here."

"If we care to stay here," said Carl Jones in a hushed voice.

"I vote we give three cheers for Uncle Ned and Aunt Julia," said little Joe

Harper, and before they could be prevented the cheers were given. When they were done cheering, Uncle Ned said, "You're mistaken, children; I am not the giver of all this, but a kind friend of mine who owns the grounds and tents, and is letting us have the use of them."

"But our dresses?" said the girls in chorus, "we've only these we've on."

"Huh!" said John Harper, "Dresses! What d'ye want with dresses when ye have the sea? It takes girls to be always thinking of their dresses!"

"Look in those hampers at your feet, girls," said Aunt Julia.

"In the hampers," said Carl Jones, "Is it only dresses that are in the hampers? Why, I thought it was grub, and I am as hungry as a hunter, too."

Aunt Julia laughed at the rueful look of disappointment on his face, then she said, "Just look around the back of that tent, laddie, and see if the 'grub,' as you call it, has been forgotten."

The sight Carl saw there set his eyes dancing excitedly. He heaved a great sigh of contentment, and sat down facing the sea. Everything seemed perfect, and just as it should be, even the sight of Captain Ben in his bare feet and sleeves rolled up splashing around in the water like a big Newfoundland dog, and throwing sticks to Pincher, who was barking excitedly and swimming around in the shallow water, seemed a fitting part of it all.

The three weeks that followed were healthy, happy days. Captain Ben seemed to grow younger every day, and tell more wonderful stories of the sea than they had ever heard before. Not only "The Crowd," but all the other little ones from the hotels and different boarding-houses gathered around him until it was their bed-time, every evening.

The mothers thoroughly enjoyed it, too, as Mrs. Ned Harper knew a great many ladies who came down every year to the seaside, and introduced her friends to them.

The little Webb boy began to take cautious steps alone, gradually growing stronger every day, until, by the end of the three weeks, he could walk quite well, although not quickly. Such a healthy look had crept into his face that his mother was often to be seen covertly watching him with tears of joy slipping down her cheeks.

And the cross Miss Webb of the old school-room days had entirely disappeared, and a merry, laughing girl had taken her place, who could explain almost all they wished to know in regard to seaweed, sea shells, and all the curious things which the children found in their daily walks amongst the rocks after the tide had gone back, the great wonderful tide that crept in quietly and almost caught them several times and penned them up in some dangerous spot, all because they had forgotten that it had a daily habit of doing that.

Every day was full of some new excitement. There were picnics inland, and moonlight excursions on the water, and clam-digging, and all voted it the happiest holiday they had ever known.

### Senior Beavers' Letter Box.

Dear Puck and Beavers,—This is my first letter to your Circle, and I hope it will escape the waste-paper basket. I live on a good farm of 200 acres, in the Parry Sound District in Ontario, near the town of Powassan, with my parents and four sisters. I have no brothers. I am the second oldest. I go to the Powassan school. I am in the Fourth Class in the Fourth room. I think I will tell you a few ways that I make some money. I plant some potatoes early and sell them early. I got \$1.75 a bag this year. Every year I pick potatoes for my father; he gives me five cents a bag. I make about \$5 a year that way. My sister and I took some things to the Fall Fair. She got two first-class tickets and one second, and I got the same. I will give you a few riddles.

Where is happiness found? Ans.—In the dictionary.

What makes a pair of boots? Ans.—Two boots.

I will close, wishing some of the Beavers would write to me.

LILA MCINTYRE (age 11).  
Powassan, Ont.

Dear Puck and Beavers,—As I saw my name on the Honor Roll it encouraged me to write again. My father has taken "The Farmer's Advocate" ever since I can remember, and he likes it fine. He goes out packing apples in the fall. I am very interested in your Circle, and would like to be a member. I go to school every day, and like it fine. My father is the caretaker of the school, so I have to go to school a little before eight o'clock to dust it. After four o'clock my two brothers and I sweep the school.

These are a few of the books I have read: "Strong and Steady," "Broken Bread," "Girls of the Forest," "Be Prepared," "Little Woodman," "Christie's Old Organ," and I am now reading "Good Luck," which is a very good book so far.

For pets, I have tame rabbits, a dog, and two kittens. Wishing the Beaver Circle every success,

MAGGIE CLARK.  
(Age 11, Sr. III. Class.)  
Ravenswood, Ont.

I would like some of the Beavers to write to me.

Dear Puck,—Since I saw my other letter in print, and was so lucky, I thought I would try again. I hope other Beavers are as successful the first time. I don't see many letters from the Beavers around here, but hope I will soon.

Well, Puck, we have had a lovely fall, haven't we? It has been so warm and nice, but I guess it will soon be over now. I see a lot of the Beavers call themselves book-worms, but I am not. I can't content myself with reading. We have two little colts; their names are Lady and Bud. They are very pretty. We have a large stock of cattle and horses. I have one little kitty, which is a good pet, but mamma won't allow me to have it in the house. Well, I guess I will close with best wishes to the Circle, and glad I have become a member.

MAISIE WILLIS.  
(Age 13, Sr. IV. Class.)  
Cannington, Ont.

Dear Puck and Beavers,—This is my first letter to your charming Circle. I enjoy reading your letters, and have decided to write one, too. I have no pets at all now. I had a kitten named Whiskers, but he died last spring. I am very fond of reading books. Some of my favorites are: "Black Beauty," "How Paul's Penny Became a Pound," "Dick and His Donkey," "Tom Brown's School Days," "True to His Vow," "The Babes in the Basket," and many others. I live on a farm three miles from the village of Canfield. We like your paper very much. Well, I guess this is long enough for my first letter, so I will close with a riddle.

What has eyes and cannot see? Ans.—A potato.

T. EDWIN JOHNSTON (age 11).  
R. R. No. 1, Canfield, Ont.

### My Dog.

No soul! And who are you, pray tell, To say to me my dog's "no soul?" What do you know who talk so well And smile at yonder little knoll? Yes, that's my dog—he's buried there—A friend so loving, full of fun; So patient with me I'd not dare To say his life's forever done. You know when trouble's comin' fast, And things look dark, and you're "all in,"

And give up, an' then at last You're plumb discouraged, and you sin—Who wants you then? They'll all pass by.

These human ones! Just any day You see 'em do it, and they try, So hard, to "look the other way." But does your dog? No, sir, not he! Those two dear eyes, so clear and true,

Look up at you—what does he see? The best and only the best in you!

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Dear God, who gavest us this friend, I pray that in Thy gracious might Show pity! And when comes the end, Send not my dog to everlasting night. A Dog Lover.—In Our Dumb Animals.