



THE BIG SNAKE; OR, AN UNWELCOME PASSENGER.

BY OLD WALTER WYNN.

My young friends may perhaps have heard a little of both Havre and Paris, though they may have seen neither the one nor the other. Havre is a French seaport, and Paris, as you know, is the French capital. Some summers and winters have passed since old Walter Wynn was at Paris, but he remembers still all the principal places in that great city.

There is a railroad now between Havre and Paris, so that people go from the one place to the other much more rapidly than they used to do. A short time ago a very unwelcome passenger made his appearance on the railway train, sadly frightening many of the travelers. It was, indeed, enough to make the stoutest heart tremble. But you shall hear.

Besides the passengers and their luggage, and merchandize of different kinds, the train carried a collection of wild beasts, about to be shown at Paris, and these savage creatures were under the care of M. Hebert, a friend of Gerard, the lion-tamer. There was also in the collection a boa-constrictor, or big snake, said to be seventeen feet long. Now we have heard of these terrible creatures swallowing deer and tigers, so that no wonder they should be regarded with great fear.

This big snake was shut up in a box that hung under the caravan in which the wild beasts were, and whether it was that he was offended in not being treated as a first-class passenger, whether he was annoyed in being cooped up so closely, or whether he wanted to look about him and see a little of the world, I will not say; but certain it is that he grew dissatisfied.

Most travelers who are uncomfortable put up with their grievances till they get to the next station, or to the end of their journey, and then make their complaint; but this was not the case with friend Scalyback, for he took the affair, I was going to say, into his own hands, but he had none. Well, he gave way to his temper, broke through the sides of his prison-house, and made his appearance on the top of the carriages. Only fancy to yourselves a railway train, full of passengers, traveling along at the rate of thirty or forty miles an hour, with a big snake, seventeen feet long, amusing himself in gliding from one carriage to another, and, quite as likely as not, every now and then to pop his head through one of the windows!

How long it was that the big snake had amused himself in sporting about on the tops of the carriages was only known to himself, and as he kept his own secret, whispering it to no one, we can only give a guess about the matter. At last, however, he poked up his head so near to the engine-driver that the poor terrified man raised a cry of distress and terror.

You may be sure that very soon there was a pretty commotion. The train was stopped. M. Hebert and his two African servants were called upon to secure the boa-constrictor, and the passengers, as the alarm ran from carriage to carriage, were terrified at the danger they were in.

It was some time before the big snake was made a captive, for he wound himself round the machinery of the engine, and seemed determined not to be taken. M. Hebert and his attendants had quite enough to do to conquer him. At last they succeeded in getting him into a much stronger box than that out of which he had broken.

So great was the consternation among the passengers that many of them could hardly make up their minds to travel on by the same train as the boa-constrictor. After the loss of much time, however, they consented. The steam hissed aloud, the shrill whistle was heard, and once again the train set off for Paris.

And now, very likely, you are saying in your hearts that you would never, no, not on any account, travel with a serpent or big snake; but, alas! you cannot help it, for to my certain knowledge, not a ship quits the shore and not a single railroad carriage leaves the station without a serpent going with it to the great danger of the passengers. What I say is true, for sin is a serpent, and "all have sinned."

"Where'er the foot of man has been
That slimy serpent has been seen."

I have heard that where rattlesnakes abound an herb, called rattlesnake herb, abounds also, and that it cures the bite of the scaly reptile; but however this may be, we know that there is a cure for the bite of the serpent, Sin. "The Lamb of God taketh away the sins of the world," and none ever fled for refuge to the Saviour, who died on the cross for sinners, without being saved by him from the poisonous bite of that old serpent, Satan. Let then your motto be,

"On Christ alone will I depend,
The sinner's hope, the sinner's friend."

The passengers who traveled with the boa-constrictor to Paris will no doubt for a long time talk of their strange adventure. The bravest man that ever went abroad, when he knew that a big snake, seventeen feet long, was traveling by the same train as himself, could hardly do otherwise than consider him to be a very unwelcome passenger.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

CHILD'S PRAYER.

JESUS, hear me when I pray:
Keep me through the shades of night;
Guide and save me every day,
And protect me by thy might.

May I never from thee stray,
Always in thyself abide;
Walk in every virtuous way
That may keep me at thy side.

Teach me thy dear name to fear,
All thy precepts may I love,
That I may be thy foll'wer here,
And reign at last with thee above.



From the "Sunday-School Almanac."

THE HORSE RUSHING TO THE BATTLE.

I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? Every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.—Jer. viii, 6. See also Prov. xxix, 1.

WHIEW! How that horse rushes through the smoke and falling balls into the thick of battle. He don't *think*, and therefore he don't fear death. By and by a shot will strike him with a dull, heavy thud, and he will die.

Now when I hear a boy say, "I don't care. I will

do just as I've a mind to," in reply to his mother's counsels, I think, "That boy is like a horse rushing into battle. He don't think of the danger he dares. He is going into the ways of death and will perish forever. Poor, foolish boy!"

I hope that you, my child, are not a little horse rushing to the battle.

MICROSCOPIC WONDERS.



PON examining the edge of a very sharp lancet with a microscope, it will appear as broad as the back of a knife; rough, uneven, full of notches and furrows. An exceedingly small needle resembles a rough iron bar. But the sting of a bee seen through the same instrument, exhibits everywhere a most beautiful polish, without the least flaw, blemish, or inequality, and it ends in a point too fine to be discerned. The threads of a fine lawn seem coarser than the yarn with which ropes are made for anchors; but a silkworm's web appears perfectly smooth and shining, and everywhere equal. The smallest dot that can be made with a pen appears irregular and uneven; but the little specks on the wings or bodies of insects are found to be most accurately circular. The finest miniature paintings appear before the microscope ragged and uneven, entirely devoid of beauty, either in the drawing or coloring. The most even and beautiful varnishes will be found to be mere roughness. But the nearer we examine the works of God even in the least productions, the more sensible shall we be of his wisdom and power. In the numberless species of insects what proportion, exactness, uniformity, and symmetry do we perceive in all organs! what profusion of coloring! azure, green, and vermillion, gold, silver, pearls, rubies, and diamonds, fringe, and embroidery, on their bodies, wings, heads, and every part! how high the finishing, how inimitable the polish we everywhere behold!

THE ALPHABET.

THE following verse contains all the letters of the alphabet, and may be used as an exercise for young children in tracing the letters:

"God gives the grazing ox his meat,
And quickly hears the sheep's low cry,
But man, who tastes his finest wheat,
Should joy to lift his praises high."

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