



A PAGE FOR JUNIORS



The Tale of a Tail.

BY ESTELLE M. KERR.

IT was a warm day in November and the windows of the class-room stood open. Bob leaned back from his desk, yawned, and looked out of the window; then seeing the teacher's reproving eye fixed upon him, he ducked behind the boy in front and bent over the blank page of his exercise-book. He heard the other scholars pencils scratching vigorously, so he picked up his own, chewed the end of it for a while, and then wrote in a clear, round hand.

"The Tail of a Chipmunk."

"What a subject!" ejaculated Bob, "how can they find anything to write of in that?" His eyes wandered out of the window again, but he was recalled by a little voice close to his ear saying, as if in answer to his question,

"Well, I don't know, it depends upon how you look at it!" and Bob was surprised to see his magnifying glass standing on end and looking at him with a genial expression which reminded him of his grandfather.

"How would you look at it, sir?" asked Bob.

"Well, I am accustomed to looking at things closely and through my spectacles, the smallest things have often the greatest importance. Take your own case, for instance," the magnifying-glass came closer and eyed him carefully.

Bob smiled at the little creature. He felt himself, such a giant, that he wondered how his friend could discover anything small about him.

"Now the smallest part of you is your brain."

Bob stopped smiling.

"In fact no one would know you had any, who didn't observe people closely as I do, and yet it is the most important thing about you. It is the same with the chipmunk's tail."

"But it isn't a tail, it's a t-a-l-e."

"Why didn't you say so then? But, no matter, write the tale of a tail."

Bob glanced at his exercise-book and was ashamed to see that he had written t-a-i-l by mistake. He was about to apologize when the Pencil spoke for him.

"That was stupid of me!" said the Pencil.

"You certainly do look dull," the Knife cuttingly remarked.

"And if I am whose fault is that?"

"Oh, come, now," said the Rubber, bouncing up, "I can soon change that."

"There you go again," said the Pencil, "always butting in. It's none of your business!" and he obstinately refused to move from the spot. "I hate these people who are always trying to correct you," he said.

"You'll never make your mark in the world unless you can learn to mind your P's and Q's," said the Knife.

"Oh, shut up!"

The Knife did as he was bid with a snap and the Pen remarked:

"Now you've done it, you can't write another word without his help!"

"Well, I need a rest anyway, and so would you if he had been chewing you for the last half hour. I am bruised all over."

"Don't speak of it," said the Pen, dropping an inky tear, "I, too, bear his scars."

"I think you are a pretty sore-looking crowd, but I am glad to see the ink well, ha, ha!" laughed the irrepressible Rubber.

"I don't know what you are laughing at," growled the Pencil.

"Why, that's a pun, don't you see the point? he, he! Oh, come, now, where's the knife? You'll never see it without his help."

"What's that you're saying, I well?" said the Ink, "I never was so upset in my life!"

"Dear me, what is it?" cried the others crowding about him.

"It's all the fault of that boy, that lazy good-for-nothing Boy, he upsets me terribly!" and he gave Bob a black look while the Pen and Pencil nodded sympathetically.

"The only cheerful one in the crowd is the Rubber and you can't crush him."

"Of course you can't, and there's no use of crying over spilt ink. Let's get busy and we can finish the composition in no time now that the Boy is asleep."

Bob blinked his eyes to show he was awake, but

the others took no notice. Even the Magnifying Glass ignored him, and said to the others:

"That's right, go ahead, I always shut my eyes when there are difficulties in the way."

The Rubber erased the T, and the Knife sharpened the Pencil, and the Pencil joined the A to the L, and added an E. Then they all put their heads together and dictated the composition while the Pencil ran rapidly across the page and Bob followed its movements with fascinated eyes. It covered one sheet and then they all helped to turn over a leaf and the Pencil hurried half way down the page, where he stopped and lay down exhausted.

"There, it's done," he said, "and the boy is waking up, hurry back to your places!"

"Time's up!" called the teacher.

Bob rubbed his eyes. He looked anxiously at his exercise-book but the page was perfectly blank and his pencil, unsharpened, lay between the leaves. Only the title remained and that was spelt wrong.

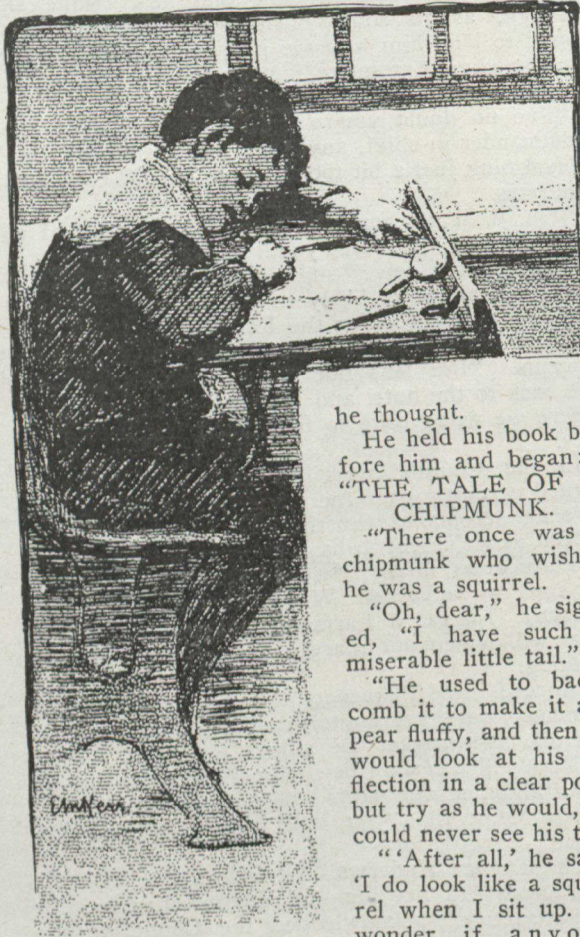
"Now, Bob, will you read us your composition?" said the teacher.

"It isn't quite finished, sir," replied Bob.

"Well, read what you have written."

Bob rose slowly to his feet—

"If I can only remember what the pencil wrote,"



he thought.

He held his book before him and began: "THE TALE OF A CHIPMUNK."

"There once was a chipmunk who wished he was a squirrel."

"Oh, dear," he sighed, "I have such a miserable little tail."

"He used to back-comb it to make it appear fluffy, and then he would look at his reflection in a clear pool, but try as he would, he could never see his tail."

"After all," he said, "I do look like a squirrel when I sit up. I wonder if anyone

would take me for a squirrel? Here comes a boy, I will run out on the limb and get into position and see what he says."

"The boy came along the path, whistling, with his hands in his pockets."

"Hello!" he said, "there's a squirrel!"

"The chipmunk trembled with delight, but he was afraid to move for fear the boy would discover his mistake."

"The boy turned his back for a few moments, then whisked around very suddenly, and before the chipmunk knew it, a stone hit him on the head and he dropped to the ground."

The boy ran up.

"Oh, Pshaw!" he said, "It's only a chipmunk and I wanted a squirrel's tail!" and he walked away.

"For hours the chipmunk lay there quite still, but after a while he was able to crawl home, and he never again wished he was a squirrel."

Bob sat down.

"That's the best essay you ever wrote, Bob," said the teacher.

"But I didn't write it, sir."

"Who did, then?"

"My pencil did," said Bob, and then he remembered that there wasn't a pencil mark on the page. Everybody laughed but the teacher, who said:

"Now don't be silly, Bob, for I see you have got

some brains after all."

Bob looked at his magnifying glass which lay on the desk and he fancied he could see it smile.

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An Unpleasant Thought.

BY BETTY SAGE.

I CANNOT bear to think upon
The fact that winter's coming on,
I love to coast and hitch and slide,
But there are other things beside;
The dentist, dancing school and sums
Begin when chilly weather comes.
But worst of all, I cannot bear
To put on winter underwear—
I love the cold, I love the snow,
But woollen things do itch me so.

* * *

Why I Prefer the Country.

IN the first place we must have the two pictures firmly fixed in our minds. First the city with all its traffic, noise and hustle. Now we board a car and go to the country, which is quite different, for you hear the low tinkling of cow bells and sheep faintly bleating; you see farm houses scattered here and there, and every three or four miles a little school house. All our artists love to paint in the country, so here we may say the country is preferable for its beauty.

In a city there are many diseases. Why? Because there are so many buildings, such as warehouses, factories, etc., where germs collect. People inhale these. They are no so strong as those living in the country because they do not get enough fresh air and exercise. So these little germs often prove fatal. Why do they send consumptives to the country for open-air treatment? Because the country is more healthful.

Some people say in a country you do not know what is going on in the world, but this is a great mistake. We have papers and magazines with just the same news as those of a city. One thing we are behind in perhaps is the reading of cheap novels and magazines.

Those living in a city go to moving pictures, concerts and something every night, and would neglect their school work, which is very important. Without good, hard study what of our future citizens? In a country we have no such attractions and the country schools turn out good, clever men and women. People say you don't learn much at a country school, but the most important studies are taught and taught thoroughly.

In a city you see young boys standing around the corners, smoking or chewing tobacco. They do not get their full growth and have that sickly look. Would it not be better for them if they were in the country on a farm away from all temptation. You will even see boys drunk in the city. The country is also the place for them. I believe the boys living in the country are better than those in a city.

I also believe that people in the country are more religious. In the larger cities people even work on Sunday, or else they work all week and then don't feel like going to church. In the country the people keep regular hours and they like nothing better than going to church. They remember the little sermon all through the week. It lightens their work. In a city those that do go to church remember the sermon only till they meet some friend, then one says, "Did you see Mrs. Jones' new gown?" and "Those plumes must have cost an immense sum." They keep on this way but don't mention sermon, anyway I don't suppose they heard one-half of it, so intent were they looking to see who looked most stylish. Now to finish up I must say when I go to the city it is a great treat; but the noise soon becomes a strain and I love to get back to my dear old country home with all its peaceful, quiet look, its lovely trees and sparkling streams, and I love to wander through the woods and think how kind nature is to us living in the country.

ELIZABETH S. BUNNELL (Age 16.)
Sussex, N.B.

—Certified by Mrs. Albert Bunnell.

COMPETITION.

For boys and girls under eighteen.

Subject: "Our Pets."

Six books (the titles to be selected from our Library List) will be awarded as prizes for the best stories, letters, poems, drawings or photographs about this subject.

All entries must bear the name and age of the contributor, and be certified as original by parent or guardian. The contest closes January 1st.