

Our Young Folks.

The Fox and Old Age.

BY PALMER COX.

"Now, father, you are growing old,"
The little foxes said;
"Your hair is turning dull and gray,
That once was bright and red.

"The teeth are dropping from the jaws
That used to break the bones,
And what were once your burning paws
Now feel as cold as stones.

"Your step is not so sure, we know,
As once in days of yore;
You often stumble as you go,
When nothing lies before.

"You'll not be eating turkey long:
So tell us, father, please,
What you went through when young and strong,
Ere we were round your knees."

The fox to answer them was slow,
And from his almond eye
He wiped a tear-drop with his toe
Before he made reply.

"I dare not tell you, children dear,
The struggles and the strife;
'T would make you shrink away and fear
To venture forth in life.

"F' various paths we all must go,
Enough rough or smooth they be;
Some find the turkey's roosting low,
Some find them in the tree.

"We were in danger day and night,
Beet by cars and lile;
What often seems a harmless bite
May hold some poison pill.

"I once could stand a lengthy chase,
When active, young and bold,
And gave the bounds full many a race
Across the country cold.

"The jawing trap the silence broke—
When least I thought of foes,
And with a vicious snap awake
Beneath my very nose.

"I've ventured, when the sun was bright,
And lagged the ducks and drakes,
When unsuspecting farmers might
Have reached me with their rakes.

"But running now must take the place
Of boldness, dash and speed;
When eyes grow dim and legs grow ailing
We must with care proceed.

"Eat we! The moon her beauty flaunts
Above the mountain's head,
And I must find the rabbit's haunts,
And you must find your bed."

DAVEY AND THE GOBLIN.

We regret that we are unable to furnish installment of "Davey and the Goblin" this week, as the "copy" has not come to hand in time.

"Chinese Gordon."

BY DAVID KER.

"So you want to hear about Gordon?" said Major Swordsleigh to a listening group of children. "Well, the first time I ever saw him was at Gravesend in 1867, when I caught him a message from London. Almost the first thing I saw was 'God bless the Kernel, called on a fence; and as I went on I heard a boy writing the same words on a roll. 'What Colonel's that?' I asked. 'Why, Colonel Gordon, of course,' he answered, quite angrily; 'don't you know him?'"

"I did know him, for all England was buzzing with what he had done in China. When the Taiping rebels were carrying all before them there, in came Gordon, raised an army of Chinamen, and beat the Taipings wherever he met them. Even when the rebels thought themselves safe a long the great swamps, in a cobweb of rivers and canals where no army could pass, Gordon's light gunboats came creeping along over mud and mud, and bang went their guns, and down tumbled the earthworks, and away ran the rebels, thinking him a magician who could make ships go on land."

"When I reached Gordon's house, a dozen ragged boys were just coming out, and in the doorway stood a quiet, pleasant man of thirty-four with a keen, bright eye, and did he say of his deeds in China; but he told me plenty about his 'kings,' as he called the boys whom he was teaching, and some of whom he had already found out."

"See these pins in my map," said he; "they show where some of my young 'kings' are, for whom I've got places on shipboard. I like to keep track of them."

"And so he did; and in after days, when he was fighting for his life in the African deserts, he still had a kind thought to spare for his English boys."

"In 1871 he was sent to Turkey, and he had hardly done with that when the Egyptian government wanted him in Central Africa. And what a life he had there! Sometimes he had to ride over the desert on a camel for days and days, with his skin peeling off with the heat, and flies stinging him all over. Or he would be struggling up the Nile among horrid swamps where the fever mist curled up like steam, or through dark gullies where armed savages lay waiting to pounce upon him."

"Many a hard fight did he have with the cruel Arabs, who were kidnapping the poor negroes and selling them for slaves. Sometimes a boat would come down the river, loaded with wood and ivory; but when Gordon took up the wood he found a close-packed crowd of slaves, almost choked for want of air, and so weak that they could hardly stand when taken out."

"In 1879 he came home quite worn out; but even then there was no rest for him. He was sent back to China, then to South Africa, and then to Central Africa again; for by this time war had broken out in the Soudan between Egypt and the Arabs, the Egyptians had been beaten, and a few handfuls of them were left shut up in fortresses far away in the desert, hemmed in by fierce Arabs."

"Every one said that Gordon was just the man to get these poor fellows out of their difficulty, so he was sent to do it. But instead of giving him the soldiers he needed, they sent him out almost alone; so in place of being able to help off the besieged Egyptians, he was soon besieged himself. For months he defended Khartoum against the enemy's whole army, with only a few cowardly Egyptian recruits to help him. But at last his own men betrayed him, and when the English came up to the rescue they found that the Arabs had taken the town, and that poor Gordon was either killed or made prisoner. There! we won't talk about it any more, children. Good-night!"—*Harper's Young People*.

THE BITER BITTEN.

BY DAVID KER.

"There's Neighbor Schalk at his old tricks again, I'm afraid," said Carl Guthertz, the landlord of the Golden Ox, looking through the frost-flecked window with a meaning shake of his huge yellow head, which, with its broad flat nose, wide mouth, and large bright eyes, gave him the look of a good-natured lion. "One of these days, if he doesn't mind, he'll find that an honest offense is better than an ill-gotten thaler."

Out in the snowy road two men were standing beside a cart laden with wood. The one—who was warmly wrapped in a thick coat that came down below his knees—was a tall, gaunt, ungrainy fellow, with a slow, pinched, sour-looking face, the very last man, in fact, whom any one would have thought of asking for help or charity. There was a cunning twinkle in his small rat-like eyes, as if he had just been driving a hard bargain at the expense of the thin, ragged, half-starved wretch by his side, who, meekly picking up the little bundle of wood which the other had flung at his feet, slunk dejectedly away.

"Aha!" cried Schalk, exultingly, stamping the snow off his feet upon the threshold as he stepped into the warm room, "I've made a good bargain with that French fellow yonder. What 'wood'-heads those foreigners are! Why, any fellow might take them in."

"Have you taken him in, then, neighbor?" asked the stout landlord, thrusting his big hands deeper down into his pockets, as if fearing that he might be tempted to use them in knocking down his worthy neighbor on the spot.

"Well, I've got two marks and a half (sixty cents) out of him for a bundle of wood not worth one," said Schalk, too full of triumph to notice the look of disgust on the

brown manly faces of the honest German peasants who were sitting round the stove. "But as for 'taking in,' the wood's my property, and I suppose I have a right to ask what price I please for it."

The landlord's ruddy face turned redder still with anger, and his eye measured Schalk's bony carcass as if to find the spot where a blow would tell most effectually. But he was checked just in time by an unforeseen interruption.

No one had paid much attention to a man who was sitting silent in the farthest corner over a plate of cold ham, with the collar of his gay riding cloak turned up so high over his ears, and his peaked cap pulled down so low over his eyes, that his face could hardly be seen at all. But just then he gave three or four sharp taps on the table with the handle of his knife, and as the landlord came up to see what he wanted, the stranger bent forward and whispered something in his ear. Whatever it was that he said, it seemed to act like magic upon Herr Guthertz, whose face instantly expanded into a grin so broad and bright that it seemed to light up the whole room.

Meanwhile Schalk was in the light breakfast of brown bread and cheese; for, being as close-listed as he was kravish, he never spent a penny more than he could help. Having finished, he asked how much he had to pay.

"Two marks and a half," answered the landlord, quietly, naming the exact sum which Schalk had extorted from the Frenchman.

"What!" screamed Schalk, "are you mad? Two marks and a half for a few mouthfuls of bread and cheese?"

"Well, the bread and cheese are my own property, as you said just now, and I suppose I have a right to ask what price I please. But don't think I'm going to cheat you. I shall keep twenty pennings to pay for your breakfast, and the rest I'll give to that poor Frenchman whom you've just been deceiving."

"It's a shame! it's a swindle!" howled Schalk, furious to see every one laughing at him. "I'll go to the magistrate about it—that I will!"

"You needn't trouble the magistrate, for I can settle the matter just as well," said a deep voice behind him, as the silent man in the corner, throwing back his cloak, revealed to the dismayed rogue the stern face of the Commandant himself. "Pay your money and go, you rascal, and be thankful to get off so cheap. As for the poor fellow whom you've cheated, I'll send him a whole cartload of wood this very day, and some thing to cook with it as well, that he may not think ill of all of us Germans for the sake of one rogue."—*The New York People*.

A Profession, or a Trade.

But, as I told you at the outset, if you have arrived at the age of fifteen or sixteen, it is time you looked matters square in the face and had some idea of your future. If you were to answer at once, you would say that you would take a profession in preference to a trade. A profession means several years of hard study, quite a large cash outlay and then trials and rebuffs to get a start in business. It is one thing to graduate as a doctor or a lawyer, and quite another to pick up clients and patients. If you have fully decided on a profession, be careful of your first move. If you have a large head, your grandmother has doubtless many times exclaimed, "What a good lawyer this boy would make." Don't try to make one on the size of your head. We've got any number of that class in the country now, and they can't pay their grocers' bills. If you can pull a liver out of your finger without winking, it may be a sign that you would make a great surgeon. It may also be a sign that you were born to be a butcher.

How will you know what to pursue? Your own feelings are your safest guide. If left to your parents and to circumstances, you may be forced into a trade or a profession which you can never make a success. When you come to realize that you must make your own way in life, your particular forte will be apt to reveal itself. One of the best lawyers in Detroit was intended for the ministry; another served three years as a journalist, but all the time feeling that he was out of his element; another was forced by his father to learn the trade of

harness maker. I know a machinist who at first studied medicine; of a watchmaker who tried to become a lawyer; of a carpenter who threw away three years of his life trying to become a dentist, probably learning by accident his true calling.

After you have selected your profession or trade, what then? Strive to master it in all its details and to excel. If you become a carpenter, don't be satisfied when you can saw, plane and match. Don't be satisfied with two dollars per day. Make yourself worth three dollars. Master details and push yourself from carpenter to builder. Don't imagine that a man in search of a lawyer walks down the street and stops at the first sign hanging out. It is the lawyer who has climbed above his fellows that he seeks out. If our friends are ill we want the best doctor. We want the man who has made himself the best by study and energy. The blacksmith who is content to mend old wagons will never iron a new one. The machinist who stands at the lathe to do about so much work in ten hours need not hope to be better off. It is the men who put their heart into what they do who succeed.

Sea Wonders.

Fishermen find queer looking customers sometimes; look at the long gray hammer-head; can you see one of its eyes flashing fire because it is in a rage? It is twelve feet long, and is bold and ugly.

But perhaps you would rather look at the pretty silvery flying fish; it has not wings like a bird, but such large light fins that they support it for a short time out of the water. They often dart out to escape from sharks or larger fish that want to swallow them. Shall I tell you what a traveller says he saw from the deck of a Spanish schooner?

"Two or three dolphins had ranged past the ship in all their beauty. The ship in her progress had put up a shoal of flying fish, which took their flight to windward. A large dolphin no sooner detected our poor friends take wing, than he turned his head towards them, darted to the surface, and leaped from the water; it seemed to us as swiftly as a cannon-ball, making a spring of some ten yards, but the prey kept ahead for some time after he fell; we could see him gliding like lightning through the water for a moment, when he again rose, and shot upwards and onwards to a greater distance than before. So the merciless pursuer seemed to stride along the sea with fearful rapidity, while his brilliant coat sparkled and flashed in the sunlight. The group of wretched flying-fish, thus hotly pursued, at length dropped into the sea, but we rejoiced to observe that they merely touched the top of the swell, and instantly set off again in a fresh flight. It was interesting to see that they took an altogether different direction, showing that they had detected the fierce enemy that was following them in giant steps along the waves. Poor little things! the greedy dolphin went faster than they could; he was quick-sighted, too, and veered about in any direction they took; the poor tiny fin wings got tired, the little fish very frightened and exhausted, the pursuer bounded here and there, caught the flying-fish as they fell; one after the other they dropped and were snatched up by his hungry jaws."

Little Amusements.

Sometimes little games or tricks that require no preparation before hand will prove very amusing. We sometime ago saw a lady entertain a party of young people for a long time with "Malaga Raisins." Taking a cane or other stick she repeated, "Malaga raisins are very good raisins, but raisins from Smyrna are better," striking the floor with the cane as each syllable was pronounced. The words were repeated slowly: Ma-la-ga rais-ins, with a tap at each syllable. The children in turn tried to repeat the words and tap exactly as she did, but all failed. She would again repeat it for them and, they, thinking that putting the taps in the right places, was the important thing to observe tried to imitate that exactly. Though she repeated it many times, none of the youngsters observed that she said, as if clearing her throat, "Hem, Malaga raisins," etc. Therein consisted the trick, which created no little amusement.