

CHILDREN'S CORNER.

READ TO SLEEP.

BY MARGARET J. PRESTON.

For three score years and ten, Burdened with care and woe, She has travelled the weary ways of men, And she's tired and wants to go.

It has been so hard to live! And even her stunted store, It seemed as if fate had grudge'd to give, And she wishes her neck 'd was o'er.

So musing one afternoon, Her knitting upon her lap, She heard at the door a drift of tune, And a quick familiar tap.

It flashes a child's fresh face, And with voice bird-like and gay, She asks: "Shall I find a pretty place, And read you a Psalm to-day?"

"Ay, read me a Psalm: The Lord Is my Shepherd—soft not fast; Then turn the leaves of the Holy Word Till you come to the very last.

Where it tells of the wondrous walls Of jacinth and sapphire stone: And the shine of the crystal light that falls In rainbows about the throne.

Where there never are any tears, (Find where the verse so saith.) Nor sorrow nor crying through all God's years Nor hunger, nor cold, nor death;

Of the city whose streets are gold? Ah, here, it was not my share One single piece in my hand to hold— But my feet shall tread on it there!

Yes, read it all, it lifts My soul up into the light; And I looked straight through the leaden rifts To the land where there's no more night.

So the little reader read Till the slow going needles stopped; And then as she saw the weary head On the wearier breast had dropped.

Rising, she nearer stepped— How easy it all had been! The gates had unclosed as the sleeper slept, And an angel had drawn her in!

—Children's Work for Children.

A BUSHEL OF NUTS.

"Phin! oh, Phin!"

Little Eben Dilke began saying that at the end of the lane, though he must have known his brother could not possibly hear him, and kept on all the way until he reached the door where Phin stood whittling. By that time Eben was so out of breath he could only stand gasping.

"Try again, boy," said Phin, thumping him on the back. "I suppose you have something to say."

"O Phin!" said Eben again, "Mr. Sumner said he will give us one of his little dogs, if we pay him."

"How much?" asked Phin without excitement. "I've got just seven cents."

"That's money, it's nuts," said Eben, a bushel of chestnuts for the dog.

Phin's eyes sparkled. He had long wanted one of the roly-poly puppies that umbled and played about Mr. Sumner's handsome Folly. But having no means to purchase one, he had tried not to think about it. Now he shut his knife briskly.

"Come on, boy," he said. "If a bushel of chestnuts will do it, I'm on hand."

However, chestnut trees were not plenty near Phin's home, and a week later he lay on the hillside grumbling.

"That puppy will be a grown-up dog and gray haired before we can get him. It's no use, Eben."

The little brother looked sober; but he did not mean to give up.

"We have quite a good many nuts now," he said.

"Not a third enough," said Phin. "Over to Scranton's woods there are enough."

"Six miles away," muttered Phin. "If Trudie's grandpa'll just let us ride old Dapple bare-backed over there and carry a bag, we could do it. And maybe she will. We helped Trudie pick blackberries, you know."

"Eben, you're a smart boy!" cried Phin. "Come on."

Perhap's Trudie's grandpa would not have let old Dapple go had not Trudie whispered more than one please in her ear.

But she did consent. So the next day the old horse was astonished to find four short legs astride his back, and to be trotted slowly toward Scranton's woods.

Phin held the bridle, and Eben held Phin's jacket, and they sat on a folded blanket. It wasn't quite so easy to stick on as the boys had expected, and going up to the first steep hill Eben slipped off over Dapple's tail and fell in a mud-puddle. But he climbed on by help of the nearest fence and never cried.

Chesnuts were plenty in those woods, and the boys were glad to hammer them out of the prickly burrs and fill their bags, in spite of feeling stiff from their ride. And when, as they were about going home, they met another small boy and bought his nuts with a leather sucker and three cents Phin had in his pocket, they felt very grand indeed.

Three miles of the homeward way were passed, when a stray dog, helping to bring somebody's cows home, sprang barking out of the bushes at Dapple's nose.

Up went the old horse's heels and off went the boys, and then away trotted Dapple toward home, leaving his riders flat on their backs.

"But the nuts are safe," said brave little Eben, scrambling up, and eying the precious bag that had also come to the ground.

"Safe and heavy," said Phin, tugging it up. "If we've got to walk and carry this all the rest of the way, I think we don't buy that dog very cheap."

It was hard work. Both boys were almost crying with fatigue when they got home; but when supper and sleep had cured their stiff limbs, and the bushel of nuts was exchanged for the dear little dog, you may be sure they did not repent of their bargain.

"You might call him Pluck," said Mr. Sumner, who had heard of their toil to earn him.

Eben fondled the puppy's round head and answered: "I think we'll call him Nuts!"

And so they did.—Youth's Com.

"A little nonsense, now and then, Is relished by the wisest men."

An old Dutchman froze his nose. While thawing the frost out, he said, "I haf carry dat nose forty year and he never froze his self before. I no understand distings."

DERE'S A HEAP OF DIFFERENCE.—"Sambo, what's your opinion of travelling by railway and steamer?"

"Now your talkin', boss; dere's a heap o' difference. When you're on de cars and an accident happens, your'e dar. But when you're on de steamer, an' she busts and blows up, where are you? Dat's de question. I tell you boss, you're no whar."

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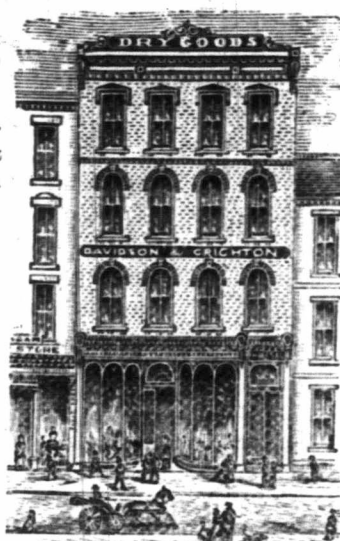
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