

NOEL'S MOVING DAY.

(By Hilda Richmond)

"If I could only live in a tent or the barn," grumbled Neal, "it would suit me lots better than here in the house." Neal had been sent from the table to wash his hands and came back pouting. "I just wish I was an Indian."

"It would be very nice in some ways to be an Indian or a tramp," remarked papa pleasantly. "I always enjoyed camping out when I was a boy."

"I wish I could do that now," said Neal, letting a little of the frown fade away. "The new corn-crib would be a dandy place."

"Why don't you try it?" asked papa, as if living in a corn-crib were an every day affair with small boys. "We won't put any corn in it till cold weather comes."

"Mama wouldn't let me," said Neal. "Please, please let me do it, mama. It would be such fun."

"Well, you might try it," said his mother easily. "When do you want to begin?"

"This very day," cried Neal hurrying down his food. "I'll have this for my moving day."

No one seemed to notice that he hurried through with his dinner nor that he left without saying, "Excuse me." He hurried to the playroom and began selecting things to move to his new home. It took only a little while to get all the things out that Neal wanted. By one o'clock all were in the corn-crib.

"I-I guess I'm hungry," said Neal to himself after he had tried the blanket in which he was to sleep, and had arranged his playthings to his liking. "I'll go and see if Mary has some cookies."

"So you are a tramp, are you?" asked Mary, looking him over as he rapped at the back door. "I never feed tramps unless they earn what they get. You carry in all those kindlings and I'll see about something to eat."

Neal had seen the real tramps splitting wood for Mary many a time before she gave them bread and meat and coffee, but he did not know how they felt doing the work before eating. Long before the woodbox was filled he thought he must take one of the nice fresh cookies, but when the last stick was neatly piled in the box, Mary was ready with a tin of milk and some bread and butter.

"Sit on the step," she said.

"Please, Mary, I'd like to have a cookie," said Neal timidly. "I'll wash my hands before I take it, if you'll only let me."

"Beggars mustn't be choosers," said Mary grimly. "If I fed cookies to every tramp that comes this way, I wouldn't have any for my folks."

Neal was very glad for the bread and milk, but he could not forget the smell of the warm cakes. Mary always saved the big corner cakes for him when he washed his hands particularly clean, but to-day he scrubbed and soaped to no purpose. After the little lunch he wandered forlornly to the new corn-crib and wrapped himself in his blanket to cry. It was twilight when he awoke and he went to the house to find the family eating supper, just as if they had forgotten all about him. He could stand it no longer, but rushed in and sobbed out his troubles.

"I want to move back," he wept. "I don't like the new corn-crib a bit."

"All right!" said papa and mama together. "Come right up to the table now." But Neal would not come until he had washed his hands and brushed his hair, and from that very day there was no more pouting about being clean. Two movings in one day have been all Neal has ever wanted.

HOUSE OF DICKENS' LITTLE NELL.

The announcement that the house in Bath, where, in 1840, Charles Dickens first conceived the idea of his immortal Little Nell, in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, is to be "let or sold," is a fact of considerable interest to all Dickens lovers.

At the time that the novelist was first attracted to his theme by the sight of a poor little girl at Bath, he and his wife, his (and Landor's) biographer, John Forster, and the painter Maclise were on a visit to Walter Savage Landor in that fair city, and the incident is thus referred to in Forster's *Life of Landor*:

"It was at a celebration of his birthday, in the first of his Bath lodgings, 35 Saint James' Square, that the fancy which took the form of Little Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop* first dawned on the genius of its creator. No character in prose fiction was a greater favorite with Landor. He thought that upon her 'Juliet' might for a moment have turned her eyes from 'Romeo,' and that 'Desdemona' might have taken her hand. With escapes to heart, so interesting and pathetic did she seem to him; and when some years later the circumstances I have named were recalled to him, he broke into one of those whimsical bursts of comical extravagance out of which arose the fancy of *Bootham*. With tremendous emphasis he confirmed the fact, and added that he had never in his life regretted anything so much as his having failed to carry out an intention he had formed concerning it, for he meant to have purchased that house, 35 Saint James' Square, and then and there to have burned it to the ground, to the end that no meaner association should ever desecrate the birthday of Nell. Then he would pause a little, become conscious of our sense of his absurdity, and break into a thundering peal of laughter."

Thus, in his somewhat ponderous fashion, does John Forster tell the story. It is certainly a great pity that the novelist did not carry out his expressed wish to purchase the house in Bath, but at that time he did not think he could afford it. It seems Dickens had gone to America, meanwhile, and was sojourning there when Forster's *Life of Landor* reached him. In allusion to the fact that he (Dickens) had himself intended to tell the story in "cold print," he wrote to John Forster from America: "I see you have told, with what our friends would have called wonderful accuracy, the little Saint James' Square story which a certain faithless wretch (C. D.) was to have related."—(Pall Mall Gazette).

TEA FOR THREE.

Once Bobby Bear and Bubby Bear and Baby Bear played tea.

They had a little tea-set that held just enough for three:

And Bobby tied on Baby's bib, while Bubby filled the pot

With just a spoon of tea apiece—and water boiling hot.

Now Bobby Bear and Bubby Bear were quite polite and fine;

They never hurried rudely when 'twas time to sup or dine.

So Bubby pouring the tea, took care that Bobby got the most—

But while they talked wee Baby Bear ate every bit of toast!

—Saint Nicholas.

Gentleness without strength is not noble—it is weakness. Strength without gentleness is not great—it is only brute force. But sweetness and strength combined yield heroic manhood.

KEEP CHILDREN WELL DURING HOT WEATHER.

Every mother knows how fatal the summer months are to small children. Cholera infantum, diarrhoea, dysentery and stomach troubles are alarmingly frequent at this time and too often a precious little life is lost after a few hours illness. The mother who keeps Baby's Own Tablets in the house feels safe. The occasional use of Baby's Own Tablets prevent stomach and bowel troubles, or if the trouble comes suddenly—as it generally does—the Tablets will bring the little one through safely. Mrs. George Howell, Sandy Beach, Que., says: "My baby was suffering with colic, vomiting and diarrhoea, but after giving him Baby's Own Tablets the trouble disappeared. I would advise all mothers to keep a box of Tablets always at hand. Sold by medicine dealers or by mail at 25c a box from The Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont."

GRASSHOPPER.

"Take care there, Mr. Grasshopper! I'm afraid you don't see where you are going. You'll get caught in that spider's web the next you know."

But he kept on jumping as carelessly as ever a grasshopper could, and never minded a word I said. Up he would go, without any thought as to how or where he would come down. There was a spider's web in the tall grass just before him.

"Take care," said I, "or you will get into trouble. Don't you see that spider's web?"

He winked at me saucily, and said: "You just attend to your books!" (for I was getting a lesson in geometry). "I guess I know how to keep out of a spider's web!"

The words were hardly out of his mouth when up he went again as heedlessly as ever. A shiver in the web and a bending of the grass told the story. One of his hind feet had caught and with an awkward curve he had come around to hang with his head downward and his back to the web.

"There!" said I; "didn't I tell you?" But the grasshopper's pertness was not diminished.

"There's only one foot caught," said he; "there are five free yet. I'll show you. Just see here!" and he turned halfway over and gave a push with his free hind foot, but instead of pushing his other foot free, the one he pushed with was caught, and he was worse off than ever.

"There!" said I again.

But he interrupted me, and said, in the midst of another convulsive struggle, "Wait a minute; I have four free feet yet."

But the only effect of his efforts was to get all his limbs entangled in the deceptive snare.

And now was the spider's opportunity. Out he came from his hiding-place and ran backward and forward over the body of his victim, spinning each time a thread that made more fruitless the desperate struggles of the grasshopper. It was but the work of a moment, and every limb of the headstrong, silly grasshopper was bound fast, and a web had been spread so thick over his head that I could not see it at all.

This is a true story children. I saw it with my own eyes. I am older now than I was then; that was a great many years ago. Since then I have seen children as reckless and foolish as this grasshopper, and have seen parents and teachers waste their advice, and to as little purpose as I did then.—Well Spring.

God is the light which, never seen itself, makes all things visible.—Richter.