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Friends or Foes.

(Written for the "Farmer's Advocate" by Cousin Dorothy.)

"Why, John Maitland, whatever is the matter?" said Miss Kate, turning a flushed face from the stove—for she was frying pancakes for tea.

"Matter enough!" answered her brother. "Read that!" he continued, holding out an open letter, and looking as cross as it was possible for such a good-tempered man to look.

"Oh, can't you read it to me?" said Miss Kate, tossing a pancake lightly over in the pan. "What has Tom been doing now? I see it is his writing," and she smiled at the thought of the brother who had been the delight and the torment of her life since their dying mother put him into her arms nearly thirty years before.

This was the letter:

"Dear Jack,—I can't stand life here without Margaret, so I have sold everything, and intend to try ranching in the Northwest. On Friday Maggie and I travel together as far as Toronto, when I shall ship her on to you by the afternoon train, and take the C. P. R. for the West. Tell Kate not to spoil my little girl; I know she and her Uncle Jack will be fast friends in less than no time. I'll send for her as soon as possible, and enclose an order for \$50 for present expenses. Will send my address when I settle down. Good-bye!"

"TOM."

"There, Kate! What do you think of that? Talk of cool cheek—I never heard tell of such a cheeky proceeding! What are we to do with a child? So Maggie and her Uncle Jack are to be 'fast friends,' are they? More likely to be foes, I'm thinking. She is sure to be in mischief from morning to night," and John Maitland almost groaned as he thought of the vanished peace and quiet of his bachelor home.

His sister only said softly, "Poor, motherless bairn!" as she poured boiling water on the tea, and dished up the last crisp pancake. Spotless and neat as the house was, from cellar to attic, it was

brown eyes looked gleefully up into his lace.

"Are you my dear old Uncle Jack?" said Maggie eagerly, and the next moment she was in the unknown uncle's arms, and, very much to his surprise, he found himself being hugged—and he liked it too.

As they drove away from the station Maggie remarked: "Daddy said I was to be kind to you, Uncle Jack, because you were a miserable old bachelor, and hadn't any little girl to love you. Are you very, very miserable? You don't look very dreadfully old; you're not quite a hundred yet, are you?"

Long before they reached home the dreaded niece was standing between her uncle's knees, driving old Jerry, and she would hardly let him touch the reins for a moment.

Aunt Kate, who was holding the gate open, was amused to see how soon her big brother had been conquered by the bright-faced child, who was chattering "sixteen to the dozen," as he declared. The next minute she was in her aunt's loving embrace, and then there was a change which quite frightened her uncle. The little head went down on Aunt Kate's shoulder, and the big tears rolled down in a sudden shower, as the tired, over-excited child sobbed, "Oh, I want my own dear daddy! I do! I do!"

John Maitland drove off to the stable, looking decidedly worried; but was quite relieved to see a sunny face at the window as he approached the house after putting the horse away.

Much to his surprise, he found himself enjoying the lively chatter over the tea-table; for Maggie's tears had been only a sun shower, and she was never shy with strangers. Before many days had passed her father's prophecy was fulfilled, for she and her uncle were almost inseparable—in fact, he was never perfectly happy unless his new comrade trotted along beside him. She trailed about after her "dear Uncle Jack" all over the farm, and was often in danger of being trampled to death by the big horses—for she didn't seem to be afraid of anything.

One morning she rushed into the house in great excitement, saying: "Oh, Aunt

gravely scattering crumbs to entice a crowd of unfeeling chickens to attend the funeral of their departed relative. Maggie looked very solemn as she placed the box-coffin in the grave. An hour later Aunt Kate was led out to inspect the tiny cemetery, which was fenced in, and the grave sodded with moss and decorated with flowers. A smooth white stone stood at the head, and printed on it with a blue pencil, were these lines:

This little chick
Was very sick,
And then, poor chap, he died.
For very shame
His friends all came,
And Maggie Maitland cried.

"Uncle Jack made up the poetry his very own self—wasn't he clever?" said Maggie, holding up the headstone so the epitaph could be read and admired. "Of course I didn't cry, but he said that was 'poetic license,' and he couldn't think of anything else that would rhyme with 'died.'"

That afternoon the old bachelor, who had been so unwilling to have a child in the house, beckoned his sister mysteriously to the door. "Come round the corner of the woodhouse, Kate," he whispered, "I want to show you a pretty sight."

And this was the picture that had aroused his admiration: Maggie was on her hands and knees—as you see her now—with Polly on one side and Pat on the other. They were all gazing at a queer creature, which was crouched in front. They seemed undecided whether to welcome it as a new playfellow or attack it as an enemy.

Aunt Kate said mischievously: "They are like you and Maggie—not quite certain whether they are friends or foes."

"Not quite certain, are we?" he answered indignantly. "Come, Maggie!" and he held out both hands to the little girl, who, in another moment, was triumphantly perched on his shoulder. Pat and Polly, left to themselves, soon settled the other question and sent their strange visitor flying off with a terrified hop, skip and jump.

PUZZLES AND RIDDLES. IX.

I form a part of every church—
The part that holds the people—
Transpose my name, you'll find me then
On almost every steeple.

X.—A Charade.

My first in winter time
Does my second often heat,
And my whole is made on purpose
To be my first one's seat.

XI.—Transposed Plants.

Red anvil.
Miss Jane E.
More rays.
Y shops.
Better wires.
Try elm.

XII.

First stands a pronoun at the head,
'Tis formed of letters two;
And then an instrument, I trust,
Not often used on you.
Put these together, head and tail,
And, lo, before you stands
A king, whose cruel name we hate,
For blood is on his hands.
Now take the final letter off,
And we at once shall see,
Something which always is admired,
And which each boy should be.

XIII.

What goes up the hill and down the hill,
yet never moves?

XIV.

What letter occurs once in minute, twice in moment, and not once in a hundred years?

XV.

Why are cowardly soldiers like butter?

Worth Something.

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Friends or Foes?

(Barber.)

sometimes a little dull, and Kate Maitland was a born child-lover.

On Friday afternoon "Uncle Jack" drove gloomily off to meet his little niece, feeling cross and sulky—perhaps he had grown a little selfish, and needed a change from his quiet, easy life.

The train dashed into the station, and the conductor carefully lifted a little girl to the platform, saying: "That must be your uncle, little one. Good-bye; tell him I'll adopt you if he doesn't want you."

John Maitland forgot his grumpiness as a soft little hand was slipped into his big brown one, and a pair of dancing

Kate, can I have some bread, please? One of the chickens is dead, and we are going to have a funeral. Uncle Jack has dug the grave, and I want all the relations to come to the funeral. We tried to chase them, but they wouldn't run the right way. I thought if we sprinkled crumbs, all the hens and chickens would come to the grave. I don't believe they are a bit sorry, but we'll pretend that they are crying when their heads are down eating the crumbs." Off she ran, with a big piece of bread, and her aunt laughed as she watched the funeral from the pantry window. It was unspeakably funny to see the big man

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