

## The Little Ones.

### Staying up Late.

(By Alden Arthur Knipe, in 'St Nicholas'.)

One evening when my bedtime came  
I didn't want to go,  
So mother said I might stay up  
For just this once, you know.

And so I stayed and stayed and  
stayed,

Through all the night I think,  
And never went to bed at all,  
Nor slept a little wink.

But when at last the sun arose,  
A shining warm and red,  
I found I had my nighty on,  
And was sitting up in bed.

### How Buster Lost His Head

Dominick, the black hen, and her family of half grown chickens, were in the back yard.

'Let's go over in the oat field,' she said. 'They are drawing of the oats, and there will be fine scratching there.'

'The idea of scratching for a living!' said Buster, the pert young rooster of the family. 'I know a trick worth two of that.'

'I know what you mean,' said little Whitey, 'and I should think you'd be ashamed of yourself! You sneak into the shed and steal everything you can find.'

'That's what I do,' said Buster boldly 'and I get a good living that way. That's why I'm the biggest of the family. Stealing is lots easier than scratching.'

'I saw Molly whack you with a broom yesterday when she drove you out,' put in Speckle.

'What, of it? She didn't hurt any more than a fly. I was in there again as soon as her back was turned. Come in with me Brownie, and we'll have a feast out of that cat's dish and the swill pail!'

'No, Brownie, don't go with your naughty brother. Come on to the oat field.' And Dominick led the way, all but Buster following. He sneaked into the shed again, and ate all he could hold.

'Mr Clay,' said the nurse, coming out on the porch, 'the doctor says Henry may have chicken broth— young chicken.'

'Oh, father!' cried Molly, 'do kill Buster, he is such a thief! I drive him out from the shed forty times a day.'

'The very one that's fit to kill then,' said her father, going to the shed, where he met Buster coming out; and the first thing that smart chicken knew, he didn't know anything!

'Tip-top chicken broth!' said Henry, smacking his lips that night. 'I'm glad Buster's dead.'

'So am I,' cried Molly.

'Remember, children,' said Dominick to the rest of her brood, 'it is safer to scratch for a living than to steal.'

### The Disappointed Vines.

(Mrs. M. B. Randolph, in the M. C. Advocate.)

On a cold morning in spring two young tendrils of a woodbine hung shivering in the rain. A rough wind had almost stripped them of their delicate clothing, and they looked almost disconsolate and forlorn.

After a while one of them gave the other a light tap, and began to whisper on this wise.

'Summer after summer our ancestors have beautified this old ramshackle house. But for them it long ago would have been a scar upon the landscape. As it is, it has become a really picturesque object. It seems as if the owner might have built at least a shed to protect them, the same as he did for those sticks of wood yonder, which are of no use but to burn. We are too independent, however, to bear such neglect. Let us

seek our own shelter. You make for the attic and I will take to the cellar. There we shall escape these distracting winds and rains and the prostrating heat of later suns.'

This they did. One climbed day by day till it reached the eaves, and entering a wide crevice, began trailing on the garret floor. The other crept along the ground until, having found a convenient hole in the foundation, it crawled in and descended to the cellar's mouldy bottom.

Weeks passed. Both grew pale and sickly, yet after the instinct of their kind, each tried to drape the unsightly objects around them with a wan beauty. In vain. Their strength was not equal to even this poor effort, and they grew into long straggling leafless stretches of stem.

At last October came around with his paint-pot. Sometimes they could hear the shouts of children over the rich tints of the vines outside. Sometimes the low voices of artists who loved to linger about the spot would reach them, and they began to feel that, after all, they might better have faced the elements than miss the transformation their kindred were undergoing.

Moved at last by a desperate desire for light and air and autumn beauty, each made a feeble turn, one reaching again toward the eaves and one toward the crumbling wall.

In time they reached the outer world, and, with united voices begged October to give them a touch of red and gold.

'My children,' said he, 'you know not what you ask. My pot is seething with the flames of the frost. At one stroke of my brush your weakened forms would fall withered to the ground. The coloring you covet comes only through the touch of fire. This you cannot bear. The loveliness about you is born of pain. I cannot explain the mystery, but the splendor developed depends on a certain vitality within. You are too near dead for this glory. By too tenderly shielding your lives and refusing to face the winds and storms you have forfeited the strength which alone could have fitted you for the beauty you desire. Were you to live again I would say, strive not to miss but to meet the trials of your lot. In this way life would be conserved and autumn glory its reward.'

### Tiny Farmers.

Ants are wonderfully wise little creatures and are well worth watching.

They follow many trades, one of which is farming.

The farmer ants live in warm climates. In our country they may be found in Texas, Florida and several other Southern states.

They do not live in small hills, but in one which is often as large as a large room, and which is sometimes high and sometimes flat.

Around is a circle of ground in which no weeds or grass, except the special grain which the ants wish to raise is allowed to grow. This grain is called ant-rice. It is a kind of grass with a large seed, and when it is ripe the tiny brown farmers pick up the seeds as they fall and carry them into their storerooms. Then they cut down old stems and take them away, leaving the place clean for the next crop.

Their next duty is to husk the seeds they have gathered. The bad ones are thrown away and the good ones are carefully watched.

They are often cut to prevent sprouting, and after a rain they are always carried out to be dried in the sun.

The seeds, of course are for winter food. There is an ant native to Florida which rolls into little balls the dust or pollen of pine cones and stores them away for food.

Another uses pine needles. They cut in pieces the tiny pine trees as soon as they peep above the ground and carry home the bits of pine laid

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