

Children's Department.

THE GRASSHOPPERS' CROQUET.

Four little grasshoppers, one fine day,
Hopped on the lawn to play croquet.
"We can't use mallets and balls," one said,
"But we'll play a game of our own, instead;
We'll hop through the wickets ourselves and see
Whether I beat you or you beat me."
So hippity-hop they went around
Through all the wickets upon the ground,
Till the one who was leading made a jump
And hit the home-stake—humpity-bump!
Then out came Johnny and Bess to play;
And the four little grasshoppers hopped away.

OLD BRONZE-BACK.

"If anybody'd get old Bronze-back, I would give'em half her flock!" cried Aunt Phila Brown, as she listened early one clear October morning to the faint "Gobble! gobble! gobble!" that came to her from Beech Hill, a thick-wooded ridge a mile away. Aunt Phila had bought Bronze-back in the Fall of a travelling turkey-dealer for a "setter," she was so large; but Aunt Phila found that she was "desperate sly," and could not be tamed. She declared that she was of wild-turkey breed, for she could not be coaxed to set around the barn.

In the Spring Aunt Phila had set her on a fine nest of the black turkey's eggs, but she was off at once, and only after a long chase was she captured, and again placed over the eggs, with Aunt Phila's deep cheese-basket turned over her; but in ten minutes Bronze-back, with her long neck run up through one of the open squares of the basket, was racing around the garden with the basket on her back like a great turtle, mowing down a swath of young onion "sets," trampling the tender beets, and cutting off the heads of the asparagus.

Ted and Aunt Phila rushed after her, catching the basket just as old Bronze-back was running blindly backward into the duckpond.

Aunt Phila did not like to give up, so once more she put Bronze-back over the eggs, with a flat stone on the basket, and buttoned the door.

"I've got you now, Mistress Gad-about," she cried, somewhat out of patience with Bronze-back's perversity, "and you won't get off in a hurry!"

But she did. On going to the barn an hour later the stone was found in the nest of broken turkey eggs, and Mrs. Bronze-back gone out of a high barn window.

As nothing further was seen of her, Aunt Phila fully believed that the foxes had got her. But along early in the Fall some queer, far-away gobblings were heard. For a long time Aunt Phila thought they came from a neighbor's flock and paid no attention.

It was old Bronze-back. She had raised her brood off in the woods, according to her notions of turkey freedom.

No one could get a sight of her, or her flock, and Aunt Phila was in despair. But at last, Ted found a way to catch them.

After a great deal of search he found the big beech in which the turkeys roosted at night. Then with his hatchet he sharpened a lot of stout beech stakes and made a pen by driving them down into the ground. He covered the top over with boughs and dug a short, shallow trench leading under and just inside the fence.

All along this trench he scattered yellow corn and away off into the woods in different trains to lure the turkeys on, and bright ears were thrown about inside the pen.

That was too much for Mrs. Bronze-back and her family. One by one they followed the golden trails, "quitting" and "queering" at this wonderful good luck, and before they knew it, lo! they were inside the pen, and as turkeys are such simple birds they could not find their way out.

Then what a gobbling there was.

Ted tied their legs together and brought them home next day, making many trips, and Aunt Phila fattened them on barley in the stable.

What a fortune Ted's share of the money seemed to him! It was his Christmas money, and visions of sleds and skates and coats filled his dreams every night for weeks.

HOW TONY SOLD ROSEBUDS.

HE was only a dog, but a very smart dog, indeed. He belonged to the class known as shepherd dogs, which are noted for their sagacity and fidelity. His master was a little Italian boy, called Beppo, who earned his living by selling flowers on the street.

Tony was very fond of Beppo, who had been his master ever since he was a puppy, and Beppo had never failed to share his crust with his good dog.

Now Tony had grown to be a large, strong dog, and took as much care of Beppo as Beppo took of him. Often, while standing on the corner with his basket on his arm, waiting for a customer, Beppo would feel inclined to cry from very loneliness; but Tony seemed to know when the "blues" came, and would lick his master's hand, as much as to say, "You've got me for a friend. Cheer up! I'm better than nobody! I'll stand by you!"

But one day it happened that when the other boys who shared the dark cellar home with Beppo went out early in the morning as usual, Beppo was so ill that he could hardly lift his head from the straw on which he slept. He felt that he would be unable to sell flowers that day. What to do he did not know.

Tony did his best to comfort him; but the tears would gather in his eyes, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he at last forced himself to get up and go to the florist who lived near by, for the usual supply of buds. Having filled his basket, the boy went home again and tied it round Tony's neck. Then he looked at the dog and said:

"Now, Tony, you are the only fellow I've got to depend on. Go and sell my flowers for me, and bring the money home safe and don't let anyone steal anything." Then he kissed the dog and pointed to the door.

Tony trotted out in the street to Beppo's usual corner, where he took his stand. Beppo's customers soon saw how matters stood, and chose their flowers and put the money in the tin cup within the basket. Now and then when a rude boy would come along and try to snatch a flower from the basket, Tony would growl fiercely, and drive him away.

So that day went safely by, and at night-fall Tony went home to his master, who was waiting anxiously to see him, and gave him a hearty welcome.

Beppo untied the basket and looked in the cup, and I shouldn't wonder if he found more money in it than he ever did before.

That is how Tony sold the rosebuds; and he did it so well that Beppo never tires of telling about it.

O! the world's running over with loving and laughter,
With sunshine and happy song;
And spite of the clouds comes the shining after,
The shadows are never for long.

After the rain comes the bursting flower,
The fragrance of all things sweet,
Robins so glad of the dancing shower,
Larks in the tossing wheat.