

STORIES
POETRY

The Inglenook

SKETCHES
TRAVELTHE BREAD THAT BARBARA
MADE.

By Alice E. Allen.

Barbara was as sober as a little girl with a rosy, roly-poly face possibly could be. And Sambo, Barbara's black dog, was a picture of gloom.

No wonder. Grandmother had been taken suddenly ill. Mother had gone to take care of her. To-morrow was Thanksgiving Day. Could there be a thanksgiving with no mother in it, Barbara wondered. Sambo felt a great responsibility resting upon him. He followed Barbara patiently back and forth while she did up the dinner work.

In the pantry stood the big turkey stuffed as full as he could hold, all ready to go into the oven the next morning.

Near by was a loaf of mother's delicious bread. When Barbara saw it, mother's words came back to her. Don't let me forget to set sponge to-day. There isn't enough bread for to-morrow."

Then had come the news of grandmother's illness, and in the rush to get mother off on the next train, such things as bread had been entirely forgotten.

"What shall we do?" said Barbara to Sambo. "We can't get along without bread, you know."

Suddenly she clapped her hands. "I know," she cried, "we'll make bread all by ourselves. Sambo. And no one shall know anything about it till it's all done. Won't father be pleased?"

Sambo wagged his long, black tail in approval. So Barbara tied on one of mother's big aprons, rolled up her sleeves, and set to work. She pulled her great bread-pan down from the shelf, and set sponge just as mother did, she thought. Then she put the cover on the pan and left the dough to rise.

At bedtime, standing on a stool to reach the shelf, she sifted in the flour and kneaded the bread-dough stiff and smooth. She patted it down just as mother did and then went to bed.

Long before light, next morning, she was downstairs. Only Sambo was awake. He watched her while she greased the shiny bread-tins and brought out the dough. Carefully she cut it into pieces and molded the big, white loaves. She even made a dozen biscuits, pricking the top of each with a fork. Then she set the bread near the fire for its second rising.

Between her many "bastings" of the turkey, she peeped anxiously at the bread. It was smooth and white, but it seemed to sink instead of rise.

When the clock struck eleven, in despair Barbara put the bread into the oven. "Maybe it will come up in there," she told Sambo.

All through the baking Sambo sat close to the oven, gazing into Barbara's hot, little face. At last the bread was done. Barbara carried it into the pantry and set it on the shelf.

It was so warm in the kitchen that Sambo fell asleep, with his head between his paws. He was awakened by a strange, sobbing sound. Opening his eyes, he discovered his mistress in a very sorry, little heap on the floor, with several small, dark objects lying about her.

Sambo sniffed at one or two of them suspiciously. Then he poked his cold, comforting nose into Barbara's face, and said as plainly as he could, "I'm so sorry."

"Oh, Sambo, Sambo!" she sobbed. "They're harder than anything—you can't think. We never can eat such bread. What shall we do?"

Poor Sambo. In his distress he picked up every one of those queer, hard biscuits and laid them carefully in Barbara's lap. Then he sat down to think the matter over.

Barbara came to a conclusion first. Papa and the boys should never see the results of her first bread making.

A few minutes later a disconsolate little procession wended its way across the yard through the barn and into the big garden. It consisted of Barbara a big basket and Sambo—ears and tail drooping sorrowfully.

Under the great apple-tree the procession halted. Barbara dug a deep hole in the moist earth. Then she dumped the contents of the basket—four flat loaves of bread and a dozen small dingy biscuits—into the hole. She covered them all up and smoothed off the earth and went back to the kitchen.

An hour later Barbara, heard father's step in the wood-house. Then he spoke to Sambo. Then "Barbara!" he called.

Barbara ran out to the wool house. Here piled up on the floor with Sambo solemnly keeping guard over them, were four loaves of bread and a dozen biscuits.

"What in the world has Sambo found, Barbara?" said father, kicking at one of the hard loaves. "He's been at work digging in the garden for half an hour."

Poor little Barbara. She felt the hot tears coming. Then she caught a glimpse of Sambo's puzzled black face and honest brown eyes.

"Oh, father!" she screamed, rushing into his arms, "oh, father, it's— it's my bread! I buried it in the garden—" The rest was lost in Barbara's sobs and Sambo's frantic barks.

When father understood all about it there was a twinkle in his eyes. But he only said, "Poor little daughter. Poor little woman." Then he helped gather up the unfortunate bread and biscuits and put them into the fire.

The dinner was a great success.

Never was a turkey so crisp and brown. Never were potatoes so mealee. Never was there such delicious cranberry sauce. Father and the boys praised everything.

There was no mention of bread until, suddenly, half way through her big piece of mother's pumpkin pie, Barbara dropped her fork.

"Why father," she exclaimed, "I forgot to put any yeast into that bread!"

Then how they laughed, Barbara more heartily than any one else. And Sambo was so delighted that he quite forgot his dinner manners, and capered up and down the room barking wildly.

And to this day there is a sly twinkle in grandmother's eyes when she tells the story of her first bread-making.

INGRATITUDE.

Not till the cruel roughening of the way,
Not till the hopeless tiring of the feet,
Not till the dusk and fading of the day
Is home most sweet.

Not till our joy has turned to memory,
Not till our hearts are wearied out with fasting
Do we lift beaten hands and cry to Thee,
Life everlasting!

RIVERS OF SOUTH AMERICA.

One of the striking features of South America is its remarkable river system which, when improved, will provide a net-work of deep waterways, thus from a commercial and missionary point of view increasing greatly its accessibility.

The three largest river systems are the Orinoco, the Amazon and the Rio de La Platte. The Orinoco River is 1,500 miles long, of which 7,400 miles are navigable. Many of its tributaries are also navigable streams.

The Amazon stands pre-eminent among the streams of the world because of the vast extent of its navigable water. Fifty thousand miles of the river with its tributaries is navigable, one-half of which is by steam. The commercial possibilities of its enormous basin are shown by the fact that it includes more than as many square miles as all Europe contains. From the Atlantic to the heart of Peru and Ecuador a navigable highway stands ready for the missionary, not to speak of the great tributaries which will in the future carry him to remote tribes and districts to be opened up by modern exploitation.

The Rio de La Platte, or River of Silver, is, strictly speaking, an estuary into which flow the waters of three rivers, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Parana. Missionaries on board Brazilian steamers can journey up the Paraguay River and its affluent for a distance of 2,300 miles to Buenos Ayres.—Beach's Geography and Atlas.