

GRANDMA'S FOUR-IN-HAND.



Round and round they travel,
Faithful to their task:
Shelter, food or water
They will never ask
Many a mile they measure
At her soft command, —
Who can count the journeys
Of Grandma's four-in-hand?

See, her steeds
are harnessed
from a woolen skein:
Round the course
they're driven
By a single rein.
Now the merry
children
Take the judges' stand:
They will time the paces
Of Grandma's
four-in-hand.

By Eudora
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TIMOTHY'S QUEST.

BY KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN.
SCENE VIII. — (Continued.)

"Give a feller time to think, will yer?" expostulated Jabe, with his mouth full of pie. "Everything comes to him as waits'd be an awful good motto for you! Where'd I see 'em? Why, I fetched 'em as fur as the cross-roads myself."

"Well, I never?" "I want to know!" cried the two women in one breath.

"I picked 'em up out on the road, a little piece this side o' the station. 'T was at the top o' Marm Berry's hill, that's jest where 't was. The boy was trudgin' along draggin' the baby 'n' the basket, 'n' I thought I'd give him a lift, so s' I, 'Goin' t' the Swamp or t' the Falls?' s' I. 'To the Falls,' s' e. 'Git in,' s' I, 'n' I'll give yer a ride, 'f y' ain't in no hurry,' s' I. So in he got, 'n' the baby tew. When I got putty near home, I happened ter think I'd oughter gone roun' by the tan'ry 'n' picked up the Widder Foss, 'n' so s' I, 'I aint goin' no nearer to the Falls; but I guess your laigs is good for the balance o' the way, ain't they?' s' I. 'I guess they be,' s' e. Then he thanked me 's perlite 's Deacon Sawyer's first wife, 'n' I left him 'n' his folks in the road where I found 'em."

"Didn't you ask where he belonged nor where he was bound?"

"Taint my way to waste good breath askin' questions 't ain't none o' my bis'ness," replied Mr. Slocum.

"You're right, it ain't," responded Samantha, as she slammed the milk-pans in the sink; "n' it's my hope that some time when you get good and ready to ask somebody somethin' they'll be in too much of a hurry to answer you!"

"Be they any of your folks, Miss Vildy?" asked Jabe, grinning with delight at Samantha's ill humor.

"No," she answered briefly.

"What yer callin' ter do with 'em?"

"I haven't decided yet. The boy says they haven't got any folks nor any home; and I suppose it's our duty to find a place for 'em. I don't see but we've got to go to the expense of takin' 'em back to the city and puttin' 'em in some asylum."

"How'd they happen to come here?"

"They ran away from the city yesterday, and they liked the looks of this place; that's all the satisfaction we can get out of 'em, and I dare say it's a pack of lies."

"That boy wouldn't tell a lie no more 'n a seraphim!" said Samantha tersely.

"You can't judge folks by appearances," answered Vilda. "But anyhow, don't talk to the neighbors, Jabe; and if you haven't got anything special on hand to-day, I wish you'd patch the roof of the summer house and dig us a mess of beet greens. Keep the children with you, and see what you make of 'em; they're playin' in the garden now."

"All right. I'll size 'em up the best I ken, tho' mebbe it'll hender me in my work some; but time was made for slaves,

as the molasses said when they told it to hurry up in winter time."

Two hours later, Miss Vilda looked from the kitchen window and saw Jabez Slocum coming across the road from the garden. Timothy trudged beside him, carrying the basket or greens in one hand, and the other locked in Jabe's huge paw; his eyes upturned and shining with pleasure, his lips moving as if he were chattering like a magpie. Lady Gay was just where you might have expected to find her, mounted on the towering height of Jabe's shoulder, one tiny hand grasping his weather-beaten straw hat, while with the other she whisked her willing steed with an alder switch which had evidently been cut for that purpose by the victim himself.

"That's the way he's sizin' of 'em up," said Samantha, leaning over Vilda's shoulder with a smile. "I'll bet they've sized him up enough sight better 'n he has them!"

Jabe left the children outside, and came in with the basket. Putting his hat in the wood-box and hitching up his trousers impressively, he sat down on the settle.

"Them ain't no children to be wanderin' about the earth afoot 'n' alone, 'same 's Hitty went to the beach; nor they ain't no common truck ter be put inter 'sylum 'n' poor-farms. There some young ones that's so everlastin' chuckle-headed 'n' hombly 'n' contrary that they ain't hardly wuth savin'; but these ain't that kind. The baby, now you've got her cleaned up,

is han'somer 'n any baby on the river, 'n' a reg'lar chunk o' sunshine, besides. I'd be willin' ter pay her a little suthin' for livin' alongside. The boy — well, the boy is a extra-ordinary boy. We got on ter-gother 's slick as if we was twins. That boy's got ideas, that's what he's got; 'n' he's likely to grow up into — well, most any-thing."

"If you think so highly of 'em, why don't you adopt 'em?" asked Miss Vilda curtly. "That's what they seem to think folks ought to do."

"I ain't sure but I shall," Mr. Slocum responded unexpectedly. "If you can't find a better home for 'em somewheres, I ain't sure but I'll take 'em myself. Land sakes! if Rhapheny was alive I'd adopt 'em quicker 'n think; but marm won't take to the idee very strong, I don't s'pose, 'n' she ain't much on bringin' up children, as I ken testify. Still, she's a heap better 'n a brick asylum with a six-foot stone wall round it, when yer come to that. But I b'lieve we ken do better for 'em. I can say to folks, 'See here: here's a couple o' smart, han'some children. You can have 'em for nothin', 'n' needn't resk the onsar-tainty o' gittin' married 'n' raisin' yer own; 'n' when yer come ter that, yer wouldn't stant no charnce o' gittin' any as likely as these air, if yo did.'"

"That's true as the gospel!" said Samantha. It nearly killed her to agree with him, but the words were fairly wrung from her unwilling lips by his eloquence and wisdom.

"Well, we'll see what we can do for 'em," said Vilda in a non-committal tone; "and here they'll have to stay, for all I see, tell we can get time to turn round and look 'em up a place."

"And the way their edjercation has been left be," continued Mr. Slocum, "is a burnin' shame in a Christian country. I don't b'lieve they ever see the inside of a schoolhouse! I've learned 'em more this mornin' 'n they ever hearn tell of before, but they're 's ignorant's Cooper's cow yit. They don't know tansy from sorrel, nor slip'ry ellum from pennyroyal, nor burdock from pig-weed; they don't know a dand'lion from a hole in the ground; they don't know where the birds put up when it comes on night; they never see a brook afore, nor a bull-frog; they never hearn tell o' cat-o'-nine-tails, nor jack-lanterns, nor see-saws. Land sakes! we got ter talkin' 'bout so many things that I clean forgot the summer-house roof. But there! this won't do for me: I must be goin'; there ain't no rest for the workin'-man in this country."

"If there wa'n't no work for him, he'd be wuss off yet," responded Samantha.

"Right ye are, Samantha! Look here, when'd you want that box you give me to fix?"

"I wanted it before hayin', but I s'pose any time before Thanksgiving 'll do, seein' it's you."

"What's wuth doin' 't all 's wuth takin' time over, 's my motto," said Jabe cheerfully, "but seein' it's you, I'll nail that cover on ter night or bust!"

(To be Continued.)

WHY.

"Weed, tall and unsightly,
Wherefore dost thou grow?"
Not now, but hereafter,
The Weed said, "thou shalt know."

Swift, swift sped the summer;
The tall Weed turned brown;
Soon followed the winter,
When the snow came down.

Deep, deep, ever deeper,
Upon the earth it lay;
The Weed rose above it,
And on a cold, cold day,

When winds were a-blowing,
There came on strong fleet wings
Three dainty questlings—
The dearest little things

That ever alighted
Upon a tall weed's stem;
And I saw, my darlings,
The Weed feed each of them.

Weed, tall and unsightly
In summer land so green,
Learned in winter
What could its growing mean.

A seed head uplifted
Above a waste of snow
Is reason abundant
Why any weed should grow.

—Wide Awake.