

TOMMY'S CHOICE

ALTHOUGH I've lots of playthings
To fill my life with fun,
I'd rather be yon Shanghai
That rules the chicken run

He stands beneath the shower
In all the pelting flood;
And gets completely covered
From head to foot with mud.

He has no nurse to grab him
And shake him in her wrath,
And give him paregoric,
And plunge him in a bath.

And put clean clothes upon him,
And make him indoors stay
To play with wooden soldiers
Until the close of day.

Ah, wouldn't I be happy?
And wouldn't it be sweet
To be that old pet Shanghai
They'll never kill to eat?

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TRUE'S MISSIONARY SWING.

"Oh, I haven't any way to make missionary money!" said True. "What can a little cripple girl do, anyhow?"

A moment later a voice on the other side of the fence was heard calling to True: "Oh, True Thomas, I hear that your uncle John has put you up the loveliest swing! Do let me come and take a ride."

"But there's no one to swing us," said True disconsolately. "Howard's gone with Uncle John fishing, and Clara is visiting Aunt Martha."

Just then a kinky head was seen rubbing itself against one of the broad planks of the fence.

"Oh, there's Dinah!" said Alice joyfully. "Let's give her a nickel to come and swing us an hour."

"But I haven't a nickel," returned True

"But I have," declared Miss Alice, with great satisfaction. "Say, Dinah Timpkins, how would you like to make a nickel—a new one that shines so you can hardly look at it?"

Dinah's head went up with such a sudden surprise that it bumped itself so hard against the board True and Alice thought it surely must be broken. But Dinah herself didn't seem to be conscious of even an ache in it as she stood before them a minute later, eyes and mouth open. What visions of red-striped candy were dancing before her! Of course she'd like to make that nickel.

"Well, come along now and swing us for an hour," said Alice, holding up the shining nickel, "and it shall be yours."

A thought came all at once to True as they were swinging. Here was the very opportunity for which she had longed.

"Alice," she said, "I do want to make some missionary money. I have thought about it all day, but there didn't seem a single thing I could do. But I do believe there is a way even for me. Suppose every time you and the other girls want to swing you pay five cents an hour. Four can swing at a time, you see. I can get Dinah is not much more trouble to swing than one or two—and just to think, I shall make from ten to fifteen cents every time for the missionaries!"

Alice entered at once into True's plan. She offered to be the advertiser, and tell all the girls about it.

And oh, such a wonderful success as the plan proved! There was fun in it and there was money for the missionaries too. It wasn't long before almost every little girl in Eastville had taken a ride in that missionary swing. Some days True made fifty cents. Once in a while she gave Dinah an extra nickel for her work, and still she had quite a sum to put in her missionary box. Soon the story of the missionary swing got into the papers, and every little girl who went to Eastville on a summer trip wanted to try it.

I wonder how many little girls will be wanting to have missionary swings.

WHAT HE HAD TO GIVE.

"MOTHER," said little Marie Weiss, "where does Jim go every evening after supper?"

"I don't know, child," said the busy farm-wife. "Don't you go pestering Jim; he don't go into any badness, that I know. Jim's one of a hundred."

So instead of getting her curiosity satisfied, Marie was consumed with desire to know another thing, namely, what mother meant by saying that Jim was one of a hundred. A hundred what?

But Madam Weiss was one of those hurriers who are too busy to answer questions, and Marie was always bursting with questions.

If she could only get leave to follow Jim out into the soft spring twilight, she could find what he was up to and what mother meant by the hundred he was one of.

But all the children were put to bed about chicken-roosting time at the Farm, and so this little daughter of the farmer nursed her curiosity until it got so big she kept her awake almost ten minutes. Her little brown head was put down on her crib pillow.

But one evening Farmer Weiss and his wife were attending a famous Grange meeting in the village, and the hired girl, was left in charge. She gave all the little ones permission to sit up until "mutter" came home. Marie away skipped Marie, following the mer of Jim's brown linen coat in the light.

If I tell you all the questions her little tongue rolled off, before she could get an old gig come slowly up the lane. I keep telling till the next meeting in Grange.

So I'll just tell you what she found. The farmer had given his hired boy a piece of ground in the meadow behind the house, and there Jim was busy digging and turning up his spare time.

Plant what? Potatoes? Tomatoes? Peas? No, indeed, but zinnias and scarlet salvia and phlox-drummond and slips of geranium, and mignonette.

Jim was Farmer Weiss' marked man. He was going to sell flowers, then he thought! No, it was sweeter and higher than money-making that filled all his thoughts. When he drove twelve miles to the great city, three times a week, with the waggon-load of vegetables for market, he saw swarms of poor children who stood around the stands and picked up and treasured faded blossom—hungry-eyed little children who had never seen a field of "Wouldn't it be nice to take 'em fresh, sweet-smelling nosegays?" Jim.

And Marie was so deeply interested in the poor little children and their pretty nosegays that she forgot to ask Jim what was one of a hundred, and a hundred.

A HORSE'S SAGACITY.

A GENTLEMAN travelling in the highlands of Scotland found the road blocked with snow that when ever rived he lost his way; but having confidence in the sagacity of his horse, he took the reins and let it choose its own way. For some time the patient beast went slowly yet carefully along until it came to a deep ravine; then it stepped into the drift and sank with its rider in the depths of the ravine. The gentleman, smothered by the snow, became unconscious for how long he never knew when he recovered his consciousness he found himself a few yards from the bottom of the drift with his faithful horse standing over him and licking him from his face. How the sagacious and affectionate creature got him out of the snow he never knew, yet the fact was undeniable. The horse had saved its master.