

STORIES
POETRY

The Inglenook

SKETCHES
TRAVEL

A JOKE ON TWO MULES.

By Frances Margaret Fox.

Five times in one morning Aunt Mary saw Alice walk out of the side door and climb into a soap box under the lilacs. Each time she carried her doll and a small satchel.

"What is the dear baby doing?" asked Aunt Mary.

"Oh," said the child's mother, "I presume she is playing go visiting. She amuses herself that way all day sometimes."

"Where have you been?" asked Aunt Mary, the next time Alice came in the house.

"Visiting Aunt Kate," was the reply.

"You didn't stay long."

"No, Auntie; you see the most fun is in getting ready. I wash Dora Belle's face every time, and change her dress and put on her cloak and hat, then I pack her satchel and go out and get in the carriage. Sometimes I stay right in the carriage and pre-end I've been to Aunt Kate's. It's just as much fun that way."

Aunt Mary smiled. "I should like to go visiting myself, it is such a nice day," she said.

"Too bad the horses are all in use," put in the little girl's mother, "or we might drive over to Aunt Kate's this afternoon."

"The mules are in the barn," suggested Alice; "let's take them and go."

"Why not?" answered Aunt Mary.

"I never drove the mule team," hesitated the little girl's mother, "and the hired man is too busy to take us."

"Are you afraid to drive the mules?" asked Aunt Mary.

"No, but they aren't exactly meant for the carriage. We bought them to do the heavy work on the farm. I shouldn't like to be seen on the road with mules."

"Nonsense," laughed Aunt Mary. "We'll get ready and go, won't we, Alice?"

"Yes, Auntie, we will; it's a lovely day to go visiting. What shall I do to help? May I dust the sitting-room or what?"

The rest of the forenoon Aunt Mary, Alice, and her mother had a fine time getting ready to go to Aunt Kate's. When the work was done, and everything in order, they changed their dresses and combed their hair the prettiest they knew how. Alice wore her Sunday white gown and big blue bows on her braids.

At last the hired man drove the mules to the door, helped Aunt Mary, Alice, and her mother into the carriage, then stood on the porch grinning from ear to ear until they were out of sight.

Laughing and talking, the three went on their way, one mile, two miles, when the mules stopped. The little girl's mother tried to urge them on.

"What do you say to mules when they won't go?" she asked.

"Say 'geddap!'" laughed Alice.

"Geddap, geddap!" repeated her mother, tugging at the lines. Next she tried the whip. The mules wouldn't stir.

For the first ten minutes the three thought it a good joke to be delayed in that fashion. Then they began to wonder how long they were going to stay in the middle of the road beneath the hot sun.

Suddenly, without the least warning, the mules turned around and trotted home. It was the only thing they would do, nor did they stop until they reached the hitching post near the lilacs.

"We may as well get out," said the little girl's mother.

"It was a delightful drive," added Aunt Mary.

"And such lots of fun to get ready," chimed Alice, joining in the merry laugh that followed.

"I'm going down cellar for a water-melon," declared Aunt Mary, "and we'll have a good time, anyway."

"Since we're all dressed up," agreed Alice.

Before Aunt Mary returned, Aunt Kate with her five little children drove into the yard.

"Oh, I'm so glad to find you at home!" she said. "It's such a beautiful day I was afraid you might not be here, and we came to pass the afternoon."

Just then Aunt Mary appeared, and for the first time Aunt Kate noticed the mules.

"Dear me! I hope you were not going anywhere," said she, "I shouldn't like to keep you home."

"Oh, no," was the reply; "we were playing a game, mules and all, that Alice taught us. We pretended go visiting. We had the fun of getting ready."

"How lucky it is!" exclaimed Alice, giving one of her little cousins a hug. "that we came back. What if nobody had found anybody at home!"

"Well!" remarked the hired man, when he put the mules in the barn without knowing what had happened, "well, that's the first time I ever knew them there animals to do what was wanted."

Maybe no one will believe it, but when he said that one mule winked at the other.

THE DEBTOR.

Anne R. Stillman.

The dearest of my friends to-day

Spoke wistfully: "I have a friend,

Who, in more ways than I may tell,

Hath served me well;

But he doth owe a debt he cannot pay;

And there is none to lend."

Eager, I cried: "Thy friends are mine!

Speak but his name, ere time is lost.

What is his secret? Whom doth he owe?

My gold shall flow

To cease his care, whose care, O Lord,

is thine;

Nor will I grudge the cost."

"And is thy love so great?" he sighed,

And turned from me, and, stooping,

wrote—

As once of old—with kingly hand

Upon the sand;

The while I waited, wond'ring, full of

pride,

Impatient to devote.

At last he rose, and looked at me.

His eyes were flames that burned

through tears.

"Who cancels this, serves me," he

said.

I knelt and read—

For the last time—thy name, mine

enemy,

And that old wrong of years.

—From the Outlook.

PATHETIC.

The following incident shows that our saucy sparrow has other good qualities besides his sturdiness and self-reliance.

For several days four or five sparrows had visited a certain place on the roof near our window. They always brought food for another little fellow, who never tried a flight from the spot. The visiting sparrows never came empty-billed. They would drop tiny morsels of food near the little sparrow. When it began to eat the crumbs the others set up a great chirping, and then flew away.

After watching this for a few days, we went out on the roof and approached the lone bird. It did not flutter away, and made no resistance when picked up.

The sparrow was blind. Its eyes were covered with a milk-like film.

THE "DEVIL'S HOLE."

Everybody knows the "Devil's Hole" on the Hull side of the Chaudiere, where the waters fall into a huge cul de sac, where they whirl around as if seeking an outlet from their rocky prison, and are finally sucked away under the rocks into an underground channel, which holds them in its embrace, according to popular report, until it discharges them once again into the main rivers near the foot of Kettle Island, several miles below the city.

Of the many strange stories that have come down from the pioneer days respecting the "Devil's Hole," none is more unique than that of the cow of Mr. Wright, the founder of Hull, that made the passage of the terrible channel and survived it like a veritable ancient mariner. It seems that a herd of cattle belonging to Mr. Wright had waded into the water above the point in question, when upon their return a few hours after one cow was missing. As it was impossible that the animal could have got away in any other direction, she was given up as having been lost in the "Devil's Hole," from whose insatiable maw there was no return.

About a month after this, one of Mr. Wright's dependents was on his way to Montreal, when down near Kettle Island he discovered the lost cow grazing with others in a farm pasture. When questioned as to how the cow had come into his possession, the farmer answered in a truthful and straightforward manner. While watching the river one evening, about a month before, he had seen the cow shoot suddenly out of the water and swim ashore. She seemed all right and a likely looking beast, so he turned her in along with his own cattle. He also remembered the exact date of the incident, which coincided precisely with that of the cow's disappearance higher up the river. The chain of circumstantial evidence was complete and proved beyond cavil that this remarkable cow had passed the "Devil's Hole" channel in perfect safety.

Of course, geologists will say that this famous channel from inlet to outlet is only a few yards in extent; that the water is forced through a fissure in a deep substratum in the rock barrier and rushes up again on the opposite side of the old stone bridge; also that this stratum may be traced for a considerable distance along the eastern foundations of the old bridge at low water. But what about that cow? She has simply torn away with her horns the cobwebs of mysticism with which these scientific people are ever seeking to obscure the vision of sound, practical common sense.—T. W. E. S., in Ottawa "Free Press."

BIRD FOUR FEET HIGH.

The "emperor" penguin, one of the discoveries of Captain Scott's recent Antarctic expedition, was the subject of an interesting illustrated lecture by Dr. Wilson before the recent ornithological congress in London. The bird stands about four feet high, weighs eighty pounds or more, and with its black coat and erect posture, has, when seen at a distance, a truly startling resemblance to a dwarf man. These "emperors" of the penguin world live upon the great girdle of pack ice which surrounds the Antarctic continent, and seem to depend for food mainly on crustaceans caught in the crevices of the ice. The female lays a solitary egg which is caught on the great web feet, so that it never touches the ice, and is held there covered with the mother's body until hatching occurs.