

STORIES
POETRY

The Inglenook

SKETCHES
TRAVEL

HOW AMY MADE THE ADVANCE.

(By Mary I. Houston.)

"Why Aunt Ella, don't you know who that is? That's old Jenkins, the meanest man in town. I thought every one knew him."

"Do you mean the Mr. Jenkins who lives next door? Well, he does look pretty stern but perhaps people think him worse than he is."

"Not a bit of it," returned Amy, "I believe he is even worse than people think, for I often see him in his garden, mumping and shaking his head as if he would like to be after some one. He is the man who put ashes on the hill so that we could not coast last winter, and we are all afraid of him."

"Poor old man," said Aunt Ella. "He does look so lonely, perhaps if people would make a few more advances he would be willing to meet them half way."

"Yes, I'll bet he'd meet you more than half way, and use a stick that would settle all advances. I know him, the old curmudgeon," put in Fred, who had joined Amy and his aunt in time to hear part of their conversation. "You'd retreat quicker than you'd advance, I can tell you." And both children laughed at the thought of any one trying to make friends with Mr. Jenkins.

For the next week no more was said upon the subject. A heavy fall of snow made the coasting excellent and the children were too busy to think of anything else.

One afternoon, however, as Amy was hurrying from school to get her sleigh, she saw ahead of her the familiar figure of their neighbor, plodding along with the aid of a stout cane and looking, if possible, more stern than usual. Once or twice, as he stepped on a slippery spot, he almost fell and Amy was frightened.

"Oh I hope he doesn't fall," she said to herself, "I know he'll be so mad if he does and will blame us for helping to make the sidewalk slippery." Just then she thought of Aunt Ella's words.

"Well I'm sure it won't be me who will make the first advance—There! he almost fell again. I wonder if he'll let me help him? There is no one on the street so, perhaps, he wouldn't mind."

Without wasting any time she caught up with the old man, and began in a frightened tone: "It's awfully slippery here Mr. Jenkins, but I have good rubbers on. Won't you let me help you?"

"No. You'd be more likely to help trip me if you got the chance. I know what children are and will help myself. Run along there."

Amy did not wait to be told again but was safely inside her own gate almost before he has finished speaking, her heart beating and her eyes swimming.

"Oh the mean old thing. He knew I only wanted to help him. Aunt Ella doesn't know him or she wouldn't have spoken so."

But, had Amy taken time to look back she would have seen something on the old man's face that would have surprised her. As he stood and watched her run up the street before him a look came into his eyes that no one had seen there for years. "She is very like her, very like. And perhaps after all she meant what she said—Poor Alice, my poor girl—But there, I'm an old fool. Of course the girl meant only to tease me; they are all the same. No I did well to send her on."

But still Silas Jenkins' face was a little softer, had any one taken the trouble to notice it. Amy told no one of this

little adventure but she took particular care to keep out of Mr. Jenkins' way and perhaps might never have spoken to the old man again had it not been for Dick. Dick was Amy's canary and he did what perhaps no human being could ever have accomplished. It was sweeping day and the sitting room window was open; and something else was open as well. Amy, in her hurry to school that morning, had neglected to fasten Dick's cage securely, so the little bird had managed to get out and flew gaily out of the window. But the snow which glistened so nicely was colder than Dick had imagined so, seeing another window open, in he flew to get warm. This window happened to open into Mr. Jenkins' library, but Dick was not particular, nor was he acquainted with the owner of the library or he might not have sung so sweetly as he sat on top of the book-case.

"Oh Amy," called Mrs. Muir, "Dicky has flown into Mr. Jenkins' house. You will have to go after him."

"Oh mother, I can't. Mr. Jenkins' is so cross that I'm afraid! Won't Fred go?"

"No Silas, I'm no advance guard toward Mr. Jenkins' affections," said Fred.

"You must hurry Amy," went on her mother, "or Dick may fly out again. Surely Mr. Jenkins cannot say anything."

Amy hesitated for a moment and then ran over. Her timid knock was answered by the old man himself, and had Amy not been so timid, she might have noticed that he looked less severe than usual.

"Well—what do you want?" he asked.

"Please—please did Dicky fly in here?"

"And who is Dicky, pray? Not that harum-scarum brother of yours. I—"

It would be a bad job for him if he flew into my clutches."

"No, oh no, not Fred. Dick is my bird, and mother says that he flew in here."

"Yes, I believe he did, come and see him," and before Amy fairly realized it, she was in the terrible Mr. Jenkins' house. And there was Dick singing away on top of the book-case.

"You naughty bird, come home here" cried Amy when she saw him.

"Not very obedient," said the old man, "like some children, eh?"

"Ye-es sir," answered Amy, feeling that she was called upon to say something.

Dicky flew from the book-case and alighted on a picture frame, and Amy's eyes followed him. "Oh, whose picture is that? Isn't she lovely," she exclaimed.

The old man made no reply, but Amy understood. "Oh sir, I forgot. I didn't mean to hurt you. Is she—?"

"Dead, yes child she is dead and all the good in me died with her," something seemed to choke him, but he went on, "You are like her, not only in looks. I have watched you often and I know. Now take your canary and go.—But wait—weren't you afraid to come after him?"

"I'm not afraid now though," replied Amy.

"Well—Well. It's no wonder. I'm enough to frighten anyone; but Alice loved me." And his gaze turned to the picture again. "Well, go now child; but you may come again, perhaps."

"Yes, I'll come," answered Amy simply. And Amy did come again, and very often. People wondered that Amy Muir should bother with old Mr. Jenkins, but soon came to lose all fear of him too.

The "advance guard," as Fred called

Amy, had done more than any one knew to thaw the wall of ice around the heart of Silas Jenkins and to change his crabbed selfish life.

Camington, Ont.

USES OF THE TELEPHONE.

Abundance of amusing as well as statistical proof of the approach of such an era of universal telephony as is implied in 20 per cent. development is not hard to find. Newspapers give publicity to all sorts of ingenious schemes for utilizing Mr. Bell's invention in heretofore unheard-of ways. The instrument has come to be of assistance in about all the vocations and advocations of the everyday world. Not only has it annihilated time and space on the superficial earth, but the Norwegian fishermen drop into the ocean depths a line with telephone attachment by which the swish of the approaching herring, codfish, or mackerel is communicated to the anxious listeners above. In some of the most delicate operations of hospital surgery the telephone medical practice the country mother raises the baby to the transmitter in order that the physician in the village may determine whether or not the cough is croupy. Concerts have been transmitted more or less successfully over the wires, and Sunday morning preaching effectively conveyed. After a recent revival, in which scores of eager "seekers" had put in their requests for prayers, the evangelist handed his secretary a list of names with their telephone numbers and with the instruction: "Just call up each one of these sisters and brothers to-morrow morning, and ask them how it goes with their souls. Tell them to keep on their prayers and inform them that I am praying for them right along."—F. W. Coburn, in the November Atlantic.

WHY EDNA WAS UNHAPPY.

Edna was cross. Nothing seemed to please her. She tore her doll's dress trying to put it on. She fell over her poor pussy, and, because she mewed, she threw her out of doors. She scolded Baby Roy when he reached out for her picture book. What was the matter with Edna. Everybody wondered.

"I wish I knew where our little girl is this morning," said mamma. "I miss her sadly."

"Why, I'm here," said Edna.

"My little girl has sunshine in her face," said mamma, "and your face is so cross and scowly. Oh, I would not like to change my little girl for you."

"Everybody is cross to me," said Edna, "and nobody loves me." And she began to cry.

"You can go into the room, Edna, and see if you can think it out," said mamma.

Edna went into the room and sat for a long time on the floor with her face in two small hands. Then she jumped up and ran to her mother. "Mamma," she said, "I broke off the lily on the porch, when I was playing with Skin, and I let you think the wind did it. I'm sorry as I can be."

"I am very glad my little Edna is ready to own her fault," said mamma, kissing her fondly. "I forgive you freely."

Then the sunshine came back to Edna's face, and she was happy again.—Morning Star.

A living salary is more to be desired than fulsome eulogy, and a competent support is better than a bunch of resolutions after the pastor has resigned.