

Children's Department.

The Sabot Boat.

Bertrand and Louis had been ill with whooping-cough—*coqueluche*, they called it, for they were little French boys—and finding at last the cough did not get better, their mother sent them to stay with their old *bonne* at the seaside.

Mere Planche lived in a snug cottage on the coast of Normandy. Her husband was only a poor fisherman, but she was industrious, and with the help of her younger sister Elise, she earned a good deal of money by washing and ironing.

She was a kind-hearted creature, and did her best for the two pale-cheeked, languid little boys, who seemed growing thinner and thinner and more weakly day by day.

What a change it was from the dull close town! They had not been many days at the cottage when they began to enjoy climbing up and down the sloping banks, gathering wild flowers, picking up shells and paddling in the pools that the tide had left in the hollows.

The bracing sea air soon brought back their appetites, and they were always ready for the rich milk and the sweet bread and butter that Mere Planche set before them. By dinner time they were so hungry they had scarcely patience to wait till her good soup was cool enough to eat, and their cheeks soon grew rosy again.

One sunny morning a brilliant idea struck Bertrand.

"Aren't you tired of watching the boats out on the sea, Louis?" he said. "Suppose we make a boat for ourselves, a little one, and sail it in the pools."

"How shall you make it?" questioned Louis.

Bertrand nodded sagaciously. "You'll see," he said; and not a word more could Louis get out of him.

Behind the great tea-tray in the corner stood Pere Planche's new sabots, and while Elise and Mere Planche were spreading the clothes out to dry,

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Bertrand slipped one of the sabots under his blouse, and ran off, followed by Louis.

As soon as they were out of sight, Bertrand sat down on the grass and began to examine the great wooden shoe.

"Won't they be angry?" said Louis.

"They won't know; we'll put it back when we've done with it," answered Bertrand confidentially. "I shall hide it. Won't it make us a fine boat?"

Louis always thought all Bertrand did was right; but somehow he didn't feel quite comfortable about that sabot. "You'll have to put up a sail," he said.

"I shall make a hole just here," answered Bertrand, pointing with his finger. "If I only had a nail I'd soon knock one in it."

But the sun got low before they could find anything to make a hole with, so they hid the sabot and went in to bed.

The next morning, when they came in to breakfast, Pere Planche was searching high and low for his sabot—behind the clothes-basket, under the chest of drawers; he had even rummaged about in the woodshed; but only one sabot was to be found.

Bertrand felt very uncomfortable at first.

"Perhaps the rats have run off with it," he said, helping to look with the rest, so that they might not think he had taken it; while Louis stood by feeling very guilty and very much afraid.

At last Pere Planche had to limp off in his old worn sabot, and the two boys ran down to the beach with a large nail that Bertrand had found in the cupboard.

He managed with some trouble to knock a hole with the nail and a big stone; then making a sail of his pocket-handkerchief and two sticks, he and Louis ran to a little backwater, and went down on their knees to launch their boat.

Two fisher children had perched themselves on the narrow footbridge to watch the fun, and Bertrand was just setting the sabot on the water when a voice close behind made him start.

"The good God is very angry when we tell lies," said Elise.

"I only said *perhaps* the rats had

taken it," said Bertrand, hanging his crimson cheeks over the water.

"You knew it was not true," persisted Elise, "you pretended you were looking for it. You saw how lame the old one had made Pere Planche; and see what a hole you have made in his new sabot."

"Will he be very angry?" asked Bertrand, pulling out the little stick mast. "I'll never do it any more."

"I don't know what he will say," answered Elise; "you have spoilt his sabot."

"Is God angry with us both?" asked Louis. "I didn't say anything."

"But you knew all the while," said Elise, reproachfully. "To act a lie is just as bad as telling one. God sees all we do and knows all we think. We can't hide anything from Him."

"I forgot that," said Louis; "I'll never think any more naughty thoughts. Let's take the sabot back, and ask Pere Planche to forgive us for making the hole."

"Yes," answered Bertrand; "and we'll ask God to help us, for Jesus' sake, not to say what is not true."

Tommy and the Oranges.

Tommy walked along the shady street, feeling just about as happy as any little boy would feel. It was a bright sunshiny day, and the birds were singing over his head, and he had to turn his eyes to see the flowers in old Mrs. Camp's garden. He had had a good breakfast and was wearing a new pair of shoes.

"Tommy," said Mrs. Camp, as he was passing the door, "won't you do a little errand for me?"

"Yes, ma'am," he said.

"I'm going to have company to tea to-night, and I want some oranges from the store. I wish you would get me a dozen."

"Yes, ma'am," said Tommy again. He took the quarter she gave him and went to the store.

"I'm giving thirteen oranges to the dozen to-day," said Mr. Gray, the store-keeper, "and they're fine ones too."

Tommy took the basket and walked towards Mrs. Camp's. When he turned into the shady street again, no one was passing. He set down the basket and peeped into it. They were fine ones, sure enough, so large and round, and yellow. Tommy thought they were the juiciest looking ones he had ever seen in his life.

"I'd like one," he said to himself.

He was very fond of oranges. He wondered if he could dare to ask Mrs. Camp for one of them. Then it came into his head that there were thirteen instead of the dozen she was expecting.

"I don't believe 'twould be a bit of harm for me to take that," he said.

"No, of course not. She only wanted a dozen; she said so."

Tommy took one of the oranges, put it in his pocket, and went on. But he did not feel quite so happy as he had done before. The basket felt

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heavier, the sun did not seem to shine so brightly, nor the birds to sing so sweetly.

"Of course it's right," said Tommy again. He did not realize that he was arguing against the Good Spirit in his heart, which kept whispering: "Tommy, that orange is not yours."

"And I'm awfully hungry." As we have said, Tommy had just had a good breakfast; but he had never yet found that that made any difference in his wanting an orange, or indeed, anything else good to eat.

"And I'm so tired lugging this big basket. It's no more'n fair I should have some pay."

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