

split the shell. Who ate out of the others?  
Not squirrels?

No. A mouse drilled that fine round hole with his neat little teeth. No carpenter or joined could do a better job. He goes in for science. But this rough, crooked hole was made by a nut-hatch. He's the smartest little bird ever you saw. He takes his nut, and sets it tight in the crotch of a limb, where every drive he gives at it, will only fix it tighter, and he hews out a bit of the shell and eats the meat. He don't lay out such handsome work as the mouse, but he does good service for himself, in eating; he gets all there is. Did you ever hear one of them woodpeckers laugh? When he strips off a slice of bark, and finds a lot of grubs under it, he is so tickled that he hangs on with his toes and throws back his head, and laughs like a good fellow. Then some of 'em lays up a pantry of provisions; they peck a hole in a rotten tree, and wedge in an acorn; then another, and another, and so on. The sassy little critters know that come spring, each of them nuts will have a big fat grub for 'em to eat, and they don't forget, they goes right back to their pantry and eats what they stored up. I'll tell you what I see one day. A cat had gone to a field where the crows had made nests in some trees, and the crows didn't want him round, so they ranged in a line, and swooped down on him, and made the fur fly one by one. The cat wanted to go home, but whenever he broke cover the crows come down on him. And it was a sight to see the cat run along under bushes so they couldn't get him, and then spy out for the next nearest, and make a dash, and so to the next, and finally to the barn by zig-zagging all over the field. Once I see all the birds in an orchard, wrens, robins, blue-birds, orioles, blackbirds, and sparrows, join that way to chase a cat, and the cat run like mad, and the birds flying low in a long train, screaming and scolding, and led by a plucky little king-bird. When the cat was out of the orchard the birds lifted up, and went home singing. Set an example to folks to unite when they want to clean out a bad thing.

It was now almost six o'clock, and they were passing a field. Some one behind a hedge shouted, 'Is that you I hear, Rasmus?'

'Hullo,' said Rasmus, looking over the hedge. 'How are you, Mr. Jackson?'

'Hearty. I knew your voice; you roar like a speaking trumpet. Never heard such a shouter in my life. Helps me to believe what I read of Whitfield preaching to thousands at once, and making 'em all hear. Why, you are never going past us without stopping, Rasmus?'

'I didn't know you was home,' said Rasmus.

'And, you might stop and ask. You face up the lane.'

'But—I've got company.'

The farmer looked through the hedge at the company, and approved them. 'Go on; go, all of you; you're all welcome. There's a room at the house, and a mow of hay sweet as a lily at the barn, and provender plenty. You go on. I'll take the horses out of the plow, and come after you.'

'I'll take the horses up,' said Rasmus. 'It does me good to have to do with farm-work.'

'Why the nation then don't you settle to it? I'll give you twenty-two dollars a month, and your board, from this till the first of January, if you'll close the bargain.'

'I can't,' said Rasmus; 'I'd like it powerful: you're the right sort of a man, Mister Jackson; but I'm advertising for my little chap, and I make sure I'll find him this trip.'

Mr. Jackson shook his head. 'You'll go on the hunt, Rasmus, till you're old and gray, all for nothing, I'm afraid.'

'I'll tell you, Mr. Jackson, this is my last throw. If I don't find Robin, I'll come to you Christmas, and work for my board till April first, and from that round till my year's up for them twenty-two a month, and there's a bargain.'

'So it is,' said Mr. Jackson, 'and mind you keep it.'

He left Rasmus with the horses and went up the long green lane with Mr. Llewellyn and Rodney.

'That's a very fine fellow, spoiling as a vagabond, all to find some one that is dead,' said Mr. Jackson. 'I can't bear to see it; honesty, muscle, smartness, good nature, all going to waste. Two years ago he came along

and I gave him leave to sleep in the barn. That night, along of a foolish girl and hot ashes, we'd all have been burnt in our beds, only for him; he saved us, and saved our house. We kept him two weeks to cure up burns he never complained of, and we all got fond of him, but he wouldn't stay longer. Couldn't bear, he said, to have a good home, while his little brother perhaps, had none, or was abused. Last May he strolled up here, when we men folks was off at the far field, and he came just in the nick of time to save my best Alderney cow from choking on a turnip my little grandson had given her. He's always up to doing some good act for other folks, and never anything for himself. But I will say he does no bad turns for himself in whiskey or tobacco. Why, he'd make a tip-top farmer.'

They passed a very pleasant evening at the farm-house. Rasmus insisted on going to the mow, while Mr. Llewellyn and Rodney had the room at the house. The farmer's daughter sang and played on her organ, and Rodney helped her sing 'The Land of the Leal,' and 'Auld Lang Syne.'

There was rain in the night, but it was clear by morning, and all along the roadside the flowers were out—dandelions, forget-me-nots, yellow oxalis, stars of cinquefoil, white wreaths of strawberry; in the woods anemones and sanguinaria, and liverwort, with white and pink and purple bloom. Rodney learned to his wonder that the choice and really needed parts of the flower were the little clustered stamens and pistils in the middle, which made the seeds, and that all this beautiful broad bloom of petals, all this fragrance and honey, were merely so many means of attracting bees and flies, and beetles and moths, and butterflies to come to the flower, and get the pollen upon their heads or bodies, and so carry it about to other flowers, and make stronger and better seed plants.

'It seems as if all the world were thinking,' cried Rodney.

'So it is,' said Mr. Llewellyn; 'that is, God is thinking and writing out His thoughts through it all.'

That day was Thursday, and in the evening they came to a little village where almost the first house was a small red cottage with a high peaked roof, and an old woman was milking a cow in the side yard. As soon as the woman saw the travellers, she ran to the gate.

'You're not going by, Mr. Llewellyn; me and sister have looked for you this week past. Come in, come in.'

'Go in, sir, if you've friends,' said Rasmus, 'and me and the boy will look out for ourselves till morning.'

'No, no! come in, all of you,' said the old lady; 'we don't often have company, and Mr. Llewellyn has been our friend for ten years. Why, sir, all our accounts are to make, and we want to take advisement what to do with a little money we have saved up.'

She held open the gates and the travellers went in. Rasmus went straight to the cow, finished the milking, and put the animal in her shed, after giving her a pail of bran and water that stood ready. Another little old lady came to the door to welcome Mr. Llewellyn, and they were a funny group, the three were so old and small and sharp-looking. A tea was soon spread, abundant for all, and then Mr. Llewellyn passed the evening in going over the year's accounts of these old people, looking over their little expenses, the modest taxes, the humble gifts, the frugal outlay for living, and the small income from eggs, milk, dried fruit, and tailoress work.

'Don't it seem odd,' said Rasmus to Rodney, 'them two little mites of old women, making their way, and having a little money over, to lend out at interest, and big, strong men complaining they can't make a living! The closer folks stick to the ground, the surer they are of a living. The ground don't strike, and eggs and milk don't go out of fashion. If I find Robin, him and me will live this way.'

(To be continued.)

### Sample Copies.

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## The Order of the Smiling Face

We've formed a new society—  
'The Order of the Smiling Face;'  
An honored member you may be,  
For everyone may have a place.

The rules say you must never let  
The corners of your mouth droop down.  
For by this method you may get  
The habit of a sulky frown.

If playmates tease you, let your eyes  
A brave and merry twinkle show;  
For if the angry tears arise,  
They're very apt to overflow.

If you must practice for an hour,  
And if it seem a long, long while,  
Remember not to pout and glower,  
But wear a bright and cheerful smile.

The rules are simple, as you see;  
Make up your mind to join to-day.  
Put on a smile—and you will be  
An active member right away.

—St. Nicholas.

## Mammy Joe.

Several men were walking back and forth upon the platform of a small way-station in Virginia. They had been there ten minutes, and were growing impatient. At last one of them drew out his watch.

'Six minutes late,' he said, discontentedly. 'The F. F. V. will be losing its reputation if it doesn't make better time. I hate waiting.'

'Perhaps your watch is wrong,' suggested one of his companions. 'We have been in the woods for a week and our time may not be correct.'

'My watch is all right,' was the petulant answer. 'It's the railroad.'

Crouching near the door of the station was a big, motherly-looking black woman. She had been there since early in the morning, arriving even before the station master himself. All through the long day she had remained in the same position, watching the trains as they arrived and scanning each face eagerly. As the man put his watch back into his pocket, she looked at him wistfully.

'Ye don't s'pose nothin's de matter, does ye, farma?'

'Oh, no; the train is only a few minutes late. Expecting some one?' as he noticed the pathetic eagerness in her face.

'Yes, sah, my boy what's done been in de hospital two year, is comin' home, all cured and fix up. De doctor sent word he'd put him on de F. F. V. an' sen' him straight frou. I was feared he mout mistook de train, an' I've been a watchin' all day.'

'What hospital did he go to?'

'Bos'n. Ye see, Henry Clay got hurted when he war a teenty feeler, an' he kep' a growin' more an' more crooked, so 't me an' my ole man was feared we moutn't raise him. We done had all de doctors round' hyer, an' at las' one tole us 'bout de place in Bos'n whar dey don fix such t'ings. He writ for us an' done make all de 'rangements. But hit cos' a heap o' money. Me'n my old man had to sell our little place an' go out to wuk. But we all ain't car' for dat, so long's Henry Clay done got well.'

'I'm glad they cured him,' said the man, heartily. 'But I reckon he's grown so big and handsome you won't know him when you see him.'

'Bress de boy! bress de boy!' ejaculated the old woman, between her smiles and tears. 'White folks will have dere jokes. But I reckon de boy is sure 'nough big an' handsome by this time. Me an' my ole man war jes' plumb 'stracted when we hearn he war all well an' ready to come. We hustled roun' an' got de money for his ticket an' sent hit to de doctor, an' now he's done writ dat he's a com-in'.'

A shrill whistle was heard in the distance. The men gathered up their baggage and stood waiting. Tears of expectation began to stream down the old woman's face.

It was a small station, and the train stopped but a few seconds. Only one passenger alighted. He was a little black boy of ten or twelve.

The old woman sprang toward him with an inarticulate cry. But she stopped suddenly. That was not Henry Clay. True, he did not