

BITS OF TINSEL.

Even the homeliest man, when assisting a fellow-passenger to put his nickel in the street car box, is passing fare.

Why are cashmere shawls like deaf people? Because you cannot make them (hear) here.

Are the sails on the Ship of State made from the Presidential canvas?" asks a young statesman from Brooklyn.

What is the difference between a pastry cook and a bill sticker? One puffs up paste and the other pastes up puffs.

What did the Puritans come to this country for?" asked a Massachusetts teacher of his class. "To worship in their own way, and make other people do the same," was the reply.

Little George was questioned the other day about his big sister's beau. "How old is he?" "I don't know." "Well, is he young?" "I think so, for he hasn't any hair on his head."

It was a son of Erin who asked the meeting to excuse him from serving on a committee because he expected to be unexpectedly called away.

The English alphabet is tolerably virtuous. Twenty of the letters have never been in prison.—*New York News*. Yes, but look what a lot of them are now in penitentiary.—*Norristown Herald*.

Herbert was walking in the garden with a lady friend, who plucked a flower now and then with, as Herbert thought, too short a stem. "Don't pluck them off so close to the roof," said the little fellow.

The *Dairy* says that when Jay Gould was a boy he used to milk 20 cows a day, but now, that he has become a man he has put away childish things and spends his spare time in watering stock and looking after the lambs who flock in Wall street.

"Has the cooking book any pictures?" asked a young lady of a bookseller. "Not one," replied the dealer in books. "Why," exclaimed the witty miss, "what is the use of telling us how to make a dinner if you give us no plates."

For Girls and Boys.

NEVER START WHAT YOU CAN'T STOP.

"Look at Rob, going so fast you can see the soles of his new boots! What's up?"

"Rob Kerr paused to answer the boys. "Going to ride on grandsir's engine."

"Couldn't you squeeze us in, too? Say, Rob!"—

But Rob though he heard the car bell, and was showing the soles again. The boys followed.

When they got there, Rob's grandfather, Adolph Kerr, was carefully examining the engine, oil-can in hand, while Silas, the fireman, looking out of the little window.

"Hercules is all right, boss, I've looked him over myself," said Silas.

"I know you always do," said Mr. Kerr, "but it's my way to look over the engine myself before starting. We can't be too careful."

"He's right," Silas told the boys. "Ef he hadn't, reg'lar as clock-work, travelled all over the Hercules, he wouldn't be called the best engineer on the road. 'Dolf Kerr' run the longest, too."

Rob was pleased to have the boys hear that.

"Rob, here—he'll be running the Hercules when grandsir's laid up," added Silas.

"I could now, almost," said Rob.

"Oh, hear him!" laughed Silas. "We may as well both lay away, boss."

Mr. Kerr made no reply, but stepped aboard. How the boys envied Rob as he rang the bell! The conductor shouted, "All aboard!" and away they went along the iron track.

They ate supper while the train waited at a junction. Silas made coffee and boiled eggs, Rob toasted bread on the end of the boiler.

Every chance he could get Rob was on the Hercules. All the other engineers knew Rob, the grandson of old Adolph Kerr, and never sent him away if they saw him about the engine-house. They trusted him because his grandfather did. Rob was very proud of this.

One day when he was alone on the Hercules, two schoolmates came along.

"Grandfather away, Rob!"

"Yes, and Silas. They've left me in charge."

"Let us get up there, too?"

"Couldn't think of it!" said Rob. "If Silas catches any boys round here he'll give them a shaking."

"We won't stay but a minute; we'll run when we see him coming."

"If I let you fellows aboard you'll get into mischief," said Rob.

They promised not to touch anything. At length Rob let them come up where he was. Very soon one said, "My uncle makes engines, so I know a lot about them too. Wouldn't it be fun to set this agoing, just a minute?"

"Rob don't dare start up!" said the other.

"What's the harm?" asked the first. "Uncle showed me how to reverse the lever."

Rob said no; but they kept on hinting and coaxing. By-and-by Rob peered out to see if anybody was coming, a strange, guilty look on his face; then there was a familiar sound from the mighty horse—it moved slowly along the siding.

"There, didn't I know how to start it?" cried Rob.

The Hercules went faster, it seemed to be getting ready for a race.

"Now we must stop it!" cried Rob. "Reverse the lever, quick!"

But the boy had forgotten how! He jumped from the engine, telling the other to "Come on." So Rob was alone, and in a sad fix. Pale as death, he tried with all his strength to do as he had seen his grandfather. It was useless! He had let loose a force he could not stop. He too jumped, throwing himself the same way the engine was going, and rolled over and down the bank into the bushes.

And there was a great cry from Silas and Mr. Kerr. With terrified faces they chased the Hercules. They were too late to get aboard; the engine had left the siding for the main road, sped along to a bend and disappeared, the ground trembling beneath its powerful tread.

Rob felt that he could never look his grandfather in the face again. He hid till dark. Then he went home. His mother was crying. And his grandfather? It seemed as if he had grown years older. Silas was there, too, talking pitifully of the Hercules as if it were some living creature that had lost its life.

"Why, here's Rob," said Silas; ye won't have no more fine rides with your grandsir and me! They've put us out of a job. Heard how the Hercules got away to-day? Wouldn't be ketched no more'n a wild horse o' the desert; he strove up a coal train and pitched head fust into a pasture!"

Rob was surprised that no one suspected him. "Anybody killed?" he whispered.

"All living, was Silas's queer reply, "except your grandsir." It pretty nigh finished him."

"Of course he'll get another engine, he's so smart," faltered Rob.

"Then his grandfather spoke, in a deep, troubled tone. "Nobody would trust the old man again, Rob. They turned him off with hard words. Oh, it's a cruel ending for the work of a life-time!" Tears filled his eyes, they rushed into Rob's too. He could keep it from his grandfather no longer. He told him all, "if you'll only forgive me," he sobbed, "and trust me as you used to, I'll never touch an engine again, never!"

It added heavily to Mr. Kerr's sorrow to find that Rob had caused their misery, but he put his arm about him and spoke kindly. "There's many other things besides engines gets the upper hand, if folks touches them," he said. "I'd willingly suffer if I thought you'd learn this lesson: *Never start anything you can't stop*. There's men in this town'll tell you they started drinking and swearing long ago; and it's running away with them now, just as Hercules did with you. Think of this, Rob, when you remember what happened to your grandsir's last engine."

That was ten years ago. The old engineer has gone where faithful service is rewarded. Rob has become a young man, but not an engineer, he has never stepped aboard an engine since that painful experience on the Hercules.

But often in the Sunday-school class, where he is now teacher, his boys say, "Tell us the story of the wild engine!"

They listen eagerly to the end, when Robert Kerr closes with his grandfather's motto, "Never start anything you can't stop."—*Congregationalist*.