

"Nonsense, Esther, you're not so superstitious as that, I hope," replied Beckie. "But I have an idea, girls. Let's tell our fortunes out of the dic."

"Oh yes!" said Esther, eagerly catching at the idea. "A dic, a dic, who has a dic.?"

"Did you wish to borrow one? Here is mine," said Ralph Harris, who was just passing in.

"Thank you, Ralph. Has it a list of proper names and significations? Oh yes, here it is. Now call the boys and girls, please. Tell them there's a fortune-teller here, with the book of fate in her hands. Hal Beckie, here is your name. 'Rebecca,—A rope with a noose.' Well, you did catch Eva in your noose nicely just now, sure enough."

But Beckie preferred to make her rope a bond of love, if possible, and holding out her hand to Eva, she said, "Let's be friends, Eva, won't we? I dare say you'll out-rank me when the term closes, and I shall be glad if you do for your sake. Only I must do my very best, for I want to be a teacher, you know." Eva's jealousy was overcome by Beckie's good-nature, and the two girls were afterwards fast friends.

"Much obliged, Ralph," said Esther. "You have found me a nice audience, and your fortune shall be the first. Here it is,—'Helpful in counsel.' Oh! that means you'll be a lawyer, I suppose. And here is Phineas close by,—'Mouth of brass.' Phin. Blake, you'll be a trumpeter, if I can read the fates aright."

"What shall I be?" asked little Philip Leighton. "Isn't my name next?"

"Yes; you'll be 'A lover of horses;' but please don't be a horse-jockey, or a circus-rider, will you, Phil? Who comes next?"

"What does Deborah mean?" asked a bright-eyed girl, peeping over Esther's shoulder.

"A bee," Esther replied. "Oh! you'll be a busy little housekeeper, I think, Debbie."

"Is mine there?" asked Josie Lee.

"Josephine? Yes, here it is,—'He shall add.' That means you'll be a great mathematician, Josie. Ruthie, your name means 'beauty.'"

"But I heard a minister say once that it meant 'amiable,' and I like that meaning better," replied Ruth; and there was a bright blush upon the sweet face of the timid little girl, which made it really very beautiful to look upon.

"Mark means 'a hammer,'" Esther continued. "Your brother Mark will be a carpenter, Ruthie, and Ike a ventriloquist, or something like that, for Isaac means 'laughing.' Asa Brown, you'll be a doctor, for it is written here in my book of fate; and Mattie and Mollie Brown,—well, the meanings of Martha and Mary are 'bitterness' and 'rebellion.' No matter, girls. They're nice Bible names; so that's worth something."

Just then, Dave Benton, a tall, strong boy,

called from the outside of the group, "Make way, make way here, for David and Jonathan to approach the fortune-teller;" and in a moment he presented himself, bringing the little twin-brothers,—Johnnie Gray upon one arm, and Nathan upon the other.

Dave's pun upon the names brought down the house; and when the cheering was over, Esther said, gravely, "Brother Dave, I'm ashamed of you to make such an uproar. Your name means 'beloved,' and as for John and Nathan, I guess their mother must have looked in the dictionary to find twin names for them, for John means 'Gracious gift of Jehovah,' and Nathan 'A gift.'"

"Is Sarah there?" asked a tall, erect girl, whose arm was locked in that of another of just her own height.

"Oh yes! Sarah means 'A princess,' and, Addie, yours means 'A princess' too. No wonder you're so intimate, girls. You'll surely think you're twins in reality after this. And your brother Luther, Sallie, his name means 'illustrious;' well, it ought to really, for my Sunday School teacher said, last Sunday, that Martin Luther was one of the greatest men that ever lived."

"I have been thinking," said Beckie, "how strange it is that almost all of us have Bible names. I never noticed it before. I always knew mine came from the Bible, but thought I was an exception to the rule."

"Mine isn't in the Bible, I guess," said Annie Ray.

"Why, isn't it the same as Anna?" asked Beckie. "And there was Anna, the prophetess in Christ's time, you know."

"Yes, and Anna is shortened from Hannah," said Esther, who had found it in her book; "and she was the mother of little Samuel."

"Is Libbie in the Bible too?" asked a little six-year-old girl, who had been very much interested in listening to what the older girls were saying.

"Yes, indeed!" said Esther. "Elisabeth was mother of John the Baptist. Don't you remember?"

"What does it mean in your book?" asked the child.

Just then the bell rang, but as they went in to school, Esther told little Libbie that her name meant "Worshipper of God."

When Libbie went to bed that night, she asked, "Mamma, what is a worshipper?"

They had a long talk about it; and then her mother kissed her good-night, and said, "And so my little Libbie will never forget to pray to her heavenly Father every night and morning, I hope."

There was one boy who had stood listening upon the outside of the group that morning,—Andrew Miller. His name had not been mentioned, but when he went into school, he looked it out. "Andrew,—Courageous." That was splendid. He liked to be thought brave. But when he was on his way home from school, he was met by two boys, who

proposed to him to do something that evening which he was sure his mother would disapprove. He hesitated, and began to make some excuse, but when the boys taunted him with being a coward, he was sorely tempted. Just then he remembered his name,—"Andrew,—courageous." He knew his mother would say, "'If sinners entice thee, consent thou not,' be brave enough to say *no*, my boy." He did say *No*, and then ran away so fast that the other boys did not attempt to follow.

When Andrew told his mother about it, she said—"The dear Saviour helped you, my boy; and now how happy I should be, if you would take one more step. Read about Andrew, the disciple of Christ, in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, and resolve, as he did, to 'follow Jesus,' and then try to lead others to the Saviour also."

WHAT THE ELEPHANT CAN DO.

WHAT a queer sight! An elephant dragging a plough! The elephant is put to many uses. If he cannot thread a needle, he can pick one up from the ground with his trunk. His sense of touch is very delicate.

An elephant was once left to take care of a little boy baby. This he did with wonderful care and gentleness. If the baby strayed off too far, the elephant would stretch out his long trunk and bring the little wanderer back.

In the year 1863 an elephant was employed at a station in India to pile up heavy logs, a work which these animals will do with great neatness and speed. The superintendent suspected the keeper of stealing the rice given for the animal's food. The keeper, of course, denied the charge; but the elephant, who was standing by, laid hold of a large wrapper which the man wore around his waist, and tearing it open let out some quarts of rice which the fellow had stowed away under the folds.

So closely do elephants remember the meaning of the signs which have been taught them that they will instantly obey the gentlest signal, such as the lifting up of a finger or the slightest touch on their ears.

Mr. Jesse, the keeper of an elephant in London, was once giving him some potatoes, when one fell on the floor just beyond the sweep of the creature's trunk. There was a wall a few inches behind the potato; and blowing strongly, the sagacious animal sent it so hard against the wall that the potato rebounded and on the recoil came back near enough for the elephant to seize it.

The elephant likes music, easily learns to mark the time, and to move in step to the sound of drums. His smell is exquisite, and he likes perfumes of all kinds, and, above all, fragrant flowers; he chooses them, picks them one by one and makes bouquets of them, and, after having relished the smell, carries them to his mouth and seems to taste them.