

YOUNG FOLKS

WHICH LOVED BEST.

"I love you, mother," said little John. Then, forgetting work his cap went on.

And he was off to the garden swing. Leaving his mother the wood to bring.

"I love you mother," said rosy Nell; "I love you better than tongue can tell."

Then she teased and pouted full half a day. Till her mother rejoiced when she went to play.

"I love you mother," said little Fan; "To-day I'll help you all I can; How glad I am that school doesn't keep."

So she rocked the baby till it fell asleep.

Then, stepping softly, she took the broom. And swept the floor and dusted the room;

Busy and happy all day was she, Helpful and cheerful as child could be.

"I love you mother," again they said— Three little children going to bed; How do you think that mother guessed Which of them really loved her best?

THE OLD HAIR TRUNK.

The old hair trunk stands up in grandma's garret. It is such a funny thing, covered with brown and white hair like my pony, with leather bands on it all nailed down with brass-headed nails. It smells of camphor and is always fast locked. There is a story about it that grandma sometimes tells us. It happened when she was a little girl like me. There were twelve children in the family, some quite big boys, and down like a pair of steps to the twins. The twins were five years old—a little girl and boy so much alike that if they had the same clothes on no one could tell them apart.

Of course they were the pets of the house, and they were the funniest little creatures, always playing jokes on their elders.

One of their favorite tricks was to hide themselves where no one could find them; in the queerest nooks and corners, under tables with clothes on them, on closet shelves, in amongst the hay in the barn. Once they got right down into a great bush and stayed there for hours. After a while the family stopped being frightened about them when they were missing, and one day when about ten o'clock in the morning some one said that Arthur and Edith had hidden themselves again, even their mother only laughed.

"They'll find themselves at dinner time," she said. But dinner time came and they did not appear. People went all about the house and garden calling "Edie! Artie! Come to dinner! Succotash, apple dumplings! Come, children!" But there was no answer.

The twins were so fond of these dishes that the family knew that they would not stay away if they heard they were on the table. So every one began to be frightened, and ran out into the fields and out into the woods, calling and calling, and some went to the neighbors' houses, and their father put a ladder into the easterly and went down to look. They poked the hay over, they looked in the horses' stalls; they were sure that something dreadful had happened to the poor little twins at last. If they had only got lost, that was bad enough; even grown folks were afraid of being lost in the thick, lonely woods, but besides there was a dangerous place by the river, and there was an old cistern. There were lost of dangerous places when they began to think, and now they were nearly frightened to death.

Before night all the neighbors were out looking for the lost twins, beating down into cisterns. Lanterns shone all over the fields and meadows, but still the children were not found.

And, oh! to think of it! Night passed and the sun arose again, and not a trace of them could be found.

Their poor mother, who had been running about all night, now gave up hope; she fainted away, and the doctor was called and said she was very ill.

All the girls were crying, and some of the little boys. Grandma said she never saw anyone look so white as her father did, and she herself was trembling all over. She had to stay with the poor, sick mother. But she could not help thinking that if she could go out and look for the lost twins she would find them dead or alive.

That was an awful thought that they might be lying dead somewhere, like the Babes in the Wood, that they were so fond of hearing about.

Now and then she would leave her mother's side and go to the window and look out; still she saw the men searching everywhere. Yes, and the women and children, too, and knew that there was no news, and so night came again.

Her mother in a red-hot fever was moaning in her bed; she herself was faint with hunger for there was no meals cooked and she had forgotten to get even a piece of bread since early morning. She was very sick, too, and she was walking up and down the room to keep herself awake, when all of a sudden there came into her head the words of a song her father used to sing: "The Mistletoe Bough." It is a song of a lady who played hide and seek on Christmas evening and hid herself in an old oak chest with a spring lock.

No one thought of looking for her there—and she died and even her bones were not found for years and years.

It seemed to my grandma that the words were really sung in her ear, and with them came the thought of the old hair trunk. One day she had seen the twins get into it; perhaps that was where they would be found.

In a minute she had caught up the candle and rushed up the garret stairs. She was so weak that she fell down twice, but she got to the place where the hair trunk stood, and with all her strength forced the cover up and looked in, and there were the children, and she thought that they were dead. But when she stooped down to lift them up, oh, joy! joy! they stirred, and Artie said in a weak voice, "Oh, Sissy Jane is blekfus weady? We is so hungry!"

Then grandma got strength enough to scream so that some one heard her, and the children were carried down stairs. If the old hair trunk had not had so many cracks and holes in it the little ones would have smothered long before. As it was they were nearly starved and Edith was too weak to speak, but a little feeding and nursing made them all right and the sight of them cured their mother, and all over the neighborhood they blew the trumpets and rang bells and hurrahed because the twins were found, and after that the big hair trunk was always kept fast locked.

ENGLAND'S QUEER VILLAGES.

One Town in Which There is Neither Church, Chapel nor Schoolhouse.

Scattered throughout the area of Great Britain are numerous towns and villages of a curious character. One large village actually consists of old railway carriages, even the little mission chapel being built out of four large-horse car trucks. Another village, with a population of 1,100 and a rateable value of £8,000, has neither church, chapel nor school, the only public edifice being a pillar letter box.

Villages with a single inhabitant are not unknown. At Skiddaw, in Cumberland, there is a solitary householder, who cannot vote because there is no overseer to prepare a voters' list, and no church or other public building on which to publish one; while the only ratepayer in a certain rural Northumberland parish has recently declined to bear the expense of repairing a road because he considers it quite good enough for himself.

In the Isle of Ely there is a little parish which has been somewhat contemptuously described as "a portion of land with three or four houses, and, perhaps, twelve inhabitants."

This place has no roads at all, and is consequently put to no expense in keeping them in repair. As a matter of fact, there are no expenses of any kind, and no rates.

One of the most remarkable villages in this country is Kempton, near Bedford, which is seven miles long, and extremely straggling. To walk from one end of the village to the other occupies two hours.

Sometimes whole villages will practically disappear. A little Shropshire village has gradually sunk until now it is almost out of sight. It is built on a disused coal pit, and the sinking goes on steadily every year. Now and then a tottering house is propped up to keep it standing, but in spite of all precautions buildings are constantly falling to the ground, and in course of time doubtless nothing will be left but a few bricks to mark the spot where a village once stood.

There are plenty of deserted villages throughout the country. A diversion of trade into other channels is sometimes sufficient to produce this effect. Not many years ago the proprietors of an iron works at a townlet near Sheffield, being unable to obtain certain concessions from a railway company, removed their works. Shortly afterward that the place was to let, and the windows of many of the houses were boarded up.

THE MOUSE IN THE PIANO.

It Ran Out at the Sound of Classical Music, but Not for Two Steps.

"Speaking of mice," said Mr. Biffleby, "a friend of mine that owns an old-fashioned piano tells me that when it was being played upon the other day a mouse ran out of it and scurried around on the top, and then ran down a curtain whose folds touch the piano at one end. The mouse had done this twice in a single day."

Search was made in the interior of the instrument for a mouse's nest, but none was found. Perhaps the mouse had only just selected this place and had not yet begun building when it was first started by the sound of the strings. However, that may be, it still comes back, and it comes out and runs away only when classical music is played, and not for two steps and that sort of thing.

As to the accuracy of these facts there can, of course, be no doubt. The only question is my own mind is as to whether the mouse's failure to come out when the two steps and so on are played really indicates a preference for the lighter forms of music, or that—err—the mouse isn't there."

WHAT SHE LEARNED.

Mamma—Well, Elsie, what did you learn at school to-day?
Elsie—Learned to spell.
Mamma—Now, what did you learn to spell?

Elsie—Man.
Mamma—And how do you spell man?
Elsie, promptly—M-a-n, man.
Mamma—Now how do you spell boy?
Elsie, after a few moments' reflection—The same way only in littler letters.

PURELY CANADIAN NEWS.

INTERESTING ITEMS ABOUT OUR OWN COUNTRY.

Gathered from Various Points from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

London's total fire loss for the year was \$58,122.65.

Brantford's total loss by fire last year was \$55,427.25.

Knox church, Stratford, will be improved \$6,500 worth.

Stratford's new Y. M. C. A. building is nearly completed.

Galt will spend several thousand dollars in cement walks this year.

Burglars got thirty cents in a raid on the Brantford Soap Company's office.

Hamilton workmen are protesting against the employment of outsiders by the city.

A syndicate of dairymen near Kingston will build and operate a cheese factory.

J. C. Whitney, of Detroit, has leased the new Grand Opera House in St. Thomas.

Three London girls found guilty of vagrancy have been sentenced to a year each.

Klondike teas are the latest church fad in rural districts. Boiled icicles are a feature.

Nell McEwan, of Vancouver, died from the effects of being knocked down by a tram car.

Mrs. Dr. Bingham of Hamilton died in the Galt Hospital after an illness of two years.

Fort William sports are revelling in anticipations of a new race track and a summer meet.

Rossland now licenses saloons for \$950 for six months and hotels for \$150 for the same period.

It is proposed that Brantford adopt a scheme for the uniform treatment of all its industries.

Woodstock has two damage cases on her hands, arising from people falling on slippery sidewalks.

Kingston's new elevator is being rushed to completion. It will have a capacity of 800,000 bushels.

Willie Jones, a ten-year-old boy, had three fingers jerked off by a pulley in Hunter's lively stable, London.

Detective W. K. Davis, of Toronto, was in Kingston looking for a man the other day. The man saw him first.

The Standard Oil Company has bought 9,000,000 feet of lumber from the Booth Co. on the Ottawa river.

Eighteen oil wells have been sunk along the London road to the west of Sarnia, and all are producing well.

Brantford Ministerial Alliance is taking steps to stop the distribution of theatre tickets among school children.

The work of erecting a new light-house on Snake Island will not be proceeded with. The reason given is lack of ice.

The Woman's Hospital Aid of Brantford has set aside two-thirds of its funds for the establishment of an isolation hospital.

George H. Dewitt, who was sent to the penitentiary from Guelph in the spring of 1896, has been released owing to ill-health.

Fred Rentschler, a Guelph cabinet-maker, lost the tip of his thumb and two fingers through trying to operate a circular saw.

Brantford street railway during the past four months carried 12,000 more passengers than during a corresponding period last year.

ills to buy her trousseau, and lost the purse. It fell into honest hands, and there is joy in one Woodstock home.

Grand Forks, B.C., owing to certain irregularities in the municipal election, must do it all over a fair and then petition the legislative assembly to allow the chosen council to take their seats.

The Carpenters' Union of Hamilton has passed a resolution, expressing appreciation of the provision made by the City Council for the payment of current wages as set by the trades in city contracts.

A belt two feet in width broke in Burr Bros. furniture factory at Guelph the other day. Beyond smashing various articles of furniture and frightening the employees nearly to death, no harm was done.

On the authority of Capt. G. Johnston, chief engineer of the Richelieu & Ontario Navigation Co., it is learned that the company has withdrawn the suit against Belleville relating to the small pox affair of last summer.

CELEBRATED CROWNS.

MANY AND VARIOUS KINDS AT THE PRESENT TIME.

Roumania's Is Made of Gun Metal—Portugal's Is Worth \$5,000,000—The "Iron Crown"—England Possesses Two Crowns.

"Who would not risk his life for a crown?" one of the French conspirators was reported to have exclaimed to Napoleon, when that mighty man shrank back from the coup d'etat which would either place him upon the throne of France or submerge him in overwhelming disaster. If the question were asked to-day, the ordinary man would reply that it depended much upon the crown, for of late years many of the lesser diadems of Europe have actually gone a-begging. Considered merely from the standpoint of intrinsic value there are many and various kinds of crowns extant in the world at the present time. For instance, the crown of Roumania, is composed of gun metal, made in fact out of a bit of old cannon captured at Plovna; that of Portugal has gems in it which have caused it to be valued at \$5,000,000.

The Iron Crown of Lombardy, which by the way, is the oldest diadem in Europe, is only six inches in diameter. The question usually asked by those who behold it for the first time is, Where is the iron? for to all appearances the crown consists of a broad circle of gold ornamented by an enamelling of flowers. This however, is but the outward case; within the coronet rests the iron itself. It is fashioned out of one of the nails by which Christ was fastened to the cross. The crown now rests in the Cathedral of Monza, Italy, and is under the care of the monks of the establishment. These holy men call attention to the fact that while no attempt has ever been made to clean the baser metal, still there is no sign of rust upon it—a fact which conclusively proves

ITS SACRED ORIGIN.

England possesses but two crowns which are ever used. One of these is the British state crown, the other the crown of England. The former is reserved for important occasions, while the latter is used at times demanding less magnificence. The state crown, the one used by Queen Victoria when ascending the throne, was made especially for that purpose, and weighs but thirty-nine ounces. It is valued at \$1,800,000. The jewels with which it is studded were supplied mostly from older diadems of the realm, and include nearly 8,000 stones. The cap is of crimson velvet, lined with white silk, and has an ermine border. To some of the gems blazing in this insignia of royal power gruesome and romantic legends are attached. For instance, the famous ruby given by Pedro the Cruel to the Black Prince is said to have come into the former's hands by foul means. The story runs that Pedro invited the Red King of Granada to his palace and murdered his guest for the sake of the wonderful gem. Perhaps the sinister influence which might attach itself to this jewel is counteracted by its companion, the immense sapphire which is famed to have come from the ring of Edward the Confessor. So great were the virtues it was supposed to have gained through its contact with this holy man that it was generally believed that the stone endowed its possessor with power over various diseases. In connection with the diadems of England might be mentioned the ancient crown of Scotland, which still may be seen in Edinburgh Castle. It was made in the fourteenth century, and of course was used at the coronation of Mary, Queen of Scots.

The Russian imperial crown is a wonderful piece of workmanship. The Czardine being regarded by his people as to a great extent a religious as well as a temporal lord, it is not surprising to find the badge of sovereignty modelled after the patriarchal mitre. Five beautiful diamonds resting on a

MAGNIFICENT RUBY.

form the cross which composes its summit. Diamonds and pearls of the utmost perfection and a sapphire which, it is claimed, has no rival, render this diadem one unsurpassed in magnificence.

The crown possessed by the German Emperor is of peculiar shape. The cap rests upon eight shields, four ornamented with diamond crosses and the

others with the figure of the imperial eagle, while above the four hood-like wings with diamonds support a globe surmounted by a golden cross.

Singularly beautiful, both in shape and ornamentation, is the crown of the Emperor of Austria. From the coronet there arise eight jewelled ornaments, each topped by a superb pearl. The hoop of the cap is surmounted by an enormous sapphire. The lining is of ruby colored velvet. The Emperor is also the possessor of the sacred crown of Hungary. This is, in fact, two crowns, which have been welded together. The first is a golden diadem ornamented with pearls and precious stones, the other a Byzantine coronet. At the back of the Byzantine coronet is an enormous sapphire surrounded by four oblong green stones of some unknown kind. Lapidaries disagree as to what these remarkable gems may be. This crown has been the subject of many extraordinary adventures. In 1848 it fell into the hands of Kossuth and mysteriously disappeared. Rumor had it that Kossuth had carried it off, broken it up, and sold the jewels in Turkey. Others declared that it had been taken to London. A Government commission was appointed to inquire into the mystery, but discovered nothing until 1853, when a countryman offered to disclose the secret of its hiding place, and led the searchers to a tree near Orsova, in the roots of which Kossuth had caused it to be buried.

One of the most beautiful crowns in Europe is that of the King of Denmark. This while comparatively simple in design is of the most artistic workmanship. The leaves by which the circlet is surmounted are curved and veined by precious stones, and each leaf is ornamented in turn by a

MAGNIFICENT JEWEL.

The King of the Belgians is an uncrowned monarch. There is no coronation function in the exact sense of the word. The feature of the ceremony consists in the King's swearing to preserve the constitution and laws of the country.

Spain had in early times no royal diadem nor does its crown-to-day figure in the coronation services, the sovereign taking an oath similar to that which forms the chief feature of the Belgian installation.

The Vatican treasures contain a variety of papal tiaras, some of enormous value, with from the beautiful workmanship and precious stones that adorn them, are rendered priceless. Among this collection is one presented to Pius IX. by Queen Isabella of Spain. It is valued at more than \$1,000,000 and weighs over three pounds. Another treasure is the papal tiara presented by Napoleon to Pius VII. One of its gems is the largest emerald known.

The Sultan possesses no crown, coronation being unknown in Turkey. In place of this is substituted the investiture of the monarch with the sword of Othman. The sabre is girt around the new Sultan with the words: "Take it with faith, for ye have received it from God."

Outside of Europe the crown becomes a rarity. The crown of the Shah of Persia, if such it may be called, is of an altogether exceptional shape and size. Indeed, it is most frequently described by those who have seen it as a bonnet. It is composed of cloth of gold, adorned with strings of hanging precious stones with here and there tufts of feathers ornamented by diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls.

LETTER THAT NORA DICTATED.

Was the Servant Girl Ignorant or Was she Very Clever.

A young housekeeper had an amusing experience with her first cook, an excellent woman from the Emerald Isle, who after a few weeks of employment in her service asked her mistress to write a letter for her to the folks across the sea.

"I do be mindin' the pots an' pans so much that I can't spell me words straight, an' as for writin' I nivir was a master hand at the pen. If it's the same to you, ma'am, I'll be after sayin' some few secrets an' it would oblige me if so as you'd be closin' your ears."

"All right, Nora. You can say anything you please and I won't listen to a word."

"Thankee, ma'am. Thin you might begin wid a fine sentiment about not forgettin' them as is left behind. An' tell thin there's money here just for the workin' for 't an' as fine things to ate an' drink an' wear as needs be, an' this is lettin' thin know that I've found a good place, barrin' the truth; but the missis doesn't have any sense, she being young and inexperienced like."

"But, Nora—"

"I'm not through yet, ma'am. She do be that foolish about taking care of her house that childer 3-years old could learn her, an' she gives me orders that would turn the heads of the blessed saints themselves, an' can't cook no more nor the pig in the pen at home, an' hasn't the patience to learn. But I learn an' here's wishin' meself good luck in the undertakin'."

"Is that all, Nora?" asked her mistress meekly, as the cook waited for inspiration.

"Put in my love and duty to the old folks an' the byes an' tell thin when they write to direct to me here, for though I nivir tackled a bigger or a harder job I'm thinkin' I'll stay by the missis till she gets a fitchen education."

Nora stayed and is well satisfied both with her place and her mistress, but the latter often wonders whether the contents of that letter were dictated by a spirit of much knowledge or real ignorance. In either case the scheme worked to the advantage of the courageous Nora.