

Young Canada Club

By DIXIE PATTON

POOR OLD YEAR

When this paper reaches most of you, the Old Year will be tottering on his legs and by the time another week has rushed around, he will be dead and buried for ever and ever.

I always feel sorry for the poor Old Year that he can't stay around a bit and see the fun. For life is such good fun. I don't care how hard up we are or how hard worked, life is one big funny, as the Chinese boy said of Hallowe'en.

I never can be quite sure which I loved best as a child, the cold crisp winters or the lovely lazy summers, but I rather think both.

I liked to go out early in the spring and sit down on the sunny side of a hill to snare gophers. It wasn't such bad sport just to go for the cows on a summer evening and it was great to drive home at harvest time in the moonshine and dream dreams of what we would be when we grew up.

Looking back on those dear old, queer old times today, the thing that I am gladdest for of all is that we lived on a farm instead of in a town or city.

DIXIE PATTON.

THE LOST PRINCESS

Once upon a time there lived a king who had married for his wife the most beautiful and good princess in all the world. The king and queen loved each other very much, and they loved their little son and daughter, too. Their son was a little boy of three years, and his sister was a wee baby. She was the image of her mother, therefore the prettiest baby ever seen.

Now, not very far away from the king's palace lived an ugly and bad old witch. On the baby's christening day the old witch was present and when she saw the beauty of the babe she grew jealous, for her own daughter was as ugly as herself.

So one day when the king and queen went out to a royal wedding, the old witch went to the castle and when the nurse went out to fetch the little prince, Alfred, in to tea, the wicked witch snatched up the little princess, Grace, and ran off. Thinking that perhaps the king would discover his little daughter if she did not flee, she got on board a ship called "The Swallow" and sailed to a distant land, with her son, daughter and the little princess.

Day by day the little princess grew in tallness and beauty. The wicked old witch never gave her an hour's schooling, but made her work hard. Of course, she never told Grace that she was not her own mother or that she was a princess. So at seventeen years of age Grace had to work like a slave, with poor food and thin clothes. The witch's son and daughter knew she was far prettier than either of themselves, so they were very jealous. They called her an ugly brute and such names, and the princess, who had never had the chance to see herself in a looking-glass, thought they despised her because she was uglier than they.

Now, the witch's daughter was very gay and went to a great many balls and dances, and so dirtied many clothes. Poor Grace had to wash them all, which took her from five o'clock in the morning till ten at night every Monday. After that she was obliged to weave or spin for two hours, and get up at four o'clock (thus affording her only four hours sleep) and drive a herd of goats to their pasture on a hill; and during the day-time, while she watched the goats, she was commanded to weave cloth.

In this part of the land lived a fairy called the "Comforting Fairy," because she was a comfort and blessing to all in need. Finding that the poor princess needed comfort, she at once came to her as she sat in the field, and watched that no bad elves stole her cloth whilst she drove the goats down to the stream.

This fairy could not work wonders and such, but she was very clever. She found out Grace's history, told her she was a princess and that her name was Grace and bade her remember it as it might prove useful some time. The princess was very good and did not complain to the fairy about her food. But the fairy saw she was thinly clothed, so she made her a warm cape that she would not take cold and be ill. But fearing the witch might steal it, Bluebell the fairy took it every night and hid it

in a tree with an owl to be on the watch for thieves.

Now, the witch's son was very crafty, so (not knowing that Grace had a brother) he thought it would be wise to marry the princess, so that when her father died he would come and claim the throne. So one Wednesday morning, as Grace sat spinning, the witch's ugly son came up to her and told her what he wanted. But Grace steadily refused. First the wicked man asked her, then tried to urge her, and then threatened her life. But the princess replied every time, "I will not marry you."

"Won't you, you'll see to-night if you won't," and shaking his fist angrily at her, he went away.

Then the princess burst into tears and sobbed, "What shall I do? Oh, what shall I do?"

Just then a knight in armor rode by and seeing her in tears, he left his horse with one of his servants and came to ask what was wrong.

He said to her, "Fair lady, why do you weep?"

The poor princess could only sob, but by and by she quieted down and told her tale.

"Fair lady," said the knight, "yonder stands my horse. Make haste, come with me and I will take you to a place of safety!"

Grace needed no second bidding, for in a moment she had sprung to the saddle, with the knight in front of her, and was riding swiftly away.

"What is thy name, fair lady?" asked the knight, when they came out of a wood through which they had been riding.

"A fairy told me my name was Grace and that I was a princess, whom the old witch stole while I was still a baby," answered Grace.

The knight gave a cry of joy. "I," said he, "am Alfred, thy brother. You are she for whom I have been searching these four years. I assured my father I would not come home till I found you; but now let us hasten on together lest the witch should discover us!"

After a long, toilsome journey, during which Grace was ailing, they reached the palace of Grace's babyhood.

The king and queen, who had heard they were coming, were ready at the gate, and embraced Grace with tender affection; crying and weeping for joy they led her into the palace, where they all lived happy ever after.

ELSIE AVERILL, Age 12. Clanwilliam, Man.

LOUISE, THE CHILD OF THE RHINE

By the river Rhine, in Germany, there once lived a child called Louise, who lived with her parents. Not far from the river stood the house. It was large, roomy and built of brick, for Louise's father, David, was very rich, as he owned large vineyards. Louise was very happy, for she loved her parents.

Soon, however, her father lost all his wealth. At last he decided to sail to America, which was reported to be a wonderful country. He travelled to a seaport and went on board a huge steamer. Louise and her mother went, too. One bright day they started for America. Louise was sick for a time, but she soon got well. Her father called it seasickness. Louise liked the ship and enjoyed the trip. She saw many icebergs and boats. At New York they landed and after a tiresome trip by rail they got to their homestead. While Louise's father was building their cabin, which was of logs, they had to sleep in the wagon, covered by blankets. When it was finished there was a great difference between their past and present home. It was a large, one-storied house, consisting of but one room. It was not far from town. Next a barn was built. It was like the house. Louise and her father killed a bear and kept its lovely black skin.

I will not tell you of all Louise's difficulties, but let it suffice to say that Louise is very wealthy and lives in New York. She still has the bear skin. DOUGLAS DARVILLE. Alvinston, Ont., age 12.

SUFFICIENT IN THEMSELVES Great thoughts, like great deeds, need no trumpet.—Bailey.

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