

"Come, Tom, we've no time to lose. See if there is rope enough in the corner there for a coil to throw ashore when we get to the landing at Woodstock, and put the paddles aboard. Let me take the baby, mother. Now, boys, jump on. There's room enough for a regiment. You'll have to make up your minds to stand a good deal of water the next hour. Push her off!"

The raft swung slowly round from its fastenings, and in another minute struck the shore current, which, though less swift than that in the middle of the river, was yet so strong as to make safe navigation a difficult task. The rain came with such blinding force that it was almost impossible to see the shore, and the increasing dusk threatened to grow into total darkness before the end of their perilous journey was reached.

It was barely three-quarters of an hour from the time they left their starting point, when the raft touched the landing place at Woodstock, and Tom, rope in hand, jumped on shore to throw the loop over the post which had always stood there.

To his dismay, the post was gone, and as the raft swept along he felt the rope slip through his fingers, in spite of his endeavors to hold it. There was another point, lower down, where the raft might strike, if his father could keep it out of the current by his single arm. Beyond that the river made a sudden bend, and if the landing should be missed there, no earthly power could keep them from going down the river.

He hurried to the nearest houses of the village and gave the alarm, and then flew down the street, which ran parallel with the river, to the lower landing. He was just in time to see his father spring from the raft, holding the rope, and, rushing in the water up to his waist, caught hold of it to assist. Their united strength bade fair to bring the raft into the eddy, and the shouts of the rapidly-advancing men, who had been roused by Tom's brief warning, gave them additional energy. Two minutes later half a dozen strong arms were aiding them, and the raft was slowly drawing to the shore, when the rope suddenly parted.

With a wild scream the mother rose, with her baby in her arms, as if to plunge into the river. Then, seeming to remember the children who clung to her garments, she sank down again, and the next moment the fierce current had swept them away in the darkness.

There was but one hope more. If the ferry, five miles lower down, could be reached in time, they might be saved; and the almost distracted father and son, mounted on horses provided by sympathizing friends, galloped there.

Too late! The ferry-keeper had seen some black object rush by in the darkness, and heard cries for help, which he was unable to give. They were in the hands of God, and He only could help them.

All that night Farmer Allen paced the floor of his desolate house. The friends who came to comfort him found their endeavors vain. He wished to be alone with his sorrow. Tom had remained at the ferry determined to take a boat at early daylight and follow down the river.

There was little sleep that night in Woodstock, and long before the usual time for the village to be astir little groups were abroad in the rain, discussing the sad event of the preceding evening. Suddenly there was a stir in the direction of the little telegraph office, and the operator who slept there came rushing out with a sealed envelope in his hand, in a state of great excitement.

"Who'll carry this over to Farmer Allen's?" he shouted.

The message was intrusted to one of the fleetest-footed boys of the village, who sped over the mile which lay between the office and Farmer Allen's like a greyhound.

"Here's something for you," he panted, as he burst into the house without knocking.

The farmer took it mechanically, without a thought that it concerned those whom he already looked upon as in heaven. Breaking

the seal, he opened the folded slip of paper and glanced at its contents. Then with a fervent "Thank God!" he fell upon his knees and the feelings so long pent-up found vent in tears of thankfulness.

The message was a brief one. It ran:

FREDERICTON, N. B., April 19.

JOHN ALLEN—Your wife and children were picked up at light this morning, on a shingle-raft, three miles above this city. All safe. ANSWER.

Swift as was the feet of the messenger, they had hard work to keep pace with John Allen's on the return. The news spread like wild-fire, and within half an hour everybody in Woodstock knew the contents of the dispatch.

Little more need be said. Farmer Allen followed the message he sent without the loss of an hour. That was Sunday morning, and it was Thursday night before the parted household again met beneath the roof whose few hours desolation made it yet the more sacred and precious to all.—C. E. Hurd, in *Inter-Ocean*.

RAT PIE.—The Rev. J. G. Wood, M. A., recently delivered the first of a series of lectures

on "Natural Science," in Dr. Channing Pearce's Geological Museum, Brixton Rise. Having, in the course of the lecture, to allude to the hedgehog and the squirrel Mr. Wood observed that these animals, when dead and properly cooked, formed excellent articles of human food. Few people were, however, aware that when similarly treated the flesh of a rat had a finer flavor and was altogether a greater delicacy than either of them. There was literally nothing of which he (the lecturer) was so fond of as a rat pie. This was a dish which frequently made its appearance on his table, and was enjoyed by all the members of his family. He had several friends, who, like himself, had overcome their prejudice, and thoroughly enjoyed a good helping of rat pie. He remembered one most interesting case of a whole family, except the parents, who were very fond of this dish. They were in very good circumstances, owning large grain stores on the Medway.

DEPTH OF EARTHQUAKES.—The recent earthquake at Virginia City was not noticed at all in the mining depths, but only by people on the surface. Their famous earthquake of some years ago, which shook down chimneys, fire walls, cracked brick buildings, and did other damage, was merely noticed by some of the miners working in the upper levels, but it did no damage, not even shaking down loose stones and earth. The station men in the various shafts felt it the strongest, and the deepest point where it was noticed was by the station tender at the 900-foot level of the Imperial-Empire shaft—900 feet below the surface. He said it felt like a sudden faint throb or pulsation of the air, as though a blast had been let off somewhere at a distance, above, below or in some indefinite direction. In some of the mines the shock was not noticed at all, even by the station men. Commenting on this peculiar fact at the time, the *Gold Hill News* remarked that the earthquake seemed to be an electrical disturbance proceeding from the atmosphere and not from the depths of the earth.

THE WAY TO AVOID CALUMNY.—"If any one speaks ill of thee," said Epictetus, "consider whether he hath truth on his side; and if so, reform thyself, that his censures may not affect thee." When Anaximander was told that the very boys laughed at his singing, "Ay," said he, "then I must learn to sing better." Plato, being told that he had many enemies who spoke ill of him, said "It is no matter; I will live so that none shall believe them." Hearing, at another time, that an intimate friend of his had spoken detractively of him, he said, "I am sure he would not do it if he had not some reason for it." This is the surest as well as the noblest way of drawing the sting out of a reproach, and the true method of preparing a man for that great and only relief against the pains of calumny—a good conscience.

THE WISHING CAP.

Dolly, here's a wishing cap!
I'll tell you all about it!
I've only just to wear it, and
Be careful not to doubt it.

Tommy read aloud, last night,
About a little fellow
Who had one that was just like this,
Black velvet trimmed with yellow.

Won't papa be surprised, when I
Tell him his cap for smoking
Will give him anything he wants!
He'll think I'm only joking.

Now, dear, what shall we wish for first?
I'd like to have a pony,
So you and I could ride about,
Our own two selves, alone.

Why don't it come? You naughty doll!
I wish I had't spoken!
You've doubted the dear wishing-cap,
And now the charm is broken!

—Wide Awake.

CHAFF.

A WIDOW refuses a foppish bore; she is not ready to be married yet, she says. "Madame, I am your servant, I can wait." "Oh, well; you look as though you did. At what restaurant, pray?"

A SELECTMAN of a suburban town, while superintending some repairs and improvements of a highway, indicated a spot near a small stream of water as "a good place to put down a cul-pit."—*Boston Transcript*.

It is now said by a scientific authority, that sleep commences in the feet and extends to the head. Possibly the custom of sitting with the feet toward the pulpit may have something to do with it.—*Turners Falls Reporter*.

At a recent performance in the New Haven Opera House, as a number of students left their seats between the acts, a good lady was heard to observe: "Ain't it too bad those fellows have to go home and go to studying!"

In a certain Massachusetts normal school the word "eucharist" was given out not long ago to be spelled and defined. More than three-fourths of the gir-bag parlor—young ladies—wrote, "euchrest, a person who plays euchre."—*Boston Transcript*.

Two painters, meeting: "What have you got in the exhibition this year?" "Oh! still life, a pie, some oysters and a lobster." "Why didn't you paint a Limburger cheese, as you did last year?" "Well, I did commence one, but I couldn't make my model keep its pose."

SPELLING and defining bee. Leader (giving out a word and defining it, in order to prevent misapprehension)—Hennery, a place to keep hens. Correct speller—H-e-n, hen, u-e-r, ner, hennery, y, hennery. Leader—Chicory. Incorrect speller (defining in order to promote misapprehension)—A place to keep chickens. Disturbance.

PURSUITS OF PLEASURE.—We smile at the ignorance of the savage who cuts down the tree in order to reach its fruits; but the fact is that a blunder of this description is made by every person who is over-eager and impatient in the pursuit of pleasure. To such the present moment is everything, and the future is nothing; he borrows, therefore from the future at a most usurious and ruinous interest; and the consequence is that he finds the tone of his feelings impaired, his self-respect diminished, his health of mind and body destroyed, and life reduced to its very dregs; at a time when, humanly speaking, the greatest portion of its comforts should be still before him.—*Channing*.

St. LOUIS is to have a new museum of fine arts. Ground was broken last week. The material to be used is stone from the Bedford quarries of Indiana. It will be ready for dedication in 12 months. Cost \$80,000, a donation by Mr. Wayman Crow.